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**H O L O K A V S T A**

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Znanstveno srečanje

**VSAKO LETO ENO IME:  
Neznani slovenski pravičniki  
iz Prekmurja in Primorske**

Univerzitetna knjižnica Maribor  
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**VSAKO LETO ENO IME:  
Neznani slovenski pravičniki iz Prekmurja in Primorske**

**EACH YEAR ONE NAME:  
The Unknown Righteous Among the Nations from Regions of  
Prekmurje and Primorska**

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## Program

- 9.00 **Karl Erjavec**, zunanji minister RS  
*Otvoritveni nagovor častnega pokrovitelja projekta Šoa – spominjajmo se 2013*
- 9.05 **Igor Vojtic**, predstavnik Judovske skupnosti Slovenije  
*Pozdravni nagovor*
- 9.15 **Anna Maria Gruenfelder**  
*Judovski begunci iz srednje Evrope in šoa v ustaški Neodvisni državi Hrvaški*
- 9.35 **Vera Klopčič**  
*Začetki mednarodnega preučevanja genocida nad Romi (1938–1945)*
- 9.55 **Franc Kuzmič**  
*Holokavst in prekmurski Romi*
- 10.15 Odmor
- 10.45 **Renato Podbersič**  
*Učitelj Andrej Vendramin – neznani pravičnik iz Solkana*
- 11.05 **Boris Hajdinjak**  
*Reševanje prekmurskega Juda Mirka Hiršla 1944–1945: Cigüt, Žilavci in Fartelji*
- 11.25 **Klemen Brvar**  
*Judje v vrstah slovenskih komunistov med obema vojnoma – Ali Kardoš*
- 11.45 **Marjan Toš**  
*Učenje o holokavstu in spominjanje nanj – primeri dobre prakse iz Maribora*
- 12.05 Razprava
- 13.00 Zaključek srečanja

# Judovski begunci iz srednje Evrope in šoa v ustaški Neodvisni državi Hrvaški

**Dr. Anna Maria Gruenfelder**

*V tem prispevku opisujem malo znani del šoe, in sicer usodo tujih Judov v Neodvisni državi Hrvaški (NDH), prebežnikov iz tretjega rajha, Avstrije in drugih držav, ki jih je do leta 1941 okupirala Nemčija. Ustaško preganjanje Judov so na splošno obravnavali nemški zgodovinarji ter njihovi kolegi iz anglosaških držav in je zato dobro znano – ni pa znano dejstvo, da so bili v »rešitev judovskega vprašanja« vključeni tudi tuji Judje na Hrvaškem. Nemški zgodovinarji so večinoma preučevali vire vojaške in policijske provenience, dostopne v nemških arhivih, medtem ko so zgodovinarji iz anglosaških dežel navajali pričevanja ključnih prič in preživelih. Zato je bila moja naloga, da sem izkoristila obsežno dokumentacijo Hrvaškega državnega arhiva v Zagrebu, ki so jo ustvarile takratne osrednje državne oblasti. Seveda nisem prezrla spominskih zapisov in osebnih pripovedi prič.*

## 1. Tuji judovski begunci, ki so jih preganjali ustaši

Omenjene listine so mi omogočile preučevati ukrepe vojaških in policijskih organov ustaškega sistema proti tujim Judom: uradne gonje proti njihovi telesni navzočnosti, uradne zahteve po njihovi odstranitvi in deportaciji v koncentracijska taborišča zaradi njihove sovražnosti do Hrvaške in hrvaških oblasti ali zato, ker so izkoriščevalci, ki izsiljujejo višanje cen – tradicionalni predsodki do Judov. Že v prvih dneh po razglasitvi NDH, natančneje 14. aprila 1941, so se začele množične deportacije tujih Judov v improvizirana koncentracijska taborišča.

Viri Hrvaškega državnega arhiva vsebujejo biografske podatke tujih Judov, kar nam omogoča, da predstavimo posamezne usode srednjeevropskih judovskih beguncev na Hrvaškem. Kot begunce lahko identificiramo približno 500 ljudi, rojenih v Avstriji (znotraj meja z dne 12. marca 1938, dan preden je Nemčija okupirala Avstrijo) ali s pravico do stalnega bivališča v Avstriji, rojenih na Poljskem ali v Češkoslovaški. Večina jih je pribežala iz Avstrije neposredno po nemški okupaciji; v glavnem so bili odrasli, stari od 40 do 60 let (približno 60 %), manjše število je bilo otrok, mladine, dijakov, vajencev in študentov. Največ odraslih je bilo po poklicu trgovcev ali obrtnikov, njihove žene pa so bile gospodinje. V zelo majhnem številu so bili prisotni tudi pravniki, odvetniki, višji uradniki, farmacevti, zdravniki in glasbeniki.

Približno 200 ljudi so deportirali v Jasenovac in Staro Gradiško. Avtorica je našla dokaze, da je več kot sto tujih Judov umrlo v Jasenovcu že leta 1941. Povojna Jugoslovanska državna komisija, ki je raziskovala zločine okupacijskih vojnih sil in njihovih kolaborantov na domačih tleh, je izkopala množična grobišča, da bi identificirala žrtve. Ker so hrvaški zgodovinarji do dandanes dvomili o zanesljivosti izsledkov komisije (kot posledica politične zlorabe med povojnimi mirovnimi konferencami), sem posebno pozornost namenila identifikaciji metod in ugotovila, da se je komisija sama zavedala pogojnosti svojih števil. Svojo nalogo je izpeljala le takrat, ko so lahko pričevali sotaboriščniki ali sorodniki žrtev. Vendar so se nekdanji interniranci le redko spomnili sojetnikov iz tujine – zato lahko sklepamo, da so tuji Judje v taboriščih preživeli le zelo kratek čas ali pa so bili ubiti že takoj po prihodu. Okoli sto tujih Judinj je izgubilo življenje v koncentracijskih taboriščih za ženske v Loborgradu in Đakovu – bile so žrtve namerno povzročenih epidemij tifusa.

Moja raziskovanja so me privedla do prepričanja, da nemške okupacijske sile niso neposredno primorale ustašev, da rešijo judovsko vprašanje, a so to gotovo »pričakovale«. Ključne priče zatrjujejo, da so ustaši in sam predsednik NDH komaj čakali, da lahko dokažejo svojo učinkovitost in predanost Nemcem (ki so podpirali ustanovitev NDH in Pavelića kot njenega voditelja), saj »kako bi pa lahko ustaši bolje izrazili svojo hvaležnost Nemcem, če ne tako, da preganjajo tiste, ki jih preganjajo Nemci?«

Čeprav je dobro upoštevati vtise prič, nas viri Hrvaškega državnega arhiva napeljejo na drugačen zaključek. »Bajno« judovsko premoženje je bilo tisto, po čemer so ustaši hlepeli, zato so se na vso moč trudili preprečiti deportacijo Judov v Nemčijo, saj bi tako Nemci deportirali tudi njihov denar in dragocenosti.

Pisna pričevanja nemških vojaških in policijskih častnikov, ki so jih za seboj pustili Nemci in ustaški voditelji, ko so v naglici zapustili Zagreb, nam omogočajo razlikovati med ustaškim in nemškim deležem pri t. i. končni rešitvi (Endlösung). Med letom 1941 in vse do sredine leta 1942 so Nemci podpirali ustaške napore, da se rešijo Judov. »Danica«, taborišča v Liki in na otoku Pagu ter končno kompleks petih taborišč v Jasenovcu in njegovi okolici so bila dejansko prisilna delovna taborišča. Vendar je prisilno delo vključevalo tudi stradanje in s tem »uničenje z delom« (Vernichtung durch Arbeit). Izkopi množičnih grobišč v okolici koncentracijskih taborišč Jasenovac in Stara Gradiška, ki jih je od maja 1945 izvajala posebna državna komisija za raziskovanje zločinov okupacijskih sil in njihovih kolaborantov na domačih tleh, so potrdili, da so bile žrtve ubite v množičnih likvidacijah ali pa so umrle zaradi bolezni, povezanih z internacijo, in lakote ter da se je ogromno število množičnih likvidacij zvrstilo jeseni 1941 in zgodaj poleti 1942. Judinje so umrle kot žrtve epidemij tifusa v koncentracijskih taboriščih Loborgrad (v bližini Varaždina) in Đakovo; tifus naj bi bile v ta taborišča prenesle jetnice iz taborišča za ženske Stara Gradiška (čeprav verodostojni dokumenti te predpostavke ne potrjujejo). Žrtve epidemije so bile lahko identificirane zahvaljujoč pogumu đakovskega uradnega mrliškega oglednika (čigar ime je ostalo v spominu – Stjepan Kolb), ki je označil vsako pogrebno mesto – edinstven primer pietete do Judov pod ustaškim režimom.

Leta 1942 so nemške okupacijske oblasti na Hrvaškem, tj. predstavniki RSHA (Reichssicherheitshauptamt), začele udeležati odločitve konference v Wannseeju: fizično iztrebljanje. Od avgusta 1942 do konca leta 1944 so iz hrvaških taborišč potekali dve obsežni deportaciji ter nekaj nadaljnjih transportov v Auschwitz in Bergen-Belsen, ki so jih v glavnem organizirale bojne enote varnostne policije in varnostne službe (Einsatzgruppen). Zelo malo jugoslovanskih Judov se je vrnilo. Preživeli so državni komisiji povedali, da so bili nejugoslovanski Judje na jugoslovanskih deportacijskih vlakih nemudoma usmrčeni.

Za zaključek moramo poudariti, da ustaši – v nasprotju z ustaljeno interpretacijo na Hrvaškem – niso bili le nemške marionete. Pokazali so se kot izjemno predani zastopniki lastnih interesov, ki so si izborili velik delež neodvisnosti v upravljanju preganjanja in iztrebljanja v svojih koncentracijskih taboriščih. Genocid na Hrvaškem je bil njihov »naredi si sam« načrt, čeprav ga je navdihnila nacistična ideologija.

## 2. Ozemlja bivše Jugoslavije, ki jih je okupirala italijanska vojska

Italijanske okupacijske oblasti so imele pomembno vlogo v poskusih reševanja Judov iz celotne nekdanje Kraljevine Jugoslavije in srednje Evrope, ki jim je uspelo zbežati iz NDH. Italijanska druga armada, ki je bila nastanjena v Sloveniji, Dalmaciji in delih Hrvaškega primorja, se je zavoljo poštenosti in avtoritete Italije odločila zoperstaviti nemškim pritiskom. Poveljniki so za svojo odločitev, da branijo Jude pod »italijansko zastavo«, dobili podporo v italijanskem ministrstvu za zunanje zadeve (Ciano naj bi bil ta načrt podpiral), v ministrstvu za obrambo in v generalštabu italijanske vojske, medtem ko je bil Mussolini še naprej zadržan. Odločitev italijanske vojske, da se zoperstavi slehernemu nemškemu poskusu pritiska, je postala edinstven primer (zabeležen ne le v Dalmaciji, temveč tudi v podobnih situacijah na jugu Francije, v Grčiji in Libiji).

Iz poročil ključnih prič in preživelih smo izvedeli, da je italijanska vojska – s tem ko je nemškim diplomatskim pritiskom navkljub rešila Jude pred deportacijo – na okupiranih ozemljih nekdanje Jugoslavije zbrala najmanj 2500 tujih judovskih beguncev, med njimi okoli 200 iz srednje Evrope (Nemčije, Avstrije, Češkoslovaške, Poljske ...). Italijanska vojska jih je internirala v koncentracijska taborišča v Dalmaciji in Hrvaškem primorju – ta koncentracijska taborišča nikakor niso bila primerljiva z ustaškimi in nemškimi koncentracijskimi taborišči. Čeprav oblasti NDH in njihovih nemških zaveznikov niso prizanašale s poskusi, da bi zasegle Jude z italijanskega okupiranega območja, je italijanska vojska njihove poskuse sabotirala. Italijansko ministrstvo za zunanje zadeve se je zoperstavilo nemškim pritiskom in zavračalo izvršiti dogovor med vladama Nemčije in Hrvaške o izročitvi vseh hrvaških, jugoslovanskih in tujih Judov hrvaškimi ali nemškimi oblastem.

28. oktobra 1942 so italijanski vojaki zbrali judovske begunce na območju Hrvaškega primorja, da bi jih internirali v koncentracijsko taborišče v Kraljevici. Judje v Dalmaciji, dalmatinskih mestih in vaseh, so ostali v svojih domovanjih kot »internirane osebe« pod zaščito italijanske vojske. Spomladi 1943 pa je bila bojna črta partizanov proti nemško-hrvaškim ofenzivam ogrožena, kar je pomenilo, da bo Nemcem omogočen vstop v Dalmacijo.

Člani komunistične partije med taboriščniki so ustanovili vojaško organizacijo, da bi se pripravili za osvoboditev. Slutili so, da bodo italijanski vojaki, preden bodo izginili, organizirali množično stradanje ali splošen masaker, saj so spoznali, da so tudi Italijani s svojimi jetniki ravnali okrutno in neusmiljeno.

Med interniranci so se organizirale manjše bojne enote, ki naj bi preostale taboriščnike »potegnile za seboj«, takoj ko bodo izbruhnili spopadi. 8. septembra 1943, na dan italijanske kapitulacije, so judovski taboriščniki razorožili italijanske straže in evakuirali sojetnike. V naslednjih dneh so tisti, ki so bili sposobni za boj, s pomočjo partizanov zapustili otok Rab in se prebili na ozemlje pod nadzorom Titovih partizanov. Partizani in razoroženi italijanski vojaki so osvobojene taboriščnike vzeli s seboj v Italijo. Določeno število tujih nekdanjih internirancev se je pridružilo Titovim partizanom in sodelovalo v vojnih operacijah proti združenim hrvaško-nemškim ofenzivam.

Med partizanskimi ofenzivami proti Nemcem je padlo tudi nekaj avstrijskih Judov. Dunajski glasbenik Fritz Lunzer pa je v Zagrebu uspešno obnovil svojo kariero. Avstrijski judovski komunisti so bili predani iskanju članov okupacijskih sil, da bi jim sodili v Jugoslaviji. Nemčija, Avstrija in druge države so »komunističnim« oblastem odklonile izročiti ljudi, obtožene »političnih« ali vojaških zločinov. Posledica tega embarga je bila, da je Jugoslavija ukinila svoje dejavnosti in razpustila komisijo.

## **Začetki mednarodnega preučevanja genocida nad Romi (1938–1945)**

**Dr. Vera Klopčič**

*Romski genocid je bil dolgo prezrt v okviru spomina na holokavst in obsodbe nacističnih zločinov med drugo svetovno vojno. Šele pred kratkim so mednarodni dokumenti in pravni akti priznali in obsodili preganjanje Romov kot genocid nad Romi, katerega namen je bilo fizično uničenje Romov. V okviru tega prispevka obravnavam nekatere značilnosti in začetke preučevanja preganjanja Romov v času nacizma. Posebna pozornost je namenjena raziskavam in študijam, ki so jih napisali avtorji z območja bivše Jugoslavije.*

Avtorica izhaja iz podmene, da sta priznanje in vključevanje romskega genocida v spomin na žrtve holokavsta povezani s spremembami pristopa k percepciji posebne etnične in kulturne identitete Romov. Ta proces vključuje spoznavanje zgodovinskih okoliščin in značilnosti romske identitete, razumevanje in spoštovanje identitete Romov ter je vsebinsko povezan z mednarodnim romskim gibanjem kot tudi s politično mobilizacijo Romov, ki se je začela v drugi polovici 20. stoletja. Vendar pa so šele spremembe v razumevanju kulturne raznolikosti kot skupne evropske vrednote in bogastva celotnega kontinenta, ki se zrcali v sodobnem evropskem normativnem in političnem konceptu, omogočile nadaljnje širjenje idej mednarodnega gibanja Romov in vključevanja varstva Romov v pravni okvir manjšinskega varstva.

Zgodovino Romov kot marginalizirane skupine prebivalstva v Evropi zaznamujejo prisilne razselitve, naselitve v izoliranih naseljih in izgoni. Zgodovinske okoliščine so privedle do popolne socialne izključenosti Romov v preteklosti. Njihov nomadski način življenja je bil pogosto opredeljen z besedami kot »klateštvo in beračenje« in se je samodejno povezoval s kaznivimi dejanji, na primer z oznakami, kot je »ciganski način vlomov«. Na območju Avstro-Ogrske je bil v

letu 1888 sprejet poseben zakon o Ciganih, katerega namen je bil zagotoviti »učinkovitejšo obrambo« pred invazijo Romov/Ciganov iz Romunije in Moldavije, ki so bili osvobojeni suženjstva v letih 1855/56. Oblasti so namestile večje število policijskih patrulj v obmejnih regijah, da bi preprečile ilegalne prehode nomadskih družin Romov. Zahtevali so natančno pridobivanje podatkov o migracijah in bivanju Romov v posameznih občinah. Namen teh seznamov je bil bodisi izgon ali prisilno naseljevanje Romov na nekaterih izoliranih območjih.

Preganjanje Romov med drugo svetovno vojno se je stopnjevalo do nacističnih zločinov, katerih cilj je bilo popolno uničenje Romov, ki so jih pošiljali v koncentracijska taborišča ali na prisilno delo. Na evropski ravni se 2. avgust označuje kot mednarodni dan spomina na žrtve genocida Romov v času nacizma v spomin na dan, ko je bilo v koncentracijskem taborišču Auschwitz-Birkenau (»Zigeunerlager«) umorjenih 3000 Romov v enem dnevu.

Zgodovinske, etnične in psihološke dimenzije preganjanja Romov pod nacizmom so bile dolgo prezrte v okviru preučevanja nacističnih zločinov med drugo svetovno vojno. Zbiranje dokumentov, fotografij in pričevanj preživelih Romov se je sistematično začelo šele ob koncu sedemdesetih let prejšnjega stoletja. V tem prispevku smo predstavili glavne rezultate raziskav o genocidu Romov in preganjanju Romov pod nacizmom, ki so jih v zadnjih desetletjih opravili najvidnejši avtorji z območja nekdanje Jugoslavije, med njimi Dragoljub Acković, Rajko Djurić, Alija Krasniči, Danijel Vojak, Filip Škiljan in Vanek Šiftar.

Danes so evropske institucije zavezane, da popravijo zgodovinske krivice, storjene Romom. V zvezi s tem so že sprejeli mednarodne dokumente in pravne akte, v katerih so označili in obsodili preganjanje Romov med drugo svetovno vojno kot genocid nad Romi. V skladu z Resolucijo Evropskega parlamenta o položaju Romov v Evropski uniji (2005) holokavst nad Romi v času nacizma zasluži polno obsodbo, sorazmerno s težo nacističnih zločinov.

Kljub temu je to razmeroma novo področje v teoriji ter raziskovalni in znanstveni sferi. Na akademski ravni je v zadnjih desetletjih ta tema postala zanimiva za preučevanja različnih znanstvenih disciplin. Dogodki v zvezi s postavitvijo spomenikov v spomin na žrtve romskega genocida pa so na žalost pokazali, kako dolga in težavna je pot do priznanja in polnega spoštovanja romskih žrtev. V praksi se je pogosto zapletalo že pri poimenovanju Romov.

Čeprav sta kulturna raznolikost in pluralizem deklarirana kot del skupne vizije sodobnih družb, ki temeljijo na spoštovanju človekovih pravic, etnične identitete in osebnega dostojanstva vsakega posameznika, stereotipi in predsodki do Romov še vedno ustvarjajo konflikte in nasprotovanja v skoraj vseh evropskih državah ter vodijo celo v nasilne rasistične napade na Rome. V vsakdanjem življenju so Romi diskriminirani in stigmatizirani na podlagi etnične pripadnosti. Kljub napredku na mnogih področjih družbenega življenja in na področju varstva človekovih pravic na splošno smo bili v sodobnem času pogosto priča nastajanju in krepitvi posebnega fenomena anticiganizma ali romofobije. Bolj poglobljeno poznavanje zgodovinskih okoliščin je zato nujno potrebno za ozaveščanje prebivalstva o skrajnih posledicah sovraštva do Romov, ki se je izkazalo v uničevalnih načrtih nacizma, ki so imeli za cilj fizično uničenje Romov. Poznavanje zgodovinskih okoliščin bo prispevalo tudi k nadaljnjemu razvoju in emancipaciji romskega naroda v Evropi in k preprečevanju in odpravi sodobnih oblik rasizma, nestrpnosti in ksenofobije.

## **Holokavst in prekmurski Romi**

**Mag. Franc Kuzmič**

*Med drugo svetovno vojno je doletelo tudi prekmurske Rome prisilno delo na madžarskih poljih. Nekateri so dezertirali, tiste, ki so jih prijeli, so ustrelili, nekatere tudi deportirali v Nemčijo. Zagotovo pa preseneča dejstvo, da v času druge svetovne vojne, ki je bila pri nas v letih 1941–1945, po do sedaj znanih podatkih ni bil deportiran in umorjen noben Rom iz Prekmurja. Iz*



*Murske Sobote je bilo namreč 22. marca 1945 poslano kratko poročilo, da na podlagi vsega naštetega zbiranje in izselitev Romov ne prideta v poštev.*

Po nepopolnih podatkih naj bi bilo na svetu v času fašističnih preganjanj izgubilo življenje več kot 3,600.000 Romov.

Glede na različne statistične podatke naj bi bilo v Prekmurju leta 1945 okoli 1100 Romov. Nemci so imeli Prekmurje zasedeno deset dni in so že pripravljali »preselitev Ciganov«, toda načrta niso izvedli, saj so Prekmurje po desetih dneh predali Madžarom. Madžarski žandarji so svoje metode v pokrajini še poostrili. Najprej so Romom prepovedali uporabo dvokoles in vzrejo psov. Poostri so nočne preglede naselij in v naseljih uvedli dnevno in nočno dežurstvo. Dežurne v naseljih so imenovali žandarji sami. Dežurni so morali voditi natančno evidenco gibanja Romov. Ko je začelo Madžarom primanjkovati delavcev, so morali leta 1943 s preostalim prebivalstvom na delo tudi Romi. Selili so jih iz puste v pusto, iz kraja v kraj, dokler jih niso začeli transportirati v Nemčijo. Skupaj z drugimi so dezertirali in se skrivali. Nekatere od njih so izsledili in jih ustrelili.

Nekoliko bolj znosno je postalo jeseni 1944, ko so prevzeli oblast njilaši in so uvedli nacistične metode. Podžupan Železne županije je 7. februarja 1945 prejel dopis, da je treba zaradi varovanja vojaške in zasebne lastnine, zaščite prebivalstva in vojaških tajnosti na območjih, kjer potekajo vojaške operacije, in v zaledju zbrati Rome in jih odstraniti s teh območij. Ostali so lahko le tisti, ki že od davna živijo na teh območjih in se dobro obnašajo. Vsak odpor Romov glede tega povelja se mora zatreti z najradikalnejšimi sredstvi. O tem so morali podrejeni organi poročati podžupanu. Iz Murske Sobote je bilo 22. marca 1945 poslano kratko poročilo, da na tem območju živi nekaj stalno naseljenih Romov, ki pošteno opravljajo poljedelska dela in imajo ali delovno knjižico ali delovno izkaznico, in da med njimi ni nobenega lenuha ne postopača, zato zbiranje in izselitev Romov ne prideta v poštev.

Do sedaj ostaja odprto vprašanje, ali se omenjeno poročilo oziroma dopis nanaša zgolj na Rome v soboškem srezu ali tudi na lendavske. Ker je bilo v lendavskem srezu manj Romov, je bila verjetno situacija podobna, saj bi se ohranila tudi ustna izročila o tem, pa jih ni.

Potemtakem prekmurski Romi k sreči niso bili žrtve holokavsta, kakor se je to dogajalo in zgodilo številnim po Evropi.

Po vojni so se nekateri Romi ob umiku sovražnikovih enot priključili skupinam, ki so odstranjevale mine in druge ovire. Nekaj se jih je celo vključilo v hitro formirane vojaške enote, ki so sodelovale v boju z Nemci in njihovimi zavezniki.

Naslednja zanimivost je, da po vojni ni bil nobeden od Romov obtožen in obsojen zaradi sodelovanja z okupatorjem.

## **Učitelj Andrej Vendramin – neznani pravičnik iz Solkana**

**Mag. Renato Podbersič**

*Prispevek obravnava vlogo Andreja Vendramina (1891–1978) pri reševanju skupine judovskih otrok in mladostnikov med holokavstom. V letih 1942/43 so se zatekli v mestece Nonantola pri Modeni. Njihova pot se je tam srečala s slovensko družino Vendramin iz Solkana, ki je zaradi fašističnega pregona očeta učitelja živela v tem severnoitalijanskem kraju. Andrej Vendramin je dejavno pomagal pri reševanju omenjene skupine Judov, pri čemer je sodeloval s krajevnim duhovnikom in zdravnikom, ki sta po vojni dobila priznanje za svoje nesebično početje. Po koncu druge svetovne vojne se je družina Vendramin vrnila na Primorsko, zato je ostala vloga učitelja Vendramina do danes precej neznana. Trenutno potekajo priprave na proces priznanja njegovih zaslug pri reševanju Judov med holokavstom.*

*Pravičniki med narodi* je izraz, ki označuje Nejudе, ki so med holokavstom pomagali reševati Jude. Izraz je v tesni povezanosti s spominsko, muzejsko in dokumentacijsko ustanovo *Yad Vashem* iz Jeruzalema. Trenutno je status pravičnika priznan 24.356 ljudem iz 47 držav. Postopek za priznanje *pravičnika* se vodi na pobudo in ob pisnem pričevanju rešenca ali prič. Odlok o priznanju izda posebna komisija pri ustanovi Yad Vashem.

Na tem seznamu najdemo sedem Slovencev (Ivan Breskvar, Martina Levec Marković\*, Zora Pičulin, Andrej Tumpej, Uroš Žun ter Ivan in Ljubica Župančič). Izraelska država pravičnike počasti na dva načina. Še živeče povabi na podelitev naziva in jim v Aleji pravičnikov v Yad Vashemu posadi drevo. Spomin na druge pa ohranja z napisom na stene leta 1996 postavljenega Vrta pravičnikov med narodi.

Pomembno vlogo v zgodbi o reševanju judovskih otrok in mladostnikov ima Joseph Ithai Indig (1917–1998), Jud iz Hrvaške. Že v mladosti je postal navdušen sionist. Pred vojno je pomagal številnim Judom, ki so bežali z območja tretjega rajha. Njihove poti so se stekale iz številnih nemških krajev ter dalje preko Jugoslavije in Bolgarije do Istanbula in naprej v zanje obljubljeno deželo.

Spomladi 1941 se je Joseph/Josef Indig, skupaj z okrog štiridesetimi judovskimi sirotami z območja tretjega rajha, znašel v Zagrebu v tedanji NDH, kjer so jih aretirali. Italijanski uradnik mu je tedaj svetoval, naj jih odpelje v italijansko okupacijsko cono. Omenjeni uradnik je Indigu tudi uredil, da je te judovske begunske otroke lahko odpeljal v takratno Ljubljansko pokrajino pod italijansko okupacijo. Italijanska judovska organizacija DELASEM mu je tam priskrbela denar. V začetku julija 1941 je lahko najel stari dvorec Lesno Brdo pri Vrhniki in pripeljal skupino otrok iz Zagreba. Spomladi 1942 so se spopadi preselili tudi v dokaj mirno okolje okoli Lesnega Brda. Razplamtel se je partizanski boj, prihodi italijanskih patrolj so bili vedno pogostejši. Situacija je za mlade in začasne judovske begunce postajala nevarna. Zato so se odločili za njihovo preselitev v Italijo, pobudo je podprl tudi DELASEM. Najeli so impozantno podeželsko Villo Emma v kraju Nonantola pri Modeni, ki je bila tedaj prazna in v zelo slabem stanju. Akcija reševanja mladih judovskih beguncev velja za enega pomembnejših uspehov organizacije DELASEM. Sredi julija 1942 se je Josef Indig skupaj z judovskimi mladostniki vkrcal na vlak in prispel v Villo Emma. Skrb zanje in za namestitev je prevzela judovska skupnost iz Modene. Za prihod otrok so vilo obnovili. Ponovno se je pričel šolski pouk, ki so ga popestrili s hišnimi deli in z delom na polju. Poljedelstvo je namreč predstavljalo pomembno sestavino sionističnega programa.

Spomladi 1943 je dozorela ideja, da bi v Villi Emma pridružili še 33 judovskih otrok, večinoma sirot z območja nekdanje Kraljevine Jugoslavije, ki so prihajali iz Splita. V Nonantolo so prispeli 14. aprila 1943 zvečer z dvema spremljevalcema. Tako je skupno število tam nameščenih mladih judovskih beguncev naraslo na več kot 70.

Življenje beguncev je skoraj nemoteno potekalo do kapitulacije Italije. Ob njeni objavi, 8. septembra 1943, so se prestrašeni judovski begunci v Nonantoli ob pričakovanju prihoda Nemcev obrnili na svojega zdravnika. Krajevni zdravnik Giuseppe Moreali (1895–1980), prepričan antifašist, je bil judovskim beguncem že dolgo zelo naklonjen. Povezal se je z duhovnikom in prijateljem don Arrigom Beccarijem (1909–2005), profesorjem, ekonomom v semenišču in župnikom v Nonantoli. Skupaj sta sklenila pomagati. Hitro je stekla reševalna akcija, v katero se je povezalo še nekaj krajevnih duhovnikov. Skrivališče za večino judovskih beguncev so pripravili v stavbi semenišča pri opatiji, ki je bilo zaradi šolskih počitnic praktično prazno. Ko so 9. septembra 1943 nemške enote vkorakale v Nonantolo, se je približno 30 mlajših judovskih beguncev že skrivalo v semeniški stavbi, kjer si je svoj »štab« uredil tudi Indig. Preostale pa so skrivale zanesljive krajevne družine.

Medtem je stekla akcija odhoda mladih beguncev na varno v Švico. Razdelili so jih na manjše skupine in jih v razmiku nekaj dni oktobra 1943 poslali proti švicarski meji. V začetku leta 1944 so jih s pomočjo Združenja švicarskih sionistov naselili v kraju Bex-les-bains v dolini reke Rone, kjer so dočakali konec vojne. Po vojni so se razselili po svetu, večina pa se je pod Indigovim vodstvom odpravila v Palestino.

V celotno operacijo skrivanja Judov je bilo vpletenih več kot sto domačinov iz Nonantole. Zaradi svojega ilegalnega dela sta bila don Beccari in don Tardini sredi septembra 1944 aretirana in odpeljana v zapor v Bologno. Kljub ostremu zasliševanju nista nikoli priznala svoje vpletenosti v reševanje Judov. Don Beccarija so obsodili na smrt, justifikacije ga je rešil konec vojne. Njune zasluge je priznal tudi Izrael, že leta 1964 sta bila za svoje nesebično delo nagrajena z vpisom med *pravičnike med narodi*.

Tukaj v zgodbo reševanja vstopi učitelj Andrej Vendramin (1891–1978) iz Solkana. Do danes je ostala skoraj neznana njegova vloga pri akciji reševanja judovskih otrok. Maturiral je v Gorici tik pred začetkom prve svetovne vojne in je opravljal učiteljski poklic po primorskih vaseh v zaledju soške fronte. Po prvi svetovni vojni je poučeval na osnovnih šolah na Goriškem, v času fašizma pa je bil kot številni drugi slovenski učitelji premeščen v notranjost italijanske države. Leta 1929 je bil »*Andrea Vendramin, Insegnante Elementare*« od šolskih oblasti poslan v Nonantolo pri Modeni. Z učiteljem je potovala tudi njegova družina, žena in trije otroci (Cvetko/Florijan, Stanislav in Marija). Oče Andrej je takoj prevzel odkazano službeno mesto v Nonantoli, kjer je dokaj mirno kot učitelj poučeval do izbruha druge svetovne vojne. Medvojnih dogodkov se še danes odlično spomni učiteljev najstarejši sin Cvetko Vendramin, tedaj dijak državne šole za geometre v Modeni. Bili so neposredni sosedje zdravnika Morealija, ki se ga Cvetko spominja kot gorečega antifašista. Na dom Vendraminovi je spomladi 1943 prišla ad hoc sestavljena občinska komisija. Povprašali so jih, kateri je njihov »*tako čudno zveneči*« jezik, ki ga govorijo med sabo doma. Šlo je za slovenščino, seveda v primorski različici. Tako so Vendraminovi postali prevajalci za begunske otroke iz t. i. splitske skupine, ki so se sredi aprila 1943 znašli v Villi Emma, večina med njimi jih je govorila srbsko-hrvaški jezik.

Stvari so se spremenile po italijanski kapitulaciji septembra 1943 in posledično nemški zasedbi. V Nonantoli se je nastanila lokalna nemška komanda, ki ji je poveljeval nemški višji častnik. Ta se je slučajno spoprijateljil z učiteljem Andrejem Vendraminom, ki je obvladal tudi nemščino. Od takrat so imeli Vendraminovi mir, ob morebitnih težavah jih je zaščitil ta nemški častnik. Ob že opisanem reševanju Judov v Nonantoli leta 1943 se je temu priključila cela družina Vendramin. Pomagali so pri skrivanju judovskih beguncev in ponarejanju dokumentov zanje.

Učitelj Andrej Vendramin se je po vojni z družino vrnil na Primorsko in do upokojitve nadaljeval poučevanje. Trenutno potekajo priprave na proces priznanja njegovega statusa reševalca Judov med holokavstom. S tem bi se nekdanja triperesna deteljica iz Nonantole pri Modeni, ki je iz človekoljubnih razlogov rešila več kot 70 preganjanih mladih Judov, ponovno združila: duhovnik don Beccari, zdravnik Moreali in učitelj Vendramin, rojak iz Solkana.

- \* V uradni evidenci Yad Vashema je med slovenskimi pravičniki navedenih šest posameznikov, medtem ko je Martina Levec Marković uvrščena na seznam srbskih pravičnikov med narodi.

## **Reševanje prekmurskega Juda Mirka Hiršla 1944–1945: Cigüt, Žilavci in Fartelji**

**Boris Hajdinjak**

*Številke so suhoparna dejstva, in če imamo pred očmi samo te, 6 milijonov žrtev holokavsta ali genocida nad Judi med drugo svetovno vojno izgubi posvečenost in tragiko, ki sta skriti v izgubi milijonov ljudi s pripadajočimi življenji. Iz te neobvladljive množice je treba iztrgati posameznike, jim ponovno dati imena, obraze in življenjske usode. To pa velja tudi za tiste maloštevilne Nejudje, ki so v času popolnega moralnega propada obdržali človeške vrednote in so kljub nevarnosti zase in za svoje družine preganjane Jude reševali. Yad Vashem v Jeruzalemu, največja ustanova na svetu, ki je namenjena preučevanju holokavsta in ohranjanju spomina nanj, od leta 1963 takšnim ljudem podeljuje naziv pravičniki med narodi. Rešitelji prekmurskega Juda Mirka Hiršla*

*izpolnjujejo pogoje, da se prvi iz Prekmurja, slovenske pokrajine z največjim številom žrtev holokausta, pridružijo dosedanjim sedmim\* uradno priznanim slovenskim pravičnikom.*

19. marca 1944 je nemška vojska zasedla Madžarsko. Čeprav je bila glavni vzrok za zasedbo želja, da bi Madžarski preprečili izstop iz nemškega zavezništva, je bila pomemben vzrok tudi »dokončna rešitev judovskega vprašanja«. Madžarska je bila namreč s svojo več kot 750.000-glavo judovsko skupnostjo še edina skoraj nedotaknjena v nacistični Evropi in tako vsekakor »napaka« znotraj nje. Uničenje Judov na Madžarskem se bo v zgodovino zapisalo kot *Ungarnaktion*. Za izvedbo »akcije« je bilo bistvenega pomena sodelovanje nove pronacistične madžarske vlade, ki je v zelo kratkem času s skupaj 107 zakoni Judom sistematično odvzela vse državljanske pravice. Nato so madžarske oblasti v prav tako zelo kratkem času, med 16. aprilom in 3. julijem 1944, aretirale več kot 430.000 Judov takratne Madžarske, jim zaplenile večino premoženja in jih zaprle v gete. Od tod so jih večino po nekaj dneh ali tednih in po ponovnem ropanju s 147 vlaki do 22. julija 1944 odpeljali v taborišče Auschwitz. Okoli 75 odstotkov prispelih, torej okoli 320.000 madžarskih Judov, so takoj po prihodu ubili v plinskih celicah, njihova trupla pa zažgali v krematorijih. Samo Judje, ki so ustrezali kateri o kategorij izvzetih, Judje v Budimpešti, Judje v delovnih enotah madžarske vojske in Judje, ki so jih kljub prepovedi skrili Nejudje, so se izognili deportaciji. Slednji so bili najmanj številčni, saj je bilo na Madžarskem zelo malo Nejudov, ki so si upali tvegati svojo svobodo ali celo življenje za reševanje Judov. V to maloštevilčno skupino ljudi sodijo tudi nekateri do zdaj praktično neznani Prekmurci, ki so rešili Emerika/Mirka Hirschla/Hiršla (1908, Vanča vas–1985, Murska Sobota) in so novi slovenski kandidati za naziv pravičnik med narodi, ki ga podeljuje Yad Vashem.

Najbolj usodna odločitev za prekmurske Jude je bila sprejeta 19. aprila 1944: madžarski okraji, ki so blizu območij, kjer delujejo jugoslovanski partizani (Murska Sobota v Železni županiji, Lendava, Čakovec, Prelog, Letenye in Nagykanizsa v Zalski županiji ter južni deli županij Somogy, Baranja in Bačka-Bodrog), so postali »območje sovražnosti«. To je pomenilo, da je treba Jude s teh območij najprej aretirati in jim tako preprečiti, da bi se zatekli k partizanom. Podobno je od 12. aprila 1944 veljalo tudi za območja na severovzhodu takratne Madžarske, danes dele Ukrajine in Romunije, ki jim je bila blizu Rdeča armada. 25. aprila 1944 zvečer so bili v mestih južnega »območja sovražnosti«, torej tudi v Murski Soboti, sestanki lokalnih oblasti z žandarji, na katerih so se dogovorili o podrobnostih za naslednji dan predvidenih aretacij Judov. Povod za te sestanke je bil madžarski zakon, po katerem žandarji niso smeli vstopiti v stanovanje brez prisotnosti civilne priče, pa tudi predvideni obseg aretacij, zaradi katerega so bili žandarji pripeljani tudi od drugod in so zaradi nepoznavanja krajev potrebovali pomoč domačinov. Kljub temu da je zato pred začetkom aretacij Judov v Murski Soboti precej Nejudov bilo seznanjenih s predvidenim potekom dogodkov, ni nihče o tem obvestil Judov. Ti so sicer pričakovali, da se bo njihov položaj poslabšal, niso si pa predstavljali, kaj natančno jih čaka. Tako je bila večina prekmurskih Judov na svojih domovih, ko so se 26. aprila 1944 ob 5. uri zjutraj začele aretacije. Izjema so bili tisti Judje, ki so ustrezali kateri od kategorij izvzetih ali niso bili doma.

Ko se je Ludvik Cigiüt (1916, Martjanci–1974, ?) 26. aprila 1944 zjutraj kot običajno s kolesom odpeljal iz Martjancev v pet kilometrov oddaljeno Mursko Soboto, kjer je bil zaposlen kot pomočnik pri krojaču Kuštorju, je na ulicah mesta zagledal, kako žandarji peljejo Jude v sinagogo. Cigiüt se je takoj obrnil in odkolesaril nazaj v Martjance ter prijatelju Hirschlu opisal, kaj je videl v Murski Soboti. Hirschl je k begu pozval tudi obe neporočeni sestri, ki sta z njim živeli v Martjancih – Jolanko Hirschl (1910, Rankovci–1944, Dachau) in Renato/Renée Hirschl (1914, Tešanovci–1945, Auschwitz), vendar sta se obe odločili nasprotno in zato vojne nista preživeli. Erika Fürst (1931, Murska Sobota), takrat trinajstletna Hirschlova nečakinja, se spominja, da je njena babica Regina Hirschl (1877, Lemerje–1944, Auschwitz) Jolanko in Renato, ko so ju pripeljali v sinagogo k preostalim članom družine, takoj vprašala za stričevo usodo. Kratko pojasnilo, da je pobegnil, je pomenilo za zaprte majhno olajšanje, saj se je vsaj en član rodbine izognil aretaciji. Po za zdaj znanih podatkih sta se aretaciji izognila še vsaj dva prekmurska Juda Elek/Aleksander Balkányi (1902, Lendava–1945, Murski Črnci) in József/Josip Mayer (1904, Lendava–1945, Murski Črnci), oba iz Lendave, ki sta se skrivala s pomočjo za zdaj neugotovljenih Prekmurcev, vendar nista dočakala konca vojne.

Hirschl se je, potem ko se je izognil aretaciji, skrivil pri svojem znancu trgovcu Aleksandru/Šandorju Žilavcu (1901, Andrejci–1976, ?) v Andrejcih 63 (danes 51). Verjetna razlaga, zakaj se je zatekel

prav k njemu, izhaja iz njunega poslovnega sodelovanja. Pri skrivanju so sodelovali Aleksandrova žena Agnes, roj. Celec (1906, Zenkovci–1954, ?) ter otroka Koloman (1925, Andrejci–1980, ?) in Marija/Mariška, kasneje por. Gregorec (1937, Andrejci). Kot se spominja Irena Kukojca, roj. Kalamar (1925, ?) iz Andrejcev, ki je Hirschla poznala, ker je delala v njegovi trgovini v Martjancih, je bilo splošno znano, da ga niso odpeljali z drugimi Judi in da se nekje skriva. Sosedje Žilavčevih niso vedeli za begunca, ko pa ga je srečal eden od vaščanov, je to povedal V. T., ki ga je nato izdal žandarjem. 19. avgusta 1944, ob prihodu žandarjev je Hirschl sicer pobegnil iz gospodarskega poslopja Žilavčevih, v katerem se je skrival, vendar so ga ujeli v bližnjem vinogradu. Kukojca se spomni, da so dva dni po aretaciji Hirschla pripeljali v Andrejce, ker je pri zaslišanju trdil, da se ni skrival samo pri eni hiši, pač pa vsak dan drugje. S tem je hotel rešiti družino Žilavec, vendar neuspešno, saj so v njenem gospodarskem posloju našli sledove njegovega skrivanja. Žandarji so zato zaprli tudi Aleksandra Žilavca, ki ga sicer ob Hirschlovi aretaciji ni bilo doma. Pri zaslišanju so pretepali tudi njega. Kmalu so oba odpeljali v internacijo. Aleksander Žilavec je internacijo preživel in je bil osvobojen 2. aprila 1945.

Hirschl je iz ujetništva pobegnil in se vrnil v Prekmurje. To pot se je skrival pri bratih Fartelj, Francu (1903, Tešanovci–1976, ?) in Jožefu (1897, Tešanovci–1966, ?), ženi slednjega Mariji, roj. Slavic (1901, Puconci–1977, ?) in verjetno tudi sinu slednjih Štefanu (1922, Tešanovci–1958, ?) v Tešanovcih 111. Verjetna razlaga, zakaj se je zatekel prav k njim, izhaja iz trgovske dejavnosti Farteljevih pred vojno. Čeprav so sosedje kmalu spoznali, da se pri Farteljevih nekdo skriva, ni nihče begunca izdal in je tako dočakal prihod Rdeče armade v Prekmurje v začetku aprila 1945. Kako nevarno je bilo takšno početje tudi še tik pred koncem vojne, dokazuje usoda že omenjenih Judov iz Lendave, Balkányija in Mayerja: tik pred prihodom Rdeče armade sta bila odkrita in nato ustreljena.

Hiršl in njegovi rešitelji so se po vojni redno obiskovali in odnosi med njimi so bili skoraj takšni kot med ožjimi sorodniki. Kolikšna je bila Hiršlova hvaležnost, se kaže v dogodku iz zime leta 1980, ko je bil zaradi pljučnice v bolnišnici. Na lastno odgovornost je odšel na pogreb Kolomana Žilavca, rekoč, da je njegova dolžnost, da gre na pogreb enega izmed svojih rešiteljev. Hiršlova otroka ohranjata stike s potomci rešiteljev svojega očeta še danes.

- \* V uradni evidenci Yad Vashema je med slovenskimi pravičniki navedenih šest posameznikov, medtem ko je Martina Levec Marković uvrščena na seznam srbskih pravičnikov med narodi. Avtor meni, da bi morali med slovenskimi pravičniki omenjati tudi Ludvika Valentinčiča in Franja Punčuha, čeprav sta uvrščena na seznam hrvaških oziroma srbskih pravičnikov med narodi.

## **Judje v vrstah slovenskih komunistov med obema vojnoma – Ali Kardoš**

**Mag. Klemen Brvar**

*Podobno kot v Evropi med obema vojnoma so bili tudi jugoslovanski Judje močno zastopani v vrstah komunistov. Ocenimo lahko, da je bila njihova angažiranost v gibanju proporcionalno tri-do štirikrat večja od njihovega prebivalstvenega deleža. Zaradi relativno majhne judovske skupnosti v Sloveniji lahko tiste, ki so med vojnoma sodelovali s KPJ in so bili judovskega porekla, preštejemo na prste ene roke. S pestro in tragično življenjsko usodo, ki je pravzaprav simptomatična za relacije med komunisti in jugoslovanskimi Judi, tukaj izstopa Ali Kardoš.*

Komunizem lahko z današnje perspektive označimo kot ideologijo, ki je v zadnjem stoletju in pol pomembno zaznamovala globalni zgodovinski razvoj. Hkrati je znano dejstvo, da je bilo med komunisti, tako v ideološki fazi kot kasnejši fazi totalitarnega političnega sistema, veliko takšnih, ki so imeli judovske korenine. A vzrok za množično naklonjenost ni bil Hitlerjev propagandni konstrukt, da je boljševisem le najnovejša krinka judovske prevlade, ampak priložnost, da se posamezniki diskriminirane skupnosti izvijejo iz oklepa omejitev lastne skupnosti. Nobelovec Isaac

B. Singer je pripadnost družbenemu radikalizmu razložil s takratnim širšim prepričanjem, »da bo komunizem enkrat za vselej naredil konec judovskemu problemu. V komunističnem redu ne bo Judov in Nejudov, samo eno združeno človeštvo. Religija in vraževerje bosta postala stvar preteklosti.«<sup>1</sup>

Komunizem je v obdobju med obema vojnama odmeval tako med obubožanimi Judi Vzhodne Evrope kot tudi med judovskimi elitami Zahodne Evrope. Izjema ni bila niti novonastala jugoslovanska država, v kateri je bila judovska skupnost le kamenček v narodnostnem mozaiku. Tudi skupnost sama ni bila enotna, saj je bila poleg osnovne delitve na aškenaške in sefardske Jude razdeljena politično in socialno. Politična angažiranost jugoslovanskih Judov je bila v obdobju med vojnama usmerjena predvsem navznoter, v skupnost, čeprav so nekateri renomirani posamezniki vstopali tudi v širši jugoslovanski politični prostor. Če so v začetku 20. stoletja vodilno vlogo igrali zagovorniki asimilacije, so jih v novih razmerah kmalu zamenjali sionisti, zagovorniki posvetne judovske identitete in vizionarji formiranja judovske države. Združeni so bili v politično pestri Zvezi sionistov Jugoslavije (1919), znotraj katere so eksistirale tudi skupine, ki so Erec Izrael želele vzpostaviti na socialističnih temeljih. Takšna izhodišča so na odmev naletela zlasti med manj premožnimi sefardskimi skupnostmi in med mlajšo generacijo.<sup>2</sup>

Najvplivnejša mladinska organizacija sionistov, ki je gojila takšne nazore, je bila Hašomer hacair (Mladi stražar). Njeni pripadniki so vzdrževali stike s SKOJ-em, podmladkom Komunistične partije Jugoslavije.<sup>3</sup> Ta je, tako kot sionistična zveza, nastala kmalu po formiranju Kraljevine SHS (aprila 1919). Zgodnji politični uspehi KPJ, ki so bili posledica zaostrenih socialnih in nacionalnih razmer, so privedli do tega, da jo je režim konec leta 1920 izobčil in potisnil v ilegalno, v kateri je nato delovala do razpada države. Ne glede na težavni položaj, ki je navznoter odzvanjal v frakcijskih bojih, je KPJ vseskozi ohranjala prisotnost na političnem prizorišču in negovala svoj revolucionarni značaj. Jugoslovanski komunisti so novo državo namreč večino časa dojemali kot protirevolucionarno tvorbo versajske ureditve, ki je bila uperjena proti boljševiški plimi. Na podlagi narodnostnih in socialnih perturbacij so bili prepričani, da je jugoslovanska država najšibkejši člen tega sistema in da so razmere primerljive s tistimi, ki so vladale v predrevolucionarni Rusiji. Čeprav se je morala KPJ vse bolj podrežati Kominterni, preko katere je bila v 20. letih izvedena boljševizacija (ideološka monolitnost), v 30. pa stalinizacija komunističnega gibanja (podreditev posameznih sekcij interesom Sovjetske zveze), so jugoslovanski komunisti vseskozi spretno krmarili med zunanjepolitično Scilo in notranjepolitično Karibdo.

V luči oteženega delovanja je KPJ iskala zaveznike vsepovsod, tudi znotraj judovske skupnosti. Jude je pritegovala iz enakih razlogov kot drugod po Evropi. Po letu 1923 pa se je angažirala tudi na področju najbolj perečega notranjepolitičnega problema: narodnostnega vprašanja in vprašanja manjšin.<sup>4</sup> Takšen kvalitativni preskok je v sebi nosil spoznanje, da imajo narodno čuteče množice za KPJ velik mobilizacijski potencial. V to kategorijo je spadala tudi s sionizmom prepredena jugoslovanska judovska skupnost.

Čeprav so bila 20. leta za jugoslovanske Jude relativno umirjen čas razcveta in jih je s partijo simpatiziralo omejeno število, pa so k zgodnji komunistični agitaciji zagotovo pripomogli nekateri, ki so se udeležili boljševiške in madžarske revolucije. V tem obdobju so se partiji pridruževali predvsem judovski študenti, ki so se s komunizmom okužili med študijem v Pragi in na Dunaju. Tudi domača zbirališča komunistov so bile univerze, predvsem beograjska in zagrebška; h gibanju so na ta način pristopili npr. Moša Pijade in Pavle Pap, poznejša vidna funkcionarja v KPJ, ter Salomon Levi, Alfred Bergman ter Nisim in Moša Albahari, če omenim le najvidnejše.<sup>5</sup>

V 30. letih se je z ekonomsko krizo in z vznikom fašizma vpliv KPJ v judovskih krogih razširil. Poleg judovskih Stražarjev so komunisti tesnejše stike navezovali tudi z nekaterimi drugimi judovskimi organizacijami, med katerimi je izstopala delavska organizacija Matatja iz Sarajeva.<sup>6</sup> Hkrati je KPJ uspelo pritegniti levo inteligenco: npr. Zvonimirja Richtmanna, pesnico Magdo Bošković in Oskarja Daviča, vodilnega jugoslovanskega surrealističnega. Mlade judovske aktiviste pa je pritegnilo tudi zbiranje prostovoljcev za špansko državljansko vojno.<sup>7</sup>

Koliko jugoslovanskih Judov se je v obdobju med vojnama pridružilo KPJ, je zaradi njenega ilegalnega delovanja težko natančno opredeliti. Na precejšnjo pripadnost namigujejo podatki o

obtoženih v političnih procesih, ki jih je režim uprizarjal proti članom KPJ. Pomemben indikator je tudi udeležba v španski državljanski vojni. Na podlagi teh podatkov lahko ocenimo, da je bila angažiranost Judov v vrstah komunistov proporcionalno tri- do štirikrat večja od njihovega prebivalstvenega deleža.<sup>8</sup>

Ker je bil vpliv partije na judovsko skupnost očiten predvsem tam, kjer jih je eksistiralo večje število (Beograd, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Osijek ...), lahko Jude, ki so med vojnama sodelovali s slovenskimi komunisti, vsaj po dostopnih podatkih, preštejemo na prste ene roke. V 30. letih je namreč na območju Dravske banovine živelo od 800 do 1000 Judov, od tega v Prekmurju več kot polovica.<sup>9</sup> V literaturi se tako omenjajo v Ljubljani delujoči Izak Baruha Sion<sup>10</sup> in murskosoboška sindikalista Ignac in Zoltan Boroš, ki sta leta 1941 končala v taborišču Jadovno.<sup>11</sup> Navedena sta še brata Evgen Jeni Kardoš in Vladimir Aladar (Ali) Kardoš.<sup>12</sup> Življenjska pot slednjega je za pripadnika jugoslovanske judovske skupnosti, ki je simpatiziral s komunisti, pravzaprav simptomatična.

Ali Kardoš, eden redkih prekmurskih Judov, ki so se politično profilirali zunaj skupnosti, se je rodil 4. februarja 1914 v Murski Soboti v obubožani meščanski družini malih trgovcev. Po izgubi očeta v prvi svetovni vojni je majhno trgovino upravljala njegova mati. Družina ni bila ortodoksna, a je negovala judovske običaje. Po končani ljudski šoli je Kardoš izobraževanje nadaljeval na trgovski šoli v Čakovcu, kjer se je v okviru tamkajšnje dobro organizirane judovske občine navzel sionizma. Po vrnitvi domov je, po posredovanju enega od sorodnikov, opravljal prakso v Benkovi kreditni banki. Čeprav je s komunizmom simpatiziral že prej, se je njegova pripadnost gibanju izkristalizirala, ko se je zaposlil v upravi Cvetičeve tovarne konfekcije. Hkrati ga je njegov mladostni prijatelj in komunist Rudi Čačinovič pritegnil med t. i. mladoprekmurce, ki so v pokrajini razpečevali komunistično literaturo. Zaradi agitacije med delavkami in pomoči pri organizaciji stavke gradbenikov je službo leta 1934 izgubil. Že leto prej je bil sprejet v prvo celico KPJ v Prekmurju in postal njen sekretar. Leta 1934 se je udeležil znane pokrajinske konference KPJ v Goričanah, na kateri je srečal Josipa Broza in Edvarda Kardelja. Med letoma 1934 in 1936 je sodeloval v Ljudski pravici, listu, ki ga je KPJ izdajala v Lendavi in nato v Ljubljani. V glavnem mestu se je družil z znanima slovenskima komunistoma Marijo in Jožo Vilfanom ter pisateljem Tonetom Čufarjem (Kardoš je tudi sam pesnikoval in objavljajl v Mladem Prekmurcu). Kot delegat se je udeležil prve konference KPS v Šmiglovi zidnici leta 1938 in druge v Joštovem mlinu na prelomu v 1940. Ko je bilo leta 1939 ustanovljeno prekmursko okrožje KPS, je postal njegov član. Oblasti so ga kot komunisto leta 1940 internirale v taborišče Bileća, po kapitulaciji Jugoslavije aprila 1941 pa se je vrnil v Prekmurje. V drugi polovici istega leta so ga po izdaji soboškega Kulturbunda aretirale madžarske okupacijske oblasti in ga poslale v zapor v Sombotel, kjer so ga mučili. Medtem ko je bil konfiniran, je njegovo delo nadaljeval brat Evgen Jeni, ki mu je spodletela likvidacija soboškega župana Ferdinanda Hartnerja. Jeni je bil po izdaji obešen pred portalom soboškega gradu. Po prihodu iz zapora se je Ali Kardoš politično pasiviziral in se kot večina drugih prekmurskih Judov ni priključil OF.<sup>13</sup> Zadnja leta njegovega življenja so ovita v meglo: v začetku leta 1944 so Kardoša poslali na prisilno delo v rudnik Bor v vzhodno Srbijo, od tam pa naj bi ga bila nemška uprava rudnika poslala v koncentracijsko taborišče Flossenbürg na Bavarskem, kjer naj bi bil februarja 1945 umrl.<sup>14</sup>

Ali Kardoš je kot mnogi drugi pripadniki jugoslovanske judovske skupnosti h komunistom pristopil v začetku 30. let, ko je KPJ začela delovati po t. i. novem kurzu – širjenju političnega delovanja med množice v okviru nastajajoče ljudske fronte. Zlasti njegov angažma pri listu Ljudska pravica, tej etapi v formiranju vsenarnodnega gibanja, ki so ga sčasoma komunisti popolnoma prevzeli, priča, da je bila takratna usmeritev KPJ uspešna tudi na slovenski periferiji in med narodnimi manjšinami. Vsekakor pa je Kardoš s provenienco obubožane trgovske družine in kot odločen protifašist v komunističnem gibanju iskal tisto, kar so iskali njemu podobni po vsej Evropi: »Gibanje je doživljal kot bratstvo med ljudmi, ne glede na raso in izvor.«<sup>15</sup>

1 Singer, Isaac Bashevis: Ljubezen in izgnanstvo. Avtobiografska trilogija (Ljubljana, 2011), Modrijan, 69–70. Več o tem in o poznejših čistkah v vrstah judovskih boljševikov v: Pipes, Richard: Kratka zgodovina ruske revolucije (Ljubljana, 2011), Študentska založba, 308–309; Rubenstein, J., in Naumov, V. P.: Stalin's secret Pogrom. The postwar inquisition of the Jewish Anti-fascist Committee (New Haven, London, 2005), Yale University Press, 2–3.

- 2 Židovi na tlu Jugoslavije. Razstavni katalog (Zagreb, 1988), ur. S. Goldstein, MTM, 171–173 (navajam: Židovi na tlu Jugoslavije).
- 3 Ibid., 173.
- 4 Goldstein, Ivo: Židovi u Zagrebu 1918–1941 (Zagreb, 2004), Novi liber, 292 (navajam: Goldstein, Židovi u Zagrebu).
- 5 Romano, Jaša: Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941–1945. Žrtve genocida i učesnici narodnooslobodilačkog rata (Beograd, 1980), Savez jevrejskih opština Jugoslavije, 20–21 (navajam: Romano, Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941–1945).
- 6 Goldstein, Židovi u Zagrebu, 292–293; Židovi na tlu Jugoslavije, 173, 175.
- 7 Židovi na tlu Jugoslavije, 175. Več o tem: Romano, Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941–1945, 19–54.
- 8 Židovi na tlu Jugoslavije, 174.
- 9 Pančur, Andrej: Judovska skupnost v Sloveniji na predvečer holokavsta (Celje, 2011), ZDC, 5 (navajam: Pančur, Judovska skupnost v Sloveniji na predvečer holokavsta).
- 10 Ibid., 136; Romano, Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941–1945, 482.
- 11 Romano, Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941–1945, 53, 339.
- 12 Ibid., 404–405.
- 13 V Prekmurju je OF podpirala le peščica Judov iz Murske Sobote in Lendave. Kljub dejstvu, da jih je drugod po zasedeni Jugoslaviji v odporiško gibanje vstopilo veliko število (in so se s tem izognili holokavstu), pa so se prekmurški Judje zanašali na manj rigidni antisemitizem Madžarske. Število je začelo naraščati šele po novembru 1942, ko so madžarske okupacijske oblasti začele mobilizacije v delavske bataljone. Več o tem: Toš, Marjan: Zgodovinski spomin na prekmurske Jude (Ljubljana, 2012), ZRC, 70 (navajam: Toš, Zgodovinski spomin na prekmurske Jude).
- 14 Čačinovič, Rudi: Zgodbe minulega sveta (Murska Sobota, 1999), samozaložba, 124–134 (navajam: Čačinovič, Zgodbe minulega sveta); Toš, Zgodovinski spomin na prekmurske Jude, 55, 64–65, 67; Romano, Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941–1945, 404.
- 15 Čačinovič, Zgodbe minulega sveta, 130.

## Učenje o holokavstu in spominjanje nanj – primeri dobre prakse iz Maribora

### Dr. Marjan Toš

*Kljub majhnosti slovenskega ozemlja in maloštevilni pred- in povojni judovski populaciji na Slovenskem lahko slovensko zgodovino holokavsta opišemo kot mikrokozmos zgodovine holokavsta v srednji Evropi in jo celo moramo. Spomin na holokavst in na tragedijo genocida pa ne sme biti le spomin na žrtve, ampak tudi na tiste, ki so to največjo tragedijo iz prve polovice 20. stoletja preživeli. Dolžnost zdajšnjih generacij in tudi naloga zgodovinopisja je, da 67 let po koncu holokavsta in zaradi odhajajočih generacij preživelih preprečimo izgubo spomina na eno najtemnejših plati zgodovine minulega stoletja. K temu lahko največ pripomore delo z mladimi na osnovnih in srednjih šolah. V Mariboru imamo o tem že nekaj primerov pozitivne prakse iz OŠ Draga Kobala in Pesnica ter iz Prve gimnazije Maribor. V letu 2013 se omenjenim šolam pridružuje še OŠ Martina Konšaka iz Maribora.*

Od leta 2007 smo sodelavci mariborske Sinagoge aktivno vključeni v posebno projektno skupino Ministrstva za zunanje zadeve RS, ki si prizadeva za mednarodno sodelovanje na področju izobraževanja, spominjanja holokavsta in raziskovanja o njem. Narejena je bila temeljna študija o sedanjem stanju, razmerah in nakazanih usmeritvah na kratki in dolgi rok, s katero je razpolagala slovenska stran na poti do polnopravnega članstva v mednarodni projektni skupini za učenje o holokavstu. Naši partnerski državi sta bila Madžarska in Izrael, Slovenija pa je seveda povsem odprta za sodelovanje z vsemi drugimi članicami omenjene skupine. Posebno bogastvo te skupine je celovit pristop k obravnavanju genocida, saj se ne omejuje le na holokavst Judov, ampak že v izhodiščih zajema tudi Rome, Sinte in druge žrtve rasnega preganjanja in množičnega uničevanja prebivalstva na okupiranih območjih med drugo svetovno vojno. To je pomembno tudi za slovenske razmere. V Sinagogi Maribor namreč že dalj časa snujemo znanstveno srečanje, na katerem bi celovito predstavili tudi genocid nad slovenskimi Romi med drugo svetovno vojno. Zelo koristna se mi zdi ciljna usmeritev skupine – naslonitev na uradne ustanove in organizacijo civilne



družbe, zlasti zaradi navezave na izobraževalne, znanstvene in druge ustanove, ki se strokovno ukvarjajo s človekovimi pravicami in njihovimi kršitvami – in holokavst je bil zagotovo najhujša oblika kršenja človekovih pravic in osebnih svoboščin. Sploh če se zavedamo obsega in posledic teh kršitev in še posebno velikanske razsežnosti in uničevalnih posledic holokavsta za Jude in vse človeštvo. Tem ciljem sledimo v Sinagogi vse od 2008., v letu 2010 pa smo uvedli strokovno široko zastavljen mednarodni projekt *ŠOA – SPOMINJAJMO SE*. V Mariboru smo se lotili celovite znanstvene predstavitve holokavsta na Slovenskem s posebnim poudarkom na preganjanju Judov v Ljubljanski pokrajini, na Goriškem, Štajerskem in v Prekmurju. Referati uglednih raziskovalcev, zgodovinarjev, sociologov in antropologov so izšli v zajetnem zborniku in bodo tako trajno dostopni zainteresirani strokovni in širši laični javnosti. Slednja se za to tematiko vedno bolj zanima. Uvedli smo tudi celovite predstavitve slovenskih pravičnikov. Doslej smo predstavili Uroša Žuna in Andreja Tumpeja. Januarja 2012 smo v Mariboru postavili še *Tlakovce spomina* z imeni 12 mariborskih žrtev holokavsta. To je bila nadvse odmevna pobuda, ki je naletela na velik odmev v javnosti in pomeni začetek trajnejšega in sistematičnega ohranjanja zgodovinskega spomina na tragedijo genocida, v kateri je bila v dobršni meri uničena predvojna slovenska judovska skupnost. Skupaj je holokavst terjal 558 žrtev, od katerih jih je 481 umrlo v koncentracijskih taboriščih. Med njimi je bilo tudi 69 mladoletnih (otrok). Največji je bil delež prekmurskih Judov, od katerih so po letu 1945 ostali le še ostanki ostankov. Ob tem želimo posebej izpostaviti svoje dobre izkušnje pri sodelovanju s šolami, zlasti z OŠ Draga Kobala v Mariboru in OŠ Pesnica iz Pesnice pri Mariboru. V letu 2013 se jima pridružuje še OŠ Martina Konšaka iz Maribora, ki je bila že angažirana v kulturnem programu pri svečani postavitvi Tlakovcev spomina. Mladi želijo sodelovati v tovrstnih programih in menimo, da je odprtih še veliko novih priložnosti. Zlasti pri projektnih nalogah, ki se jih lotevajo osnovnošolci. Sinagoga je letos podprla tudi gostujočo razstavo Ana Frank, ki januarja 2013 gostuje na Prvi gimnaziji. Načrtujemo tudi sodelovanje z drugimi srednjimi šolami, predvsem z II. in III. gimnazijo Maribor.

S projektom *ŠOA – SPOMINJAJMO SE*, ki je bil zasnovan v Sinagogi v okviru sodelovanja s Prvo gimnazijo Maribor, z Inštitutom za novejšo zgodovino v Ljubljani in s Študijskim centrom za narodno spravo v Ljubljani, smo nakazali kompleksnost novega pristopa k obravnavi posameznih tematskih sklopov o holokavstu oziroma genocidu. Zdaj nas prvenstveno zanimajo tudi zgodovinopisno gledano šibke strani tega poglavja 20. stoletja, predvsem pa nekateri zgodovinski nastavki, ki smo se jih začeli lotevati znotraj znanstvenega pristopa k prezentaciji te tematike, in sicer: zgodovina holokavsta: pogoji (vzpon fašizma in nacizma), rasno čiščenje nemškega rajha, družbena diskriminacija, brezpravnost, razlastitve in izsiljena emigracija Judov iz nemškega rajha; koncentracija v geta, množične usmrtitve na zasedenih vzhodnih ozemljih, rasizem in antisemitizem: strukture drugačnosti v človeških odnosih (konflikti), vojna in množično nasilje; kako se spominjati holokavsta in učiti o njem, holokavst v kontekstu povojnih evropskih političnih procesov; antinacizem in antifašizem kot ideološka temelja združene Evrope, travma preživelih; medgeneracijska travma množičnega nasilja, množične deportacije – historični nastavki, obseg in posledice, zgodovinska, sociološka in psihološka analiza nacističnega uničevalnega sistema, moralna konstitucija nacističnih iztrebljevalcev – odnos med njimi in deportiranci (z zornega kota posameznika); odnos žrtev-preganjalec, degradacija žrtev – lažni občutki moči in boj za preživetje, znanstvena podpora množičnemu uničevanju in zatiranju – tehnologije smrti in mehanizmi iztrebljanja; zloraba znanosti v nacističnih taboriščih in podpora umorom, individualna in kolektivna krivda za množično uničevanje, zanikanje holokavsta – genocid nad Judi je zgodovinska laž (izum zavezniške in judovske propagande); holokavst in razredno nasilje (nacistično prilagajanje azijski praksi) – Hitlerjeva obsesivna identifikacija judovstva z boljševizmom, holokavst in slovensko zgodovinopisje.

Tem nastavkom bo treba postopoma dodati zgodovinopisno obravnavo in jih na različne načine prezentirati javnosti. Ena od oblik je tudi muzejska oziroma muzeološka, pri čemer pa menim, da je klasične razstave treba nadomestiti z modernejšimi načini in tehnologijo. Sodobna multimedija postaja nepogrešljiva in omogoča vsestransko doseganje zelenih učinkov, še posebno edukativnih. O klasični postavitvi muzejskih razstav pa je treba povedati, da je muzejskih predmetov zelo malo in da večina tovrstnih razstav sloni na arhivskem gradivu. Strinjam se s tezo, da zgodovina holokavsta v Sloveniji doslej še ni bila docela povedana. Treba jo bo napisati neobremenjeno, objektivno in celovito, tako, da jo bo mogoče jemati kot del zgodovine holokavsta v srednji oziroma jugovzhodni Evropi. Tega dela se lahko mirne duše lotimo – imamo dovolj relevantnih

strokovnjakov, ki bodo ta segment še vedno spregledane narodne zgodovine obdelali tako, da bo uporabna za maloštevilne slovenske Jude, predvsem pa bo služila za učenje o holokavstu in bo prvenstveno namenjena učencem, dijakom in študentom. V nadaljevanju pa posamezni deli tudi zahtevnejšim znanstvenim in strokovnim krogom za sistematično, načrtno in transparentno obveščanje domače in tuje javnosti o Judih, holokavstu in antisemitizmu. O slednjem je tudi v Sloveniji še veliko nejasnega, zato dela v Mariboru ne bo zmanjkalo.

# The Middle European Jewish Refugees and the Shoah in the Ustasas' "Independent State of Croatia"

**Dr Anna Maria Gruenfelder**

*This text presents a little-known part of the Shoah, namely the fate of Jews fleeing from the German Reich, Austria and from other countries occupied by Germany in 1941 to the "Independent State of Croatia". Persecution of the Jews by the Croatian Ustasas, in general, has been studied by the German historians and by their colleagues from the Anglo-Saxon countries, and is therefore well known – but not so much the fact that there were also Jewish refugees in Croatia from other countries who were included into the "solution of the Jewish question". German historians mainly studied documents – sources of military and police provenience available in German archives, while those from Anglo-Saxon countries have concentrated on key witnesses and survivors. So it was up to me to utilize the huge records in the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb created by the central state authorities. Of course, I did not ignore the recollections and personal reports of witnesses.*

## 1. Foreign Jewish refugees persecuted by the Ustasas

The records I mention allowed me to study the measures of the military and police bodies of the Ustasas' regime against foreign Jews: Official campaigns against their physical presence, official demands to remove them and to deport them into concentration camps because of their "animosity" against Croatia and the Croatian authorities, or as exploiters who force prices up... the classic prejudices against Jews. It was during the first days after the proclamation of the "Independent State of Croatia", precisely on 14 April 1941, when full-scale deportation of foreign Jews into improvised concentration camps started.

The sources in the Croatian State Archives contain biographical data for foreign Jews, thus enabling us to portray individual fates of Middle-European Jewish refugees in Croatia: approximately 500 persons could be identified as refugees, either born in Austria (within the borders of 12 March 1938, the day before the Wehrmacht occupied Austria) or having had the right of domicile in Austria and born in Poland or Czechoslovakia. Most of them escaped from Austria immediately after German occupation; they were mainly adults between 40-60 years of age (approximately 60%), as well as a smaller number of children, young people, children of school age, apprentices and students. Most of the adults were merchants or craftsmen, their spouses were housewives. A very small number of them were lawyers, attorneys, senior officers, pharmacists, medical doctors and musicians.

Approximately 200 persons were deported to Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška; for more than a hundred foreign Jews the author succeeded in finding evidence that they had perished in Jasenovac as early as 1941: The post-war Yugoslav State Commission, committed to investigate crimes of the occupational forces and their domestic collaborators, excavated the mass-graves in order to identify the victims. The Croatian historians have been doubting about the reliability of the Commission's findings (as a consequence of political abuse during the post-war peace conferences), I have paid particular attention to the identification methods and found out that the Commission itself was aware of the unreliability of its figures: It was able to carry out its task only in cases, where co-inmates or members of the families of the victims could bear testimony. However, memories of ex-inmates rarely included foreign inmates, therefore we must conclude that foreign Jews survived in the camps for a very short time, or were murdered soon after arrival. Approximately a hundred of foreign Jewish women lost their lives in the concentration camps for women Loborgrad and Đakovo – as victims of an intentionally introduced typhoid epidemic.

As a result of my research, I realized with certainty that the Ustasas were not directly forced, but surely were "expected" by the German occupational forces to resolve the Jewish question. Key witnesses affirm that the Ustasas and the chief of the State himself were eager to demonstrate

both their efficiency and loyalty to the Germans (who had supported establishing of the Independent State of Croatia and Pavelić's position as its leader): "In what manner could the Ustashes better express their thankfulness to the Germans than by persecuting those who were persecuted by the Germans?"

The sources in the Croatian State Archives also suggest another conclusion: The impression of the witnesses should be taken into account – however, it was the "fabulous" Jewish wealth the Ustashes were after; the Ustashes tried hard to prevent deportation of the Jews to Germany, as the Germans would also have taken the money and valuables of those Jews.

Written testimonies of German military and police officers left behind when the Germans and the Ustasha leaders hurriedly left Zagreb, enable us to differentiate between the part of the Ustashes and the part of the Germans within the framework of "Endlösung". During 1941 and until mid 1942, the Germans tolerated the efforts of the Ustashes to come to an end with the Jews: "Danica", the camps in the Lika region and on the Island of Pag, and finally the complex of five camps in Jasenovac and its surroundings were the camps for forced labour. However, forced labour included starvation and thus "extermination through labour". Exhumations from the mass graves around the concentration camps Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška, performed after May 1945 by the special State Commission for researching the crimes of the occupation forces and their domestic collaborators, proved that the victims were killed in mass liquidations as well as by internment-related diseases and famine, and that a huge number of mass liquidations took place in autumn 1941 and in early summer of 1942. Jewish women died as victims of a typhoid epidemic in the concentration camps of Lobargrad (near Varaždin) and Đakovo; it has been supposed that typhus had been introduced into these camps by inmates from the camp for women Stara Gradiška (although this supposition cannot be proved by dependable documents). The victims of the epidemic could just be identified, thanks to the courage of the municipal mortician from Đakovo (whose name is remembered as Stjepan Kolb) who marked each funeral place – a unique example of piety towards Jews under the Ustashes' regime.

In 1942, the German occupational authorities in Croatia, namely the representatives of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt (RSHA), started the implementation of the "Wannsee Conference" decisions on actual extermination: From August 1942 until the end of 1944, two extensive deportations and some further transports, organized predominantly by the police "Einsatzgruppen" of the Gestapo, passed from the Croatian camps towards Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen. Very few Yugoslav Jews returned from there. Survivors told the State Commission that non-Yugoslav Jews in Yugoslav deportation trains were immediately killed.

As a conclusion it must be pointed out that the Ustashes – contrary to traditional interpretation in Croatia – were not merely German puppets. They also presented themselves as very committed agents of their own interests, gaining a large measure of independence in managing persecution and extermination in their concentration camps. The genocide in Croatia was their self-made program, although it was inspired by the Nazi ideology.

## 2. Territories in former Yugoslavia occupied by the Italian Army

Italian occupational authorities played a significant role in rescue efforts in favour of the Jews from all over the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia and from Middle Europe who succeeded in escaping from the Independent State of Croatia. The Second Italian Army, located in Slovenia, Dalmatia and parts of the Croatian Littoral, decided to resist German pressures for the sake of Italy's honesty and authority. Its commanders persuaded the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the War Ministry and the General Headquarter of the Italian Army and won support for their decision to protect the Jews "under the flag of Italy" (Ciano apparently supported the plan), while Mussolini continued to hesitate. The decision of the Italian Army to refuse any German attempt of pressure was a unique example (demonstrated not only in Dalmatia, but also in similar cases in the South of France, in Greece and in Libya).

From the reports of key witnesses and survivors, we have found that saving Jews from deportation, in spite of German diplomatic pressure, the Italian Army in the occupied territories of the former

Yugoslavia gathered at least 2500 foreign Jewish refugees, among them approximately 200 from Middle Europe (Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland etc.). The Italian Army interned them in the concentration camps in Dalmatia and in the Littoral District of Croatia – the concentration camps that were in no sense comparable with the concentration camps of the Ustasas and the Germans. Although the authorities of the “Independent State of Croatia” and their German allies spared no efforts to seize the Jews from the Italian occupation zone, the Italian Army sabotaged their activities. The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs opposed to German pressure, refusing to carry out an agreement between the governments of Germany and Croatia on rendering of all Croatian, Yugoslav and foreign Jews to the Croatian or German authorities.

On 28 October 1942, the Italian soldiers collected the Jewish refugees in the Croatian Littoral District in order to intern them in the concentration camp of Kraljevica. The Jews in Dalmatia, in Dalmatian cities and villages, remained in their domiciles as “interned persons” under the protection of the Italian Army. However, in spring 1943, the frontline to the German-Croatian offensives against the partisans threatened to break down, what meant that the Germans would have free entrance to Dalmatia.

Members of the Communist party among the prisoners established a military organization in order to prepare themselves for the liberation. They suspected the Italian soldiers of planning to let them starve or to carry out a general massacre before they would disappear, because it became clear to them how brutally and ruthlessly the Italians, too, had treated their prisoners.

Among the prisoners small fighting units were formed, which were supposed to “sweep along” the other prisoners as soon as clashes broke out. On 8 September 1943, the day of the Italian capitulation, the Jewish inmates disarmed the Italian guards and evacuated their co-prisoners. During the next days, with the help of partisans, those who were fit for fighting, left the Island of Rab and moved to the territory under the control of Tito's partisans. It was both the partisans and the disarmed Italian soldiers who took the liberated ex-inmates with them to Italy. A certain number of foreign ex-inmates joined Tito's partisans and took part in war operations against the combined Croatian-German offensives.

A few Austrian Jews died in the partisans' fight against the Germans. The Viennese musician Fritz Lunzer succeeded in re-starting his career in Zagreb. Austrian Jewish communists committed themselves to searching for members of the occupational forces in order to bring them to justice in Yugoslavia: Germany, Austria and other countries refused to render persons accused of “political” or military crimes to the “communist” authorities. As a consequence of this embargo, Yugoslavia cancelled its own activities and dissolved the Commission.

## **The Origins of the International Research about the Roma Genocide (1938–1945)**

**Dr Vera Klopčič**

*The genocide of the Roma has long been neglected within the scope of the remembrance of the Holocaust and Nazi crimes during the Second World War. Only recently, international documents and legal acts recognized and condemned the persecution of the Roma as the Roma genocide, which had been designed to physically eliminate the Roma of Europe. In the context of this paper we discuss some features and origins of the research on persecution of Roma during the Nazi times. Special attention is given to the research and studies, carried out by authors from ex-Yugoslavia.*

The paper is based on the supposition that the process of recognition of the Roma genocide and of its inclusion in the remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust is linked with the changes in the

approach towards perception of specific ethnic and cultural identity of the Roma. This process includes learning about the historical background, characteristics of the Roma identity, understanding and respecting the Roma identity, and is essentially linked with the international Roma movement as well as with the political mobilization of the Roma that started in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, only the emerging understanding of the cultural diversity as a common European heritage, reflected in the modern normative and political European concept, made possible a wider expansion of the ideas of the international Roma movement and inclusion of Roma population protection in the context of minority rights protection.

The history of Roma in Europe is marked by forced relocations, segregated settlements or expulsions of Roma/Gypsies as a marginalised part of the population. The historic circumstances led to the total social exclusion of Roma in the past. Their nomadic lifestyle was often defined by words as “vagrancy and begging”, automatically associated with criminal offences, e.g. with “gypsy style burglaries”. On the territory of Austro-Hungarian empire a special law on Gypsies was adopted in 1888, aiming to provide “efficient defence” against an expected invasion of Roma/Gypsies from Romania and Moldavia who were released from slavery after 1855/1856. Increasing numbers of police patrols were sent to border regions to prevent illegal crossings of nomadic Roma families. The authorities demanded accurate collecting of data on the migration and settling of Roma in different municipalities. The purposes of these lists were either expulsions or forceful settling of the Roma in remote and isolated areas.

Persecution of the Roma during the WWII escalated to Nazi crimes intended to completely exterminate the Roma population. Roma were sent to concentration and force labour camps. In Europe now, the second of August is marked as the international day of commemoration of the victims of the Roma genocide during the Nazi regime, in memory of the day when in the concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau (the “Zigeunerlager”) three thousand Roma were murdered in one day.

The historical, ethnic and psychological dimensions of persecution of the Roma under Nazism had long been neglected in research of the Nazi crimes committed during the Second World War. Collecting of documents, photographs and testimonies of survivors of the Roma genocide, was systematically started only towards the end of the nineteen seventies. In this survey we present the main results of research of the Roma genocide and of persecution of the Roma under Nazism, published by some authors from the territory of ex-Yugoslavia in the past decades, namely by Dragoljub Acković, Rajko Djurić, Alija Krasnići, Danijel Vojak, Filip Škiljan and Vanek Šiftar.

Nowadays, the European institutions are committed to make up for the historical injustices against the Roma. In this context they have adopted international documents and legal acts recognizing and condemning the persecution of the Roma during WWII as the Roma genocide. According to the European Parliament Resolution on the Situation of the Roma in the European Union (2005), the Roma Holocaust deserves full recognition and condemnation, commensurate with the gravity of the Nazi crimes.

Nevertheless, it is a relatively new field of theory, research and scientific work. In recent decades this topic has become increasingly interesting for the study of various scientific disciplines at the academic level. Events around the monuments commemorating the victims of the Roma genocide unfortunately show how long and difficult is the path to recognition and full respect for the Roma victims in practice. There have often been complications even with the very notion of the name of Roma people itself.

Although the cultural diversity and pluralism are declared as a common vision in contemporary societies, based on respect for human rights, ethnic identity and personal dignity of every individual, stereotypes and prejudices against Roma still generate conflicts, rejection by the majority population, and even violent racist attacks against Roma in almost all European countries. In everyday life, Roma are discriminated and stigmatized on the basis of their ethnicity. Despite progress in many areas of social life and the protection of human rights in general, we have been witnessing emergence and growth of a specific phenomenon of *anti-Gypsyism* or *Romaphobia*. More in-depth knowledge of the historical circumstances is therefore needed to raise public

awareness about the extreme consequences of hatred against Roma, which had led to the destructive plans of Nazism during the World War II, designed to physically exterminate the Roma of Europe. However, it will also contribute to the further emancipation and development of the Roma nation in Europe and to prevention or elimination of contemporary forms of racism, intolerance and xenophobia.

## **The Holocaust and the Roma of the Prekmurje Region**

**Mag Franc Kuzmič**

*During World War II, also the Roma of Prekmurje Region were forced to work on Hungarian fields. Quite a few of them deserted; some were captured and shot, others were deported to Germany. But the surprising fact is that – according to present data – no Roma of the Prekmurje Region were deported or killed during World War II which, in Slovenia, lasted from 1941 till 1945. Namely, on 22 March 1945 a dispatch was sent from Murska Sobota stating that, for various reasons, rounding up and deportation of the Roma was not an option.*

In the period of the Fascist persecution, judging by incomplete data, more than 3,600.000 Roma lost their lives throughout the world.

In 1945, according to various statistical data, roughly 1,100 Roma lived in the Prekmurje Region. In the ten days of April 1941, after the Germans occupied this territory, they were already planning for “resettling the Gypsies”, but the plan was not carried out, because the area was then handed over to Hungarians. The Hungarian gendarmes took control over the region with ever tighter methods. Their first two measures were to stop the Roma from using any bicycles and dog breeding was also forbidden. They tightened up their night inspections of the settlements. They introduced day and night surveillance. The guards in the settlements were appointed by the gendarmes and they were obliged to maintain a proper account of the Roma whereabouts. In 1943, when the Hungarians started experiencing a shortage of workers, the Roma were forced to go to work with the rest of the population. They were relocated from one Puszta to another, from place to place, until they were started to be transported to Germany. Along with others, the Roma resorted to deserting and hiding. Some of them were found and shot.

In the autumn of 1944, when the so-called Nyilasas took power in Hungary and introduced Nazi methods, however, the situation eased up a little. On 7 February 1945, the deputy mayor of Vas County received a message that in order to safeguard the military and private property, and to protect the population and military secrets in the areas of military operations and in the hinterlands, the Roma from these areas had to be rounded up and removed. Only those who had been living there for a considerable time and were well behaved, could remain. Any resistance regarding this order from the part of the Roma must be suppressed by the most radical means. On this matter, the subordinate officials had to report to the deputy mayor. On 22 March 1945, a message was sent from Murska Sobota reporting that, in this area, several Roma were permanently settled and were doing honest farm work and were in possession of employment record books or labour cards and that among them there were no idlers, no loafers, therefore rounding up and deporting these Roma was not an option.

Up until now the question remains, whether the above-mentioned message was referring only to the Roma in the area of Murska Sobota or also to those from Lendava. Since there were fewer Roma in the Lendava district, the situation there was probably similar, otherwise there would have been accounts of that, but there are none.

It may therefore be concluded that the Roma of the Prekmurje Region were fortunately not victims of the Holocaust – the fate that befell numerous Roma across Europe.

After the war, when the enemy troops were retreating, some Roma joined the teams removing mines and other obstacles. Some of them had even joined the partisans and took part in the fight against Germans and their allies.

Another interesting fact is that, after the war, none of the Roma was ever accused or convicted for collaborating with Germans.

## **The Teacher Andrej Vendramin from Solkan – One of the Unknown Righteous Among the Nations**

**Mag Renato Podbersič**

*The paper examines the role of Andrej Vendramin (1891–1978) in saving a group of Jewish children and youngsters from the Holocaust. In 1942/43 these children took refuge in the town of Nonantola, near Modena. There their path crossed with the one of the Slovenian Andrej Vendramin from Solkan and his family. Vendramins lived there because the father Andrej, a teacher, had been removed from his teaching post in Solkan and sent to Nonantola by the fascist regime. In Nonantola, Andrej Vendramin helped the mentioned group of Jews in alliance with the local priest and physician; after the war, the latter two received acknowledgements for their altruistic actions. When the war ended, the Vendramin family returned to Primorska Region, thus the role of the teacher Vendramin remained relatively unknown to this day. At present, preparations for the process of recognizing his merits for rescuing Jews during the Holocaust, are in progress.*

The term *Righteous Among the Nations* refers to non-Jews who saved Jews during the Holocaust, and is closely associated with the Holocaust commemorative, museum and documentation institute *Yad Vashem* in Jerusalem. Currently, 24,356 persons from 47 countries have been given the title of the Righteous. The process of such recognition is started by a nomination from the rescued person or from an eyewitness, along with their written testimonies. The final decision is issued by a special commission at *Yad Vashem*.

This list of the Righteous includes seven Slovenians (Ivan Breskvar, Martina Levec Marković\*, Zora Pičulin, Andrej Tumpej, Uroš Žun and Ivan and Ljubica Župančič). The State of Israel honours the Righteous in two ways: Those who are still alive, are invited to Israel to receive the title and to attend a ceremony in the Avenue of the Righteous in *Yad Vashem*, where a tree is planted in their honour. The memory of the others is kept alive by engraving their names on the walls of the Garden of the Righteous, built in 1996.

An important role in the rescue story of the Jewish children and youngsters was played by Joseph Ithai Indig (1917–1998), a Jew from Croatia. Already in his youth he became an enthusiastic Zionist. Before the war he helped numerous Jews who fled from the area of the Third Reich; their paths started in various German towns and villages and led through Yugoslavia and Bulgaria to Istanbul and onward to their promised land.

In spring of 1941, Joseph/Josef Indig, and approximately forty Jewish orphans from the territories of the Third Reich, found themselves in Zagreb in the then Independent State of Croatia where they were arrested. At that time an Italian official advised Indig to take the orphans into the Italian occupational zone. This official also enabled Indig to take his children into the then Ljubljana Province occupied by Italy. There, the Italian Jewish organization DELASEM provided him with money. Thus, at the beginning of July 1941, Indig was able to rent the old mansion of Lesno Brdo near Vrhnika, where he brought his children from Zagreb. By spring 1942, the war reached the fairly quiet surroundings of Lesno Brdo. The partisan battles flared up and the Italian patrols there became more frequent. The situation became more dangerous for the young Jewish refugees. It



was decided to move them to Italy. This initiative was also supported by DELASEM. The organization found a refuge for them in Nonantola, near Modena. There it rented Villa Emma, an imposing building which, at the time, was empty and in poor condition. The rescue operation of young Jewish refugees is considered one of the most significant achievements of the DELASEM organization. In mid-July 1942, Josef Indig and the Jewish children arrived by train. The task of care for the children and of their accommodation was taken over by the Jewish community in Modena; before their arrival this community renovated the villa. School lessons resumed, enriched with household chores and practical work on the fields; agriculture represented an important component of the Zionist programme.

In spring 1943 the idea was realized, to bring to Villa Emma another 33 Jewish children, mostly orphans from the territory of the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Arriving from Split, they reached Nonantola in the evening of 14 April 1943, accompanied by two attendants. The total number of young Jewish refugees in Villa Emma thus exceeded seventy.

Up until Italy's capitulation, the life of the young refugees remained largely undisturbed. On 8 September 1943, when Italy announced its capitulation, the scared Jewish refugees in Nonantola, anticipating the arrival of the Germans, turned to their physician. Giuseppe Moreali (1895–1980), the local doctor and a committed anti-fascist, had long been well disposed towards Jewish refugees. He contacted his friend, Don Arrigo Beccari (1909–2005), a professor, treasurer and parish priest at the catholic seminary of Nonantola. Together they decided to help. Before long, the rescue operation began, supported by several local priests. In the building of the seminary at the abbey, which was virtually empty due to school holidays, they organized a hiding place for most of the Jewish refugees. On 9 September 1943, when German troops marched into Nonantola, roughly thirty young Jewish refugees were already hiding in the seminary building where Indig also arranged his "headquarters"; the rest of them were hidden by trustworthy families in the village.

Meanwhile, the plan was developed how to bring the young refugees to safety in Switzerland. They were divided into smaller groups and, in the course of a few days in October 1943, they were sent towards the Swiss border. In the beginning of 1944, with the help of the Swiss Zionist Union, the refugee children were successfully settled in Bex-les-Bains, a spot situated in the Rhone River valley, where they awaited the end of the war. After the war, they scattered all round the world; most of them, led by Indig, left for Palestine.

More than one hundred Nonantolani were included in the whole operation of hiding Jews. On the grounds of their illegal actions, don Beccari and don Tardini were arrested in mid-September 1944 and sent to prison in Bologna. In spite of the rigorous interrogation, they never admitted their involvement in rescuing the Jews. Don Beccari was condemned to death, however the end of the war prevented his execution. Their merits were acknowledged by the State of Israel; in 1964 they were honoured for their altruistic actions and listed as the *Righteous Among the Nations*.

At this point, the teacher Andrej Vendramin (1891–1978) from Solkan, enters the rescue story. To this day, his part in the rescue operation of the Jewish children remains almost unknown. Just before the beginning of World War I he graduated from the secondary school in Gorica/Gorizia, and then taught in several villages of the Primorska Region in the hinterland of the Soča/Isonzo front. After World War I, he practised his profession at various elementary schools in Goriška Region, but during fascism, like numerous other Slovenian teachers, he was relocated to Italy's inland. In 1929, the school authorities sent "Andrea Vendramin, Insegnante Elementare" to Nonantola, near Modena. On his journey, the teacher was accompanied by his family: his wife and three children (Cvetko/Florijan, Stanislav and Marija). Andrej, the father of the family, immediately assumed the appointed teaching position in Nonantola, where he worked as a teacher, relatively uninterrupted until the outbreak of World War II. Even today, Cvetko Vendramin, the teacher's eldest son and at the time a student of the public high school for land surveying in Modena, remembers wartime events distinctly. They were immediate neighbours of doctor Moreali, who was, as Cvetko recalls, a fervent anti-fascist. In spring 1943, an ad hoc township committee turned up at the Vendramin family's home. They inquired about their "so peculiarly sounding" language, which they used among themselves at home. It was Slovenian, of course, in the dialect of the Primorska Region. Thereupon, members of the Vendramin family were turned

into translators for the refugee children from the so-called Split group that ended up in Villa Emma in mid-April 1943; most of the family members also spoke Serbo-Croatian.

However, after Italy's capitulation in September 1943, and consequently the German occupation, the situation changed. In Nonantola, the local German headquarters were set up, commanded by a German field officer. The officer happened to befriend the teacher Andrej Vendramin, who was proficient in German. Thereupon, the Vendramin family was left in peace and was protected by the German officer in event of any troubles. In saving the Jewish refugees, in Nonantola in 1943, the whole Vendramin family took part. They helped to hide them and helped at forging documents for them.

After the war, the teacher Andrej Vendramin and his family returned to Primorska Region and until his retirement he continued to teach. Right now, preparations for the process of recognizing him as a rescuer of Jews during the Holocaust, are in progress. This would reunite the former "trio" from Nonantola that altruistically saved more than 70 persecuted young Jews: the priest, don Beccari, the physician Moreali and the teacher Vendramin, our compatriot from Solkan.

\* The Yad Vashem's official evidence lists 6 Slovenian Righteous, while Martina Levec Marković is listed as the Righteous Among the Nations of Serbia.

## **Saving Mirko Hiršl, a Jew from the Prekmurje Region, 1944–1945: Cigüt, Žilavec and Fartelj Families**

**Boris Hajdinjak**

*Numbers can be dull facts and if we are focused solely on them, we bereave 6 million Jews, victims of the Holocaust, of the sanctity and tragedy contained in the loss of millions of people's lives. Out of that enormous crowd, individuals have to be found, their names, faces and destinies have to be recognized. Equally, we must do the same for those few non-Jews who, at the time of a complete moral collapse, maintained human values and rescued the persecuted Jews despite the danger to themselves and their families. Since 1963, Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, the largest institution in the world committed to Holocaust research and remembrance, has been awarding such people with the title of the "Righteous Among the Nations". The rescuers of Mirko Hiršl, a Jew from the Prekmurje Region, fulfil the conditions for being recognized as the first from Prekmurje – Slovenia's region with the largest number of Holocaust victims, to join the existing seven other\* officially acknowledged Slovenian Righteous Among the Nations.*

On 19 March 1944 the German army occupied Hungary. Although the main reason for the occupation was their desire to prevent Hungary from withdrawing from the German alliance, an important motive was also the "final solution of the Jewish question". Namely, the only Jewish community in Nazi Europe, left almost intact, was in Hungary – with more than 750,000 members – and as such definitely "an error". The extermination of Jews in Hungary will surely be written down in history as the *Ungarn-Aktion*. To implement that "action" the collaboration of the new pro-Nazi Hungarian government was of crucial importance; in an extremely short period of time and with a total of 107 new laws, the new Hungarian government systematically suppressed all civil rights of the Jews. Thereafter, also in a very short time, between 16 April and 3 July 1944, Hungarian authorities arrested more than 430,000 Jews, confiscated most of their property and confined them into ghettos. After a few days or weeks and after more plundering, most of them were loaded onto altogether 147 trains which, by 22 July 1944 brought them to the Auschwitz concentration camp. Around 75 % of those, i.e. about 320,000 Hungarian Jews, were immediately murdered in gas chambers and their bodies were incinerated. Only those Jews who fitted into one of the exempted category, Jews in Budapest, Jews working in the Hungarian army units and those who had been hidden by the non-Jews, were able to avoid deportation. The latter were among the

fewest, for there were exceptionally few non-Jews in Hungary that dared to risk their freedom or even their lives to rescue Jews. A part of this small number were also some, by now practically unknown, non-Jews from the Prekmurje Region who saved Emerik/Mirko Hirschl/Hiršl (1908, Vanča vas–1985, Murska Sobota) and these are now the latest Slovenian candidates for the title of “Righteous Among the Nations” awarded by Yad Vashem.

For Jews of the Prekmurje Region, the most fatal resolution was adopted on 19 April 1944: The Hungarian districts near the territories, where the Yugoslav partisans were active (Murska Sobota in Vas County, Lendava, Čakovec, Prelog, Letenye and Nagykanizsa in Zala County as well as the southern parts of the Somogy, Baranja and Bačka-Bodrog counties), were declared “hostile areas”. Consequently, Jews of these areas had to be arrested first in order to prevent them from fleeing to the partisans. Similar measures were also in effect since 12 April 1944, in the areas of the then Northeast Hungary – nowadays part of Ukraine and Romania, that the Red Army was close to. In the evening of 25 April 1944 in the towns of the southern “hostile areas”, i.e. also in Murska Sobota, meetings were held of local authorities and gendarmes, arranging the details of the arrests of the Jews, to be carried out the next day. The reasons for these meetings were the Hungarian laws forbidding the gendarmes to enter a residence without the presence of a civilian witness, and the foreseen extent of the arrests, for which gendarmes from elsewhere had to be brought in and were in need of local assistance due to their ignorance of the area. Despite the fact that prior to the arrests of Jews in Murska Sobota many of the non-Jews were acquainted with the foreseen course of events, none of them alerted the Jews. Although the latter did expect their situation to deteriorate, they could not even imagine what exactly they were about to experience. Thus, on 26 April 1944 at 5 am, when the arrests began, most of the Jews of the Prekmurje Region were at home. The only exception were the Jews that fitted into one of the exempted categories or those who were absent from their homes.

In the morning of 26 April 1944, when Ludvik Cigiūt (1916, Martjanci–1974, ?) cycled his usual 5 kilometres route from Martjanci to Murska Sobota, where he was employed as an assistant to the tailor Kuštor, he witnessed the gendarmes taking the Jews to the local synagogue. Cigiūt immediately turned and pedalled back to Martjanci to tell his friend Hirschl what he had seen in Murska Sobota. Hirschl called both of his unmarried sisters who lived with him – Jolanka Hirschl (1910, Rankovci–1944, Dachau) and Renata/Renée Hirschl (1914, Tešanovci–1945, Auschwitz) and urged them to flee, but both of them decided to stay and therefore did not survive the war. Erika Fürst (1931, Murska Sobota), then a thirteen years old niece of Hirschl, remembers how her grandmother Regina Hirschl (1877, Lemerje–1944, Auschwitz), as soon as they were brought to the synagogue where the rest of the relatives were already held, asked Jolanka and Renata about Erica’s uncle’s fate. A brief explanation that he had fled brought a relief to his imprisoned relatives, that at least one member of the family avoided the arrest. According to the known facts at least two more Jews from the Prekmurje Region managed to avoid being arrested: Elek/Aleksander Balkányi (1902, Lendava–1945, Murski Črnci) and József/Josip Mayer (1904, Lendava–1945, Murski Črnci), both from Lendava; they were hiding with the help of still unidentified persons from the Prekmurje Region, but, alas, did not survive the end of the war.

After avoiding arrest, Hirschl hid with his acquaintance, the merchant Aleksander/Šandor Žilavec (1901, Andrejci–1976, ?) at Andrejci 63 (today 51). A probable explanation as to why Hirschl took refuge with him and not with someone else is that they had a business relationship. Aleksander’s wife, Agnes, née Celec (1906, Zenkovci–1954, ?) and their children, Koloman (1925, Andrejci–1980, ?) and Marija/Mariška, later wed Gregorec (1937, Andrejci) helped to hide Hirschl. As Irena Kukojska, née Kalamar (1925, ?) from Andrejci clearly remembers, she knew Hirschl, because she worked at his store in Martjanci, and told that it was a well known fact that he was not taken with the other Jews and that he was hiding somewhere. The neighbours of the Žilavec family were not aware of the refugee, but when one of the villagers met him, he informed a certain V. T., who then passed the information to the gendarmes. On 19 August 1944, when the gendarmes arrived, Hirschl did manage to flee out of the outbuilding of the Žilavec family, where he was hiding; however, he was apprehended in the nearby vineyard. Kukojska recalls that two days after the arrest, Hirschl was brought to Andrejci, because during his interrogation he had claimed, that he was not hiding at only one house, but rather each day at another one. Although this claim was a clear attempt of Hirschl to save the Žilavec family, it was unsuccessful, because the gendarmes found traces of

hiding at their outbuilding. Hence, the gendarmes arrested Aleksander Žilavec, although he had not been at home at the time of Hirschl's arrest. During the interrogation, the gendarmes had beaten him as well. Before long, both of them were interned. Aleksander Žilavec survived the internment and, on 2 April 1945, he was liberated.

Hirschl fled from captivity and returned to the Prekmurje Region. This time, he was hiding with the Fartelj brothers, Franc (1903, Tešanovci–1976, ?) and Jožef (1897, Tešanovci–1966, ?), Jožef's wife Marija, née Slavic (1901, Puconci–1977, ?) and most probably also with their son, Štefan (1922, Tešanovci–1958, ?), at Tešanovci 111. The most likely explanation as to why he took refuge with them and not with somebody else, has to be the trade activities of the two brothers before the war. Although the neighbours soon recognized that the Farteljs were hiding someone, no one gave away the refugee, hence Hirschl lived to see the arrival of the Red Army to the Prekmurje Region at the beginning of April 1945. The proof, how dangerous such conduct was, even just before the end of the war, is the fate of the two Jews from Lendava, Balkányi and Mayer, whom we mentioned before: right before the arrival of the Red Army the two of them were discovered and killed.

After the war, Hiršl and his rescuers regularly visited each other and the bond between them was almost as tight as with close relatives. The extent of Hiršl's gratitude is apparent in the event of the winter of 1980, when he was in hospital due to pneumonia. He left the hospital at his own risk to attend the funeral of Koloman Žilavec, saying that it was his duty to be present at the funeral of one of his saviours. To this day, Hiršl's children are keeping in touch with the descendants of their father's rescuers.

- \* The Yad Vashem's official evidence lists 6 Slovenian Righteous, while Martina Levec Marković is listed among the Righteous Among the Nations of Serbia. The author of this article is convinced that Ludvik Valentinčič and Franjo Punčuh, too, should be on the list of Slovenian Righteous, even though they are listed as Croatian and Serbian Righteous Among the Nations, respectively.

## **The Jews among the Slovenian Communists between the Two World Wars – Ali Kardoš**

**Mag Klemen Brvar**

*As in all of Europe between the two World Wars, the Yugoslav Jews, too, were strongly represented in the ranks of the communists. We can estimate that their involvement in the movement was proportionally three to four times greater than that of their population proportion. Because the Jewish community in Slovenia was relatively small, we can “count on the fingers of one hand” the ones who were involved with the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in the interwar period and were of Jewish descent. Out of them stands out Ali Kardoš – with a rich life and a tragic fate that was, in fact, symptomatic for relations between the communists and the Yugoslav Jews.*

From the current perspective, communism can be described as an ideology that considerably affected the global historic development in the past one and a half century. At the same time, it is a known fact that there were many individuals of Jewish descent among the communists – either at its ideological stage or later on, when it was a totalitarian political system. However, the reason for the mass inclination of Jews towards communism did not lay in Hitler's propaganda construct that Bolshevism was merely the latest cloak of Jewish predominance, but rather in the possibility for individuals of a discriminated community to tear themselves out of their own confined community. The Nobel Laureate Isaac B. Singer explained his affiliation to this social radicalism through the prevalent belief of that time, that “communism will come to an end with Jewish problem once and for all. In a communist regime there will be no Jews and non-Jews, just one united mankind. Religion and superstition will become a thing of the past.”<sup>1</sup>

In the interwar period, communism has resonated among the impoverished Eastern European Jews as well as among the Jewish elites of Western Europe. The newly established Yugoslav state was not exemption; the Yugoslav Jewish community was merely a pebble in its mosaic of nationalities. But the community itself was not uniform, for alongside the cardinal division between the Ashkenazim and Sephardim, it was also divided on a political and social level. The political involvement of the Yugoslav Jews in the interwar period was primarily focused inwards, on the community, even though some renowned individuals also entered into the broader Yugoslav political arena. If in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the leading role was played by the advocates of assimilation, the new situation produced a recast by the Zionists, secular Jewish identity apologists and visionaries of the Jewish state formation. They were united in the politically colourful Yugoslav Zionist Union (*Zveza sionistov Jugoslavije*; 1919), part of which were also groups that wanted to establish *Eretz Israel* on a socialist foundation. For the most part, these kind of starting-points resonated with the less wealthy Sephardim communities and the younger generation.<sup>2</sup>

The most influential Zionist youth organisation, which shared this vision, was *Hashomer Hatzair* (transl. Young Guard/ian); its members kept in touch with the Young Communist League of Yugoslavia (*Savez komunističke omladine Jugoslavije*; SKOJ), the youth wing of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.<sup>3</sup> The latter was founded soon after the formation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (*Kraljevina SHS*) – in April 1919, at the same time as the Yugoslav Zionist Union. Early political successes of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (abbr. KPJ or Party), which were the effect of tense social and national circumstances, led to its banishment and forced underground – where it was active until the downfall of the state – by the established regime end of 1920. Regardless of the difficult situation that echoed inwards in fractional fights, the KPJ persisted with its presence on the political stage and nourished its revolutionary character throughout this period. Namely, most of that time, the perception of the new state by the Yugoslav communists was in the scope of an anti-revolutionary formation by the Versailles settlement, which was directed towards stemming the Bolshevik tide. On the basis of national and social perturbations they concluded that the Yugoslav state was the weakest link of this system and that the circumstances were comparable to those of pre-revolutionary Russia. Although with time the KPJ had to increasingly subordinate to the *Comintern* (russ. Komintern) – through which the “Bolshevization” (ideological monolithism) of the 20’s was realized as well as the Stalinization of the communist movement (subordination of individual sections to the interests of the Soviet Union) in the 30’s – the Yugoslav communists managed to adroitly steer between the foreign political Scylla and inner-political Charybdis through it all.

In the light of its ever greater difficulty of functioning, the KPJ searched for allies everywhere, even among the Jewish community; Jews from all across Europe were drawn to it for the same reasons. After 1923 the KPJ was also engaged in the area of the most urgent inner-political problem: the national question and the question of minorities.<sup>4</sup> Such qualitative leap in itself was full of recognition that the masses with the national sense consider the KPJ as a great mobilization potential. Part of this category was surely the Yugoslav Jewish community, interweaved with Zionism.

Although the 20’s were a relatively peaceful period of prosperity for the Yugoslav Jews and only a few of them sympathized with the Party, but some of them who were part of the Bolshevik and Hungarian revolution surely helped with the early on communist agitation. In this period, the Party was mainly joined in by Jewish students who got “infected” with communism during their study in Prague and Vienna. The universities at home were also meeting places of the communist, predominately the ones in Belgrade and Zagreb; in this manner, the movement was joined in by, for example, Moša Pijade and Pavle Pap, later well-known functionaries of the KPJ, as well as Salomon Levi, Alfred Bergman, Nisim and Moša Albahari, to mention only the most renowned.<sup>5</sup>

In the 30’s, at the time of the economic crisis and the rise of fascism, the influence of the KPJ grew considerably among the Jews. Along with the Jewish Guard(ian)s, the communist established stronger connections with other Jewish organizations – the most exposed was the workers’ organization Matatja from Sarajevo.<sup>6</sup> Simultaneously, the KPJ managed to attract the “left” intellectual circles: e.g. Zvonimir Richtmann, the female poet Magda Bošković and Oskar Davič,

leading Yugoslav surrealist. While the Young Jewish women activists were drawn in by the rally of volunteer for the Spanish Civil War.<sup>7</sup>

The exact number of Yugoslav Jews who joined KPJ in the interwar period is difficult to determine due to its underground, illegal status. That the membership might be considerable is alluded by data about the accused on political trials performed by the regime against the members of the KPJ. An important indicator was also the participation in the Spanish Civil War. According to these data, we can estimate that the involvement of Jews in the ranks of the communists was proportionally three to four times greater than their population proportion.<sup>8</sup>

Because the influence of the Party on the Jewish community proved obvious mainly in the areas, where there were in larger numbers (Belgrade, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Osijek etc.), we could “count on the fingers of one hand” the Jews who collaborated with the communist during the interwar period – at least judging by available data. Namely, in the 30’s about 800 to 1,000 Jews lived on the territory of the Drava Banate; more than a half of them in the Prekmurje Region.<sup>9</sup> In the literature there is mention of Izak Baruh Sion<sup>10</sup> who was active in Ljubljana, as well as the syndicalists Ignac and Zoltan Boroš of Murska Sobota who ended up in the concentration camp Jadovno in 1941.<sup>11</sup> Also listed are brothers Evgen Jeni Kardoš and Vladimir Aladar (Ali) Kardoš.<sup>12</sup> The life path of the latter as a member of the Yugoslav Jewish community who sympathised with the communists was actually symptomatic.

Ali Kardoš, one of the few Jews from the Prekmurje Region who was politically profiled outside the Jewish community, was born on 4 February 1914 in Murska Sobota to an impoverished middle-class family of petty merchants. After losing his father in World War I, the small shop was managed by his mother. The family was not orthodox, but nourished Jewish traditions. Following the end of primary school, Kardoš continued his schooling on the secondary school for trade in Čakovec; in the local well-organised Jewish community he embraced Zionism. Upon his return to home and after an intervention of one of the relatives, he pursued his profession in the Benko’s credit bank. Although he sympathised with communism earlier, his commitment to the movement crystallized, when he got employment in the management of Cvetič’s clothing factory. At the same time, his childhood friend and communist, Rudi Čačinovič, draw him in among the so-called Prekmurje’s Youth who were distributing communist literature in the region. In 1934 he lost his employment due to communist agitation among the female workers and help with organizing a construction workers’ strike. A year earlier, he was accepted into the first cell of the KPJ in Prekmurje Region and became its secretary. In 1934 he attended the well-known regional conference of the KPJ in Goričani, where he met Josip Broz–Tito and Edvard Kardelj. During the years 1934 and 1936 he cooperated in preparing “Ljudska pravica”, a paper issued by the KPJ in Lendava and later in Ljubljana. In the capital he kept company with the renowned Slovenian communists, Marija and Joža Vilfan, and the writer Tone Čufar (Kardoš himself wrote poetry and published it in the paper “Mladi Prekmurec”). As a delegate he attended the first conference of the Communist Party of Slovenia (abbr. KPS) in Šmiglj’s vineyard cottage in 1938 as well as the second one in Jošt’s mill on verge of the year 1940. In 1939, when the Prekmurje’s district of the KPS was founded, he became its member. In 1940, the authorities interned him into concentration camp in Bileća, because he was a communist; after Yugoslavia’s capitulation in April 1941 he returned to the Prekmurje Region. In the second half of the same year, after the betrayal of the Kulturbund from Murska Sobota, the Hungarian authorities arrested Ali Kardoš and sent him to prison in Szombathely, where he was tortured. While Ali was confined, his brother Evgen Jeni carried on with Ali’s work; his attempt to liquidate the mayor of Murska Sobota, Ferdinand Hartner, failed. After treason, Jeni was hanged in front of the porch of Murska Sobota’s mansion. When Ali Kardoš returned from prison, he became politically passive and did not join the Liberation Front of the Slovene Nation (abbr. OF)<sup>13</sup> – as did not many other Jews from the Prekmurje Region. The last years of his life are wrapped in a mystery: beginning of 1944 Kardoš was sent to eastern Serbia to do forced labour in the mine Bor, from where the German management of the mine allegedly sent him to the concentration camp Flossenbürg in Bavaria, where he supposedly died in February 1945.<sup>14</sup>

As many other members of the Yugoslav Jewish community, Ali Kardoš has joined the communists in the early 30’s, when the KPJ started to operate according to the so-called new course – spreading political activity among the masses within the scope of the nascent Popular Front.

Especially Kardoš's involvement in the publishing of the paper "Ljudska pravica" – at that stage of development of the all-national movement, which was gradually but thoroughly taken over by the communists – is evidence that the direction of the KPJ at that time was successful also on the Slovenian periphery as well as among national minorities. It is without a doubt that Kardoš, a descendant of an impoverished merchant family and a fervent anti-fascist, was looking for the same thing in the communist movement as everyone else across Europe that resembled him: "He experienced the movement as a brotherhood of all people regardless of race or origin."<sup>15</sup>

- 1 Singer, Isaac Bashevis: Ljubezen in izgnanstvo. Avtobiografska trilogija (Ljubljana, 2011), Modrijan, pp. 69–70. More on this matter and the purges that occurred later on among the Jewish Bolsheviks in: Pipes, Richard: Kratka zgodovina ruske revolucije (Ljubljana, 2011), Studentska založba, pp. 308–309; Rubenstein, J. and Naumov, V. P.: Stalin's secret Pogrom. The Postwar Inquisition of the Jewish Anti-fascist Committee (New Haven, London, 2005), Yale University Press, pp. 2–3.
- 2 Židovi na tlu Jugoslavije. Razstavni katalog (Zagreb, 1988), ed. S. Goldstein, MTM, pp. 171–173 (cited as: Židovi na tlu Jugoslavije).
- 3 Ibid., p. 173.
- 4 Goldstein, Ivo: Židovi u Zagrebu 1918–1941 (Zagreb, 2004), Novi liber, p. 292 (cited as: Goldstein, Židovi u Zagrebu).
- 5 Romano, Jaša: Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941–1945. Žrtve genocida i učesnici narodnooslobodilačkog rata (Beograd, 1980), Savez jevrejskih opština Jugoslavije, pp. 20–21 (cited as: Romano, Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941–1945).
- 6 Goldstein, Židovi u Zagrebu, pp. 292–293; Židovi na tlu Jugoslavije, pp. 173, 175.
- 7 Židovi na tlu Jugoslavije, p. 175. More on this matter: Romano, Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941–1945, pp. 19–54.
- 8 Židovi na tlu Jugoslavije, p. 174.
- 9 Pančur, Andrej: Judovska skupnost v Sloveniji na predvečer holokavsta (Celje, 2011), ZDC, p. 5 (cited as: Pančur, Judovska skupnost v Sloveniji na predvečer holokavsta).
- 10 Ibid., p. 136; Romano, Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941–1945, p. 482.
- 11 Romano, Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941–1945, p. 53, 339.
- 12 Ibid., pp. 404–405.
- 13 In the Prekmurje Region the Liberation Front was supported only by a handful of Jews of Murska Sobota and Lendava. Despite the fact that in other parts of the occupied Yugoslavia the resistance movement had many Jewish members (hence avoiding the Holocaust), the Jews of the Prekmurje Region had put their trust into Hungary's less rigid anti-Semitism. The number of Jews among the resistance began to increase as late as November 1942, when the Hungarian occupational authorities commenced mobilizations into workers' battalions. More on this matter: Toš, Marjan: Zgodovinski spomin na prekmurske Jude (Ljubljana, 2012), ZRC, p. 70 (cited as: Toš, Zgodovinski spomin na prekmurske Jude).
- 14 Čačinovič, Rudi: Zgodbe minulega sveta (Murska Sobota, 1999), self-publishing, pp. 124–134 (cited as: Čačinovič, Zgodbe minulega sveta); Toš, Zgodovinski spomin na prekmurske Jude, pp. 55, 64–65, 67; Romano, Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941–1945, p. 404.
- 15 Čačinovič, Zgodbe minulega sveta, p. 130.

## **Remembering and Teaching about the Holocaust – Examples of Good Practice in Maribor**

**Dr Marjan Toš**

*Despite the small size of the Slovenian territory and the smallness of the Jewish population before and after World War II in Slovenia, Slovenian Holocaust history can be, or rather, must be described as a micro-cosmos of the Central European Holocaust history. However, the memory of the Holocaust and the tragedy of the genocide should preserve, not only the memory of the victims, but also of those who survived the greatest tragedy of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The responsibility of the present generations, as well as the task of historiography – 67 years since the end of the Holocaust, and for the sake of the departing generation of survivors, is to prevent the memory loss of one of the darkest sides of history of the past century. The largest step towards accomplishing this goal is working with youth at primary and secondary schools. There are several examples of good practice in Maribor, namely at the Drago Kopal Primary School,*

*Pesnica Primary School and First Grammar School (Gymnasium) of Maribor. In 2013, these schools will be joined also by the Primary School Martin Košak in Maribor.*

Since 2007, the Maribor Synagogue's employees and collaborators have been active within the special task group of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, which endeavours for international co-operation in the fields of Holocaust education, remembrance and research. When Slovenia was in the process of gaining full membership in the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research (ITF/IHRA), a fundamental study was conducted that resulted in the analysis of the current situation and conditions and indicated our short- and long-term directions. Our partnering countries were Hungary and Israel; however, Slovenia is certainly fully opened to prospects of partnership with all other members of the ITF/IHRA. The distinct contribution of this task force is a comprehensive approach to addressing genocide, given that it is not focused solely on the Holocaust of Jews; on the contrary, its starting points include the Roma, the Sinti and other victims of racial persecution and massive annihilation of the population on the occupied territories during World War II. This is also important for the situation in Slovenia. For some time now, the employees and collaborators of the Maribor Synagogue have been developing and preparing an annual science meeting in order to comprehensively present the genocide of Slovenian Roma during World War II. Another advantage of the ITH/IHRA is its goal orientation – relying on government institutions and civil society organizations; mainly because of its relations to educational, scientific and other institutions with a professional focus on human rights and human rights violations – for the Holocaust was undeniably the worst form of violation of human rights and of fundamental freedoms; especially considering the extent and the consequences of those violations and the particularly enormous proportions and devastating effects of the Holocaust for Jews and mankind in general. Since 2008, Maribor Synagogue has been devoted to pursuing these objectives, and in 2010 we launched the international and broadly conceived project named “Shoah – Let Us Remember”. In Maribor, we have undertaken a comprehensive scientific presentation of the Holocaust in Slovenia with a special emphasis on persecution of Jews in the province of Ljubljana, Goriška Region, Styria and Prekmurje Region. Papers by prominent researchers, historians, sociologists and anthropologists have been published in an extensive collection of scientific papers and will therefore be permanently accessible to interested experts and to broader lay public; the latter is increasingly interested in this topic. We have also introduced comprehensive annual presentations of Slovenian Righteous Among the Nations; so far we have presented Uroš Žun and Andrej Tumpej. Furthermore, in January 2012 we have installed “Stolpersteine” (paving stone) memorials in Maribor, commemorating 12 Holocaust victims from Maribor. This highly notable initiative met a great public response and marks the beginning of a more sustainable and systematic maintenance of historical memory of the tragedy of genocide, in which the pre-war Jewish community in Slovenia was nearly totally destroyed. In Slovenia, the Holocaust claimed 558 victims, 481 of them died in concentration camps. Among these victims were 69 children. Most of these victims were the Jews of Prekmurje, of whom only a few remained after 1945. Moreover, we would like to highlight our good experiences in co-operating with schools, particularly with the Drago Kobal Primary School in Maribor and the Primary School in Pesnica near Maribor. Joining them in 2013 is the Maribor Primary School Martin Košak which was already engaged in the cultural programme at the installation of the “Stolpersteine” memorials. The children want to be part of such programmes and we believe there will be many more such opportunities for them, especially in project tasks undertaken by pupils of primary schools. This year, in January, the Maribor Synagogue was supporting the hosting of the exhibition “Anne Frank” at the First Grammar School of Maribor. We are also planning partnerships with other high schools, for the most part with the Second and the Third Grammar Schools of Maribor.

With the project “Shoah – Let Us Remember” – conceived in the Maribor Synagogue in cooperation with the First Grammar School of Maribor, the Institute of Contemporary History in Ljubljana and the Study Centre for National Reconciliation in Ljubljana, we have indicated the complexity of the new approach in treating particular themes about the Holocaust and genocide. Presently, our paramount interest is in the historiographically “weak sides” of this chapter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and, above all, in the several historical starting-points that we have examined within the scientific approach of presenting this topic, namely: Holocaust history: conditions – the rise of



fascism and Nazism, racial cleansing of the German Reich, social discrimination, deprivation of rights, expropriations and forced emigration of Jews from the German Reich; concentration into ghettos, mass executions on the Eastern occupied territories, racism and anti-Semitism: structures of otherness in human relations (conflicts), war and mass violence; how to remember and educate about the Holocaust, the Holocaust in the context of European post-war political processes; anti-Nazism and anti-fascism as ideological foundations of united Europe, survivors' trauma; intergenerational mass violence trauma, mass deportations – historical starting-points, the extent and consequences, historical, sociological and psychological analysis of the Nazi annihilation system, the moral constitution of Nazi mass murderers – the relationship between them and the deportees (from the points of view of individuals); the victim-persecutor relationship, degradation of victims – false feelings of power and the fight for survival, scientific justification of the mass annihilation and oppression – technologies of death and mechanisms of annihilation; abuse of science in the Nazi concentration camps and justifying murders, individual and collective guilt for mass annihilation, Holocaust denial – the genocide of Jews as historical lie (an invention of allied forces' and Jewish propaganda); the Holocaust and class conflict violence (the Nazis adapting to the Asian practices) – Hitler's obsessive identification of Judaism with Bolshevism, the Holocaust and Slovenian historiography.

With time, these starting-points have to be studied by historians and presented to the public in various manners – among them also in the museum or museology area. I am convinced that classical exhibitions should be replaced by more modern methods and technologies; contemporary multimedia are becoming indispensable, enabling us to reach the desired all-round effects, especially educational. As for classical installations of museum exhibitions, it has to be pointed out that the museum items are scarce and that most of such exhibitions rely on archival materials. I agree with the thesis that up to the present, Slovenian Holocaust history has never been told in full. Thus it has to be written without inhibition, objectively and comprehensively – in a way that it can be considered as part of the Holocaust history of Central and south Eastern Europe. We can undertake this task without hesitation – for we have enough relevant experts, who will treat this, still disregarded, segment of the national history in a way that it shall prove useful not only to the not so many Slovenian Jews, but above all, serve as the basis for teaching about the Holocaust, primarily intended for students at primary and secondary schools as well as universities. Then, later on, several parts of this study should also prove valuable to more demanding scientific and expert circles in their efforts to systematically, deliberately and transparently inform the local and foreign public about the Jews, the Holocaust and anti-Semitism. For, in Slovenia too, there is still much left unclear regarding anti-Semitism; thus we have got our work cut out for us in Maribor.

## Šoa – spominjajmo se 2013

### Shoah – Let Us Remember 2013

#### **Organizacija in izvedba projekta | Organization and realization of the project**

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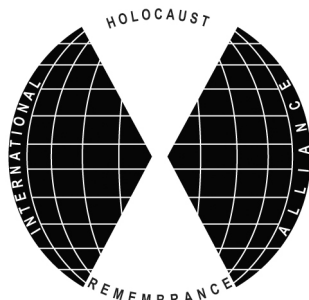
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