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MEDIA

Presents



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
OFFICIAL SELECTION
UN CERTAIN REGARD

TERROR'S ADVOCATE

A film by

BARBET SCHROEDER

(135 mins, France, 2007)

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SYNOPSIS

Communist, anti-colonialist, right-wing extremist?

What convictions guide the moral mind of Jacques Vergès? Barbet Schroeder takes us down history's darkest paths in his attempt to illuminate the mystery behind this enigmatic figure. As a young lawyer during the Algerian war, Vergès espoused the anti-colonialist cause and defended Djamila Bouhired, 'la Pasionaria', who bore her country's hopes for freedom on her shoulders and was sentenced to death for planting bombs in cafes. He obtained her release, married her and had two children with her.

Then suddenly, at the height of an illustrious career, Vergès disappeared without trace for eight years. He re-emerged from his mysterious absence, taking on the defense of terrorists of all kinds, from Magdalena Kopp and Anis Naccache to Carlos the Jackal. He represented Historical monsters such as Nazi lieutenant Klaus Barbie. From the lawyer's Inflammatory and provocative cases to his controversial terrorist links, Barbet Schroeder follows the winding trail left by this 'devil's advocate', as he forges his unique path in law and politics.

The filmmaker explores and questions the history of 'blind terrorism' through his penetrating investigation of this compelling man and leads us towards shocking revelations that expose long-hidden links in history.



BIOGRAPHIES OF FILM'S PARTICIPANTS

THE PROTAGONISTS



BACHIR BOUMAZA

Born in 1927 in the area of Setif, at Kerata, Boumaza joined the fight for an independent Algeria in 1945. Arrested on the first day of the 1954 insurrection, he succeeded, a few years later, in escaping from prison, and played a major role in the foundation of the FLN in France up until his arrest in 1958. While imprisoned in Fresnes, he wrote *La Gangrène* (Gangrene), a book about the torture that took place on French territory during the Algerian war. On October 17, 1961, he escaped from prison, on the same day as the famous riots in Paris. Minister under Ben Bella, Boumaza was forced into exile when Boumediene came to power. He rejoined his friend François Genoud in Switzerland and continued the anti-colonialist struggle, fighting for the Palestinian cause alongside Haddad. He also acted as intermediary between Waddi Haddad (PFLP) and Abou Jihad (Arafat's Fatah), forged closer ties with the Irish and ironed out ideological differences with the Marxist Georges Habbache "L'Extremiste". In 1990, he created the "8th of May 1945 Foundation" which fights for the requalifying of events which transpired in Sétif as 'crimes against humanity' so that they become imprescriptible. Today, he maintains office as a senator.



YACEF SAADI

Born in Algiers in 1928, Saadi was a juvenile delinquent in the Casbah when he got involved in the fight for Algeria's independence in 1945. He joined the FLN in 1954 and became the military head of the Autonomous Zone of Algiers in 1956, where he was responsible for creating new channels for the production and stocking of explosives, as well as recruiting young, attractive women - including Djamila Bouhired and Zohra Drif - who were responsible for planting bombs in areas frequented by Europeans. The 'Battle of Algiers', which began on the January 7, 1957, ended with the arrest of Djamila Bouhired and the French army regaining control of the city, but this 'defeat' marked a turning point for the Algerian population, which sided strongly with

the FLN. While incarcerated at Fresnes in 1957, Yacef Saadi wrote a memoir, "The Battle of Algiers", which he would later produce as a remarkable movie, directed by Gilles de Pontecorvo, in which he played himself. Banned in France in 1966, the film was granted its visa of exploitation in 1971, only to be instantly removed from movie screens worldwide. It resurfaced 40 years later in 2004, after being shown in the Pentagon on August 27, 2003. For the American military, the film provided a lesson on the political impact of urban guerrilla warfare and its mechanisms, as it sought to better understand such matters in the light of the war in Iraq. According to Monique Robin's documentary "Death Squads: The French School", the film was also used to teach torture techniques in South America.



DJAMILA BOUHIRED

Born in Algiers in 1935, Bouhired was working as a seamstress when she was recruited by Yacef Saadi. During the 'Battle of Algiers' attacks, it was she who planted the 'Milk-Bar' bomb on September 30, 1956. Eleven people were killed and five wounded in the explosion. In the ambush that followed, Bouhired was accidentally wounded by Saadi. Arrested, then tortured for 17 days, she was found guilty of terrorism and sentenced to death. Jacques Vergès, her lawyer, prevented her execution thanks to his relentless and combative defence. The media campaign he orchestrated transformed Djamila into the emblematic figure of the anti-colonialist resistance throughout the world, and saved her life. Upon her release, she married Vergès. They had two children. In line with the moral principles that guided her struggle during the war for independence, Djamila withdrew from political life after the war and played no part in the construction of independent Algeria.



SINE

Born Maurice Sinet, in 1928, Siné grew up in the 'Goutte d'Or' neighborhood of Paris, and thereafter retaining a trademark sharp tongue and rebellious spirit. After becoming a political cartoonist for "L'Express", Siné attracted controversy for his anti-colonialist and anarchist views during the Algerian war. Defended by his friend Vergès in numerous court cases, he joined forces with the lawyer in Algeria to found the newspaper "Révolution Africaine". In 1981, Siné was hired as an illustrator for "Charlie Hebdo".



MAHER SOULEIMAN

A member of the PFLP, Souleiman was arrested following a grenade and machine gun attack on an El Al airplane at Athens airport on December 26, 1968. One Israeli was killed and several passengers injured. Defended by Vergès, he was released following the hijacking of an Olympic Airways airplane in Cairo on July 22, 1970. He lives in Beirut.



HANS JOACHIM KLEIN

Klein was born in 1947 in Frankfurt. Son of a Jewish mother deported to Ravensbrück and a Nazi police officer father, Klein served eight months in prison for car theft at the age of 18. He moved on from larceny to legal political struggle, participating in various organizations of the radical left from 1968 on. During this period in Frankfurt, Klein participated in almost daily street riots, and worked as the driver and personal bodyguard of lawyer Klaus Croissant before rejoining the Revolutionary Cells (RZ) in 1974, for whom he acted as a clandestine operative. Weinrich and Bose, the leaders, chose Klein to participate in the OPEC operation, coordinated by Carlos on behalf of Waddi Haddad. After being severely wounded in the stomach, and increasingly disillusioned with Carlos' mercenary greed and Palestinian anti-Semitism, Klein withdrew little by little from the movement, eventually sending a confession and his gun to the German newspaper, "Der Spiegel". His

confession contained information that prevented two attacks. The penitent Klein lived for twenty years under an assumed name until his arrest in 1998 in a small village in France. During this time, wild rumours circulated, notably that he had been kidnapped and executed by former colleagues. Judged and sentenced to nine years in prison, he was released in 2004.



KLAUS CROISSANT

Born in 1931, Croissant was the lawyer for the Red Army Faction (RAF) and as such was accused by prosecutor Rebmann of having “organized the operational reserve of West German terrorism from his cabinet“. While on the run in France he was arrested in Paris on September 30, 1977: Jean-Paul Sartre and Michel Foucault were amongst those most vocal in the campaign against his imprisonment. In spite of vigorous protests and organized demonstrations in Germany, Italy and France, the Paris Court of Appeals ruled in favour of Croissant’s extradition on November 16, 1977. Several years later, he returned to France and, with Vergès, attempted to create a “collective of European lawyers for political prisoners“, inspired by the Algerian model. On September 14, 1992, he was accused by German courts of “espionage on behalf of East German communists“ based on information found in STASI archives, and condemned in March 1993 to a suspended sentence of twenty-one months. Croissant died in 2002.



CARLOS

Son of a Venezuelan communist lawyer, Carlos “The Jackal” was born Illitch Ramirez Sanchez on October 12, 1949. As a student in Moscow, he came into contact with the KGB, and joined the ranks of the PFLP in the 1970s. Under the orders of Waddi Haddad, he moved to Paris and began working for Moukarbal. Carlos described himself as an “international professional revolutionary“ and became known for the unpredictability of his strikes: the rue

Toullier shooting in Paris; his killing of two police officers and his boss Moukarbal, whom he suspected of treachery. Assisted by European terrorists from the far left, Carlos organized a series of violent attacks: hostage taking in Den Haag; the attack on a drugstore on Boulevard Saint-Germain in Paris; the raids at Orly airport. The historical hostage taking of the OPEC ministers in Austria, an operation organized on behalf of Waddi Haddad, with PLO representative Anis Naccache, and H.J. Klein and the RZ, followed. The Jackal took the money for the operation but failed to respect the terms of his contract. When the PLO offered him money in exchange for the lives of the two ministers, Carlos spared them, pocketed the cash and sought refuge in Algiers, thereby rupturing his ties with the Palestinians. Henceforth he went into business for himself, with right hand man Johannes Weinrich at his side. In 1982, Carlos put pressure on the French government by means of attacks on rue Marbeuf, the Capitole and St.Charles Station, demanding the release of Bruno Bréguet and his partner Magdalena Kopp. In his secret dealings with the French state, Vergès, the lawyer representing Kopp and Bréguet, was of crucial importance. Carlos then settled in Damascus where Magdalena Kopp rejoined him upon her release from prison. Expelled from Syria in 1992, Carlos sought refuge in Sudan, which was to be his final host country. He was seized while undergoing surgery, on August 14, 1994. Following his arrest, Mourad Oussedik promised to defend him, and was soon joined by Vergès. Since 1997, Carlos has been represented by his wife, Isabelle Coutant-Peyre, a past collaborator of Vergès'. Carlos was judged and sentenced to life for the rue Toullier murders. Today he is still incarcerated in Clairvaux prison where he waits to be judged for the attacks at rue Marbeuf, St.Charles Station and the Capitole, for which Judge Bruguière has since closed the investigation.



JOHANNES WEINRICH

Born on July 21, 1947, in 1967 Weinrich founded - with Wilfried Bose - the Revolutionary Cells (RZ), the precursor to the Red Army Faction. The group targeted American interests in Germany and harvested funds for the Palestinian and Vietnamese cause through 'Red Help'. Weinrich's companion, Magdalena Kopp, joined the group, which soon attracted the sympathy of Waddi Haddad, who introduced Weinrich to Carlos. Wienrich and Carlos found themselves together after the arrest of Haddad on the 24 March, 1975; the raid of the El Al airplanes at Orly, executed on behalf of Waddi Haddad, failed. Released a few months later for health reasons, Weinrich went underground and joined Carlos - now autonomous - as his right hand man. Magdalena Kopp left Weinrich for Carlos, later marrying him. In the eighties,

Weinrich maintained ambiguous relations with the STASI, which facilitated the attack on the Maison de la France on 16 August 1983, by allowing the entry of explosives into the GDR. Weinrich was arrested in Yemen in 1995 and sentenced to life for the Maison de la France attacks. He hopes to be released in 2020. Acquitted for the attacks at rue Marbeauf and St.Charles Station, he is still awaiting trial for the 1975 rocket launcher attack on Orly airport, as well as the attacks on Radio Free Europe (21 February, 1981), the Capitole (29 March, 1982) and the ambassador to Saudi Arabia in Athens (13 April, 1983).



NEDA VIDA KOVIC

Born in Belgrade, where she completed her studies, Vidakovic met Vergès in 1978 following his eight-year-long disappearance, and became his assistant, driver and friend. In 1983 she returned to Belgrade. Vergès asks her to help Johannes Weinrich by providing various services, which resulted in relentless interrogation by the police and an eventual 3 month 'secret' incarceration in Yugoslavia. Vidakovic then returned to the United States where she married. But her past continued to raise suspicions, and she once again underwent interrogation regarding her 'terrorist activities', this time at the hands of the FBI. Now a widow, she lives in Chicago and plans to return to Belgrade.



MAGDALENA KOPP

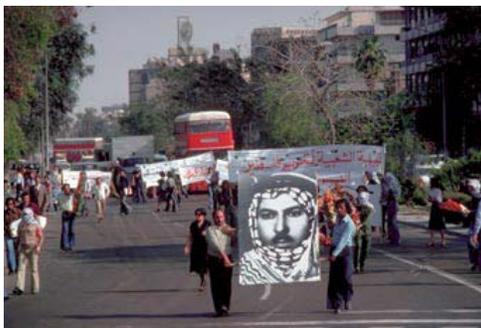
Raised in Ulm, in South West Germany, Kopp left to study photography in Berlin to escape an unrepentant Nazi father. Caught up in the student movement of the extreme left, she became the companion of Johannes Weinrich, at that time the manager of a bookstore that served as a cover for the RZ. In London in 1977, Weinrich introduced Kopp to Carlos; she would later become The Jackal's companion, then wife. She followed Carlos to Budapest, East Berlin and Paris. Ordered by him to commit terrorist acts, she was arrested along with Bruno Bréguet, in a car full of explosives in February 1982, in a Champs-Élysées parking lot. On the recommendation of Francois Genoud, she hired Vergès to represent her. At the same time, Carlos was furiously applying pressure on the French government: several attacks exploded throughout the territory. Sentenced to five years in prison, Kopp was released on May 4, 1985 and rejoined Carlos in Damascus. There she gave

birth to her second child, Rosa Elbita, born on August 17, 1986. Expelled from Damascus, she relocated to Venezuela with her daughter. Today, Magdalena Kopp lives in her city of birth with her daughter and is thinking about writing her memoirs. During Weinrich's trial, she testified against the accused.



BRUNO BREGUET

Born in 1950 in Switzerland, Bréguet was barely 20 years old when he was arrested on June 23, 1970 in Haifa while attempting to dynamite harbour installations. He affirmed that he had been given the responsibility of this mission by the Italian Proletariat Action Group, but denied any ties with Waddi Haddad's PFLP-COSE. Bréguet was the first European arrested and condemned for pro-Palestinian terrorist activities. His friend and tireless supporter, François Genoud, organized his defence through an intermediary, his lawyer son-in-law, Maurice Cruchon. Condemned in 1971 to a fifteen-year sentence, Bréguet was eventually pardoned, and was expelled from Israel on the July 24, 1977. On February 16, 1982, Bréguet and Magdalena Kopp crossed paths with two police agents during a routine check in a parking lot on Avenue Georges V, in Paris. Two bottles of gas, two kilos of explosives linked to a timer set to go off at ten- thirty and two grenades were found in the trunk of their vehicle. Bréguet attempted to open fire on the police officers but his gun jammed. Genoud asked Vergès to act on behalf of Bréguet and Kopp. On April 22, Bréguet was sentenced to five years in prison, ending up at Fleury-Mérogis in the company of Anis Naccache and Georges Ibrahim Abdallah - all clients of Vergès. Freed on September 17, 1985, he rejoined Carlos in Damascus before settling down with his family in Greece. On November 12, 1995, a few minutes before leaving on the ferry 'Le Lato' en route for Igoumenitsa, he disappeared. Systematic searches by Greek authorities and Interpol revealed nothing; to this day, his body has not been found.



WADDI HADDAD

Born in 1928 in Galileo, Haddad worked as a doctor in Beirut. A Christian, he joined the PFLP - founded by Georges Habbache - in 1967. He served as Habbache's right hand man and controlled the Command of Foreign Special

Operations (COSE), transforming it into the first terrorist multinational: an organization whose scale and power has only recently been matched by Al Qaida. Inspired by Maoist ideology, the organization moved beyond the scope of the Palestinian struggle, recruiting revolutionaries world-wide. Haddad organized training camps for terrorist organizations from all over the globe and oversaw an international arms traffic. In return, non-Arab organizations supplied him with mercenaries devoted to the Palestinian cause. Little by little, the PFLP-COSE spun an ever-widening international network. Certain 'congresses', organized in Europe and Lebanon united diverse movements. All centered around the same ideology: communism coloured by terrorism; the same dynamic: the coordination of international terrorist acts; and the same objective: to destabilize the occidental powers and weaken their support of Israel. Following the massacre in 1972 at Lod airport in Israel by Japanese terrorists that left twenty-six dead and twenty-four wounded, Waddi Haddad found himself isolated within his own movement. He resolved to continue, waging his own war by reinforcing the ties he had maintained with certain European terrorist organizations, united despite each group's individual cause. Over the course of eight years, COSE executed approximately thirty terrorists attacks outside Palestinian territory, resulting in forty deaths and two hundred wounded. In 1976, Waddi Haddad was 'proscribed', and forced to leave the PFLP. His isolation and failure over past operations, notably those that took place at Entebbe and Mogadishu, took their toll: he died on March 28, 1978 in the GDR. Some believe leukemia was the cause of death, while others maintain he was poisoned by MOSSAD. The official presence of all Palestinian political leaders at his funeral revealed the ambiguous nature of his break with the more moderate branches of the Palestinian movement. As all potential successors failed in their ability to establish a strong base and alliances with important political groups, COSE vanished with the death of its charismatic leader.



MOHAMMED BOUDIA

Born in Algiers in 1932, explosives expert Boudia enrolled in the fight for Algerian Independence in 1955 in the heart of the Federation of France. Arrested in 1958 for blowing up an oil depot in Mourpiane, close to Marseille, Boudia escaped from prison in 1961 and joined the FLN theatre troupe in Tunis. After Algeria achieved independence, he served in diverse cultural and

artistic roles, including the creation and direction of the National Algerian Theatre and editing of the newspaper "Le Soir". When Boumedienne came to power, Boudia sought sanctuary in France where, like his friend Bachir Boumaza, he rejoined the Palestinian cause and represented Waddi Haddad's PFLP-COSE in Paris. He also retained a position of charismatic leader of the West Parisian Theatre in Aubervilliers. In 1971 he succeeded in causing the explosion of a GULF oil refinery but failed to demolish an Israeli depot in Rotterdam. Boudia was known for his particular ability to recruit young women to his cause. That same year, at Easter, he sent three of these women to Jerusalem to bomb a series of Holiday Inns. The operation was aborted, and the young women arrested at Tel-Aviv airport with the explosives in their bags. A few months later, accompanied by another young woman, Boudia targeted a castle in Austria that was used a transit camp for emigrant Russian Jews en route for Israel. This attack also failed but Boudia did not give up: his next target was an oil refinery in Trieste, which he loaded with twenty kilos of explosives. The success of this operation was overwhelming: 250,000 tons of burning oil and a destroyed pipeline resulting in 2.5 million dollars' worth of damage. On June 28, 1973, while leaving the house of one of his female friends, he was blown up while getting into his car. The attack was coordinated by MOSSAD, via a commando unit nicknamed 'Rage of God', sent at the behest of Golda Meir in response to the massacre of the Israeli athletes in Munich. Three weeks after Boudia's death, Carlos was sent by Waddi Haddad to Paris as his replacement. Carlos named his commando unit 'Mohammed Boudia' and executed two attacks in London and three in Paris under the banner of their fallen comrade. Vergès, a friend of Boudia's since Algeria, and who met with him during the former's disappearance, was designated by the PLO to re-open an investigation against MOSSAD - an investigation that was swiftly closed.



FRANÇOIS GENOUD

Born in 1915 in Lausanne, Genoud was sent by his father to Germany at the age of 16 to learn national socialist doctrine. There, the avid pupil found a hero in Hitler. They met in a hotel in Bad Godesberg near Bonn and exchanged a few words. The future Führer confided in the adolescent, explaining his need for people of Genoud's kind to create a fraternal Europe. During the war, Genoud worked for the Abwehr, a German counter-espionage service. At the time of the German defeat, he was an active element of the ODESSA organization, organizing the escape of high-ranking Nazi leaders to South America, Italy and Spain and coordinating the transfer of their 'war treasure' to Swiss bank accounts. Numerous contacts made during the war enabled him to acquire the rights to many of Hitler's works, including his

'political testament'. Genoud also acquired the entirety of Goebbels' works. Revenue made on his publishing activities went to support Nazi prisoners and their families. Genoud's ascent would not have been possible without the help of his loyal friend Rechenberg, one of Goering's former lieutenants. Together they created an import-export company, Arabo-Afrika, a cover for financing various nationalist movements, including the FLN.

From 1935 to 1936, Genoud took a long car tour to the Middle East. There he met the Grand Mufti, who became his mentor, transforming him into a fervent militant of the Arabic-Palestinian cause. Genoud became the legal representative for the Grand Mufti's financial interests in Germany and defended him in a trial where he stood in opposition to Goering's heirs. Even after the Grand Mufti died in 1974, Genoud remained his loyal defender, continuing to represent him for the next twenty years. Meanwhile, at the end of the 1950s, Genoud created Swiss bank accounts in the name of numerous nationalist Arab movements. He first met Vergès in Geneva in 1961. Vergès had just finished organizing a strategic reply to the French government after they had suspended his law license. After the victory of Independent Algeria, Genoud, being very close to Khider, founded a Swiss bank with him, to manage the infamous 'FLN treasure'. The bank's capital was majority-owned by Khider. Claims have been made that a tiny part of these funds was used to finance the journal "Revolution", founded by Vergès in 1963 (see the testimony of Nils Anderson, a founding member of the publication). Genoud reunited with Vergès in 1969, financing and advising on the defence of the PFLP members who had hijacked the El Al airplane in Zurich. He became Waddi Haddad's strategic advisor, and was nicknamed "Sheik François" by Haddad who enrolled his Algerian friends, notably Mohammed Boudia and Bachir Boumaza to join him. Genoud admits to having delivered the ransom demand to the headquarters of the airline company on behalf of Waddi Haddad during the hijacking of a Lufthansa Boeing 747 in Yemen. The five million dollars collected were awarded to the PFLP. Besides these accounts, it is difficult to identify the terrorist acts in which Genoud participated. When Klaus Barbie was arrested, Genoud called Vergès and financed the defence, according to Genoud's own testimony, information that was corroborated by several witnesses who related specific details regarding the circumstances of this request (namely the collaborator Oussedik and Maitre Brahimi). Meanwhile, Vergès maintains that it was Barbie's daughter who asked him to defend her father. In 1995, his health deteriorating, Genoud called his family and close friends to his side to commit suicide in their company. Despite his fanatical Nazi principles, his anti-Zionism, his Negationism and his anti-Judaism, Genoud always denied being an anti-semitic.



ANIS NACCACHE

A Lebanese architect-decorator, Naccache joined the Palestinian cause at the beginning of the seventies. He was sent by the PLO to direct the OPEC hostage operation in Vienna in 1975 organized by Waddi Haddad. When Ayatollah Khomeini came to power, Naccache developed closer ties with Iran, being considered the most effective new spokesman for the Palestinian cause. He received personal orders from Khomeini to assassinate Bechir Bakhtiar, former minister of the Shah of Iran. The operation was a failure, faulty intelligence leading the commando to the wrong door. Naccache was duly arrested and condemned to life on May 10, 1982. At his trial, he was the first terrorist to claim membership of a religious order, heralding the birth of Islamic terrorism. Following a hunger strike orchestrated by Vergès, he succeeded in being a part of the global negotiation between France and Iran. He was then freed on July 27, 1990. Since then, Naccache has operated as a strategic advisor and divides his time between Teheran and Beirut. At the time of the interview in Lebanon for "Terror's Advocate", he had just returned from a trip in North Korea, and made a point of specifying that he did not travel there for political reasons...

THE “EXPERTS”



Louis CAPRIOLI

Born in Algiers, Caprioli was a survivor of the Milk-Bar attack during the ‘Battle of Algiers’. As assistant director of the DST (France’s equivalent of the FBI) , he was in charge of the official anti-terrorist struggle during the 1980s. Since his retirement in 2004, he has worked in the private industrial information sector for the company GEOS.



Jean-Paul DOLLE

Philosopher and communist Dollé contributed to the journal “Revolution” founded by Vergès in 1964, financed by China and the right wing of the FLN (Mohammed Khider). He writes and teaches philosophy at the Ecole d’Architecture.



Lionel DUROY

Duroy began work for the newspaper “Libération“ in 1981, and was responsible for revealing the fact that Jean-Marie Le Pen committed acts of torture at the Susini villa during the Algerian war. He also instigated a thorough investigation into Vergès during the Barbie trial. Intending to create a complete portrait of Vergès the lawyer, Duroy’s interviews with many witnesses now deceased concerning Vergès’s life go far beyond the spectrum of the trial. At the end of the 1980s, Duroy quit journalism to concentrate on his career as a novelist.



Claude FAURE

An SDECE agent since the late 1960s, Faure wrote what is considered to be the definitive reference history of the French Secret Service.



David FECHHEIMER

Legendary San Francisco private eye David Fechheimer began his career as a teacher in the 1960s. A fervent admirer of Dashiell Hammett, he presented himself at the Pinkerton Detective Agency in search of part-time work and discovered his vocation. He has used his talents to support the defence of individuals with political power who contest the government. Clients have included Huey P. Newton, the Black Panthers, Angela Davis, Eldridge Cleaver, George Jackson, Timothy McVeigh (the Oklahoma Bomber), Jon Walker Lindh (the American Taliban member) and Kobe Bryant.



Horst FRANZ

First employed by the STASI in 1953, Franz ascended the ranks to become the head of border surveillance, escapees and illegal immigrants to the West. In 1978, he was transferred to the anti-terrorist section of Berlin (Principal and Autonomous Section XXII). Initially adjunct, then director, he became an expert on The Jackal's group, Carlos often spending time in East Germany until the early 1980s, equipped with a diplomatic passport. When Franz nonetheless ordered Carlos' bags to be searched, weapons and explosives were found. He also searched Johannes Weinrich's apartment and photographed Weinrich's 200 page diary, and obtained documents that Vergès had left in the lockers of the East Berlin train station, believing Franz was still in the West.



Claude MONIQUET

Moniquet began his career as a member of a small terrorist group in the 1970s. Shocked by the reality of violent direct action, he quit the movement before participating in a single attack. He became a journalist and historian and published “La Guerre sans visage” (“War Without a Face”) a study of the history of modern terrorist movements and their interactions, in 2002.



Oliver SCHROM

An investigative journalist, working notably for the German magazine “Stern“, he is also the author of a book on Carlos’ network, a far-reaching investigation that was used as a basis for a documentary on the subject.



Patricia TOURANCHEAU

A journalist for “Libération” since 1990, specializing in obituaries, criminal investigations, high level organized crime, terrorist activities, and police and information services, she covered the DST kidnapping of Illich Ramirez Sanchez, alias Carlos, in the Sudan. She also covered the STASI discovery of documents implicating Jacques Vergès, as well as investigating his disappearance in 1995 and finding the key to his departure from Algiers. Her book “Le Gang des Postiches“ is published by Editions Fayard.



Tobias WUNSCHIK

Researcher in the office for the conservation and study of the STASI archives (BSTU), he is the author of numerous publications on left-wing terrorism and state security in the GDR.

THE WITNESSES



Bassam ABU CHARIF

A former student at La Salle in Amman, Jordan, Charif was Waddi Haddad's lieutenant. In charge of public relations, he met Genoud and recruited Carlos and Bruno Bréguet. In 1972, his office in Beirut received a booby-trapped book dedicated to Che Guevara from MOSSAD. Charif lost several fingers and the use of one eye in the ensuing explosion. In the 1990s he became a close advisor of Arafat, and an important player in the Israeli-Arab dialogue. He published a book, "Tried by Fire", in 1995.



El Djohar AKROUR

He was sentenced to death in 1957 by the Assizes Court of Algiers at the age of 16 for the attacks on Algiers Stadium which left seventeen dead and forty-five wounded. The Oran Assizes Court for minors retried the case and sentenced him to life in a labour camp. His four accomplices were executed.



Abderrahmane BENHAMIDA

Benhamida was sentenced to death for terrorist acts during the Algerian struggle for independence.



Miloud BRAHIMI

Brahimi is a lawyer and President of the League for Human Rights in Algeria.



Nuon CHEA

“Brother number 2“ of the Khmer Rouge, and considered to be Pol Pot’s ‘double’, Nuon Chea is still calmly awaiting trial.



Isabelle COUTANT-PEYRE

Lawyer and former secretary of the Bar Conference in Paris, she worked with Jacques Vergès from 1981 to 1984. A passionate advocate in cases where politics overrule justice, she has defended Carlos, whom she married in 2001, since 1997.



Zohra DRIF

Originally from Oran, she became Yacef Saadi’s associate at the age of 19, planting bombs in the Casbah. Captured with Saadi on September 24, 1957, she became a lawyer after Algeria won independence, and married Rabah Bitat, one of the five historic leaders of the FLN. Today she is a senator.



Rolande GIRARD-ARNAUD

The wife of Georges Arnaud, author of the novel “Le Salaire de la peur“ (“The Wages of Fear“), accomplice and co-author with Vergès of a book on Djamila, she has been a close friend of the lawyer since the Algerian war. Now widowed, she is as a professional author.



Georges HABBACHE

A doctor by profession, in 1951 he created, with other Christians, laymen and progressives, the ANM (Arab Nationalist Movement), and published the confidential bulletin "Al-Thar" ("Vengeance"). The day after the defeat of the six-day war in 1967 he created the PFLP, a pan-Arab and international revolutionary movement, as opposed to Arafat's purely nationalist Fatah. Habbache handed control of the international branch - COSE - to Waddi Haddad, whose mission was to spread terrorist action to foreign territories. Despite being very close to Haddad, Habbache officially disavowed excessively violent terrorist actions.



Tep KHUNAL

Now 55 years old, Tep Khunal is an intellectual. He represented the Khmer Rouge at the United Nations from 1980 to 1992. From 1992 to 1998, he was Pol Pot's secretary. The two were inseparable, thereby often having the occasion to discuss many things, including Vergès.



Gilles MENAGE

High Prefect functionary, he was, for eleven years, first technical advisor, then associate director to François Mitterrand's office at l'Élysée, where he was in charge of security issues, information services and the war against terrorism. From 1992 to 1995 he was the President of EDF. Today, he is the general secretary of the François Mitterrand Foundation.



Alain MARSAUD

State prosecutor for the criminal section service of Paris from 1980 to 1986, he represented the state in the rue Marbeuf affair. Head of central services in the fight against terrorism from 1986 to 1989, he modernised terrorist repression techniques at the time of the 1986 attacks and spent four days in confinement with each of the accused: Garbidjian, Abdallah and Naccache, all three, clients of Vergès. Today he is a parliamentary deputy.



Fadila MESLI

Mesli was a nurse in Algeria, defended by Vergès in 1956 during the ‘Trial of the Nurses’.



Karim PAKRADOUNI

Lawyer and head of the Christian Lebanese party Kataeb, Pakradouni lives in Beirut.



Pol POT

Saloth Sar was born in 1925 and is better known as Pol Pot. He studied in France from 1949 to 1954 before becoming “Brother Number One” of the Khmer Rouge and ruling Cambodia from 1976 to 1979. A communist

ideologue, his political doctrine of purification was responsible for the death of one and a half million Cambodians. The war in Vietnam provoked the downfall of his government a few years later. The Khmer Rouge confined him to his residence after his trial in 1997, accusing him of murdering his designated successor and right hand man, Son Sen. He died of a heart attack in 1998 after learning that the Khmer Rouge were going to deliver him to an international tribunal. As he was cremated, a post-mortem to rule out suicide proved impossible.



Martine TIGRANE

Lawyer and a close collaborator of Maitre Oussedik for more than twenty years.

TIMELINE REFERENCE

- March 5th 1924 or April 1925:** Jacques Vergès is born in Thailand.
- 1928:** His mother dies of tropical fever. Vergès moves to Réunion Island.
- 1941:** He receives a Baccalauréat Philosophy.
- 1942:** He leaves for Liverpool where he joins General De Gaulle's infantry and fights in Morocco, Algeria, Italy and France.
- May 8th 1945:** Massacre at Sétif.
- 1945:** Vergès studies History and Oriental Languages at the Sorbonne.
- 1946:** He joins the Communist Party. First marriage to Carine.
- 1949:** President of the Association of Colonial Students. Meets Saloth Sar/Pol Pot and Eric Honecker.
- 1949:** Attends his first trial. His empathy for the accused compels him to become a lawyer.
- 1950:** The Communist Party sends Vergès and his wife to Prague to direct the International Student Union. There he meets Stalin.
- 1952:** Vergès visits India and meets Indira Gandhi and Nehru.
- 1954:** Elected Prime Secretary of the Conference of the Order of Lawyers of the Paris Bar.
- Beginning of the Algerian War.
- 1955:** First important trial: Vergès defends a group of communist students who attempted to prevent the departure of recruits to Algeria and wins.
- June 20-22 1956:** Wave of individual attacks in Algiers.
- August 10th 1956:** "Ultra" bomb in Algiers resulting in dozens of Muslim victims.
- September 30th 1956:** Beginning of the FLN offensive in Algiers against the European community with the attacks on 'Milk-Bar, 'Cafeteria' and 'Otomatic': The 'Battle of Algiers'.
- 1957:** Vergès leaves the Communist Party due to its support for French foreign policy in Algeria. He creates the Collective of French Lawyers in service of the political doctrine of the FLN.
- February 10th 1957:** FLN bombs in stadiums.
- April 13th 1957:** Djamila Bouried is arrested, interned and tortured for 17 days at Maillot hospital.
- April 27th 1957:** Vergès meets Djamila for the first time in the presiding judge's office.
- July 11th 1957:** Djamila appears before the military tribunal.
- July 15th 1957:** End of the trial. Djamila and her co-condemned are found guilty and fully responsible. They are sentenced to death.
- September 24th 1957:** Yacef Saadi, responsible for the Autonomous Zone in Algiers (ZAA), is arrested.
- November 1957 :** Publication of the manifesto "For Djamila Bouhired" by Jacques Vergès and Georges Arnaud (letter from De Gaulle on the December 8, 1957 congratulating the authors).
- March 13-14 1958:** Djamila is pardoned by René Coty, and transferred to the Maison Carrée.

May 13th 1959: An anonymous threat is sent to all the lawyers of the collective: Oussedik, Vergès, Ben Abdallah, Courrégé, Beauvillard, Radziewski, Ould Aoudia, Zavrian.

May 21st 1959: Ould Aoudia is murdered in his office in Paris.

May 26th 1959: Second death threat.

August 1959: Publication of the 'list of the disappeared'. Vergès is banished from Algiers courts for having published the list.

February 1960: Vergès, Courrégé and Zavrian flee to Geneva when Oussedik is imprisoned.

September 5th 1960: 'Trial of the baggage carriers' before the Permanent Tribunal of Armed Forces. The 'Jeanson trial'.

November 1960: Vergès is suspended for one year and sentenced to two months in prison (suspended sentence) for posing a threat to state security.

1961: Vergès is wounded during a demonstration denouncing the assassination of Lumumba, for which Moïse Tschombé was responsible.

October 17th 1961: Violent repression of Algerian demonstrations in Paris ordered by the Prefect of Police, Maurice Papon. Many victims are thrown into the Seine.

1961 - 1962: Vergès is exiled in Morocco. He acts as advisor to certain African countries.

1962: Djamila Bouhired is released from prison.

March 18th 1962: Signature of the Evian Accords.

September 29th 1962: Ben Bella comes into power.

February 2nd 1963: founding of "African Revolution", the weekly magazine of the FLN.

March 30 1963: Vergès visits Mao in China for the newspaper for two weeks (article in edition number 9 with a report signed by Djamila Bouhired and Jacques Vergès).

September 1963: Mohammed Harbi becomes the director of "African Revolution". Vergès returns to Paris to found the monthly paper "Revolution - Africa - Latin America - Asia", financed by China and the "treasure of the FLN". The headquarters is on rue François 1er in Paris with offices in Cuba, Beijing, London, Lausanne and New York.

Spring 1965: Marries Djamila Bouhired.

June 19th: Boumedienne's military coup overthrows Ben Bella.

1965 - 1966: Defence of Mahmoud Hedjazi: the first fedayin arrested and sentenced by Israel.

1967: Foundation of the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) by Georges Habbache, joined by Waddi Haddad, following the defeat during the 'Six Day War'.

June 30th 1967:

Kidnapping of Moïse Tschombé, his plane hijacked and rerouted to Algeria. Vergès agrees to defend him.

December 26th 1968:

Maher Souleiman and Mahmud Mohamad, members of the PFLP, lead a grenade and machine gun attack at the Athens airport against an El Al

airplane. One Israeli is killed and several other passengers wounded. Vergès takes on the defence of Souleiman and Mohamad at the request of the Algerian government.

February 18th 1969: Four members of the PFLP attack an El Al Boeing jet at Zurich airport.

The terrorists are arrested, and a trial is planned for December 1969: the Winterthur trial. Vergès takes on their defence. Genoud takes care of contact with the organisation and the families.

April 28th 1969: General De Gaulle resigns as President of the Republic.

July 1st 1969: Suspicious death of Moïse Tschombé in a prison in Algiers.

February 1970: Vergès disappears. He is last seen at a political meeting at the Mutualité in Paris.

May 1970: Andréas Baader escapes. Foundation of the Rote Armee Fraktion (RAF, Faction Armée Rouge, Red Army Faction)

June 23rd 1970: Bruno Bréguet is arrested in Haïfa in possession of explosives, and sentenced to fifteen years in prison before being released, then expelled from Israel in 1977.

1971: Boudia attacks an oil refinery in Trieste; an Austrian refuge for emigrants in transit to Israel (target missed); an Israeli depot in Rotterdam (target missed) and several Holiday Inns in Jerusalem (operation aborted).

September 5th 1972: Israeli athletes are massacred during the Olympic games in Munich.

June 28th 1973: Car bomb attack on Boudia Mohammed .

January 24th 1974: Carlos throws a grenade at an Israeli bank in London, wounding one person.

September 15th 1974: Carlos throws two grenades at a drugstore in Saint-Germain, killing two people and wounding thirty-four.

January 13th and 19th 1975: Raid conducted by Carlos and Weinrich on behalf of Waddi Haddad against El Al airplanes stationed in Orly. Twenty-one wounded.

June 27th 1975: Shooting at rue Toullier in Paris, where Carlos kills two DST police officers and his boss, Moukarbal.

December 21st 1975: Taking of hostages on behalf of the PFLP during the meeting of the OPEC ministers in Vienna. Carlos, Anis

Naccache and two German militants, including Hans Joachim Klein of the Revolutionäre Zellen (RZ) make up part of the commando unit.

June 27th 1976: An Air France plane is hijacked at Entebbe (Uganda) by a commando unit composed of Palestinians and Germans from the RZ who take passengers as hostages separate from seventy Israelis. On the 4th of July, the Israelis conduct a raid, liberating the Entebbe hostages. A female passenger is assassinated by the Ugandans.

July 12th 1977: A warrant for the arrest of RAF lawyer Klaus Croissant is issued in Germany.

October 13th 1977: Hijacking of a Lufthansa airplane by Waddi Haddad ensures the Majorca-Frankfurt link. The passengers are taken hostage and the plane re-routed to Mogadishu. The commando Halimeh demands the

liberation of RAF militants and two Palestinian detainees being held in Istanbul. The operation results in the death of one person and ten wounded.

October 18th 1977: The intervention of German special forces puts an end to the hostage situation in Mogadishu. Three of the four members of the Palestinian commando unit are killed. Andréas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin and Karl Jaspe are executed (hanging and firing squad) in Stammheim, Stuttgart. Another RAF militant, Irmgard Möller, is incarcerated and severely wounded from multiple stabbings.

October 24th 1977: First day of the Klaus Croissant trial in Paris.

November 16th 1977: Klaus Croissant is extradited to Germany.

March 16th 1978: Aldo Moro is kidnapped by the Red Brigade.

March 28th 1978: Waddi Haddad dies in the GDR.

1978: Vergès reappears in Paris.

April 15th 1980: Jean-Paul Sartre dies.

August 1981: Anis Naccache's commando unit (composed of two Iranians, one Palestinian, and one Lebanese) target Shapour Bakhtiar, the former prime minister of the Shah of Iran, in Paris. The operation fails but two police officers and an elderly neighbour are slain.

February 16th 1982: During the course of a routine check in a parking lot, two police officers confront and arrest Bruno Bréguet (a Swiss citizen sought for his complicity with the PFLP) and Magdalena Kopp, lover and accomplice of Johannes Weinrich (one of the heads of the RZ), for possession of explosives.

February 28th 1982 : Carlos writes a letter to Deferre (minister of the Interior), demanding the liberation of Kopp and Bréguet.

March 10th 1982: Anis Naccache receives a life sentence.

March 29th 1982: Attack on the 'Capitole': a bomb derails a Paris to Toulouse train that Jacques Chirac was supposed to be riding, killing five people and injuring twenty-seven.

April 22nd 1982: A car bomb explodes on rue Marbeuf in front of the office of the pro-Iraq Lebanese newspaper "Al Watan al Arabi", leaving one dead and sixty-three wounded.

April 22nd 1982: Opening of the trial of Bruno Bréguet and Magdalena Kopp. They are sentenced to five and four years of prison, respectively.

August 9th 1982: A machine gun attack on the Jewish restaurant 'Goldenberg' on rue des Rosiers in Paris, leaves six dead and twenty-two wounded. Abou Nidal claims responsibility for the attack. The SDECE (French Secret Service) believes he is acting on behalf of Carlos and the PFLP.

August 21st 1982: Bomb attacks in Paris on American-owned vehicle claimed by the Lebanese Armed Revolutionary Fraction leave two bomb disposal experts dead.

December 20-22nd 1982: STASI documents: meeting between lawyers Vergès, ('Herzog') and Rambert ('Duke') with Carlos' two lieutenants, Weinrich and Aboul Akam in East Berlin concerning their involvement in the liberation of Kopp and Bréguet.

1983: The banker François Genoud asks Vergès to defend Klaus Barbie. Meanwhile Vergès continues to affirm that Barbie's daughter is the one that asked him to defend her father.

July 15th 1983: Attack on Orly airport claimed by the ASALA (Armenien independents): Turkish Airlines is targeted resulting in eight dead and sixty-three wounded. On July 18, 1983, Varoujan Garbidjian is arrested and defended by Vergès. On March 3, 1985, he is sentenced to life imprisonment.

August 16th 1983: Attack by Weinrich, with the help of STASI who provided him with explosives, against Maison de la France in West Berlin. Markus Wolf is sentenced to four years in prison.

December 1983: Attack at St-Charles train station in Marseille. Two dead and twenty wounded.

1984: Hijackers of an Air France airplane in Teheran demand the liberation of Anis Naccache.

October 25th 1984: Georges Ibrahim Abdallah, head of FARL, is arrested by the DST in Lyon. His movement executed six attacks committed in Paris between 1981 and 1984.

May 4th 1985: Magdalena Kopp is released from prison.

1986: Vergès defends Georges Ibrahim Abdallah.

January 1986: Negotiations for the anticipated liberation of Anis Naccache collapse.

1986: Series of attacks in Paris executed by the C.S.P.P.A (The Committee for Solidarity for Arab Political Prisoners) who demand the liberation of three of Vergès's clients: Varoudjan Garbidjian, Anis Naccache and Georges Ibrahim Abdallah. Iran, interested solely by Anis Naccache, hides behind the CSPPA.

February 3: Galerie du Claridge – eight wounded;

February 4: Gibert Jeune – five wounded;

February 5: Fnac Sport des Halles – twenty two wounded;

March 17: TGV Paris-Lyon – nine wounded;

March 20: Galerie Point Show – two dead and twenty nine wounded;

September 8: Post office Hôtel de Ville – one dead and twenty-one wounded;

September 14: Pub Renault – two dead and one gravely wounded;

September 15: Prefecture of police – one dead and fifty-six wounded ;

September 17: Tati rue de Rennes – seven dead and fifty-five wounded.

March 1st 1987: G.I. Abdallah is condemned to life imprisonment for conspiring to commit acts of terrorism.

May 11th 1987: The Barbie Trial opens.

On July 3, 1987, he is sentenced to life.

1989 : The trial of Direct Action, Lyonnaise branch (Ollivier, Joëlle Crepet).

September 11th 1989 to 26th of January 1990: Anis Naccache's hunger strike. He drops from 75 to 48 kilograms.

July 27th 1990: Anis Naccache is granted amnesty, then freed. His right to pardon is signed by President Mitterrand, and four million francs in indemnities are paid to the victims.

1991: Barbie dies at Jules Coumont hospital.

July 1992: Vergès defends the FIS (Islamist Front of Salutation) in Algeria.

1992: Vergès defends Cheyenne Brando.

1993: Vergès defends Omar Raddad.

March 1993: Klaus Croissant is condemned to twenty-one months of prison for espionage in the service of the RDA, based on information found in STASI archives.

August 14th 1994: Carlos is kidnapped in Sudan while anesthetized for surgery.

1996: Vergès defends the Holocaust denier Garaudy.

2001: Vergès defends Gnassingbe Eyadema against Amnesty International who accused the president of Togo of having 'disappeared' several dozen people. He wins the case.

2002: Vergès takes part in Milosevic's defence.

2003: Saddam is captured. Vergès proposes his services for Saddam's defence.

February 2004: Vergès takes on the defence of Khieu Samphan, former president of democratic Kampuchea, accused of crimes against humanity.

November 2005: Vergès defends Schleicher of Direct Action.

WHERE COULD VERGÈS HAVE DISAPPEARED TO BETWEEN 1970 AND 1978?

PALESTINIAN CAMPS, in LIBYA, YEMEN or JORDAN: These top-secret camps were controlled by the Palestinians to whom he was very close before his disappearance.

RÉUNION ISLAND: Vergès grew up on Réunion, where his brother still lives. He could easily have vanished there.

PARIS, FRANCE: Certain associates met him often in Paris during this period.

MOSCOW, URSS: According to a DST agent, spent time in a KGB school where he would have learned techniques for the political destabilization of the western states during the Cold War, techniques he later put to use.

SOUTH AFRICA: Vergès met, and enjoyed a friendship with, Nelson Mandela while in Morocco in 1961. No journalist ever gained access to the secret ANC training camps, which could certainly have offered a secure refuge.

CAMBODIA: The most widespread rumour is that Vergès acted as an advisor to Pol Pot, whom he met when both were students at the Sorbonne.

GDR: A communist in his student days, many sources have suggested that Vergès acted as an agent for Moscow. The GDR was the centre for Soviet intelligence; Vergès travelled there often following his reappearance. (STASI archives).

CHINA: Vergès could easily have passed unnoticed in China, given his Oriental features. Ideologically close to Mao (see his visit to China in 1963 and close involvement with the magazine "Révolution"). One theory suggests that he could have been a Chinese agent (notably in Cambodia) and then been arrested. This would explain the length of his unexplained disappearance.

ALGERIA: According to an SDECE agent, Vergès would have taken part in the drafting of the Algerian Constitution in 1975.

CUBA: Close to the Cuban political leadership while a director of "Révolution", he could have hidden in Cuba.

INTERVIEW WITH BARBET SCHROEDER

Why have you returned to the documentary thirty years after “General Idi Amin Dada“?

I never abandoned the documentary. After “Amin Dada“, I made a real documentary, “KoKo, a Talking Gorilla“, a philosophical movie ‘starring’ a gorilla who had a real presence at all times. Next came another ‘monster’, Charles Bukowski, who had loved the Amin Dada film. With him, I tried to make something like a series of fifty aphorisms, little monologues: “The Charles Bukowski Tapes“. Another real documentary. But in any case I approach all my fiction films as documentaries. I am a great believer in the oft-repeated phrase: “Every great film is a documentary“.

Can you give us an example?

In the case of “Reversal of Fortune“, we had a documentary obligation to follow the interviews that were on file, in other words, what Von Bülow and others had declared to the police. We were obliged to respect, not the letter but the ‘spirit’ of what was described in the depositions. These scenes weren’t invented; they are reality, somewhat reinterpreted. But even when you’re making a documentary, you interpret, you fabricate a reality. So conversely, I always approach documentaries as if they were fictions.

As in “General Idi Amin Dada“, you have introduced a fictional element to documentary material, you treat Vergès and Amin Dada as fictional characters....

Absolutely! Vergès is definitely a character from a novel. When you’re dealing with the life of such a character, it’s always incredible. An avalanche of questions arise, certainly more than those surrounding his disappearance... Are you dealing with a great figure of historic importance or an infamous conman? An innocent man wrongly presumed guilty, or a guilty man presumed innocent?

What made you choose Vergès as the subject of a film?

This film exists thanks to the fierce determination of my producer Rita Dagher. But my connection to Vergès is very strong: a link through life and political memories. When I was 14, 15 years old, I followed exactly the same political path as Vergès. I was some 20 years younger than him, I joined the communists even though they didn’t really want me, then left them to align myself more closely with the movement in support of Algeria, while criticizing the communists for not doing enough for that cause. Exactly like Vergès. I followed everything he said or did, assiduously: I was a real fan! And of Siné’s drawings too.

How far did you follow Vergès path and how do you view his evolution?

I felt very close to the Algerian cause, but shortly after independence, Ben Bella made a speech saying that, now, they were going to take care of Israel

and I was shocked. At that time, I knew a lot about the Holocaust, and nothing about the Palestinian cause, and for me it was a crushing disappointment, seeing this great struggle ending up in one country's waging war against another.

Vergès' trajectory grew ever more incomprehensible to me, but I always dreamt of knowing more about this character, whom I viewed also as a perverse and decadent aesthete.

While we were filming "Reversal of Fortune", the lawyer Alan Dershowitz (who also declared that he would be "prepared to defend Hitler"), reawakened my curiosity by talking to me of his great admiration for Vergès, the inventor of the "rupture strategy".

He became something of a mystery!

Exactly! While at the beginning he was a heroic figure for me, he became a somewhat repulsive mystery... but as I love 'monsters', I wasn't going to look a gift horse in the mouth!

But really, what thrilled me most was the opportunity, through Vergès, of making a film about contemporary history, about our experience of the last 50 years, about what I too have lived through since the age of 13. So it's also a film about my own political history, a look at my own life. Certainly, it's not the same view I had while I was living through these events... The angle of blind terrorism allows us a new perspective that reveals a great deal about the last fifty years. And, unfortunately, about the decades to come.

Was the film conceived as a piece of cinema or as an inquiry?

I didn't want a direct connection between what is said and what is shown. I wanted ricochets, short cuts, reflections, interior echoes. Thus when I talk about a love story, I'm in fact talking about terrorism, and when I speak of terrorism, it's from the perspective of a love story. It's these ricochets, these echoes that thrill me, because that's how the cinema I love works. You don't embark on some journalistic discourse in order to prove a proposition; you adopt a 'fictional', poetic approach. But this is also a detective movie. I was the chief detective, aided by my accomplice Eugénie Grandval who led the enquiry and filmed the interviews armed only with a little high-definition camera. I truly wanted this film to be as gripping as any thriller or spy movie.

You avoid voice-over, and remain as much as possible in the background, above all never appearing onscreen. Could you explain this stylistic choice and the impact it had on your film?

It's a bit like with Amin Dada, the idea is to allow things to speak for themselves; the film's discourse must be a cinematic discourse, conveyed through the editing. We understand the discourse through the editing, there's no voice-over explaining everything, just images that suggest: the viewer is left to do some of the work. My collaboration with the editor Nelly Quettier was essential in this respect. We had to find a narrative and to remain always within this narrative, with the characters. And above all, never miss an

opportunity to highlight conflict, suspense, and those moments when something could really happen.

Your use of a symphonic score is also surprising.

The film is conceived entirely as a work of fiction. Jorge Arriagada's music is there to reinforce every fictional element: it indicates to us the love stories about which the characters do not wish to speak. So we have Djamila's theme, a similar, if less elevated theme for Magdalena, themes for the Palestinian freedom fighters, to help us understand the ideals for which they were fighting at the time. The entire score acts as in a fiction film, to underline moments of tension, drama and heightened emotion.

What were your choices and priorities with regard to the image?

I was one of the first to shoot high-definition, on "Our Lady of the Assassins", and I was champing at the bit to return to it. For this film, we used two cameras, which allowed us to achieve everything we wanted with the image. I wanted to go straight to what was essential, and not to waste time filming characters outside the interview situations. That was my narrative thread. So I insisted on eloquence in the framing and the locations. With first Caroline Champetier and later Jean-Luc Perreard we spent a long time finding resonances between the settings and the characters.

Could you talk a little about the film's structure?

The entire film takes place as follows: there's a magnificent, heroic heart, which is Algeria. This is the matrix, the place where our lead character finds himself, reveals himself, experiences the most intense moments of his life. Here is also where he lives out the most beautiful love story imaginable. All of this is something very beautiful, very pure: an ideal. Then, with Algerian independence, everything stops and our protagonist finds himself, in my view, without the possibility of carrying on. But for the rest of his life he yearns to recapture these moments, or something very close to them, whatever the price. Often in our lives, there's something very pure, and then later things are corrupted. But what's interesting is that these things become corrupted when they are desired to remain pure. It's almost paradoxical, because in fact, it's by wanting to relive this extraordinary love story he shared with Djamila that he goes on to live something entirely ridiculous in comparison with his first love. The story repeats itself as a grotesque caricature. This is the theme of Hitchcock's "Vertigo" (and one which I explored in "Our Lady of the Assassins") where the main character yearns to relive that which has absolutely not the same quality the second time. It's pathetic and painful at the same time. Thus we discover that terrorism itself follows a similar evolutionary path to that of our protagonist.

Could you talk a little about Carlos and his relationship with Vergès ?

Again we are in the midst of a truly "fictional" richness. On paper, it's an extraordinary situation. A lawyer falls in love with a prisoner, but the prisoner

is the wife of a major terrorist who has set about drowning Europe in blood to free her, while the lawyer has clandestine meetings with the terrorist group in order to secure her escape. Then, once she's free, she tells him: "No, I can't stay with you, I absolutely have to go back to him!". That's a somewhat "interpreted" description, but there's amazing dramatic material here! The relationship between Carlos and Vergès is absolutely a passionate one; we see that at the beginning there was a great sympathy, a grand camaraderie. Their relationship must have been of a similar order as the one with Anis Naccache, who said they were in absolute accord with each other, that they understood each other perfectly. The betrayals, real or imagined, came later

Can you say something about Hans Joachim Klein, a very singular figure in the world of terrorism ?

He's an incredible character, a bit removed from Vergès' story, but I wanted to put him in the film as a vessel of hope. Klein made the decision to send back his gun, to take an enormous risk by renouncing violence and disappearing. For me it's the "happy ending" which comes before the film's finished and which we keep with us, a ray of hope. Without it, the film would be entirely despairing.

How do you stand in relation to Vergès? For or against?

I don't take a position! My whole idea is to allow the characters to speak. I want to allow things to unfold, to follow the thread which allows me to trace the history of contemporary terrorism through the destinies of many interlinked characters whose paths cross again and again. That's it! And really, the film isn't a portrait of Vergès. His life remains unexplored except in so far as it is directly linked with terrorism.

How has your relationship with Vergès developed from the beginning of shooting to the moment he saw the finished film?

Our relationship has always been extremely cordial. From the beginning he accepted something I've always insisted on in my Hollywood films: final cut, meaning choosing those interviewed and the right to decide the final edit. This was essential for me; I told him moreover that I thought it very brave of him. He asked me why and I replied that personally I would never allow such a film to be made about me... too many skeletons in the closet! He laughed.

Now, he has seen the film, I visit him from time to time and he always manages to avoid truly telling me how badly he thinks of the film and of me... Anyway, he says that I am treacherous and that he is my victim...

**Interviewed by Regine Vial, April 2007
(2,182)**

BARBET SCHROEDER

Born August 26th 1941 in Teheran.

1958-1963: collaborates at the Cahiers du Cinéma and L'Air of Paris.

Assistant to Jean-Luc Godard for **LES CARABINIERS**.

Directs two short B & W 16 mm films.

In 1963, creates the production company Les Films du Losange.

Produced the first two fables of Eric Rohmer.

Nominated for Best Director Oscar and Golden Globe for **REVERSAL OF FORTUNE**

DIRECTOR :

1969 **MORE** with Mimsy Farmer and Klaus Grunberg (Cannes)

1972 **THE VALLEY** with Bulle Ogier and Jean-Pierre Kalfon (Venice)

1974 **GÉNÉRAL IDI AMIN DADA** (documentary) (Cannes)

1975 **MAITRESSE** with Bulle Ogier and Gérard Depardieu

1977 **KOKO, A TALKING GORILLA** (documentary) (Cannes)

1982 **CHARLES BUKOWSKI** (documentary, 50 x 4 minute videos)

1984 **TRICHEURS** with Bulle Ogier and Jacques Dutronc

1987 **BARFLY** with Mickey Rourke and Faye Dunaway (Cannes)

1990 **REVERSAL OF FORTUNE** with Glenn Close, Ron Silver and Jeremy Irons (Oscar for Best Actor)

1992 **SINGLE WHITE FEMALE** with Bridget Fonda and Jennifer Jason Leigh

1994 **KISS OF DEATH** with David Caruso, Nicholas Cage and Samuel Jackson (Cannes)

1995 **BEFORE AND AFTER** with Meryl Streep and Liam Neeson

1997 **DESPERATE MEASURES** with Andy Garcia and Michael Keaton

2000 **OUR LADY OF THE ASSASSINS** with German Jaramillo (Venice)

2002 **MURDER BY NUMBERS** with Sandra Bullock, Ryan Gosling and Michael Pitt (Cannes)

2007 **TERROR'S ADVOCATE** (Cannes)

PRODUCER :

1962 **LA BOULANGÈRE DE MONCEAU** by Eric Rohmer

1963 **LA CARRIÈRE DE SUZANNE** by Eric Rohmer

1964 **MEDITERANÉE** by Jean-Daniel Pollet

1965 **PARIS VU PAR...** by Claude Chabrol, Jean Douchet, Jean-Luc Godard, Jean-Daniel Pollet, Eric Rohmer, Jean Rouch

1966 **LA COLLECTIONNEUSE** by Eric Rohmer

1967 **TU IMAGINES ROBINSON** by

Jean-Daniel Pollet

1968 **MA NUIT CHEZ MAUD** by Eric Rohmer

1970 **LE GENOU DE CLAIRE** by Eric Rohmer

1972 **L'AMOUR L'APRÈS-MIDI** by Eric Rohmer

OUT ONE by Jacques Rivette (coproduction)

1973 **LA MAMAN ET LA PUTAIN** by Jean Eustache (coproduction)

1974 **CÉLINE ET JULIE VONT EN BATEAU** by Jacques Rivette

1975 **FLOCONS D'OR** by Werner Schroeter

LA MARQUISE D'O by Eric Rohmer

1976 **ROULETTE CHINOISE** by R.W. Fassbinder (coproduction)

L'AMI AMERICAIN by Wim Wenders (coproduction)

1977 **LE PASSE MONTAGNE** by Jean-François Stévenin

1978 **PERCEVAL LE GALLOIS** by Eric Rohmer

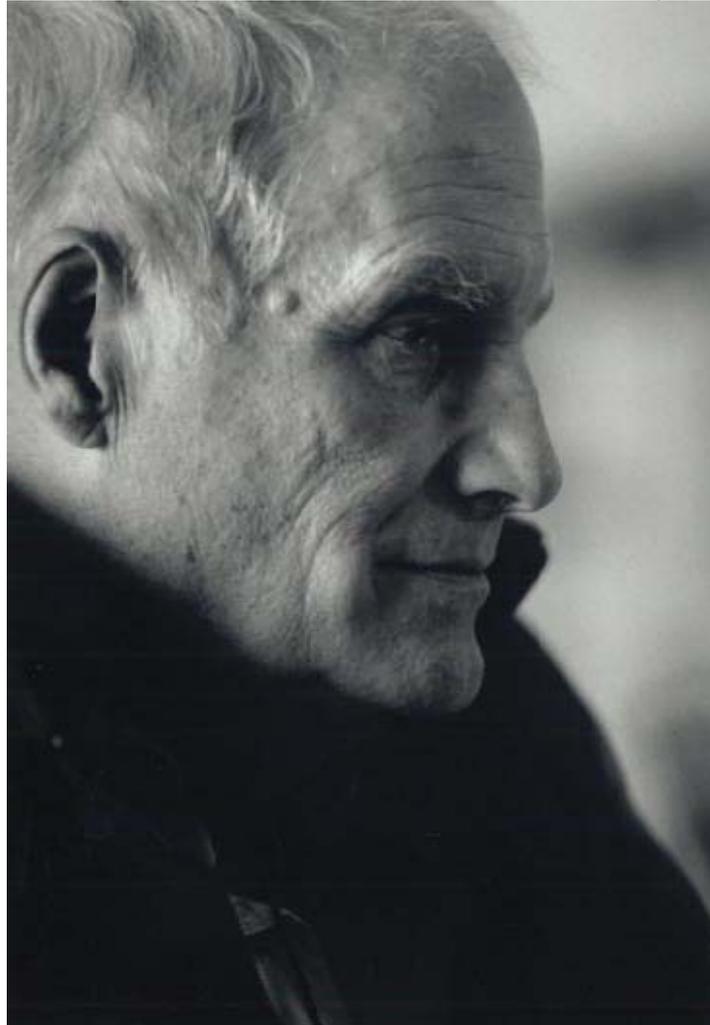
1979 **LE NAVIRE NIGHT** by Marguerite Duras

1981 **LE PONT DU NORD** by Jacques Rivette

1984 **MAUVAISE CONDUITE** by Nestor

Almendros

Barbet Schroeder has also acted in a number of small roles for friends, most notably in **LES CARABINIERS**, **LA BOULANGERE DE MONCEAU**, **PARIS VU PAR ...** (episode **GARE DU NORD** by Jean Rouch), **OUT ONE**, **CÉLINE ET JULIE VONT EN BATEAU**, **ROBERTE CE SOIR**, **BANDINI**, **BEVERLY HILLS COP 3**, **LA REINE MARGOT**, **MARS ATTACKS!**, **PARIS JE T'AIME**, **NE TOUCHEZ PAS LA HACHE**, **DARJEELING** (Wes Anderson).



CREDITS

Directed by **BARBET SCHROEDER** • **A WILD BUNCH**, **YALLA FILMS** coproduction • With the participation of **CANAL +** and the **CENTRE NATIONAL DE LA CINÉMATOGRAPHIE** • In association with **SOFICA UNI ÉTOILE 3** • Produced by **RITA DAGHER** • Co-producers: **BRAHIM CHIOUA AND VINCENT MARAVAL** • Assistant director: **EUGÉNIE GRANDVAL** • Production manager: **SYLVIE BALLAND** • Post-production manager: **CHRISTINA CRASSARIS** • Sound: **YVES COMÉLIAU, BÉATRICE WICK, DOMINIQUE HENNEQUIN** • Music: **JORGE ARRIAGADA** • DPs: **CAROLINE CHAMPETIER A.F.C, JEAN-LUC PERREARD** • Editor: **NELLY QUETTIER**.

The Producer **RITA DAGHER**

Rita Dagher created the feature film production company **YALLA FILMS** in July 2005, with the aim to produce and develop original, unique and innovative fiction and documentary films.

Prior to creating **YALLA**, Dagher was associated with the production of a series of bold and singular feature films:

- **BULLY** by Larry Clark, acclaimed at the Venice Film Festival 2001.
- **LOVE LIZA** by Todd Louiso, with Philip Seymour Hoffman and Kathy Bates, Won Best Screenplay at Sundance 2002 .
- **SPUN** by Jonas Akerland with Mickey Rourke, John Leguizamo, Jason Schwartzman and Brittany Murphy .
- **PERSONA NON GRATA** d'Oliver Stone, Official Selection at the Venice Film Festival 2003.
- **FAHRENHEIT 9/11** by Michael Moore, palme d'or at the Festival de Cannes 2004.

YALLA's new projects are just as bold and original.

In Production :

- **MY ENEMY'S ENEMY**, a feature documentary directed by Kevin Macdonald, (Oscar for Best Documentary in 2000 for One Day In September). The film follows the rise to power of former Nazi lieutenant Klaus Barbie. Theater Release end 2007.
- **THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE**, documentary film directed by Barbet Schroeder about the controversial French lawyer Jacques Vergès, Un Certain Regard Cannes 2007.
- **MAMAROSH**, a dramatic comedy about a forty year old man and his mother who decide to leave their home in Serbia to find a better life in America. Franco-Germano-Serb co-production directed by Momcilo Mrdakovic, produced by Yalla and co-produced by Emir Kusturica and Fatih Akin (Shooting summer 2007).
- **MOVEON.ORG**, a documentary film directed by Alex Jordanov about a group of political activists who have transformed the American political process by bringing it into the digital age.