

Shoah — Let Us Remember 2022

International
Scientific Meeting



Roman Erich Petsche

Auschwitz and the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia II

and



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A Joint Museum Exhibition of the States of the
Former Yugoslavia at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum

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*Roman Erich
Petsche*

Auschwitz and the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia II

Roman Erich Petsche: On the Path to Becoming a Righteous Among the Nations

Mihael Petrovič Jr.

As a member of the German-speaking ethnic community in the territory of the present-day Slovenia, the Kočevje-born Roman Erich Petsche felt the consequences of intolerance towards minorities from an early age. This painful experience was made even worse after the annexation of his second homeland, Austria, to Hitler's Germany in 1938 and during World War II, when the political practice of National Socialism with its criminal ideology cut deep into his daily life and his wider family environment. Information on Petsche's life and the documentation he systematically collected and preserved as a kind of 'imaginary (auto)biography' can thus be used to shed light on the forces that, in addition to the artist's religious beliefs and multinational origins, influenced a decision he made at a later time, i.e. despite the great personal risk during this dark period, he refused to go against his principles. When Petsche received Yad Vashem's Righteous award decades later, he described these principles by saying that for him, fulfilling his duty had always been a commandment both by law and by heart.

Keywords: Roman Erich Petsche, Kočevje (Gottschee), intolerance, Austria, National Socialism, duty

Mihael Petrovič Jr. (1967) has been researching the past of the Gottschee region (Kočevska) for more than a quarter of a century. He has authored or co-authored several books, catalogues and museum exhibitions. In collaboration with the Kočevje Regional Museum and the Gottscheer Gedenkstätte (Gottschee Memorial) association from Graz, Petrovič Jr. curated the first exhibition of Petsche's works in the artist's home country. He was also the initiator of a memorial plaque at Petsche's birth house in Kočevje.

Željeznička Street 13

Vladimir Todorović

Lieutenant Roman Erich Petsche arrived in Novi Sad in March 1944 after the Wehrmacht's withdrawal from Romania. He was accommodated in one part of the flat that was occupied by the Jewish Cserneyi family at Željeznička street 13. The other occupants of the flat were the relatives of the owner – five-year-old twins Eva and Mira Tibor, and their mother.

At the end of April, Petsche learned of the planned deportations of Jews from Bačka to Auschwitz. Anticipating the fate that awaited the twin girls, he took them on a train to Budapest one night. Accompanied by Jucika (surname unknown), a servant working for the Cserneyi family, he managed to get the girls through the checkpoint by introducing Jucika as his wife and the girls as their children.

The officer and his alleged wife, a Hungarian-born woman with the required documents, were not asked to show any documents.

At another checkpoint in Szeged, Petsche once again behaved in rather arrogant way, i.e. as befitted a German officer, and as previously, everything went well. Then he returned to Novi Sad and reported for duty in the morning.

The two fugitive girls and Jucika continued on their way to Budapest, where Jucika took the girls to their relatives, the Racs, a couple who had got in touch with Sister Renata Marija, who managed a convent orphanage in the city of Pécs. Sister Renata Marija was of Jewish descent and had been a distinguished physician until she took her monastic vows out of love and respect for her late husband.

Sister Renata Marija took the twins together with Magda Ratz and Magda's two-year-old son with her to Pécs. She hid them there until the arrival of the Red Army. However, even before the liberators had made their way there, a relative of the twins from Novi Sad, Eugen Cserneyi, disguised as a Catholic priest, came to get them. He took advantage of the chaos of the war and took them back to Novi Sad by carriage.

Back at home, Eva and Mira Tibor learned that their mother had been killed in Auschwitz and that their father had died while returning from captivity.

Together with the other surviving family members, the twins emigrated to Israel in 1948 and changed their names to Chava and Myriam.

By the time the Wehrmacht withdrew, Petsche had saved the life of another Jew, Dr. Tibor Fenye, who had tried to commit suicide. As agreed, he also hid the Cserneyi family's valuables, and the family got them back after the war.

In May 1946, the Novi Sad Jewish Community confirmed the Righteousness of Roman Erich Petsche in an official document.

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Thanks to Jucika, who lived in Hungary, Petsche corresponded with Eugen Cserneyi for years.

At the suggestion of Eva/Chava, married name Shik, Roman Erich Petsche and Sister Renata Marija were awarded the honorary title Righteous Among the Nations.

In the summer of 1944, two exhibitions of Petsche's watercolours were held in Novi Sad. In 2016, the Kočevje Regional Museum (represented by Vesna Jerbič Perko), Mihael Petrovič and Vladimir Todorović (Novi Sad Jewish Community and Danubius Association) organised an exhibition of Petsche's works at the Novi Sad synagogue. In 2021, this exhibition was on view at the Synagogue Maribor.

Keywords: Roman Erich Petsche, Eva/Chava and Mira/Myriam Tibor, deportation, Sister Renata Marija, emigration of Jews to Israel, Righteous Among the Nations

Vladimir Todorović (1947) is a journalist and publicist, whose work has received several awards both in Serbia and elsewhere. He lives in Novi Sad and is a member of the local Jewish community. He has authored multiple books that deal with, among other topics, the life of Jews in Vojvodina. In his book *Final Stop Auschwitz (Poslednja stanica Aušvic)*, he aimed to shed light on the deportations of Jews from Bačka in 1944 (the book has been translated into Hungarian). In cooperation with the Archives of Vojvodina, he co-authored another book dedicated to this internment. The book has been translated into English. He also sought to introduce the Austrian Roman Erich Petsche and his extraordinary deed during the deportation to the Serbian public. Vladimir Todorović's oeuvre includes books on Nikola Tesla as the first translator of the poetry by Jovan Jovanović Zmaj, a book about the Hungarian writer István Balog's first drama manuscript about the first Serbian uprising, which was published during the Serbian-Turkish War, and a book about the Jew Josif Šlezinger, a bandmaster at the court of Prince Miloš.

The Total Number of Yugoslav Auschwitz Victims: The Current State of Research

Boris Hajdinjak

There is no other place in the world marked by death to quite such an extent as the Auschwitz concentration camp: during its operation from 20 May 1940 to 17 January 1945, around 1.3 million people were brought to the camp and about 1.1 million people were killed there. According to the research results revealed to date, the first Yugoslav Auschwitz prisoner was Vasil Gluzdkowski (30 Mar 1898, Kobyzhcha near Kyiv – 14 Mar 1942, Auschwitz) from Belgrade, who was brought to Auschwitz on 26 September 1941 as part of a transport of 62 prisoners from different prisons. Gluzdkowski had most likely been sent to Auschwitz from Graz. He was assigned camp number 21092. Auschwitz was the final stop of his life. The last Auschwitz prisoner from Yugoslavia is believed to have been the Slovenian Ivan Zajec (6 Oct 1923, Gorizia/Gorica), who arrived in Auschwitz on 3 December 1944 on a transport of 1,120 prisoners from the Mauthausen concentration camp. This transport included at least twenty Slovenians and at least one Slovenian Roma. Of all of them, Zajec was given the highest camp number, namely 202330. When Auschwitz was liquidated, Zajec was transferred to the Buchenwald concentration camp. He lived to see the end of the war.

According to the current state of research, around 19,800 people from the area of Yugoslavia were brought to Auschwitz in the period between the time when Gluzdkowski and Zajec arrived in Auschwitz. Most of them were Jews: approximately 16,500 or 83% of all the Yugoslavs sent to Auschwitz. The number of Yugoslav Jews amounted to 1.5% of the total number of Jews sent to Auschwitz, which is 1.1 million. Unfortunately, it is not known what proportion of the Yugoslav Jews sent to Auschwitz died there – the percentage is certainly very high. For instance, when it comes to the Slovenian Jews, it is about 90%. This means that more Yugoslav Jews probably died in Auschwitz than in the Jasenovac concentration camp, where more than 13,000 Yugoslav Jews died. At least 124 Yugoslav Roma were also sent to Auschwitz, i.e. 78 from Slovenia and 46 from the Independent State of Croatia (NDH). The Yugoslav Roma represent 0.5% of the total number of 23,000 Roma sent to Auschwitz. Approximately 3,200 members of the Yugoslav nations were also sent there. Most of them, i.e. 2,200, were Slovenians, and probably around 1,000 Bosniaks, Montenegrins, Croats and Serbs. Further research, however, is likely to reveal that there were also some Macedonians. The share of these nations among the total number of the people sent to Auschwitz may not appear large at first. However, by subtracting the Jews, the Poles (about 150,000), the Roma and the Soviet POWs (about 15,000) from the total number, the number of other individuals brought to Auschwitz

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equals about 25,000. Of this figure, 12.8% were members of the Yugoslav nations.

Keywords: Auschwitz, concentration camp, Yugoslavia, Jews, Roma, victims

Boris Hajdinjak (1966) is a history and geography teacher. In 2003, he started working with the Center of Jewish Cultural Heritage Synagogue Maribor as an external expert, and since 2017 he has been its director. He has authored numerous papers on the medieval and early modern history of Slovenia, the history of Maribor in the first half of the 20th century, and the history of the Holocaust in Slovenia and the countries of the former Yugoslavia. As an author or co-author, he has been part of exhibition projects of the museums in Brežice, Maribor, Ljubljana, Ptuj and Ravne na Koroškem. His last and most extensive exhibition is dedicated to the Slovenian victims of Auschwitz. Hajdinjak has also been involved in the production of documentaries about a medieval noble family – the Lords of Ptuj – and the Holocaust in Yugoslavia. He was one of the initiators of the idea to lay the *Stolpersteine* memorial stones in Maribor in 2012, Ljubljana in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021, Lendava in 2019 and Murska Sobota in 2019, and also suggested five individuals from the Prekmurje region to be awarded the *Righteous Among the Nations* honorary title in 2018. Since the same year, he has also been a member of Slovenian Delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).

From Resistance to Auschwitz. The Fates of Slovenian Anti-Nazi Resisters and Their Relatives — Štajerska 1942

Dr. Tonček Kregar

The paper deals with the characteristics of the Nazi occupation of the Štajerska region (known as Lower Styria or the Slovenian part of Styria), the nature of the Slovenian resistance movement and the retaliatory measures, i.e. the Nazi violence against the members of the resistance movement, their associates and relatives. The year 2022 marks the 80th anniversary of the Nazis' most brutal violence in enemy-occupied Štajerska. In addition to hostage killings, this violence was characterised by mass deportations of Slovenians to Nazi concentration and extermination camps, primarily Auschwitz. Based on Himmler's instructions accompanying the order to 'pacify' the Gorenjska (historically known as Upper Carniola) and Štajerska regions, in the summer of 1942 the occupying forces conducted the largest 'Aktion' of their time against the liberation movement. In early August, almost 1,300 members of the families of Partisans and hostages were arrested and brought to Celje, followed by another wave of arrests soon after. About 600 children and youngsters were taken to the institutions of the Lebensborn Association and to special youth re-education camps throughout the Reich, whereas most adult men and women were taken to the Auschwitz concentration camp. For instance, as many as four transports left Celje for Auschwitz in August 1942, carrying a total of 394 women and 139 men. More than half of them died in Auschwitz later that year. Although all the Slovenian prisoners ended up in Auschwitz in the context of the Nazis' confrontation with the resistance movement, they were nevertheless a fairly heterogeneous group of people, which can be roughly divided into two groups. The first group includes active Liberation Front organisers and members of the resistance movement/Partisans, while the second group consists of their supporters, associates and relatives. There are, however, many differences in the roles individuals played within the resistance movement.

This presentation therefore sheds light on some concrete examples, from well-known ones, such as the revolutionary Tončka Čeč, to some other, more or less forgotten fates of the Slovenian victims of Auschwitz.

Keywords: Auschwitz, occupation, resistance, Nazi violence, Celje, Tončka Čeč

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Tonček Kregar (1971), PhD in Historical Sciences, Director of the Museum of Recent History Celje. His interests lie in the history of Slovenians and other Slavic nations in the second half of the 19th century, and the 20th century, as well as local history with a focus on World War II. He has published a number of papers, articles and books in Slovenian and foreign specialist literature and press, including a photography monograph titled *Occupation in 133 Pictures (Celje 1941–1945)* (*Okupacija v 133 slikah (Celje 1941–1945)*), which he co-authored, the scientific monograph *Between the Tatras and Triglav (Comparisons of the National Development of Slovenians and Slovaks, and Their Cultural and Political Contacts 1848–1938)* (*Med Tatrami in Triglavom (Primerjave narodnega razvoja Slovencev in Slovakov in njihovi kulturno-politični stiki 1848 – 1938)*), and an overview of World War II in the Celje area titled *Spring Returns (Vigred se povrne)* with a print run of over 40,000. Kregar has hosted numerous museum exhibitions and is the recipient of the Valvasor Award and two Valvasor Recognition Awards. He has participated in museological and historical education, conventions and conferences both in Slovenia and further afield, including in Amsterdam, Dubrovnik, Prague, Jerusalem, Cape Town and Skopje.

They Never Came Back. The Suffering and Death of the Jews from the Gorizia Region in Auschwitz

Dr. Renato Podbersič

About 250 Jews lived in the Gorizia region (Goriška) at the beginning of World War II. The cruel devastation caused by the war and persecution resulted in the decline of the once thriving Jewish community, as almost all the Jews from this area had been deported between 1943 and 1944, i.e. following the occupation of the Gorizia region by the Nazis after the capitulation of Italy. The detainees were first taken to local prisons, and from there via Trieste to the Auschwitz extermination camp a few days later. For the vast majority of the Gorizia region's Jews, this was a journey of no return.

One of those who died during transportation to the extermination camp was the oldest Jew from the Gorizia region, Emma Michelstaedter, aged 89. Of the arrested Jews from the Gorizia region who were deported to Auschwitz, as many as fifteen were killed immediately upon arrival at the camp, while others managed to survive the initial selection. Individual prisoners spent several months in the camp and died later. Few survivors lived to see 18 January 1945 and a midwinter evacuation towards the central part of the Third Reich due to the Soviet Red Army's advance from the east.

The Jews of Gorizia who had found a hiding place or had fled to other towns in Italy were not spared either. They too were eventually found by the cruel German persecutors – most of them were arrested and sent to the Nazi camps, mostly Auschwitz, by the late spring of 1944. One of the Jews in this second group was the youngest victim from the Gorizia region's Jewish community – Bruno Farber. The barely four-month-old boy was deported from the Fossoli camp near Modena and killed on arrival in Auschwitz on 26 February 1944.

Only two Jews from the Gorizia region returned from the horrific death camp alive, namely Jakob Jacoboni and Iris Steinmann. The latter had also survived the initial Auschwitz selection after the arrival of the transport. She was sent to do slave labour at the camp, where she spent day after day carrying stones and suffering from hunger. In early January 1945, she was sent by train to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, joining those lucky inmates who had survived the death march from Auschwitz. When she was released from Bergen-Belsen, Iris Steinmann weighed a mere 23 kilogrammes.

Keywords: Jews from the Gorizia region, Auschwitz, the Holocaust in Primorska region, Auschwitz survivors

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Renato Podbersiĉ (1970) is a historian, publicist and Research Fellow at the Study Centre for National Reconciliation in Ljubljana. As part of his teaching process, he also works with the School of Humanities, University of Nova Gorica. In 2016, he received his PhD degree at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Primorska, with a doctoral thesis titled *The Jewish Community in the Gorizia Region: 1900–1950* (*Judovska skupnost na Goriškem: 1900–1950*). The subjects of his research include totalitarianisms in the twentieth-century Slovenia, as well as topics related to interwar and post-war revolutionary violence in the Slovenian region of Primorska, World War I – especially the Isonzo Front, ecclesiastical history, the history of Jews in Primorska and north-eastern Italy, and the persecution of Jews in Europe during the Holocaust. Among other institutions, he is a member of the Slovenian Delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) and a member of the editorial board of the *Na fronti* (*On the Front*) journal, published by the Isonzo Front Society Nova Gorica. Between 2007 and 2013, he was chairman of the Northern Primorska Historical Society.

The Child of a Forgotten Homeland

Nataša Konc Lorenzutti M.Phil.

The National Archives in Washington, D.C. keep a letter from Himmler's relative Hermann Heyder of Abensberg in Lower Bavaria. In this letter, Heyder asks 'dear Heinrich' for help with adopting a child, as he and his wife Charlotte are unable to have children. He also promises to raise the child in line with the National Socialist ideology.

On 19 March 1943, Himmler gave his consent for Heyder and his wife to adopt a child from a Lebensborn home in the town of Kohren-Sahlis. The couple chose a one-year-old boy. The management of the Lebensborn home lied to the new parents about the child's origins. The boy was named Haymo, and his middle name was Heinrich after his godfather – Himmler.

The boy was Viljem Goručan, born on 29 March 1942 in Celje. His grandfather Jožef was a stoker and machinist at Cinkarna in Celje. He had allegedly cooperated with the Partisans by donating them ten dinars. He was arrested and shot on 7 July 1942 at the Stari pisker prison.

Jožef's wife Marija and daughters Marija and Jožica were arrested on 8 August 1942. At the time, daughter Marija was 23 years old and had an illegitimate son, Viljem, while Jožica was nine years old. Their brother Vincenc had left for Maribor to escape arrest.

On the morning of 10 August 1942, the young Marija was put on a train to Auschwitz. Baby Viljem and his aunt Jožica travelled to the Frohnleiten children's camp near Graz together with other children separated from their mothers. The elder Marija was not taken away until 20 August. Both Marijas died in Auschwitz-Birkenau in November later that same year. Viljem was selected for the Lebensborn programme and Jožica remained in the Saldenburg children's camp, from where she returned home after the war. She and her brother looked for their nephew for years.

In the meantime, their nephew was growing up first in Germany and later in Venezuela. It wasn't until 2007 that he found out who he really was. He now says that his German parents despised Nazism and made the aforementioned false promise out of desperation to get a child.

Haymo Heinrich Heyder, who later changed his middle name to Henry, was a sound engineer by profession and now lives in Costa Rica as a retired professor.

Keywords: Heinrich Himmler, denationalisation policy, stolen children, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Lebensborn, Germanisation

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Nataša Konc Lorenzutti graduated from the Department of Stage Acting and the Artistic Word at the Ljubljana Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television, where she also achieved her master's degree. As an actress, Konc Lorenzutti has worked in two professional Slovenian theatres. Since 1999, she has devoted herself to literature. In 2021, she published a novel titled *The Word I Don't Have* (*Beseda, ki je nimam*). The story is set in August 1942, when the Nazis separated children from their mothers as part of two 'Aktions' in Celje. While doing research for the book, Konc Lorenzutti discovered new, previously unknown cases of lost children. Together with director Maja Weiss, she is working on a documentary titled *Captured in the Source – Lebensborn's Slovenian Children* (*Zajeti v izviri – Slovenski otroci Lebensborna*), which features three surviving 'children' who were part of Himmler's Aryan expansion programme.

Deportations from Čakovec (Međimurje) to Auschwitz in 1944

Dr. Goran Hutinec

The Čakovec Jewish Community was established in 1740. Its first members were immigrants from the Austrian lands, and later Hungarian Jews, who immigrated to Čakovec in large numbers. The synagogue in Čakovec was built in 1836 and there were also a number of Jewish organisations, including a Chevra Kadisha [a Jewish burial society, editor's note], a society of women, a school (closed in 1886), and a charitable foundation. Although the community was based in Čakovec, it also consisted of Jewish families from some of the nearby villages. The Čakovec-based Jews were mainly merchants and tradesmen, while many of them also practiced liberal professions, i.e. they were lawyers, physicians etc. The community also nurtured the Zionist tradition from the 1910s onwards.

The occupation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the arrival of the Hungarian army in Međimurje marked a turning point for the Jews of Čakovec. Although they were spared deportation and extermination compared to the Jews who lived under Nazi or Ustasha rule, they were subject to Hungarian antisemitic legislation (*numerus clausus*), and many members of the community were sent to forced labour or had their property confiscated. Nevertheless, the life of the Jews under Hungarian occupation was safer than, for instance, in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), so many Jews tried to escape from the Ustashes via Čakovec and thus save their lives. Following the German occupation of Hungary in spring 1944, the situation of the Jews in this area also deteriorated. Within a matter of a few weeks, they were taken to the concentration camp in Nagykanizsa, from where they were deported to Auschwitz in May 1944. Very few of the Jews from Čakovec survived this camp. In autumn 1944, Jews from mixed marriages and the 'Half-Jews' who had not been deported to Auschwitz were taken to Nagykanizsa. From there they were transferred to Sárvár, where they helped build German defences as forced labourers. Due to the imminent end of the war, most Jews in this group survived the war and returned to Čakovec, where they managed to rebuild the community together with the Auschwitz survivors. Initially, the Čakovec community had more members who had survived the deportations than the neighbouring towns, therefore Jews from Varaždin and Prekmurje came to Čakovec on Jewish religious holidays.

Keywords: Čakovec Jewish Community, Međimurje, Hungarian occupation, antisemitic legislation, Nagykanizsa, Auschwitz

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Goran Hutinec (1980) is an Assistant Professor at the Department of History of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. His work focuses on the research of urban history, the history of World War II and the Holocaust in the Independent State of Croatia, especially the persecution of Jews in north-western Croatia, the Jasenovac Concentration camp and deportations from Croatian territory to Auschwitz-Birkenau. In 2011, he received his PhD degree with a doctoral thesis titled *The Operation of the Zagreb City Administration during the Interwar Period (1918–1941) (Djelovanje zagrebačke Gradske uprave u međuratnom razdoblju (1918. – 1941.))*. He built on his scientific and professional work by researching the archives in Zagreb, Belgrade, Sarajevo, Berlin, Munich, Ludwigsburg, London and many other archives in Croatia and elsewhere. He has participated in several international scientific meetings and has had papers published in various prominent scientific journals and proceedings of scientific conferences. Together with Dr. Ivo Goldstein, he co-authored the book *The History of Zagreb, Book 2: 20th and 21st Centuries (Povijest grada Zagreba, Knjiga 2: 20. i 21. stoljeće)*.

The Transport of Jews from the Vinkovci Camp to Auschwitz in August 1942: Insights and Research Challenges

Dr. Rajka Bućin

The transport of Jews that set out from Vinkovci to the Auschwitz concentration camp in August 1942 is important in terms of shedding light on the fate of Jews from the Syrmia region during World War II, as well as the fate of Jews from Bijeljina, who were also part of this transport. Recent research has revealed new documents in the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, the Croatian State Archives, the Archives of Vojvodina, the Archives of Yugoslavia and the Jewish Historical Museum in Belgrade. In addition to the previously known documents, these new documents provided a more accurate and profound insight into the Jewish victims from the aforementioned areas. The transport consisted of about 1,000 people from different cities within the Syrmia region: Ilok, Vukovar and Županja in the territory of present-day Croatia, Šid, Sremska Mitrovica, Ruma and probably also Stara Pazova in present-day Serbia, as well as Bijeljina in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Lists of the Jews deported to the Vinkovci transit camp were compiled by the local authorities, and comprehensive lists of the people included in the transports were prepared during subsequent deportations to Auschwitz, however, none of these lists have been preserved. Therefore, data on the number of people brought to Vinkovci and then deported to Auschwitz was ascertained from individual statements of surviving Jews from individual cities (Vukovar, Sremska Mitrovica), as well as the documents of local authorities, articles in the press reporting on the number of deportees (Ilok, Ruma), later research on local history (Šid) and comparisons of the data kept by the Jewish Department of the Ustasha Surveillance Service (UNS), the Office for the Nationalised Property of the Ministry of State Treasury of the Independent State of Croatia (also known as "PONOVA"), post-war war crimes commissions and similar institutions (Stara Pazova, Bijeljina, Županja). Like most foreign fugitives from Ruma, the Jews from Vinkovci, Zemun and Stara Pazova had been killed earlier, mostly in the Jasenovac camp complex. The Holocaust, carried out jointly by Ustasha and Nazi authorities in the area of Syrmia and Bijeljina in August 1942, was thus almost completely finished. Compiling list of victims transferred to Auschwitz from Syrmia is the most challenging part of the research process, due to the lack of the original transport lists to that concentration camps, and bearing in mind the fact that large part of the local Jews were sent to the Ustasha camps. The only truly reliable source is the *Death Books* of Auschwitz concentration camp Prisoners, however, only 88 people from this area are listed in them. Therefore, a complex methodology is required to identify other victims, which, however, does not always provide definitive answers.

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Keywords: Auschwitz, Sylvania, Bijeljina, list of victims, Vinkovci camp, Jews

Rajka Bućin (1961) completed her archaeology and art history studies at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, where she also received her PhD degree in archival studies in 2012. Since 1996, she has been employed at the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb and since 2019 at the Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski Institute, which is part of the Archives. She is the author of various professional and scientific works in the fields of archiving and history and has edited several individual editions. Since 2018, Dr. Bućin has also been the editor-in-chief of *Arhivski vjesnik (Archival Journal)*. She has been participant in many professional and scientific symposiums and since 2010 has also been a member of the Croatian Delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). Since 2017, Dr. Bućin has been working on a project focusing on a list of Auschwitz victims. She has curated several exhibitions, including a 2020 exhibition on the Holocaust in Croatia titled *If I Forget You... – The Holocaust in Croatia 1941–1945: Final Destination Auschwitz (Ako tebe zaboravim ... – Holokaust u Hrvatskoj 1941. – 1945.: zadnje odredište Auschwitz)*; Rajka Bućin was the co-author of this exhibition, while the concept was developed by Dr. Nataša Mataušić).

The Testimonies of Auschwitz Survivors (The Jews in Osijek)

Dr. Zlata Živaković-Kerže, Dr. Marija Benić Penava

In the introductory part, the two authors will briefly describe the first stage of the liquidation of Jews in Osijek following the adoption of racial and other laws in the Independent State of Croatia, i.e. between April 1941 and May 1942. The main part of the presentation will focus on the second stage during which the Ustasha government – following the German authorities' permission to deport Croatian Jews to Eastern Europe – deported Jews to German death camps, mostly Auschwitz, by the end of August 1942. Based on the archival materials kept by the Osijek Jewish Community and the testimonies related to the deportation in August 1942 of approximately 3,000 Jews from Osijek and the surrounding area from the Tenja camp – which was initially a labour camp and later a concentration camp – not far from Osijek, the authors describe the Jews' departure to the extermination camps, life in these camps, and the horrors the camp inmates experienced there. The testimonies from Auschwitz are very emotional and are based on the memories of just three surviving Jews from Osijek (Željko Perlsten, Dragutin Glasner and Mišo Weiss), who gave their personal testimonies in the months after returning to Osijek in the summer of 1945. In conclusion, the authors will present the data that reveal that about 3,000 Jews from Osijek were deported to the death camps and that only ten of them returned, which means that a mere 0.3 per cent of the deported Jews were rescued. One of the survivors was Arnold Kohn from Osijek; it took Mr Kohn eight months after returning from the Golleschau camp to break his silence and give a personal testimony about the horrors he had experienced in the camp. The authors will round off their presentation with a list of the members of the Osijek Jewish community who were taken to Auschwitz and murdered there: Marija Wolf, née Hirschfeld (aged 82); Nada Spivak, née Wolf (aged 21); Ervin Spivak (aged 25); a young boy called Perica Spivak; Irena Wolner, née Wolf (aged 56); Žiga Wolner (aged 59); Hilda Kraus, née Wolner (aged 34); Dr. Laci Kraus (aged 44) and his two sons, Darko and Ivo Kraus; Arnold Wolf (aged 74); Eugenija Hirschfeld, née Mūsber (aged 70 let); Greta Heht, née Roth (aged 44); Adolf Heht (aged 48) and Leo Heht (aged 42); Rosa Kiss, Julio, Ela and Vlado Kiss; Hinko and Rosa Kiss; Vilma and Ernest Goldstein, and Regina Larsen.

Keywords: Auschwitz, Jewish survivors, Osijek, Perlsten, Glasner, Weiss

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Zlata Živaković-Kerže (1953) is a retired Scientific Adviser. In 1981, she obtained her master's degree in archival studies in Zagreb, and in 1995 she received her PhD degree from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. A year later, she started working for the Unit for History of Slavonia, Sylvania and Baranya, a regional unit of the Croatian Institute of History, in Slavonski Brod, where she worked until she retired in 2019. The focus of Dr. Živaković-Kerže's research and scientific work is economic and ecclesiastical history, Jewish history and the history of sports in the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries. She has authored several books and a large number of scientific and professional papers and has participated in scientific symposiums and congresses in Croatia and further afield.

Marija Benić Penava (1975) is an Associate Professor at the Department of Economics and Business, University of Dubrovnik, where she lectures on Croatian economic history and the history of Croatian tourism and the Mediterranean area in modern times. She obtained her PhD degree in 2011 from the Department of History, University of Zadar. Her scientific and research interests lie in the study of economic history, environmental history and the history of everyday life. Professor Benić Penava has gained lecturing and research experience at various universities across Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. She has authored several books and a large number of scientific and professional papers and has participated in scientific symposiums and congresses in Croatia and further afield.

The Fate of Jewish Internees from the Kapor Camp on Rab

Dr. Ivo Goldstein

On the same day, or a day later, after Italy capitulated on 8 September 1943, the inmates imprisoned in the concentration camp on Rab managed to escape in an independent campaign. They disarmed the Italian guards, and 243 volunteers from the camp organised themselves into a Jewish partisan battalion, which soon reached the mainland and joined the partisan units.

During the German offensive, the Nazis demanded that 'the Jews located in the coastal area [...] be immediately arrested and deported to the camp.' Due to the danger they were facing, the partisans managed to evacuate from Rab almost all the prisoners of the former Jewish camp, i.e. 3,151 people including 1,812 non-combatants, in a well-organised campaign in the autumn of 1943.

It was one of the largest and most successful rescues of Jewish camp inmates during World War II, and the only example of an entire camp being liberated in such a way. The male and female camp inmates fit for army and auxiliary military services joined the National Liberation Army, while those who did not or could not take an active part in the struggle were mostly dispersed across the rural area of Kordun, which was a partisan-controlled area.

Around 200 Jews were transferred from Rab to Bari, although they had to wait three months for this transport.

However, around 200 – 204 to be precise – former camp inmates from Kapor (Rab), mostly the elderly and the sick, were not evacuated and remained on the island. For months, discussions took place between the Allies and the partisan authorities about how to evacuate those that remained, but in the meantime, in March 1944, German forces disembarked on Rab and the Gestapo launched a large-scale operation to capture the Jews on the island. The islanders were informed that hiding Jews was a 'crime against the Reich', punishable by death. Over the next three days, most of the remaining Jews on Rab were captured, only a small group managed to hide. The prisoners were transported by boat to Rijeka and then by lorry to Trieste, before finally being deported to Auschwitz. Almost none of them returned from Auschwitz.

Keywords: Jews, Rab, World War II, camp, Kapor, Italy

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Ivo Goldstein (1958), historian and diplomat, is a Professor at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, where he has worked since 1980. In the earlier part of his career, he mainly focused on Byzantine studies and the study of Croatian medieval history, especially the early medieval period, as well as the history of the Jews in Croatia. Since the mid-1990s, he has also been working on various aspects of Croatian history in the 20th century. Dr. Goldstein was Head of the Department of History and Head of the Institute for Croatian History. He has published some twenty books, including *Byzantium in the Adriatic Between the 6th and 9th Centuries* (*Bizant na Jadranu VI.–IX. stoljeće*, 1992; he received a PhD degree with a thesis on this topic in 1988), *The Early Middle Ages in Croatia* (*Hrvatski rani srednji vijek*, 1992), *Croatian History* (*Hrvatska povijest*, 2003; four Croatian, three English and one Slovenian edition of the book were published), *Jasenovac* (2018; a Serbian edition of the book was published a year later). Together with Slavko Goldstein, they published *The Holocaust in Zagreb* (*Holokaust u Zagrebu*, 2001; the American edition was published in 2015), *Jasenovac and Bleiburg are not the same* (*Jasenovac i Bleiburg nisu isto*, 2011), *Tito* (2015; the Slovenian edition followed in 2017, and the Serbian edition in 2018), and *Tragedy, Mythomania, Truth – Jasenovac* (*Tragika, mitomanija, istina – Jasenovac*, 2016). Goldstein and Vladimir Anić compiled the *Dictionary of Foreign Words* (*Rječnik stranih riječi*, 1999), and in 2002 he co-authored the *Croatian Encyclopaedic Dictionary* (*Hrvatski enciklopedijski rječnik*). From 2013 to 2017, Dr. Goldstein was the Croatian Ambassador to France and Monaco and a Permanent Representative to UNESCO. Since 2018, he has been a member of the Academy of Arts and Sciences of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Sarajevo Holocaust – the Final Solution to the Jewish Question

Dr. Eli Tauber

Resolving the Jewish question under occupation in Bosnia and Herzegovina was just a continuation of the general Nazi policy, i.e. the realisation of the genocide, which was supposed to 'finally solve the Jewish question' in the whole of occupied Europe.

The first female detainees were brought to the Loborgrad camp from the Kruščica camp. Among them were about 1,350 Jewish women and children, as well as several dozen Serbian women. The first group of female detainees was sent from Loborgrad to Auschwitz on 13 August 1942, and four more transports were organised by 28 August. The last transport was in October 1942. Serbian women were mostly taken to do labour in Germany, and some of the elderly were transferred to Serbia.

Meanwhile, the cleansing of Jews in Sarajevo continued. Since it was impossible to intern everyone in the camps, some of them were housed in the premises of La Benevolencija [Sarajevo-based Jewish Humanitarian Society, editor's note.] Police agents and the Ustashas succeeded in rounding up all the Jews. The detainees included elderly people aged 90 and over and mothers with their new-born infants, as well as the seriously ill, the blind, the crippled, the lame, the deaf and dumb, and even the mentally afflicted. All the requests by the commissioners of the Jewish communities addressed to the Ustasha official Ivan Tolj to at least release those who were most seriously ill were in vain. He did not spare the employees of the Jewish religious communities who were under protection and who had been issued with special ID for that purpose. Tolj did not release a single Jewish gravedigger, so the Jews who were gathered in the premises of La Benevolencija died and were buried like animals.

The Protection Police in Zagreb received notification about the transport of Jews to Germany, in which they were informed that the transports would proceed as follows: I Zagreb, II Loborgrad and III Vinkovci. Accordingly, the Jews from other counties, primarily the Great County of Bilogora, were concentrated in either Loborgrad or Zagreb, but not in Osijek.

The victims of the Holocaust included Dr. Moritz Levy, Chief Rabbi, author of the book *Sephardim in Bosnia (Sefardi u Bosni)* and a professor at the First Gymnasium in Sarajevo; Dr. Kalmi Baruch, the greatest Hispanologist outside of Spain; Daniel Ozmo, an artist and progressive intellectual and a professor at the First Gymnasium in Sarajevo; Alfred Pordes, a conductor and composer, who composed the first operetta in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Dr. Marcel Schneider, mathematician and philosopher and a professor at the First Gymnasium in Sarajevo; Laura Papo Bohoreta, writer

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and translator, the first woman to write plays in Ladino; as well as another 8,500 Jews in the city of Sarajevo.

Keywords: Jews, Sarajevo, Holocaust, Loborgrad, transports, Auschwitz

Eli Tauber (1950), director of the Archives of the Jewish Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), is one of the most prominent members of the Jewish community in BiH. After graduating from the First Gymnasium in Sarajevo, he studied journalism at the Faculty of Political Sciences. He worked in journalism for 15 years and then became interested in marketing, screenwriting and production of documentaries. From an early age, he studied the history of Jews and their customs in BiH. Eli Tauber has authored several high-profile exhibitions, such as *Holocaust Remembrance (Sjećanje na Holokaust)* and *The Righteous Among the Nations from BiH (Pravednici jevrejskog naroda iz BiH)*, as well as numerous works on Judaism. He received his PhD in 2012 with a doctoral thesis titled *How the Holocaust Was Conducted in BiH (Kako se sprovodio Holokaust u BiH)*, and also authored or edited various works, including *When Neighbours Were People (Kada su komšije bili ljudi)*, *An Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Judaism: History, Religion and Customs (Ilustrovani leksikon judaizma: istorija, religija i običaji)*, *The Bosnian Sephardic Cookbook (Kuhar bosanskih sefarda)*, *Zeki Effendi*, *The Purim of Sarajevo (Sarajevski purim)*, *Judeo-Spanish Language in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Jevrejskošpanski jezik u Bosni i Hercegovini)*, and *Jewish Surnames in the Archival Documents of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Jevrejska prezimena u arhivskim dokumentima Bosne i Hercegovine)*.

The Roma and Sinti from the Lands of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in Nazi and Fascist Camps, with Special Emphasis on Auschwitz–Birkenau

Dr. Danijel Vojak

The history of the Roma has often been marked by a policy of repressive assimilation, implemented by most European national and local authorities in relation to the Romani population. This policy was largely based on the stereotypical perception of the Roma as asocial persons (idlers) and ‘hardened criminals’. Since the beginning of their immigration to European territory, the Roma, who differed from the majority population in terms of culture, language and traditions as well as other characteristics, were considered in certain areas to be ‘perpetual strangers’, which led to their isolation or marginalisation in terms of social, economic and cultural life in most European countries. The rise of racism, accompanied in the second half of the 19th century by increasingly nationalist (exclusivist) politics, led to the dominance of an anti-Romani dominant political discourse in many European countries. In this political and social context, and in the face of centuries of (entrenched) negative prejudice against the Roma and Sinti, soon after taking power in Germany, the Nazi authorities began to pursue a genocidal policy against the Roma and Sinti. The Nazi model of attitude towards the Roma and Sinti minority community was manifested in the implementation of measures such as the sterilisation of the Roma and their internment in camps, legislative discrimination and, from the beginning of World War II, the mass killing of the Roma. The Nazi political and social model was adopted by most European governments that were either Nazi allies or under Nazi occupation.

The Nazi authorities and their allies – Hungary, Italy and Bulgaria – began to pursue a similar policy towards the Roma and Sinti population after the occupation and military-political overthrow of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in April 1941. Soon after taking power in April 1941, the Ustashe authorities in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) began to implement a genocidal policy towards the Roma, which to some extent coincided with the Nazi policy. This policy culminated in mid-1942 in the mass deportations to the Jasenovac concentration camp, where most of the Roma were murdered shortly after their arrival. In Serbia, the German occupying authorities, with the help of the collaborationist government of Milan Nedić, sought to become one of the first of all the Nazi countries to solve the ‘Gypsy question’ through mass deportations of the Roma to camps and their killing.

At the same time, the Romani population in other parts of the occupied Kingdom of Yugoslavia was forced into forced labour and was only later (at the end of 1944) deported to camps, as illustrated by the case of the Hungarian

authorities in the occupied areas of Prekmurje, Međimurje, Baranja and Banat. In other areas, the Roma were often collateral casualties of the armed conflict between the Nazi troops and their allies, and the anti-fascist (partisan) units. The topic of Roma participation in the anti-fascist resistance movement in the territory of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia is less researched, however, many examples illustrate their courageous action in partisan units. The consequence of this genocidal policy towards the Roma on the territory of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was the almost total extermination of the Roma population in the NDH and other parts of the country.

This paper focuses on an analysis of part of the genocidal policy implemented by the collaborationist authorities on the territory of the occupied Kingdom of Yugoslavia, i.e. an analysis of the issue of the deportation of the Roma from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia to the Nazi and fascist concentration camps. It also attempts to analyse the situation of the Roma and Sinti prisoners in prisoner-of-war camps, labour camps and concentration camps, and pays particular attention to the issue of the deportation and killing of the Roma camp inmates from the aforementioned area in the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp.

Keywords: Roma, Sinti, Kingdom of Yugoslavia, persecution, genocide, camps

Danijel Vojak (1980) is a Senior Research Assistant at the Ivo Pilar Institute of Social Sciences in Zagreb, where he has worked since 2008. In 2003, he completed his history studies at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, followed by his master's and PhD degrees in 2006 and 2011 respectively. Between 2005 and 2007, he worked for Ibis grafika, a Zagreb-based publishing and print company, and later for a short time also for the Media Department of the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights. The focus of his scientific research work is the history of the Roma community in the Croatian territory, especially in the 20th century. He has published about a hundred scientific and professional papers on this topic in international and Croatian scientific publications and has also authored various educational publications and exhibitions on the fate of the Roma during World War II. He has participated in several scientific projects related to the research on Roma history as well as in numerous scientific symposiums both in Croatia and elsewhere.

The Liberation of Auschwitz – a Turn of Events, But Not the End of the Holocaust

Dr. Anna Maria Grünfelder

The liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp by the Red Army on 27 January 1945 was not the end of the Holocaust. In fact, its final stage was the 'evacuation' of the camp and the camp prisoners leaving for the death marches – a chaotic and aimless ride in open freight cars or walking in the midst of harsh winter and snowstorms. The main source of knowledge about this are the survivors' recollections. Israeli historian Daniel Blatman believes that for the starving camp prisoners, the death marches were exertion unlike any other: "If Auschwitz was hell, the death marches were its Ninth Circle." Opatija-born Oleg Mandić, who is now almost ninety, survived Auschwitz and Mengele's experiments as an eleven-year-old boy. On the night of 17 January 1945, he managed to avoid the prisoners' departure for the death march, and eventually left Auschwitz as 'the historically last prisoner of Auschwitz' on 11 February 1945.

The victims from Yugoslavia arrived in Auschwitz as early as 1941, but very few Yugoslav prisoners were among those who set out – some in open freight cars and others headed West on foot – aimlessly and chaotically. Auschwitz and its subcamps were not the only camps left empty in such a way, much the same thing happened in camps within the Reich. In fact, Himmler had ordered that not a single prisoner was to be released by the enemy. The author of this presentation reconstructed in which directions the prisoners were headed and where they stopped on their way – a journey that claimed the lives of about 250,000 people. People died of hunger, exhaustion, as well as under the gunfire of the SS or in the Allied powers' air strikes aimed especially at train stations and trains. All over East Germany, there are cemeteries with white crosses on top of the graves of nameless camp prisoners. The residents of the cities and towns that witnessed these marches rarely gave the victims refreshments, in fact, they were much more likely to physically attack them and considered them thieves and criminals.

From March 1945 onwards, the Soviets organised repatriation transports to Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav Repatriation Commission put off the repatriation of civilians, as its priority was to detect potential war criminals. Civilians 'who survived the war abroad' were accused of 'collaborating with the Nazis', as evidenced by the Dachau trials. Those who bore witness to the times therefore adapted to the general climate of Stalinist paranoia, as a result of which some of them ended up on Goli Otok.

Keywords: Auschwitz, death marches, graves of nameless victims, attacks, repatriation

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Anna Maria Grünfelder (1948), PhD in History, Art History and Catholic Theology. She is active in the field of science and humanitarianism and is an external collaborator and columnist for a number of Austrian and Slovenian newspapers. As part of her research work, she collaborates with the Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance (DÖW) in Vienna, the Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (SOF) in Regensburg, the Federation of Jewish Communities of Serbia, and the Center of Jewish Cultural Heritage Synagogue Maribor. As a lecturer, Dr. Grünfelder has attended various professional meetings and symposiums. She is the recipient of multiple awards for her professional work and writing; for instance, her texts on Judaism after the Holocaust and the forced labour of Jews have received awards from the Federation of Jewish Communities of Yugoslavia, and later also the Federation of Jewish Communities of Serbia.

The Righteous Among the Nations from Serbia, 1941–1944

Dr. Milan Koljanin

During World War II, the territory of the Republic of Serbia was occupied by the neighbouring countries (Hungary, Bulgaria, Albania and the Independent State of Croatia (NDH)), whereas the central part of Serbia was under German military rule with domestic collaborationist administration. In all these occupied territories, the Holocaust was part of the Nazis' Final Solution in Europe, however, it was also carried out in accordance with the policy of the various occupiers of persecuting the Jews. In the German-occupied territory, the Holocaust was expedited by the mass Serbian uprising, and by early May 1942 it had in fact been carried out in Nazi camps on Serbian territory (Topovske šupe, Banjica and Sajmište). In the area under the administration of the Ustasha NDH, the extermination of Jews mainly took place in the death camps (Gospić, Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška), while the remaining Jews were mostly sent to the Auschwitz extermination camp in August 1942 and May 1943. The Jews from the Bulgarian-occupied territory, along with those from Macedonia and Greece, were deported to the Treblinka extermination camp in March 1943. By early May 1942, the Jews from the German-occupied territory in Kosovo and Metohija had been killed along with the other Serbian Jews, and most of the remaining Jews from this area were deported to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in May 1944. The second largest Jewish community in Serbia was in the Hungarian-occupied territory of Bačka. A part of this community was killed by the Hungarian army and gendarmerie in January 1942. The arrival of German troops in Hungary in March 1944 was followed by internments and mass deportations of Jews from the occupied territory of Serbia, i.e. the territory occupied first by Hungary and later by Germany, to Auschwitz. The Jews who tried to escape the Holocaust in the territory of Serbia were helped by people who were from different parts of the country and belonged to different social groups – both Serbs and members of various other nationalities. Most Jews in the German-occupied territory were rescued in Serbian villages, where they had hidden by assuming the identity of Serbian refugees. The presentation presents the rescuers of the Jews who were supposed to be deported to Auschwitz, i.e. the Righteous Among the Nations from the Hungarian-occupied Bačka.

Keywords: Holocaust, Serbia, occupied territories, rescue of Jews, Bačka, Righteous Among the Nations

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Milan B. Koljanin (1953), a retired Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Contemporary History in Belgrade. In 2006, he received his PhD degree with a thesis titled *Jews and Anti-Semitism in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia 1918–1941* (*Jevreji i antisemitizam u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji 1918–1941*). He has researched the political and social history of Serbia and Yugoslavia during the interwar period and especially during World War II. A special focus on his research was also on the establishment of repressive systems in Serbia and the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), the role of individual camps within these systems, the NDH's policies and repressive legislation, the Holocaust in Serbia and Yugoslavia, the use of film and antisemitic stereotypes in propaganda within the occupied Serbia, the history of Jews and antisemitism in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the political activities of the Roman Catholic Church during World War II and the rescue of Serbian children from the NDH camps, as well as topics related to the World War I history and crimes of the Bulgarian occupation administration in Serbia.



Block 17

A Joint Museum Exhibition of the States of the
Former Yugoslavia at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum

Preparation of a Joint Exhibition Between Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Montenegro, the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of North Macedonia, the Republic of Slovenia and the Republic of Serbia at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim, Poland

Dr. Nataša Mataušić, dr. Olga Manojlović Pintar

The paper will first describe how the idea of a joint exhibition and its realisation developed from 2011 to the present, while also outlining the way in which the organisational problems were solved, the thematic strands coordinated, the material researched and sourced, and the final scenario prepared.

The first meeting to discuss this topic was held in Belgrade on 29 June 2011. The participants discussed the status of the so-called Yugoslav exhibition space in the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and confirmed the agreement of the countries they represent that the space in Block 17 would not be split but rather arranged as a common exhibition space. This intention was confirmed by the ambassadors of the six countries who met at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Poland in October of the same year.

In the following years, six meetings were held under the auspices of UNESCO and its global initiative *Culture: a Bridge to Development* and the Intersectoral Platform for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence: in Belgrade (June 2012), Sarajevo (December 2012), Skopje (April 2013), Auschwitz-Birkenau (July 2013), Zagreb (February 2014), and Ljubljana (2015).

In addition to the representatives of the relevant ministries and experts from all six countries, the meetings were attended by the representatives of international institutions: UNESCO (Regional Office in Venice), Mémorial de la Shoah (Paris), Topography of Terror (Berlin), and the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for the Victims of National Socialism (Vienna). Representatives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum (Oświęcim) were also present at two of the meetings.

In this paper, the authors pay special attention to the work of the Editorial Board, which was formed in 2013 and consisted of Dr. Kaja Širok, Dr. Nataša Mataušić, and Dr. Olga Manojlović Pintar. They also describe the various stages of the development of the exhibition scenario and establishment of the cooperation with the Herman Foundation from Zagreb and Studio Libeskind from New York.

In the second part of the paper, the authors provide an overview of the concept of the exhibition scenario entitled *"I command you these words"* (*"Vi comando queste parole"*), a verse from Primo Levi's poem *Hear* (*Sh'ma*), which illustrates the message of this exhibition.

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In a formal context, the concept of the exhibition is conceived in such a way that it involves two levels of communication with visitors. The first level allows for the transmission of information through direct access to visual and written material, while the second level involves the concept of 'information on demand'. Thanks to the abundance of historical sources collected in the six countries, visitors will have the opportunity to view the material on their own initiative, taking on the role of active researchers rather than passive recipients of the information available.

In terms of content, the scenario is also divided into two parts. The introductory part contains information about the history and everyday life of the Jewish community in the former Yugoslavia during two periods, first from 1918 to 6 April 1941 and then during the Second World War.

Through personal stories, the central part of the exhibition depicts the intricate schedule of the transports that transferred detainees from the former Yugoslavia to the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp. The first transport set off on 28 September 1941 from Bled and Klagenfurt, transporting peasants and political prisoners from the part of Slovenia under German occupation to Auschwitz. The last transport for Auschwitz-Birkenau set off on 28 June 1944 from the Gestapo Dedinje (Banjica) concentration camp in Belgrade.

The scenario interlaces diachronic and synchronic perspectives, and the basic thematic units are formed through a chronological presentation. Among them, special attention is paid to the personal stories of the prisoners who were brought to Auschwitz-Birkenau in five transports from the Independent State of Croatia and in the so-called *Sonderaktion 'Ungarn'* mass deportation, when almost the entire Jewish population from the areas of Prekmurje, Međimurje, Baranja and Bačka (today's Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia) was deported in May and June 1944.

Keywords: Block 17, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, concept of the exhibition, Jews in the former Yugoslavia, transports, personal stories

Nataša Mataušić (1956), a retired Museum Adviser and head of the Collection of Photographs, Films and Negatives at the Croatian History Museum in Zagreb and former registrar for all history museums and historical collections in the Republic of Croatia. In 2020, she completed her PhD at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, with the dissertation *Diana Budisavljević and Civil Action on Saving Children – Victims of the Ustasha Regime (Diana Budisavljević i građanska akcija spašavanja djece – žrtava ustaškog terora)*. She is the author of more than 30 historical exhibitions, including *El Shatt – The Croatian Refugee Community in the Sinai Desert, Egypt (1944–1946) (El Shatt – zbjeg iz Hrvatske u pustinji Sinaja, Egipat (1944. – 1946.))*, for which she received the Croatian Museum Association Award for the best exhibition project in 2008, and *If I Forget You... – The Holocaust in Croatia 1941–1945: Final Destination Auschwitz (Ako tebe*

Round Table

zaboravim ... – Holokaust u Hrvatskoj 1941. – 1945.: zadnje odredište Auschwitz), for which the Croatian Museum Association awarded her a special recognition in 2021. She is also the author of several exhibition catalogues and books, such as *The Film Material Fund in the Collection of Photographs, Films and Negatives of the Croatian History Museum (Fond filmske građe u Zbirci fotografija, filmova i negativa Hrvatskoga povijesnog muzeja, 2004)*, *Jasenovac 1941–1945: Work Camp and Death Camp (Jasenovac 1941. – 1945.: Radni logor i logor smrti, 2003)*, *Jasenovac – a photomonograph (Jasenovac – fotomonografija, 2008)*, *Women in the Camps of the Independent State of Croatia (Žene u logorima Nezavisne Države Hrvatske, 2013)*, *Diana Budisavljević, the Overlooked Heroine of the Second World War (Diana Budisavljević, prešućena heroína Drugog svjetskog rata, 2020)*. Dr. Mataušić's main areas of research interests are the study of the camps in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), the fate of women and children in the NDH camps, the Holocaust, the anti-fascist movement, and the issue of memorialisation of these themes. From 1997 until her retirement in 2021, she was Chair of the Board of Directors of the Jasenovac Memorial Site public institution and is currently a member of the IHRA Museum Working Group.

Olga Manojlović Pintar (1966) is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Recent History of Serbia in Belgrade, where she has worked since 1994. She holds a Master's degree (1996) and a PhD (2005) from the University of Belgrade, having previously completed her Master's degree at the Central European University in Budapest (1995). Her research interests include the culture of remembrance, the memorialisation of the past in the public sphere, and the commemoration of wars in Serbia in the 20th century. She is the author of *The Last Battle. Spanish Fighters and the Yugoslav Crisis in the 1980s (Poslednja bitka. Španski borci i jugoslovenska kriza osamdesetih, 2019)* and *The Archaeology of Remembrance: Monuments and Identities in Serbia 1918–1989 (Arheologija sećanja: Spomenici i identiteti u Srbiji 1918–1989, 2014)*. Furthermore, she has edited several collections, such as *Transnational Experiences of Yugoslav History (Transnacionalna iskustva jugoslovenske istorije, 2019)*, *Tito – Views and Interpretations (Tito – viđenja i tumačenja, 2011)*, and *History and Remembering: Studies of Historical Consciousness (Istorija i sećanje: studije istorijske svesti, 2005)*. Dr. Manojlović Pintar regularly participates in various interdisciplinary conferences and workshops, and is involved in numerous international research and museum projects that explore the themes of resistance in Europe during World War II, the Holocaust and the deportation of Jews, as well as new approaches to remembering and teaching about the Holocaust, the revisualisation of the recent past in museums of communism and modern history in post-communist Eastern Europe, and the creation of European national museums based on identity politics, the use of the past, and the idea of the European citizen.

Interinstitutional Exhibition Photographs from Auschwitz: Stories from Photographs of Slovenes Sent to the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in 1942*

Dr. Monika Kokalj Kočevar

Around 3,000 people from Slovenia were deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp, among them about 350 Jews, at least 78 Roma and at least one Slovene Jehovah's Witness. For 1,723 of them, Auschwitz became their last resting place.

About 200,000 prisoners of the Auschwitz concentration camp were photographed on arrival. When the camp closed, orders were given for the destruction of all photographs of the concentration camp inmates. Prisoner No. 3444 – the photographer Wilhelm Brasse – managed to hide 38,916 of these photographs, which are now kept by the Archive of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum (Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau (APMAB)) in Oświęcim. These photographs are not only the greatest mass evidence of the large number of Auschwitz prisoners, but are also the last trace of many of them. Among them are more than 800 photographs of Slovenes, however, there are no photographs of Jews or Roma from Slovenia. The photographs of the Slovene concentration camp inmates were taken between 28 September 1941, when the first group of Slovenes arrived from Begunje prison, and 20 September 1944, when two Slovenes arrived from the Dachau concentration camp. As for a long time the Auschwitz and Ravensbrück concentration camps were the only Nazi concentration camps that also imprisoned women, photographs of female inmates prevail. Copies of about 769 of these photographs are kept by the Museum of Recent History in Celje.

The exhibition is based on a photograph of a camp inmate, while at the same time it tells the story of an entire family. The fate of six concentration camp inmates and their families (Šarh, Poljanšek, Žmauc, Hlačun, Prislán and Čeplak) is presented in this exhibition with the hope that one day, the fate of all the others will be presented in the same way.

The exhibition was curated by Boris Hajdinjak (Center of Jewish Cultural Heritage Synagogue Maribor), Darja Jan (Museum of Recent History Celje) and Dr. Monika Kokalj Kočevar (National Museum of Contemporary History, Ljubljana).

Keywords: photographs, Nazi concentration camp, Auschwitz, Slovene inmates

* The interinstitutional exhibition has been presented at a round table by dr. Monika Kokalj Kočevar and Darja Jan.

Round Table

Monika Kokalj Kočever (1963), historian, curator at the National Museum of Contemporary History in Ljubljana. In 2016, she completed her PhD at the Faculty of Arts at the University of Maribor with a thesis titled *The Mobilised from the Gorenjska Region in the German Army, 1943–1945* (*Gorenjski mobiliziranci v nemški vojski 1943–1945*). Her research focuses on topics such as Slovenian forced and slave labourers in World War II and the forcible mobilisation of Slovenes into the Wehrmacht. She is a member of the Comité International de Mauthausen, a member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Mauthausen Memorial, a member of the Slovenian Delegation to the IHRA, and Vice President of the coordination committee of the victims of war violence at the Union of the Associations for the Values of the National Liberation Movement of Slovenia.

Darja Jan (1966), a historian, has been working as a curator at the Museum of Recent History Celje since November 1992. While doing research and working in the field of museum documentation, over time she increasingly devoted herself to PR-related work and co-organisation of international museum workshops and seminars under the auspices of the Celje School of Museology. She has authored numerous temporary museum exhibitions. The focus of her research work is on content related to World War II (stolen children, camp prisoners, 5th Overseas Brigade, emigrants) and the Slovenian War of Independence. Since 2014, Darja Jan has also been a custodian in charge of integrating senior volunteers – cultural mediators – into museum work. She is a member of the Slovenian Museum Society and the International Council of Museums (ICOM). She is also a long-time chair of the Franjo Malgaj Patriotic Society Šentjur, a society dedicated to preserving the memory of Franjo Malgaj, a soldier who fought for the northern Slovenian borderlands.

“Here Is Where Death Worked Itself to Death...”: Slovenian Victims of Auschwitz — the Original Exhibition Supplemented with Materials from the Šalek Valley

Vinko Mihelak

On the initiative of Boris Hajdinjak, director of the Synagogue Maribor and author of the exhibition on Slovenian victims of Auschwitz, the Velenje Museum decided to host this exhibition at its premises. In agreement with Mr. Hajdinjak, we accepted the task of supplementing the original exhibition with materials from the Šalek Valley, i.e. the area in which our museum focuses. Due to other obligations, we were unable to start research on this topic until early 2022. It was therefore clear in advance that it would not be possible to research this subject matter satisfactorily, even more so since our museum had previously not dealt with it in any depth. Most of our work consisted of fieldwork and networking, i.e. looking for contacts of the relatives, acquaintances, descendants or others who might have had any relevant information or known anyone who was in any way connected to Auschwitz. A provisional list of potential victims, compiled by Mr. Hajdinjak based on his own research, was of great help. Another important source of information was the albums of the victims of fascist violence in the municipality of Velenje (the present-day municipalities of Šoštanj, Šmartno ob Paki and Velenje), which were most likely created in the 1960s. Quite a few of these albums are kept at our museum, but unfortunately not all of them.

After a mere two months of work, we were able to collect twelve local Auschwitz-related family stories, which were exhibited on six display boards. However, the most important result of this brief ‘research’ is the list of Auschwitz victims from the Šalek Valley. The basic list provided to us by Mr. Hajdinjak consisted of just over sixty names. The exhibition, however, includes eighty-seven names of victims from the Šalek Valley although it is not a complete list. The initial list of victims from our area was thus extended by one third, which neither we nor Mr. Hajdinjak had expected. Of the eighty-seven victims from the Šalek Valley, fourteen people survived internment in Auschwitz. We also managed to obtain some internee-related family items, which were an important addition to the exhibition.

Keywords: Auschwitz, internees, stolen children, Lower Styria, Šalek Valley

Round Table

Vinko Mihelak (1971), Museum Adviser, has been working as a contemporary history curator at the Velenje Museum since 2004. He has authored numerous permanent and temporary exhibitions and some mostly non-specialist publications especially related to the local area. Among others, he is the author of the following exhibitions and publications: a permanent exhibition titled *The City That Was Called A Miracle: From a Workers' Colony to an Ideal City (Mesto, ki so mu rekli čudež: od delavske kolonije do idealnega mesta)*; a permanent exhibition titled *The Šalek and Upper Savinja Valley in the Process of Slovenia's Independence (Šaleška in Zgornja Savinjska dolina v procesih osamosvajanja Slovenije)*, on view in the 1991 Memorial Centre museum unit; a permanent exhibition on view in the memorial room of The Fourteenth Division museum unit in Graška gora; a permanent exhibition titled *Topolšica on 9th May 1945 (Topolšica 9. maj 1945)*, on view in the memorial room of the Topolšica museum unit; a temporary exhibition on the victims of Auschwitz from the Šalek Valley (supplement to the exhibition "*Here Is Where Death Worked Itself to Death...": Slovenian Victims of Auschwitz* by Boris Hajdinjak); a publication on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the town of Velenje titled *Velenje, a Century on Postcards (Velenje, stoletje na razglednicah)*; a publication on the 135th anniversary of the Velenje Coal Mine titled *The Velenje Coal Mine: Milestones (Premogovnik Velenje: Mejniki)* etc.

Round Table

Moderator of the round table

Jože Dežman (1955), historian and philosopher, Museum Councillor at the Gorenjska Museum in Kranj. His fields of study are history, anthropology, and museology. So far, he has edited several anthologies on local history, prepared more than ten exhibitions, held lectures in Slovenia and abroad, and published several hundreds of articles in anthologies, scientific and daily publications. The focus of his research is on the consequences of a discriminatory division of Slovenian society in Titoism, and the processes of the transitional justice. In 2014, he completed his research on this topic with a PhD thesis titled *An Ethical and Personalistic Approach to Redressing the Injustices Suffered by the Victims of Titoism according to the Archival Materials of the Government Commission for the Implementation of the Redressing of Injustices Act* (*Etično-personalistični pristop k popravi krivic žrtvam titoizma po arhivu Komisije Vlade RS za izvajanje Zakona o popravi krivic*). Since 2005, he has been the co-editor of the Radio Ognjišče broadcast *Moja zgodba* (*My Story*) and has been in charge of the Commission of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Concealed Mass Graves. Between 2012 and 2013, he was the director of the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia. In 2021, he was appointed director of the National Museum of Contemporary History in Ljubljana – he had also previously managed this museum between 2005 and 2010.

International Scientific Meeting & Round Table

Coordinator of the scientific meeting and the round table

Marjetka Bedrač (1977), art historian and Museum Adviser, is the coordinator and organiser of cultural programmes at the CJCH Synagogue Maribor. She was initially employed in the Maribor Regional Museum where she gained experience in all fields of museological work and specialised in museum documentation. Since 2006, Marjetka has been employed at the CJCH Synagogue Maribor, where for some years she has also held the position of acting director. Ms Bedrač has staged more than five exhibitions and curated around 70 exhibition projects. As the main coordinator, she has been involved in the organisation of more than 200 cultural events and projects, including the *Shoah – Let Us Remember* (*Šoa – spominjajmo se*), *European Days of Jewish Culture* (*Evropski dnevi judovske kulture*; for Slovenia), *The Crocus Project* (*Projekt Krokus*; for Slovenia), and *Stone Tears* (*Kamnite solze*) projects. Between 2016 and 2017, she was in charge of the project *Tracing the Paths of Jews from Maribor* (*Po poteh mariborskih Judov*), which was conducted under the auspices of the Rothschild Foundation Hanadiv Europe. As part of this project, she managed various activities and also co-authored the exhibition *The Morpurgos, the Descendants of the Maribor Jews* (*Morpurgi, potomci mariborskih Judov*). In addition, Marjetka has taken on the role of the Synagogue Maribor's main educator, whilst she is also the author of numerous introductory texts for exhibition catalogues and brochures. Since 2018, she is a member of the Slovenian Delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA).

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING
EACH YEAR ONE NAME: ROMAN ERICH PETSCHÉ
Auschwitz and the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia II

24 May 2022, at 9.00

- 9.00 OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SCIENTIFIC MEETING
- 9.00–9.15 WELCOME SPEECHES
Boris Hajdinjak, Director of the Center of Jewish Cultural Heritage Synagogue Maribor,
Dr. Jože Dežman, Director of the National Museum of Contemporary History, Ljubljana,
Dr. Vlasta Stavbar, Head of the Department for Local History and Special Collections, University of Maribor Library
- 9.15–9.20 OPENING ADDRESS
Alenka Iskra, Deputy-Mayor of the Municipality of Maribor
- 9.20–9.40 ROMAN ERICH PETSCHÉ: POT V PRAVIČNIŠTVO
Mihael Petrovič Jr., Kočevje
- 9.40–10.00 ŽELJEZNIČKA 13
Vladimir Todorović, Danubius Association and Jewish Community of Novi Sad
- 10.00–10.20 SKUPNO ŠTEVILO JUGOSLOVANSKIH ŽRTEV AUSCHWITZA: STANJE RAZISKAV
Boris Hajdinjak, Center of Jewish Cultural Heritage Synagogue Maribor
- 10.20–10.40 OD UPORA DO AUSCHWITZA. USODE SLOVENSКИH PROTINACISTIČNIH UPORNIKOVIH IN NJIHOVIH SVOJCEV – ŠTAJERSKA 1942
Dr. Tonček Kregar, Museum of Recent History Celje
- 10.40–10.50 DISCUSSION
- 10.50–11.10 COFFEE BREAK

- 11.10—11.30 NI JIH VEĆ BILO NAZAJ. TRPLJENJE IN SMRT GORIŠKIH JUDOV V TABORIŠČU AUSCHWITZ
Dr. Renato Podbersič, Study Centre for National Reconciliation, Ljubljana
- 11.30—11.50 OTROK POZABLJENE DOMOVINE
Nataša Konc Lorenzutti M.Phil., Osek near Nova Gorica
- 11.50—12.10 DEPORTACIJE IZ ČAKOVCA (MEĐIMURJA) U AUSCHWITZ 1944.
Dr. Goran Hutinec, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb
- 12.10—12.30 TRANSPORT ŽIDOVA UPUĆEN U AUSCHWITZ IZ LOGORA U VINKOVcima U KOLOVOZU 1942.: SPOZNAJE I PRIJEPORI
Dr. Rajka Bućin, Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski Institute, Croatian State Archives, Zagreb
- 12.30—12.50 SVJEDOČANSTVA PREŽIVJELIH IZ AUSCHWITZA (ŽIDOVI GRADA OSIJEKA)
Dr. Zlata Živaković-Kerže, retired co-worker of the Croatian Institute of History in Zagreb – Unit for History of Slavonia, Sarmia and Baranya in Slavonski Brod,
Dr. Marija Benić Penava, Department of Economics and Business, University of Dubrovnik
- 12.50—13.00 DISCUSSION
- 13.00—13.10 COFFEE BREAK
- 13.10—13.30 SUDBINA ŽIDOVSKIH INTERNIRACA IZ LOGORA KAMPOR NA RABU
Dr. Ivo Goldstein, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb
- 13.30—13.50 SARAJEVO HOLOKAUST – KONAČNO RJEŠENJE JEVREJSKOG PITANJA
Dr. Eli Tauber, Jewish Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo

- 13.50—14.10 ROMI I SINTI IZ ZEMALJA KRALJEVINE JUGOSLAVIJE
U NACISTIČKIM I FAŠISTIČKIM LOGORIMA S
POSEBNIM OSVRTOM NA LOGOR AUSCHWITZ —
BIRKENAU
Dr. Danijel Vojak, Ivo Pilar Institute of Social Sciences,
Zagreb
- 14.10—14.30 OSLOBOĐENJE AUSCHWITZA — PREKRETNICA, ALI
NE I KRAJ HOLOKAUSTA
Dr. Anna Maria Grünfelder, Zagreb
- 14.30—14.50 PRAVEDNICI IZ SRBIJE 1941.—1944. GODINE
Dr. Milan Koljanin, a retired co-worker of Institute for
Contemporary History in Belgrade
- 14.50—15.00 DISCUSSION
- 15.00 CLOSURE OF THE SCIENTIFIC MEETING

ROUND TABLE
BLOCK 17
A Joint Museum Exhibition of the States of the Former
Yugoslavia at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum

24 May 2022, at 17.30

Introductory presentations:

RAD NA PRIPREMI ZDRUŽENE IZLOŽBE BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE,
REPUBLIKE CRNE GORE, REPUBLIKE HRVATSKE, REPUBLIKE
SEVERNE MAKEDONIJE, REPUBLIKE SLOVENIJE I REPUBLIKE
SRBIJE
U DRŽAVNOM MUZEJU AUSCHWITZ – BIRKENAU U OŠWIĘCIMU
U POLJSKOJ

Dr. Nataša Mataušić, a retired co-worker of the Croatian History
Museum in Zagreb,

Dr. Olga Manojlović Pintar, Institute for Recent History of Serbia,
Beograd

MEDINSTITUCIONALNA RAZSTAVA FOTOGRAFIJE IZ
AUSCHWITZA: ZGODBE S FOTOGRAFIJ SLOVENSКИH
TABORIŠČNIKOV, POSLANIH LETA 1942 V KONCENTRACIJSKO
TABORIŠČE AUSCHWITZ

Dr. Monika Kokalj Kočevar, National Museum of Contemporary
History, Ljubljana,

Darja Jan, Museum of Recent History Celje

»TU SE JE SMRT UTRUDILA DO SMRTI ...«: SLOVENSKE ŽRTVE
AUSCHWITZA – DOPOLNITEV RAZSTAVE Z GRADIVOM IZ
ŠALEŠKE DOLINE

Vinko Mihelak, Velenje Museum

Round table:

Dr. Rajka Bućin, Dr. Jože Dežman (moderator), Boris Hajdinjak,
Darja Jan, Dr. Monika Kokalj Kočevar, Dr. Milan Koljanin,
Dr. Olga Manojlović Pintar, Dr. Nataša Mataušić, Vinko Mihelak,
Dr. Eli Tauber, Dr. Danijel Vojak

Organisers of the scientific meeting and the round table:
Center of the Jewish Cultural Heritage Synagogue Maribor,
National Museum of Contemporary History, Ljubljana

SINAGOGA

CENTER JUDOVSKÉ KULTURNE
DEDIŠČINE SINAGOGA MARIBOR



MUZEJ NOVEJŠE
ZGODOVINE SLOVENIJE

The event has been organised in cooperation with the University of Maribor Library withing the framework of the *Shoah – Let Us Remember 2022* project.

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Univerza v Mariboru

Univerzitetna knjižnica Maribor



MESTNA OBČINA MARIBOR



Veleposlaništvo
Države Izrael

The Honorary Patron of the event is the President of the Republic of Slovenia,
Borut Pahor.

