

**THE SUFFERING
OF MOSTAR SERBS IN
THE INDEPENDENT
STATE OF CROATIA
1941–1945**

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Milan Gulić, Ph.D.

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FOREWORD

Mostar, a city on the banks of the Neretva River, has since it was first mentioned in the 16th century, experienced centuries of growth and development, as well as destruction and stagnation. It was established during a time when the regions that in the future would be known under the name Herzegovina were ruled by Duke Stjepan Vukčić Kosača. However, most of Mostar's history is tied to the Ottoman Empire, a part of which it remained for more than four centuries (from 1468 to 1878). The city was then occupied and annexed by the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, remaining under its control until the end of World War I, which resulted in the dissolution of this significant Central European state (1878–1918). After the Great War, Mostar became part of the Yugoslav state, known as the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Kraljevstvo Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca, from 1918 to 1920; Kraljevina Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca, from 1920 to 1929) - and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1929–1941). During World War II, it was part of the Independent State of Croatia (1941–1945), and after the war, it first within the People's Republic, and later the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as part of the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia (1945), the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (1945–1963), and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1963–1992). Since 1992, Mostar has been part of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, within the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina entity. Today, Mostar is the administrative center of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton/County.

Based on the aforementioned historical facts alone, it is evident that the history of this city and its surroundings has been turbulent and vibrant. The centuries gone by have sculpted lavish architecture influenced by various cultures. They resulted in a rich cultural heritage, as well as historical episodes of torment. The wars of the 20th century achieved what hundreds of years before could not or would not – they wiped out, for the most part, one of the three ethnic groups living in the area – the Serbs. The large-scale destruction of the Serbian community of Mostar began during World War II, when a fifth of local Serbs were killed, and was completed in the civil war of 1992–1995, when the majority of Mostar’s Serbs had to leave the city. Mostar’s Serbs particularly suffered in the summer of 1941 as victims of the brutal rampages of armed Ustasha. Besides being killed, they were subjected to plundering and confiscation of property, forced evictions, dismissals from jobs, and more. The Ustasha authorities in Mostar attempted to thoroughly and systematically solve the “Serbian question” in Mostar, specifically aiming to cleanse the city of Serbs completely. In addition to killing several hundred people, they organized entire transports supposedly destined for Serbia, but in reality to concentration camps, to deport all Orthodox inhabitants of Mostar, regardless of gender, age, or social status. It can rightfully be said that the extermination of Mostar’s Serbs during World War II by the Ustasha authorities permanently interrupted the existence of a small but dynamic and progressive community that was a beacon of Serbian cultural, educational, and economic development throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mostar’s Serbs never recovered from what the Independent State of Croatia inflicted upon them. Those years marked a turning point for Mostar’s Serbs.

The extermination of Mostar’s Serbs from 1941 to 1945, which undoubtedly was an act of genocide, has not yet been the subject of a comprehensive historiographical study, despite the clear need for it. The suffering of Mostar’s Orthodox inhabitants has been the subject of smaller works or larger studies on the suffering of Serbs in Herzegovina, but not of a specific, unified study. What made work on a mon-

ograph that will comprehensively examine the suffering of Mostar's Serbs during the existence of the Independent State of Croatia possible in the first place was historical distance and the availability of documents (including the 1964 war victim census that was inaccessible until the breakup of socialist Yugoslavia),.

Significant progress in unifying data on the total number of victims in Mostar (apart from the aforementioned war victims' census from the early 1960s), has also been made through the establishment of the Committee for the History of the Revolutionary Workers' Movement and the People's Liberation Struggle of Mostar (Odbor za istoriju revolucionarnog radničkog pokreta i narodnooslobodilačke borbe Mostara), by the Municipal Council of Mostar (Skupština opština Mostar). The committee was led by Danilo Bilanović as president and Esad Peco as vice president, with Nebojša Milivojević, M.A. serving as secretary. Owing to their efforts, the "Memorial Book of Mostar 1941–1945" (*Spomenica Mostara 1941–1945*) was published in 1987, with Vasko Gnjatić chairing the editorial board. The "Memorial Book" listed the names of almost 2,400 Mostar residents who lost their lives during the war and occupation, categorized into three groups: fallen fighters, victims of fascist terror, and war victims. Due to the war victims' census from 1964 being made available in the previous two decades, as well as its revision by the Genocide Victims' Museum (Muzej žrtava genocida) in Belgrade, we were able to more accurately determine the total number of Mostar residents killed, including Mostar Serbs, and identify those responsible for their suffering.

In our work on this study, we used documents stored in three archival institutions. In the Archive of Yugoslavia (Arhiv Jugoslavije) in Belgrade, the collections of the State Commission for Determining the Crimes of the Occupiers and Their Collaborators (Državna komisija za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača - 110) and the Federal Commission for the Census of War Victims (Savezna komisija za popis žrtava rata - 179) were particularly useful. In the Military Archive in Belgrade, we reviewed the collection of the Independent State of Croatia (Nezavins država Hrvatska), paying special atten-

tion to materials produced by the County Police Department in Mostar (Župska redarstvena služba u Mostaru), the Great parish of Hum (Velika župa Hum), and the District Office in Mostar (Kotarska uprava Mostar). Among the collections we reviewed in the Croatian State Archive in Zagreb (Hrvatski državni arhiv), the collections of the Ministry of the Interior of the Independent State of Croatia (Ministarstvo unutrašnjih poslova Nezavisne države Hrvatske - 223) and the General Administrative Commission with the II Army of the Italian Army High Command of the Slovenian-Dalmatian Armed Forces (Opće upravno povjereništvo kod II armate talijanske vojske Višeg zapovjedništva talijanskih oružanih snaga Slovenija-Dalmacija - 491) were particularly significant.

The collections of published documents also played a crucial role in shaping our study. We will highlight several such collections that significantly contributed to the richness of this study. Regardless of the compilers' bias and the selective nature of the documents or parts of documents published, the "Collection of Documents and Data on the People's Liberation War of the Yugoslav Nations" (*Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda*) is indispensable in any study of World War II. Particularly important for the topic at hand were documents from the fourth volume, which pertains to the battles in Bosnia and Herzegovina and is divided into 35 books, the twelfth volume, containing documents by the units and institutions of the German Reich distributed across four books, and the thirteenth volume with documents from the units and institutions of the Kingdom of Italy, making up three books.

Of particular importance was the first volume of the edition "Crimes in the Yugoslav Territories in the First and Second World Wars," (edited by Slavko Vukčević) (*Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima u Prvom i Drugom svetskom ratu*), which covered the crimes of the Independent State of Croatia from 1941–1945. This first book of an ambitiously conceived edition was published in 1993, but the publication was not continued.¹ Equally important for our work was the two-vol-

¹ *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima u Prvom i Drugom svetskom ratu*, Zbornik dokumenata, I, *Zločini Nezavisne Države Hrvatske 1941.-1945.*, Ed. Slavko Vukčević, Beograd 1993.

ume collection of documents titled “Crimes of the Independent State of Croatia and the German Occupier in Herzegovina 1941–1945,” edited by Savo Skoko and Milan Grahovac (*Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske i nemačkog okupatora u Hercegovini 1941-1945*). The first volume was published in 2011, and the second a year later.²

In the second half of the 1990s, Nikola Živković and Petar Kačavenda edited a collection of select documents entitled “Serbs in the Independent State of Croatia” (*Srbi u Nezavisnoj državi Hrvatskoj*). This publication aimed to show, by way of a small number of important documents, how a community representing a significant percentage of the total population of this newly established state lived.³ “Documents on the genocide against Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina from April to August 1941” (*Dokumenta o genocidu nad Srbima u Bosni i Hercegovini od aprila do avgusta 1941*), compiled by Zdravko Antonić, provide a glimpse into the first months of the Independent State of Croatia existing, which were crucial for the destruction of a significant number of Serbs in Mostar and throughout Herzegovina.⁴ Đuro Zatezalo, in the second volume of his monumental publication “Jadovno,” published documents that allow us to trace the origins and mechanisms of the genocidal policy of the Croatian Ustasha authorities during the existence of the Independent State of Croatia.⁵

Furthermore, the 1992 publication of the Federal Bureau of Statistics (Savezni zavod za statistiku), entitled “War Victims 1941–1945” (*Žrtve rata 1941.-1945., popis iz 1964. godine*), which was released in a limited number of copies and is difficult to find (the Genocide Victims’ Museum, the Archive of Yugoslavia, and the Institute for Statistics of the Republic of Serbia (Republički zavod za statistiku Srbije) own one copy each) was the base for the list of Mostar Serbs killed included in

² *Zločini Nezavisne Države Hrvatske i nemačkoj okupatora u Hercegovini 1941–1945*, I–II, Zbornik dokumenata (Ed. Savo Skoko, Milan Grahovac), Tačko/Beograd 2011–2012.

³ *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*, Izabrana dokumenta (Ed. Nikola Živković, Petar Kačavenda), Beograd 1998.

⁴ *Документи о ієноциду над Србима у Босни и Херцеговини од априла до августа 1941*, Ed. Здравко Антонић, Бања Лука/Српско Сарајево 2001.

⁵ Ђуро Затецало, *Јадовно*, II, *Зборник докумената*, Beograd 2007.

the appendix, as well as for reconstructing the number of victims of individual Ustasha massacres. The lists of those killed in Jadovno and Jasenovac, compiled by diligent researchers Đuro Zatezalo and Antun Miletić, were crucial for locating Mostar Serbs who were taken from the Mostar region and perished in the camps.⁶

In the preparation of this study, we also used newspapers and memoirs. The most useful newspapers were those published during the existence of the Independent State of Croatia, such as the Zagreb-based “Narodne Novine” and “Hrvatski Narod,” as well as the Sarajevo-based “sarajevski Hrvatski List” and “sarajevski Novi List.” Of the memoirs at hand, the most significant was the two-volume “Collection of Memories on the Illegal NOP of Mostar 1941–1945” (*Zbornik sećanja o ilegalnom NOP-u Mostara 1941-1945*) which was never published in the true sense of the word, but had only a handful of copies printed just before the breakup of socialist Yugoslavia. One of these copies is held by the Library of the Archive of Yugoslavia.⁷ Additionally, the memoirs of Fra Tugomir Soldo, published in the journal “Hercegovina Franciscana,” provide insight into the conditions in Mostar and its surroundings, the crimes against Serbs, and the conduct of the Catholic clergy under these circumstances.⁸

From the numerous studies, monographs, and articles we relied on while writing this book, we will highlight a few of the most important ones. When it comes to studying the suffering of Serbs in Herzegovina, including Mostar, the decade-long research conducted by Savo Skoko and resulting in several monographs and articles, is indispensable. What began with the book “The Massacres of Herzegovinian Serbs ‘41” (*Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba ‘41*), published in the last year of the Yugoslav socialist state existing, was concluded by Skoko in the year 2000 with the publication of his well-known study symbolically entitled “The

⁶ Ђуро Затецало, *Јадовно, I, Комплекс усташких логора 1941.*, Београд 2007; Antun Miletić, *Ubijeni u koncentracionom logoru Jasenovac 1941–1945.*, Јагодина 2011.

⁷ *Zbornik sećanja o ilegalnom NOP-u Mostara 1941–1945, I–II*, Mostar, s. a.

⁸ Tugomir Soldo, „Držanje katoličkog svećenstva u Hercegovini za vrijeme Drugoga svjetskog rata“, *Hercegovina franciscana*, Nr. 7/2011, p. 379–456.

Bloody Kolo of Herzegovina.” (*Krvavo kolo hercegovačko*).⁹ Regarding Mostar Serbs, three smaller articles have been published so far, which have greatly contributed to the creation of this study. First, Drago Karlo Miletić published the article “Sufferings in Mostar” (*Stradanja u Mostaru*) in the second volume of a collection of papers entitled “Herzegovina in the People’s liberation Struggle” (*Hercegovina u NOB*), from 1986. Savo Skoko subsequently published the article “The Suffering of the Serbs of the City and District of Mostar” (*Stradanja Srba grada i sreza Mostara*) in the collection “Serbs in Mostar: Discussions and Essays” (*Srbi u Mostaru, rasprave i ogledi*) in 2001. Recently, Novica Telebak addressed the same issue in a separate study, publishing the article “The Suffering of Mostar Serbs” (*Stradanje mostarskih Srba*) in the collection “Crimes of the Independent State of Croatia against Serbs, Jews, and Roma in the Herzegovina 1941–45” (*Zločini Nezavisne države Hrvatske nad Srbima, Jevrejima i Romima 1941-45, na prostoru Hercegovine*) in 2014.¹⁰ The two-volume study by Božidar N. Čučković entitled “Crimes in Herzegovina during World War II” (*Zločini u Hercegovini u Drugom svjetskom ratu*) is also a highly significant contribution.”¹¹

Based on the sources that were available to us and that we have reviewed, as well as newspapers, memoirs and literature, we compiled a study providing a brief overview of the history of the Serbian community in Mostar from the foundation of the settlement to the outbreak of World War II, describing the conditions in Mostar during war and occupation (the arrival of Italian and German occupying forces, the establishment of Croatian authority, Italian reoccupation, the return of Croatian and German forces, and the city’s liberation), and detailing the crimes against Serbs in Mostar and the villages of the then Mostar

⁹ Savo Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba '41*, Beograd 1991; Savo Skoko, *Krvavo kolo hercegovačko 1941–1942*, I, Пале/Београд 2000.

¹⁰ Drago Karlo Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, in: *Hercegovina u NOB, april 1941.–jun 1942.*, II, Ed. Sveto Kovačević, Beograd 1986, p. 109–122; Savo Skoko, „Страдање Срба града и среза Мостара 1941. године“, in: *Срби у Мостару. Расправе и огледи* (Ed. Боривоје Пишталло), Београд 2001, p. 293–312; Новица Телебак, „Страдање мостарских Срба“, in: *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске над Србима, Јеврејима и Ромима 1941–45 године на простору Херцеговине*, Зборник (Ed. Владимир Лукић), Бања Лука 2014, p. 401–419.

¹¹ Бојидар Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини у Другом свјетском рату*, I–II, Требиње 2003.

district. As appendices, we included several illustrative documents and the most comprehensive list of Serbs who perished at the hands of various representatives of the Independent State of Croatia's authorities. We are fully aware of the imperfections and possible omissions in this list, stemming from the fact that an accurate list of victims was never established, there is insufficient documentation, and that in many cases, there is no one left to testify about the suffering of some individuals.

The list includes Mostar Serbs who perished under the genocidal policy of the Independent State of Croatia, carried out by its official bodies or armed formations acting on its behalf and under its protection, which terrorized the Serbian Orthodox population of Mostar and its surroundings. The list comprises Orthodox Serbs and is based on the 1964 war victims census, documents from the Federal Commission for the Census of War Victims held in the Archives of Yugoslavia collected in the "Memorial Book of Mostar 1941–1945", as well as lists of those killed in camps and numerous scholarly works. The list includes the Serbs who perished in the then Mostar district (in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia), or the Mostar County (in the Independent State of Croatia). This area included the territories of the post-war municipalities of Mostar, Široki Brijeg, and Čitluk, along with several villages which were later part of the Čapljina municipality.

The Mostar district included the city of Mostar and ten municipalities: Bijelo Polje, Blagaj, Donje Brotnjo, Drežnica, Gornje Brotnjo, Kočerin, Mostar-Sela, Mostarsko Blato, Široki Brijeg, and Žitomislić. The later municipality of Mostar included the areas of four pre-war municipalities (Bijelo Polje, Blagaj, Drežnica, and Mostar-Sela), the later municipality of Čitluk included three (Donje Brotnjo, Gornje Brotnjo, and Žitomislić), and Široki Brijeg included three pre-war municipalities (Kočerin, Mostarsko Blato, and Široki Brijeg). There were some deviations in certain cases, but the administrative division of the Mostar area generally developed in this way. Thus, the municipality of Donje Brotnjo included Šurmanci (later part of the Čapljina municipality), Gornje Brotnjo included the village of Lipno (later in the Ljubuški

municipality), Široki Brijeg included the village of Grljevići (later part of the Ljubuški municipality), and the Žitomislić municipality included the village of Bivolje Brdo (later part of the Čapljina municipality).

After World War II, Mostar became a significant city in Bosnia and Herzegovina, becoming an important administrative, cultural, educational, industrial, and military center. The population increased, including the number of Serbs. However, this was a different population from the pre-war one, often having migrated from various parts of Yugoslavia. According to the 1971 census, 19,076 Serbs lived in Mostar out of a total population of 89,580 (21.29%); according to the 1981 census, 20,271 Serbs lived in the Mostar municipality out of 110,377 inhabitants (18.36%); and according to the 1991 census, 23,846 Serbs lived out of 126,628 inhabitants (18.83%). However, a significant number of Serbs can also be found among those who identified as Yugoslavs. In 1971, there were 2,329 (2.59%); in 1981, there were 16,509 (14.95%); and in 1991, there were 12,768 (10.08%). Looking at the Mostar settlements, Serbs were the absolute majority in Bačevići, Vrapčići, Zijemlje, Željuša, Žitomislići, Lakševine, Ortiješ, Prigradani, Ravni, and Hodbine, and the relative majority in Gornji Jasenjani, Malo Polje, and Raštani.

The municipality of Mostar as it existed in socialist Yugoslavia and after its dissolution, with 57 settlements, no longer exists. The majority of it became part of the Federation of Bosnia and Hercegovina, restructured as the City of Mostar, while a smaller part became part of the Serbian Republic as the Municipality of East Mostar. According to the first results of the first population census in Bosnia and Herzegovina as an independent state, the City of Mostar has 105,797 inhabitants, of whom 51,216 are Croats, 46,762 Bosniaks, 4,421 Serbs, 1,910 others, 1,312 did not declare, and 186 without answers. In East Mostar, which includes three territorially unconnected villages Kamen, Kokorina, and Zijemlje, there are 257 inhabitants, of whom 166 are Serbs, 78 Bosniaks, and 11 Croats. It is evident that the Serbs, due to the actions of the Croatian authorities from 1941–1945 and Croatian and Muslim/Bosniak authorities from 1992–1995, have become a negligible part of the population of the city on the Neretva River. Their former strength,

size, and importance remain only as a fond memory and distant past. This book was created as a tribute to the time when this thriving community was almost destroyed.

This monograph as presented to the professional and broader reading public was inspired by the late Boris Peško, whose profound connection with Mostar remained a permanent feature of his personality. This book would not have been possible without the professional and personal support of: Bojan B. Dimitrijević, Ph.D. from the Institute for Contemporary History (Institut za savremenu Istoriju), Nikica Barić, Ph.D. from the Croatian Institute of History (Hrvatski institut za povijest), Bojan Đokić from the Humanitarian Law Fund (Fond za humanitarno pravo), Branislav Popović, Ph.D. from Matica Srpska, Aleksandar Lukić, Ph.D. from the Institute for Recent History of Serbia (Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije), Biljana Stojić Radović, Ph.D. and Miloš Ivanović, Ph.D. from the Historical Institute (Istorijski institut), to whom the author extends his heartfelt gratitude on this occasion. Additionally, the author wishes to thank the colleagues working at the Archives of Yugoslavia, the Croatian State Archives, and the Genocide Victims' Museum. Special thanks are also due to our compatriot Đurđica Popović, who helped us obtain photographs of the wilderness of Velebit – that great Serbian graveyard – taken by Milorad Milošević.

Belgrade,
St. Peter's Day, 2017

INTRODUCTION

Serbs in the Neretva Valley in the Middle Ages

Among several state formations established by the Serbs upon settling in the Balkan Peninsula was Zahumlje, which encompassed the area of present-day Mostar. Based on the limited sources from that period, we can conclude that this region was inhabited by Serbs as early as their migration. The princes of Zahumlje were vassals to the Byzantine Empire, but we have no detailed information about this Serbian medieval state entity. The first mention of Zahumlje appears in the writings of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, who explicitly states that the inhabitants of Zahumlje were Serbs. The first known prince of Zahumlje was Mihailo Višević, who is mentioned as a loyal ally of the Bulgarian Tsar Simeon (893–927), in the first half of the 10th century. Major changes in the Balkan Peninsula also affected this area, so in the first half of the 10th century, probably after the death of Mihailo Višević, the present-day Mostar region found itself within the state of Serbian prince Časlav Klonimirović (927–950). After Časlav died in conflict with the Hungarians, the Serbian state was left weakened. Zahumlje likely found itself outside of its borders and once again fell under strong Byzantine influence. Bulgarian expansion under Tsar Samuel (976–1014) at the turn of the century extended his rule to Zahumlje, but this was short-lived.¹²

¹² Јевто Дедијер, *Херцеговина. Антиривојеоіеоірафска сѣудија*, Београд 1909, р. 106–108; Синиша Мишић, *Хумска земља у средњем веку*, Београд 1996, р. 19, 39–44; Синиша Мишић, „Мостарски крај у средњем веку“, in: *Срби у Мосѣару. Расѣраве и оіледи* (Ed. Боривоје Пиштало), Београд

After the death of Tsar Samuel, his state disintegrated. The Byzantine Empire restored its authority over Zahumlje, which would last for the next few decades. When the Dioclean prince Stefan Vojislav (1019–1044) raised a rebellion and defeated the Byzantine army in 1042, he took control of Zahumlje. Zahumlje remained under the Dioclean rule during the reign of Mihailo Vojislavljević (1046–1081), the successor of Stefan Vojislav. It is not entirely certain whether, during the reign of King Petar Krešimir IV (1058–1074), when the medieval Croatian state experienced its expansion, Croatia took control of this region. After the collapse of the Croatian medieval state in 1102, the Kingdom of Hungary increasingly got closer to the Neretva Valley but had not yet managed to seize it. It is also uncertain when Duklja's authority over Zahumlje ended. During the 12th century, Zahumlje was ruled by Prince Desa, the brother of the Grand Župan of Raška Uroš II (1140–1161), whose rise to power in Zahumlje is considered the beginning of the rule of the Grand Župans of Raška over this area. At the end of the 12th century, Zahumlje was ruled by Prince Miroslav (before 1180–after 1190), the brother of Grand Župan Stefan Nemanja (1166–1196), to whom Zahumlje was given as an apanage. It was during the 12th century that the name Zahumlje faded away, and the term Hum increasingly prevailed, remaining in use for the next several centuries.¹³

The strengthening of Stefan Nemanja as the Grand Župan of Raška led to the expansion of his authority over the land of Zahumlje. However, in the early years of the rule of his successor, Stefan the First-Crowned (1196–1228), Duke Andrew, the brother of the Hungarian king, invaded Zahumlje in 1198 and briefly ruled over it. This was a prelude to frequent Hungarian-Serbian power shifts in the area throughout the 13th century. During the reign of Stefan the First-Crowned, the Hum Eparchy was established in 1219 with its seat in Ston, as one of the seven new eparchies founded after the monk Sava (Nemanjić) obtained the right to establish an autocephalous archbishopric. The Hungarians

2001, p. 11–34; Владимир Ђоровић, *Прошлост Херцеговине*, Београд 2003, p. 29, 35–40.

¹³ Ј. Дедијер, *Херцеговина*, p. 108; С. Мишић, *Хумска земља*, p. 19–20, 44–48; В. Ђоровић, *Прошлост Херцеговине*, p. 41–50.

again invaded Hum in 1237, led by Duke Coloman, but withdrew when pressured by the Tatars who were attacking the Hungarian Kingdom. In the 1240s, Prince Andrija, son of Prince Miroslav, ruled the area. Andrija's son Radoslav acknowledged Hungarian authority, but his rule was short-lived, and the Serbian medieval state reestablished control over Hum. The Nemanjić dynasty ruled over Hum during the reigns of Kings Stefan Uroš I (1242–1276), Stefan Dragutin (1276–1282), Stefan Milutin (1282–1321), and Stefan Uroš III Dečanski (1321–1331). During King Milutin's reign, the Bribir princes of the Šubić family briefly ruled Hum (1303–1306).¹⁴

Taking advantage of dynastic conflicts in Serbia, Bosnian Ban Stefan II Kotromanić (1322–1353) invaded the Neretva Valley in 1326, and the area around present-day Mostar became part of the medieval Serbian state of Bosnia. Attempts by Serbian King/Emperor Stefan Uroš II Dušan (1331–1355) to gain control of Hum were unsuccessful, and the Nemanjić dynasty never returned to the Neretva Valley. Bosnian rulers reestablished their authority over the Neretva Valley after the fall of Nikola Altomanović in 1373 and due to internal conflicts in Hungary following the death of King Louis I (1342–1382). However, after the death of King Tvrtko I Kotromanić (1353–1394), medieval Bosnia entered a period where regional lords took over the prerogatives of central authority. Thus, in the early 15th century, Radič Sanković and Hrvoje Vukčić Hrvatinić ruled the Neretva Valley. From July 1420, the entire Neretva Valley and the area of present-day Mostar were under the control of Sandalj Hranić Kosača. Despite Hungarian attempts to reclaim this territory, Sandalj's successor, Stefan Vukčić Kosača (1435–1466), maintained the rule of the Kosača over the Neretva Valley.¹⁵

¹⁴ *Српска ѡрвославна Херцеѡвачко-захумска миѡројолија ѡри крају 1900. ѡд.*, Ed. Јован Муцовић, Мостар 1901, р. 26–28; Ј. Дедијер, *Херцеѡвина*, р. 108–109; *Сѡменица Еѡрхије захумско-херцеѡвачке живим и уѡкојеним борцима за ослобођење и уједињење 1918.–1928.*, Ниш 1928, р. 49–63; Владимир Ђоровић, *Хистѡрија Босне*, I, Београд 1940, р. 222–235; С. Мишић, *Хумска земља*, р. 48–60, 126–130; С. Мишић, „Мостарски крај у средњем веку“, р. 15–18; Милош Благојевић, *Србија у доба Немањѡна. Од кнежевине до царсѡва 1168–1371*, Београд 1989, р. 73–75; В. Ђоровић, *Прошлост Херцеѡвине*, р. 51–58.

¹⁵ Ј. Дедијер, *Херцеѡвина*, р. 109; Сима М. Ђирковић, *Херцеѡ Стефан Вукчић-Косача и њѡво доба*, Београд 1964, р. 5–19; Сима Ђирковић, *Истѡрија средњовековне босанске државе*, Београд

However, the rule of the Kosača was not peaceful for the Neretva Valley. Stefan Vukčić defended the present-day Mostar area several times with the help of the Ottomans, first in 1435 from the Hungarian King Sigismund of Luxembourg (1387–1437), and then in 1444 and 1445 from the Bosnian King Stefan Tomaš (1443–1461). On the other hand, in 1447 and 1448, the Ottomans devastated the lands of the Kosača in the Neretva Valley. The following years were not any more peaceful. In June 1451, Duke Stefan Vukčić fought against the Republic of Dubrovnik, and the following year his son Vladislav and Duke Ivaniš Vlatković rebelled against him. Although Vladislav and Stefan reconciled in 1453, conflicts continued in the years to come. It was in the second half of the 15th century that the name Hum was replaced by the term “Herzeg’s land” or Herzegovina, named after Stefan Vukčić’s title of herzeg (duke) which he adopted in October 1448. This name remains in use today. From 1459, the Ottomans exerted increasing pressure on Stefan’s lands, and in February 1463, they ravaged Hum. Parts of the duke’s land were occupied by the Hungarians and Venetians in the following period. After the death of Stevan Vukčić (1466), the remaining territory was gradually taken over by the Ottomans. Blagaj fell in 1466, and two years later, Ključ was also captured.¹⁶

Serbs in Mostar in the Ottoman Empire (1468–1878)

In the final years of the duke’s rule, we encounter mentions of Mostar. Mavro Orbini states that in 1440, the city was built by Radivoj, a nobleman of Duke Stefan and that Vladislav Herzegović resided there when he rebelled against his father and captured some cities. In 1452, “two fortresses on the bridge over the Neretva” are mentioned. According to the guardians of that bridge, the city of Mostar got its name (Serb.

1964, p. 88–92, 266–275; С. Мишић, *Хумска земља*, p. 60–84; С. Мишић, „Мостарски крај у средњем веку“, p. 18–20; В. Ђоровић, *Прошлост Херцеговине*, p. 59–65.

¹⁶ Михаило Динић, *Земље Херцеговина Светиога Саве*, Београд 1940; В. Ђоровић, *Хисторија Босне*, I, p. 481–510, 575–585; С. М. Ђирковић, *Херцеговина Стефан Вукчић-Косача*, p. 21–267; Вељан Атанасовски, *Пад Херцеговине*, Београд 1979; С. Мишић, *Хумска земља*, p. 84–109; С. Мишић, „Мостарски крај у средњем веку“, p. 21–22; В. Ђоровић, *Прошлост Херцеговине*, p. 66–71.

most – bridge).¹⁷ In a charter from King Alfonso V of Aragon in 1454, mention is made of “civitas pontis,” which likely corresponds to Mostar. After the death of Duke Stefan, Mostar developed increasingly at the expense of Blagaj. Mostar likely fell under Ottoman rule in 1468 when the Ottomans conquered Blagaj, and the Turkish name for the city, at least at the beginning of Ottoman rule, was Koprühisar. In the first Ottoman census of newly conquered territories in present-day Herzegovina from 1468/69, Mostar is mentioned as a market of little significance with 19 houses. The Mostar region became part of the Herzegovina Sandzak formed between May 1469 and February 1470 with its seat in Foča. Mostar belonged to the Hersek Vilayet. The name Mostar is first mentioned in 1476.¹⁸ According to the Ottoman cadastral census from 1475/77, there were 2,333 inhabitants of the Mostar district, and by looking at the names of male heads of tax-paying families, we see that the population was Serbian and Orthodox and that the process of Islamization had not yet begun in the early years of Ottoman rule. Based on this, we can say that the beginnings of Mostar as a city are exclusively linked to its Serbian, Orthodox population.

The transformation of Mostar from a small late medieval market in the Neretva Valley into a more significant settlement is associated with the first decades of Ottoman rule in the area. Over time, Mostar became the seat of a nahiyah and increasingly turned into a marketplace, becoming a significant place of trade between the Ottomans and the Republic of Dubrovnik. Mostar represented the farthest Ottoman military outpost towards the central Adriatic, from which light caval-

¹⁷ Asim Peco, „O porijeklu toponima Mostar“, in: *Knjiga o Mostaru*, Ed. Borivoje Pištalo, Beograd 2006, p. 155–157.

¹⁸ Мавро Орбин, *Краљевство Словена*, Београд 2006, p. 182; Владимир Ђоровић, *Мостар и његова српска православна ојштина*, Београд 1933, p. 9–10; Намдија Крешевићковић, Намдија Каридџић, „Стари херцеговачки градови“, *Наше старине*, Nr. 2/1954, p. 9–22; Десанка Ковачевић-Којић, *Градска насеља средњовековне босанске државе*, Сарајево 1978, p. 115, 121; Богумил Храбак, „Урбани, привредни и војно-управни раст Мостара (1450–1700)“, *Зборник за историју Босне и Херцеговине*, Nr. 1/1995, p. 113–159; С. Мишић, „Мостарски крај у средњем веку“, p. 26–27; Никола Самарџић, „Срби у Мостару 1440–1850“, in: *Срби у Мостару. Расправе и ојштини* (Ed. Боривоје Пиштало), Београд 2001, p. 35–79; Тодор Дутина, Драга Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове. Прилози за историју Херцеговине*, Билећа 2012, p. 230.

ry could reach Split and Šibenik within a few days. It gained particular importance during the reign of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–1566), whose expansionist policy towards Venetian strongholds along the Adriatic coast increased the importance of Mostar. However, as we can observe from the 1519 census of the Herzegovina Sandzak, the strengthening of Ottoman authority led to the beginning of the process of Islamization in that region. According to this census, Mostar had 73 Christian and 19 Muslim families, indicating that Islamization had not yet gained much ground. Islam was mainly accepted by the commanders of urban garrisons, to whom timars were given in return for their service. In order to preserve their estates, both large and small feudal lords gradually converted to Islam.¹⁹

Judicially, Mostar was part of the Foča kadiluk, which was first mentioned in 1506, and we find a separate Mostar kadiluk in 1522. The Sandzak-bey of Hercegovina used Mostar as a reserve residence, residing there in 1522 and 1523. Although it originated on the left bank of the Neretva, Mostar had expanded over both of its banks during the 16th century and gained the status of a kasaba. New buildings arose, many of which remained lasting symbols of the city. The city was surrounded by walls and transformed into an elongated fortress. As the old wooden bridge approached the end of its lifespan, Sultan Suleiman ordered the collection of funds and building materials for the construction of a new stone bridge in 1565. Money was collected from the inhabitants of the Herzegovina and Klis Sandzaks. The construction of the bridge, most likely completed in 1566 according to the project by architect Hajrudin, consisted of stone arches gracefully spanning the Neretva and connecting its two banks. Apart from the important role it played in local traffic, this imposing structure also held symbolic significance, demonstrating the power and ambition of the Ottoman Empire. A thorough reconstruction of the bridge was carried out on its centenary in 1664, and the bridge remains a symbol of the city today,

¹⁹ Лука Грђић Бјелокосић, *Мостар некад и сад*, Београд 1901, р. 6–20; Б. Храбак, „Урбани, привредни и војно-управни раст Мостара“, р. 114, 119, 123; Н. Самарџић, „Срби у Мостару“, р. 38–39, 41, 45.

although it was destroyed during the civil war at the beginning of the last decade of the 20th century.²⁰

The city increasingly attracted new inhabitants over time, rapidly expanding. According to data from 1633, it had 24 mahalas grouped into 10 quarters. On the left bank were Ćarina, Brankovac, Donja Mahala, Grad, Bjelušine, and Luka, while on the right bank were Ričica, Cernica, Zahum, and Predhum. By the beginning of the 17th century, 36 mosques had been built, as well as aqueducts, public baths, madrasas, dozens of shops, inns, and mills powered by the Neretva.²¹ Despite wars and plague epidemics that also affected Mostar, the city continued to develop in the following decades and by the late 17th century had nearly 12,000 inhabitants. Trade and crafts adorned the city's economy and contributed to its development, as did its strategic position, which made it a bridge between the Dalmatian coast and the hinterland.²²

The Long War (1593–1606) served as a sort of prelude to the 17th century as if heralding a century marked by wars. Considering that the Ottoman Empire, to which Mostar belonged, and the Republic of Venice, near whose borders the city on the Neretva was located, participated in all these wars, they significantly affected Mostar and its hinterland. During the Cretan War (1645–1669), there were no military operations in the Neretva Valley until 1652, when the Venetians began raids into Herzegovina, coming from the direction of Dalmatian cities. A particular danger for Mostar was the Venetian advance towards Bi-jelo Polje, when the Mostarians were hastily mobilized and managed to defend the city.²³

Combat activities significantly closed in on Mostar during the Morean War (1683–1699). As early as 1684, Senj knights attacked Mostar, and the following year, in 1685, Morlachs from Dalmatia did the

²⁰ Б. Храбак, „Урбани, привредни и војно-управни раст Мостара“, р. 114, 121; Hivzija Hasandedić, *Spomenici kulture turskog doba u Mostaru*, Mostar 2005, р. 121–127; Milan Vasić, „О градњи Старог mosta u Mostaru“, in: *Knjiga o Mostaru*, Ed. Borivoje Pištalo, Beograd 2006, р. 301–306.

²¹ В. Поровић, *Мостар и његова српска православна оштинина*, р. 12–13; Б. Храбак, „Урбани, привредни и војно-управни раст Мостара“, р. 119–120; Н. Самарџић, „Срби у Мостару“, р. 41–44.

²² Н. Самарџић, „Срби у Мостару“, р. 48.

²³ Б. Храбак, „Урбани, привредни и војно-управни раст Мостара“, р. 144–145.

same. However, Mostarians were not passive in these wars but participated in offensive actions, such as the attack on Zadvarje. Uskoks, led by Stojan Janković, attempted to seize Mostar in 1687, taking advantage of the fact that Mostar fighters were mostly engaged in defending Herzegovina. Janković's uskoks set fire to and plundered the mahalas of Predhum, Džabovina, and Rajevina, but they were repelled by the city garrison, led by Captain Halebi. A new attempt by the Morlachs to capture Mostar occurred in the spring of 1690 when they attacked and plundered Mostarsko Blato and two other villages, capturing 400 heads of small and 200 heads of large livestock and relocating 30 Orthodox families to the Venetian side. Morlachs, on behalf of the Republic of Venice, continued to attack Mostar in the following years. At the end of April 1694, they burned down the suburbs, defeated the pasha of Mostar in June, and it seems that in that year, almost the entire Mostar region was destroyed and plundered. The last serious attack by the Morlachs on Mostar was recorded in February 1697 when two detachments penetrated through Livno.²⁴

In the 18th century, after the era of wars had ended, the development of Mostar continued. Located in the hinterland of the Ottoman border towards the West and therefore in the hinterland of Islamic civilization pushed towards Christian Europe, the city was still known for skilled craftsmen and adept merchants, and increasingly for educated people. It is generally agreed upon that the Orthodox Church parish in Mostar was formed in the first decades of the 18th century. There are, however, valid assumptions that it is much older than that and that its roots date as far back as the 17th century, which is evidenced by old monuments on the graves of monks in the cemetery in Bjelušine.²⁵ After Metropolitan Aksentije (Palikuća, 1751–1763) transferred the seat of the Hum-Herzegovina diocese from the Duži Monastery to Mostar, this city became the most important center of the Orthodox Church

²⁴ Б. Храбак, „Урбани, привредни и војно-управни раст Мостара“, р. 146–149; Н. Самарџић, „Срби у Мостару“, р. 64–66. See in detail: Глигор Станојевић, *Јуџословенске земље у млејачко-џурским рајтовима XVI–XVIII вијека*, Београд 1970.

²⁵ Радивоје Станић, „Споменици монахиња и монаха из XVII и XVIII века на православним гробљима у Мостару“, *Гласник*, III 1946, р. 39–46.

in Herzegovina. However, his successor, Metropolitan Stefan (Milutinović), returned the seat to the Duži Monastery. After the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć (1766), Mostar became the center of the Zahum-Herzegovina diocese, headed by Greek metropolitans (from 1767). The appearance of non-Serbian, Phanariot Metropolitans, first Antim (1766–1772) and then Ananias (1772–1802), led to conflicts within the Orthodox community, causing the Serbian Orthodox population to split into supporters of the two conflicting sides. The struggle against the Greek bishops was carried out by the monks of the Žitomisljić Monastery, which dates back to the 16th century. The period of Greek metropolitan bishops lasted for more than a century (1766–1888). These metropolitans were often appointed after a public bidding, i.e. they were awarded to the highest bidder.²⁶

It's not entirely certain when the old Church of the Protection of the Theotokos in Mostar was built, but it is known that it was demolished in 1832 to make way for a new one that better suited the needs of the Orthodox Serbs at the time. Approval for the construction of the new church in Mostar was sought by the Serbs as a reward for their participation in quelling the uprising of Hussein-captain Gradašćević. The firman for the construction of the new church was personally delivered to Metropolitan Josif I (1815–1837) by the Grand Vizier Kara Mahmud-pasha. However, the construction of the new Orthodox sanctuary upset the Muslims of Mostar, so the construction was prohibited. It was only the new Herzegovinian Pasha Ali-pasha Rizvanbegovic (1833–1851) who allowed the local Orthodox population to build a new church “neither longer, nor wider, nor higher than it previously was”, in accordance with the firman they had received. Ali-pasha took a considerable sum of money from the Serbian community so as to approve construction to continue. The church was six meters high, 13.20 meters long, and 9.30 meters wide, so during major holidays, a multitude of faithful people remained in front of the

²⁶ *Српска православна Херцеговачко-захумска митрополија*, p. 49–50; В. Ђоровић, *Мостар и његова српска православна ојштина*, p. 34–35, 42–46; Ђоко Слијепчевић, „Хумско-херцеговачка епархија и епископи (митрополити) од 1219 до краја XIX века“, *Бојословље*, Nг. 3–4/1939, p. 239–294; Н. Самарџић, „Срби у Мостару“, p. 72–74; Јован Радуловић, *Славно доба Мостара*, Мостар 2010, p. II, 33–43.

doors. The Mostarians themselves mainly built the church (with the help of compatriots living in Dubrovnik and Trieste), and it was consecrated in 1835. As decided by Bishop Josif, the new church was dedicated to the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos, which the Serbs celebrate as Mala Gospojina. After the consecration of the church, the bishop called three monks to Mostar: Serafim (Šolaja), Ananias (Perinović), and Joanikije (Pamučina), and assigned them to the new church, which “did not have a *secular priest*”, as noted by the famous Russian diplomat, historian, and travel writer Alexander Gilferding.²⁷

Some sources state that there was a Serbian school in Mostar as early as the end of the 18th century, but we have no more detailed information about it. Presumably, Catholic children attended this school alongside Orthodox children. The first reliable mention of the Serbian school in Mostar is found in 1842 in the Serbian-Dalmatian magazine, where Fra Ivan Jukić mentions an exaggerated number of around 500 students. The old school used two premises near the old church, and in the 1850s, it had three classes. Shortly after the new church was consecrated and put into use, voluntary contributions began to be collected for the construction of a building for the Serbian school. The building was completed in 1856 and at that time was one of the largest and most beautiful buildings in Mostar. In the school year of 1856/57, the Serbian Orthodox Elementary Boys’ School had four grades with about 150 students. Students learned reading, writing, arithmetic, catechism, church singing, grammar, and the history of the Serbian people at the school. Observing the work of the school, the Russian travel writer Gilferding noted: “that in the main city of Herzegovina, there is no hesitation among the Orthodox population when it comes to intellectual development and the pursuit of enlightenment.” In that regard,

²⁷ Прокопије Чокорило, Јоаникије Памучина, Стака Скендерова, *Љеџојиси*, Ed. Војислав Максимовић, Лука Шекара, Сарајево 1976, p. 97–101; Јоаникије Памучина, „Dolazak Ali-Paše u Mostar“, in: *Knjiga o Mostaru*, Ed. Borivoje Pištalo, Beograd 2006, p. 18–23; Aleksandar Gilferding, „U Mostaru 1857.“, in: *Knjiga o Mostaru*, Ed. Borivoje Pištalo, Beograd 2006, p. 27–33; В. Ђоровић, *Мостар и његова српска православна ојштина*, p. 47–51; Владимир Ђоровић, *Мостар*, Бања Лука/Београд 1999, p. 62–66; Н. Самарцић, „Срби у Мостару“, p. 73–75; Н. Hasandedić, *Spomenici kulture turskog doba u Mostaru*, p. 75.

Gilferding considered “Mostar far surpasses all other Serbian places in Turkey, although its Orthodox parish is much smaller than that in Sarajevo, and even smaller than those in second-rate cities like Banja Luka and Livno.” To sustain and develop the school, a school fund was formed from which the Church parish provided loans and used interest to meet the school’s needs. Obviously, the Church parish became the focal point around which the Orthodox Serbs of Mostar gathered, but also the engine of their further development and progress in this ethnically and confessionally mixed city. In 1857, steps were taken towards establishing a spiritual school, which began operating in 1858 at the Žitomisljić Monastery. However, the school did not last long. After the male and spiritual school, a Serbian Orthodox elementary girls’ school also opened in Mostar. The building for that school was erected in 1861, so it is presumed that the school opened that same year or possibly a little earlier. Already at the beginning of its operation, 65 female students were enrolled. To minimize the interaction of female children with males, a chapel of St. Mary Magdalene was built near the school.²⁸

Just a few decades after the construction of the new small church, the Mostar Serbs managed to erect a completely new and significantly larger church. Approval for the Orthodox Serbs in Herzegovina to build seven new temples, including one in Mostar, was granted by the sultan’s firman in 1862. The following year, construction began, and the foundations were consecrated by Archimandrite Joanikije (Pamučina). The Cathedral Church of the Holy Trinity was completed in 1873, achieving that “with its dimensions and its elevated position, it dominates the city.” The consecration of the new church, performed in the presence of

²⁸ Александар Ф. Гилфердинг, *Путовање по Херцеговини, Босни и Сјарој Србији*, Београд 1996, р. 54–55; *Српска православна Херцеговачко-захумска митрополија*, р. 65–66, 196–210; Ђорђе Пејановић, *Srednje i stručne škole u Bosni i Hercegovini od početka do 1941 godine*, Sarajevo 1953, р. 25–28, 40–41; Војислав Богичевић, *Istorija razvitka osnovnih škola u Bosni i Hercegovini u doba turske i austrougarske uprave (1463–1918)*, Sarajevo 1965, р. 53; Митар Папић, *Školstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini za vrijeme austrougarske okupacije (1878–1918)*, Sarajevo 1972, р. 25; Митар Папић, *Историја српских школа у Босни и Херцеговини*, Сарајево 1978, р. 25–29; Midhat Šamić, *Francuski putnici u Bosni i Hercegovini u XIX stoljeću (1836–1878) i njihovi utisci o njoj*, Sarajevo 1981, р. 234–235; Душан Берић, „Срби у Мостару и његовој околини 1844–1918.“, in: *Срби у Мосџару. Расправе и ојледу* (Ed. Боривоје Пиштало), Београд 2001, р. 81–244; Ј. Радловић, *Славно доба Мосџара*, р. 74–78.



The Cathedral Church of the Holy Trinity in Mostar
at the end of the 19th century
(Library of Matica Srpska)

about 3,000 people on the day of St. Luke, was solemn and represented one of the most significant events for the Serbs of the Mostar region in the entire 19th century. A contemporary description reads: “According to reports from these days the church is magnificent and towers over all of Mostar, just as the festivity exceeded all previous ones, since the Turks oppressed Herzegovina.” This time, neither the local Muslim populace nor the Ottoman administration posed problems for the Or-

thodox Serbs, so the magnificent building of the Orthodox Church enriched the city's panorama. The Cathedral Church adorned Mostar until 1992 when, at the beginning of the war, it was raised to the ground.²⁹

The minor concessions made by Ottoman authorities contributed to national sentiment flourishing among the Serbs of Herzegovina in the 1870s. Mostar played a leading role in this sentiment, not only as the true urban center of the region but also as the place where the elite of the Serbian people in Herzegovina was formed – intellectual, educational, cultural, and economic. Old Serbian trading families in Mostar grew into some of the most prominent Mostar families in the 19th century, becoming leaders and the best representatives of Mostar and Serbian citizenship in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These included the Šola, Krulj, Bjelobrk, Mrav, Aničić, Knežić, Kuić, and others. Hence, according to the travel writer Alexander Gilferding, it seemed to him that in Mostar, “all trade is almost exclusively in the hands of Orthodox people”, while Muslims “participate very little”, and Catholics “do not engage in trade at all”. Thus, the environment in Mostar, with its wealthy merchants, monasteries, and churches, produced educated people who acquired knowledge throughout Europe. However, in the vicinity of Mostar, especially to the east of the city, prominent Serbian families also developed – Ivanišević, Lojpur, Lečić, Ćorić, Bošković, Kraljević, Čolović, Skočajić, Ćorluka, Popadić, Papić, and others. It was precisely the villages in the vicinity of Mostar (but also in other parts of the Serbian ethnic space) that represented an inexhaustible source from which Serbian citizenship was renewed.³⁰

In terms of culture, Mostar was a focus point, not only for the Serbian inhabitants of Herzegovina, but Bosnia and Herzegovina as an administrative unit. Mostar Serbs served as a literary beacon for the entire region. Before the extraordinary generation, consisting of Alek-

²⁹ В. Ђоровић, *Мостар и његова српска православна ојштинина*, р. 67–70; Александар Кадиевић, „Саборна црква Св. Тројице у Мостару-остварење српског градитељства друге половине деветнаестог века“, in: *Срби у Мостару. Расправе и ојпеди* (Ed. Боровоје Пиштало), Београд 2001, р. 471–481; Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, р. 144–145; Н. Насандедић, *Spomenici kulture turskog doba u Mostaru*, р. 76–77.

³⁰ Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, р. 104–105; Ј. Радуловић, *Славно доба Мостара*, р. 27–28.

sa Šantić, Jovan Dučić, and Svetozar Ćorović, there were lesser-known but extremely significant monks such as Serafim (Šolaja), originally from Dalmatia, Prokopije (Čokorilo), the author of the “Herzegovina Chronicle” (*Ljetopis Hercegovine*) and “Diary” (*Dnevnik*), which are precious works for studying the history of that region in the mid-19th century, and Joanikije (Pamučina), who wrote patriotic poems, collected folk creations, wrote about folk customs and celebrations. Apart from the three monks, Ato Marković Slomo, who wrote about folk customs, Luka Grdić Bjelokosić, who collected and published folk creations, wrote short stories, and engaged in ethnographic research, and Risto Ivanišević, who represented a kind of link between two exceptional generations of Mostar writers, also contributed to the development of literature in Mostar.³¹

The development of a small trading class and a not particularly numerous urban population in Herzegovina could not hide the fact that the majority rural population suffered hardship, living in difficult conditions and oppression by the Ottoman bureaucratic apparatus. Although the Porte sought to appease this part of the Empire through concessions on several occasions, the attitude of officials from the lowest to almost the highest level did not allow for significant improvements in conditions. The guerrilla action that emerged in late 1874 slowly grew into a mass movement, and at the end of June 1875, an uprising of great proportions broke out in the vicinity of Nevesinje, known as the Nevesinje Uprising. The uprising revealed the weaknesses of the entire Ottoman Empire, the ‘sick man upon the Bosphorus’ as it was called in some European diplomatic circles. The uprising quickly spread throughout Herzegovina and beyond, turning into the well-known Great Eastern Crisis, which represented the culmination of the Eastern Question. The Serbian people rose up in various parts of

³¹ В. Ђоровић, *Мосћар и његова српска православна ошћина*, р. 74–82; Станиша Тутњевић, *Мосћарски књижевни крућ*, Београд 2001, р. 7–18; Станиша Тутњевић, „Књижевни и културни живот Мосћара“, in: *Срби у Мосћару. Расправе и оћеди* (Ed. Боровоје Пиштало), Београд 2001, р. 343–451; Војо Ковачевић, „Памучина и Чокорило“, in: *Српска ћроза данас. Кулћурна и духовна исћорија Херцећовине*, Ed. Никола Асановић, Билећа/Гацко 2004, р. 543–558; Ј. Радуловић, *Славно доба Мосћара*, р. 120–140, 263–265.

the Balkan Peninsula, believing it was a suitable opportunity to finally thoroughly remove the Ottoman rule that had oppressed them for centuries. Mostar region was mostly not affected by the insurgent battles, but it could not remain on the sidelines. The strong non-Serbian element in the Mostar region prevented the uprising from igniting there, but the Mostar Serbs still participated in it in various ways. Unlike the previous uprising, which was far from Mostar, on the border with Montenegro, so Mostar was not significantly affected by it; this uprising was very close to the city, with a tendency to spread to Mostar itself. The active participation of Mostar merchants in aiding the uprising led to its escalation and taking on new dimensions. In the uprising of 1875–1878, Mostar “played not only the role of financial supporter but also an active participant”, and Ottoman authorities received information that there was a “revolutionary committee” in Mostar. It was precisely the actions of prominent Mostar citizens, especially the merchant Stojan Čokorilo, who contributed to the spread of the uprising from Herzegovina to Bosnia. Among the Mostar merchants who assisted the uprising, Jevto Bjelobrk, the “procurer for all needs of the insurgents in Herzegovina, who prepares everything necessary for the war”, stood out. Bjelobrk even participated in negotiations between the insurgents and the Austro-Hungarian General Gavrilo Rodić, held in Sutomore in March 1876. Apart from providing logistical support for the struggle for the liberation of the Serbian people of Serbia and Montenegro, Mostar also supported it by sending volunteers. The years of war from 1875 to 1878 were also years of great hope that Herzegovina and Mostar would finally achieve their long-awaited freedom. However, at the end of the war, hope turned into disappointment. Freedom did not come; instead, Mostar and Herzegovina as a whole merely changed masters and transitioned from the status of oriental subjects to subjects of the Central European Empire.³²

³² Ристо Т. Пророковић-Невесинџац, *Невесинџац, Невесинџацка буна 1874. и почетак устјанка у Херцеговини 1875. године*, Београд 1905; Васиљ Поповић, „Покрет од 1875. до 1878.“, in: *Најор Босне и Херцеговине за ослобођење и уједињење*, Сарајево 1929, p. 40–65; Васо Чубриловић, *Босански устјанак 1875–1878*, Београд 1930; В. Ђоровић, *Мостар и његова српска православна оштина*, p. 82–84; Milorad Екмеџић, *Ustanak u Bosni 1875–1878.*, Сарајево 1973; Душан Берић, „Почетак

Serbs in Mostar During the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (1878–1918)

At the beginning of 1878, rumors began to circulate that the Ottoman Empire would not emerge unscathed from the crisis and conflicts, and that divisions were imminent. This did not please the Serbian population in Herzegovina, who dreamed of freedom and joining Montenegro, not a new master who would merely replace the despised one they wished to see leave. When, on July 25th, 1878, the mutasarrif of Mostar gathered prominent citizens and informed them that the Porte had notified him that Austro-Hungarian troops would enter Herzegovina, there was no longer any doubt. The Great Eastern Crisis brought significant change to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Berlin Congress clearly stipulated: “The provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina shall be occupied and administered by Austria-Hungary.” After the Berlin Congress in 1878, Bosnia and Herzegovina formally remained part of the Empire, but its administration was “temporarily” taken over by the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, ending a 410-year period of Mostar’s history under the Ottomans. Except for the first years of its existence, when it was part of the Duchy of Saint Sava of Duke Stefan Vukčić Kosača, Mostar spent most of its history as part of the Ottoman Empire (1468–1878) – over four centuries. The Ottoman period laid the foundations for Mostar, and the history of Mostar is inseparable from Ottoman rule in these areas. Just a year after taking over the administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the new Austro-Hungarian authorities conducted a census. This census was meant to show the new authorities the exact number and structure of the population in the territory they had taken over. Alternatively, given the limitations of Ottoman censuses, this census represented the first true population count of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Austro-Hungarian census of 1879 showed that the Mostar area had a

херцеговачког устанка 1875. године“, *Зборник за историју Босне и Херцеговине*, Нр. 1/1995, р. 203–235; Вилиам Ц. Стилман, *Херцеговачки устаник и Црнојорско-шурски рај 1876–1878.*, Београд 1997; Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, р. 162–174; Миливоје Буха, *Невесњска њушка и херцеговачки устаник 1875–1878. године*, Српско Сарајево 2003.

population of 40,696, of which 22,928 were Roman Catholics, 11,447 Muslims, 6,280 Orthodox Christians, 35 Jews, and six others. In the city itself, there were 1,909 houses and 2,535 apartments, with a total population of 10,848. Of that number, 59.19% were Muslims (6,421), 27.89% Orthodox (3,026), and 12.59% Catholics (1,366).³³

Mostar did not welcome the Austro-Hungarian authorities either. They were simply seen as a new occupying administration. A document from July 1879 refers to Mostar as the ‘seat of agitation’ with a ‘committee that guides the national spirit,’ which serves no one but is ‘purely national-Herzegovinian,’ aiming to draw closer to Montenegro and strongly opposing Austro-Hungary. This brief information seemed to foreshadow what Mostar would become during the forty years of Vienna’s rule—a bastion of the Serbian people’s struggle for their rights, cultural institutions, religious freedom, and educational development.³⁴ The ‘continuous struggle’ (*borba neprestana*) was fought out of Mostar from the arrival of the first Austro-Hungarian cavalry to their departure from the city on the Neretva during the days of the Empire’s collapse decades later. During the negotiations between the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the Ecumenical Patriarchate on the Convention regarding the position of the Orthodox Church in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Mostar Church-School Municipality personally addressed Emperor Franz Joseph in 1880, stating they would not agree to have their religious leaders appointed by a secular ruler. Several memoranda were sent to the emperor, authored by Jovo Ljepava. Protests were directed at the overall behavior of the Austro-Hungarian authorities, especially the suppression of schools.³⁵

³³ *Ortschafts- und Bevölkerungs-Statistik von Bosnien und Hercegovina*, Sarajevo 1880, pp. 103–125; Драга Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина у Краљевини Срба, Хрватиа и Словенаца (1918–1929)*, Београд 2009, p. 67, 87; Ј. Радуловић, *Славно доба Мосџара*, p. 216–219; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, p. 494.

³⁴ Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, p. 175–176.

³⁵ Божо Маџар, „Конвенција о положају православне цркве у Босни и Херцеговини закључена 1880. године између Аустро-Угарске и Цариградске патријаршије“, *Прилози*, Nr. 11–12/1975–1976, p. 79–97; Божо Маџар, *Покрећ Срба Босне и Херцеговине за вјерско-просвјетну самоуправу*, Сарајево 1982, p. 30–38; Божо Маџар, Митар Папић, *Полијтика и српска православна црква у Босни и Херцеговини 1878–1945.*, Бањалука 2005, p. 63–71; Т. Дутина, Д. Мастиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, p. 395–402.

In September 1880, the Church-School Municipality sent their representative, Todor Milić, to the emperor in Vienna. They requested that the population of the province be allowed to participate in administration at all levels—from the local level upwards: “It is well known that a country cannot be considered organized nor can it achieve lasting prosperity until the people themselves take administration into their own hands and until their voice is heard in determining one measure or another.” It was said that the “Serbian quarter of Mostar rose against the established system of administration.” However, the emperor did not receive Milić. Nonetheless, this stance of Mostar’s Serbs influenced the views of Serbs in other parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In February 1881, relations between the Austro-Hungarian administration and the Church-School Municipality further deteriorated when the Municipality declared they would not implement the authorities’ order to stop teaching Serbian history and language in Serbian schools. In such tense circumstances, only a spark was needed to ignite a new blaze in these regions. That spark came in the form of the Military Law of 1881, which showed the determination of Austro-Hungarian authorities to conscript the entire population, regardless of nationality and religion. In November 1881, the Serbian Orthodox Church Municipality in Mostar sent a sharp protest to the Provincial Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Zemaljska vlada Bosne i Hercegovine*) over the Military Law, which mandated the conscription of all young men into the Austro-Hungarian army. The petition was drafted by the headmaster of the Serbian School in Mostar (*Srpska škola u Mostaru*), Đorđe Bekić, and signed by the president of the Serbian Orthodox Church Municipality (*Srpska pravoslavna crkvena opština*), Dimitrije Bilić, vice-president Mihailo Anić, members: Vaso Krulj, Ignjat Gatalo, Nikola Zec, Đordo Radulović, Marko Kosjerina, Simo Kovačević, and Vojislav Šola, along with 55 other prominent Mostar Serbs. Austro-Hungarian sources claim that the “protest of the Mostar Church-School Municipality sparked an uprising.” By December 1881, in response to the arrest of prominent Serbs, the first rebels appeared, and in the following weeks, a new uprising in Herzegovina flared up—the first since the region fell

under Austro-Hungarian rule. The uprising began in Krivošije near Kotor at the end of 1881 and spread to Herzegovina. The attack by around 100 armed men on the gendarmerie barracks in Ulog on the night of January 10th/11th 1882, brought the uprising to Herzegovinian soil. Attacks on other gendarmerie barracks demonstrated the widespread nature of the uprising. At the beginning of February, the insurgents attacked Foča and Trnovo, causing the uprising to spread towards the valleys of the Rama and Vrbas rivers, and towards Glasinac and Sokolac. When the uprising was at its peak, the insurgents formed their own organs of authority in Obrnja near Ulog, which, however, did not last long. The lack of ammunition, hunger, and a strong offensive by Austro-Hungarian armed forces led to the uprising's collapse by the end of February, and a proclamation announcing the suppression of the uprising and granting general amnesty to the insurgents was issued on April 22, 1882. Due to the significant participation of Mostar in the uprising against the new authorities, specifically the Serbian Church-School Municipality, it is not surprising that it was dissolved. Some prominent Mostar Serbs were sentenced for aiding the insurgents and undermining Austro-Hungarian authority. Among those convicted were Đorđe Bekić, Vaso Krulj, Simo Kovačević, Nikola Zec, Marko Kosjerina, Mijat Radović, and others.³⁶

Despite the repression suffered by the new authorities, Mostar Serbs led in almost all areas of national, cultural, educational, and economic organization in the years to follow. The first Serbian reading room, craftsmen's association, bank, and a Serbian trade youth society in Bosnia and Herzegovina were established in Mostar. A delegation from Mostar was sent to Vienna to express opposition to the adminis-

³⁶ Ристо Јеремић, „Оружани отпор против Аустро-Угарске, од 1878–1882.“, in: *Најор Босне и Херцеговине за ослобођење и уједињење*, Сарајево 1929, р. 66–78; В. Ђоровић, *Мосћар и његова српска љавославна ојшћина*, р. 87–91; Ђорђе Ст. Бекич, *Борба српско-љавославној Ојшћестива у Мосћару љроћив аустро-босанске уљраве 1880–1882 љодине и друје с љим љовезане усљомене*, Сарајево 1936; Hamdija Kapidžić, *Hercegovački ustanak 1882. godine*, Sarajevo 1973; Milorad Ekmečić, „Ustanak u Hercegovini 1882. i istorijske pouke“, *Prilozi*, Nr. 19/1982, р. 9–74; Б. Маџар, *Покрећ Срба Босне и Херцеговине*, р. 95–117; Д. Берич, „Срби у Мосћару“, р. 176–180; Б. Маџар, М. Папић, *Полићика и српска љавославна црква*, р. 71–74; Ј. Радуловић, *Славно доба Мосћара*, р. 219–224; Т. Дућина, Д. Мастиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, р. 404–406.

tration of Benjamin Kallay (1882–1903).³⁷ In two separate elections for the city council of Mostar, the opposition defeated regime representatives, which kickstarted the fight for press freedom in this marginalized province under special imperial administration.³⁸ The best testament to what Mostar truly represented at the turn of the century (the last decades of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th century) are these lines written by Milan Đaković, a professor at the Mostar Gymnasium: “In the last years of the previous century and the first years of this one, Mostar held the first place in cultural-national terms in western Serbian lands. It can be freely assessed that in terms of the institutions located there and the much larger number of cultural workers, outside of Serbia, only Novi Sad was ahead of Mostar. However, in terms of the quality of literary and cultural work, Mostar was even ahead of Novi Sad, not to mention Sarajevo, Cetinje, Dubrovnik, and other places. And since at that time, every kind of public work, including literary and artistic had the distinction of being national, Mostar was renowned as being the most national of cities.”³⁹

In 1885, Austria-Hungary conducted its second census since occupying Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mostar had 12,665 inhabitants, of which 6,825 were Muslims, 3,369 were Orthodox Christians, 2,359 were Roman Catholics, and 98 were Jews. Notably, that the number of Roman Catholics had nearly doubled in just six years since the first Austro-Hungarian census, while the number of Muslims and Orthodox Christians grew at a “usual” rate.⁴⁰ The grip of the Austro-Hungarian authorities only eased in light of far more complex diplomatic maneuvers and contacts between Austria-Hungary and Russia in the following years. In those kinds of circumstances, the Serbian Church-School Municipality resumed its activities in 1888, it was allowed for the

³⁷ More about the Kállay regime in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Tomislav Kraljačić, *Kalajev režim u Bosni i Hercegovini (1882–1903)*, Sarajevo 1987.

³⁸ Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, р. 143–144.

³⁹ Cited as in: Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, р. 404.

⁴⁰ Ivica Šarac, „Hercegovina u razdoblju Austro-Ugarske uprave“, in: *Hum i Hercegovina kroz povijest.*, II, Ed. Ivica Lučić, Zagreb 2011, р. 11–52.

Church-singing Society “Gusle” to be founded, and it was finally possible for the Herzegovinian Metropolis to be taken over by a Serb—Leontije (Radulović), whose death separated him from the throne just a few months later. Moreover, during this time, prominent cultural figures such as Aleksa Šantić, Jovan Dučić, and Svetozar Ćorović began their work in the city on the banks of the Neretva, and Mostar experienced a comprehensive cultural transformation. Although the Austro-Hungarian authorities viewed connections with Serbia with suspicion, books and magazines from the homeland reached Mostar and Herzegovina, and Mostar’s poets published their works in Serbian newspapers. In those years, Mostar did everything in its power to preserve Serbian national consciousness and to fight against Austro-Hungarian incursions, aimed precisely at pacifying, de-nationalizing, and rendering the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina harmless.⁴¹ Behind all the achievements by the Serbs of Mostar stood the Serbian Orthodox Church-School Municipality, which managed to gather seemingly incompatible people around a common goal - intellectuals, traders, craftsmen, and peasants. The level of organization demonstrated by the Serbian Orthodox Church-School Municipality (*Srpsko-pravoslavna crkveno-školska opština*) of Mostar is best evidenced by the fact that it was the first, and for years the only, Orthodox church municipality that had its own Statute. This was officially confirmed by the Austro-Hungarian authorities on February 10th, 1888. That same year, the Provincial Government approved the Statute for Serbian schools, which was developed by the Serbian Church-School Municipality.⁴²

The founding of the Serbian Singing Society “Gusle” in Mostar represented the most significant cultural endeavor of Serbs in Mostar and Herzegovina throughout the entirety of the 19th century. Its greatest contribution was the preservation and promotion of Serbian culture and national identity. Efforts to establish the Society began in 1880 when a proposal for its founding was first submitted to the authori-

⁴¹ Т. Дутина, Д. Мастиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, р. 406–407.

⁴² *Српска православна Херцеговачко-захумска митрополија*, р. 177–186; Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, р. 145.



Mostar at the Turn of two Centuries (Library of Matica Srpska)

ties. However, the turbulent conditions during the early years of Austro-Hungarian rule led the authorities to look unfavorably upon this initiative, and it remained on the back burner due to other, more pressing issues. The first significant progress toward the establishment of “Gusle” was only made in 1888 when the authorities approved the Society’s regulations. The Austro-Hungarian authorities aimed to appease the Serbian population in honor of the tenth anniversary of their administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Society’s mission was to nurture church singing, participate in Serbian Orthodox Church ceremonies, teach Serbian secular and other songs, and organize social events and lectures for charitable purposes. The founding assembly, chaired by Jovo Šola, was held on December 18, 1888, when the society’s rules were read, and membership registration took place.

In the Society’s early years, the most significant roles were played by Aleksa Šantić and Vojislav Šola. Aleksa Šantić also served as the Society’s president from 1896. The Society’s activities were conducted under strict Austro-Hungarian control. Although the Society was primarily

a national cultural institution, this was not evident in its original name. To meet the authorities requirements, the adjective “Orthodox” was used instead of “Serbian.” Despite multiple requests from the Society’s management to add a national descriptor to its name, so as not to alienate Muslims who identified as Serbs, the change was only approved in 1902, when it became the Serbian Singing Society *Gusle*. Within the Society, there were a choir, a theater troupe, a tamburica section, a library, and a reading room. The choir existed even before the official formation of the Society but had its first performance in 1889 at the celebration of Saint Sava. An amateur theater group also operated before the Society’s formal founding. The library was opened in 1890, stocked mainly with books donated by Society members, and a reading room was established in 1891. By 1898, the library housed about 2,000 books. The reading room operated until 1911, and the library until 1913, when it was handed over to the Serbian Cultural Society “Education” (*Prosvjeta*).

Besides its cultural role, the Society also played an important social and humanitarian role by economically uplifting and financially supporting the Serbian population in Herzegovina. The Society provided loans to artisans and small traders, thus aiding their survival and development. Clearly, the Society’s role extended far beyond what its name suggested. It was a national, cultural, educational, economic, and humanitarian bastion for the Serbian people in Mostar and Herzegovina. From the late 1880s, along with the Church-School Municipality, *Gusle* represented the most significant Serbian national center in Mostar. It is therefore not surprising that with the outbreak of World War I, the activities of “*Gusle*”, along with other Serbian societies, were banned. From its founding until the ban (1888–1914), the leaders of the Society were: Jovo Šola (1888–1893), Risto Ivanišević (1893–1895, 1902–1903), Aleksa Šantić (1895–1902, 1903–1906), Atanasije Šola (1906–1908), Luka Grdić Bjelokosić (1908–1909), Dušan Bilić (1909–1911), Dr. Pero Mandić (1911–1914), and right before the war, Simo Vujović (1914).⁴³

⁴³ *Kultura i umjetnost u Bosni i Hercegovini pod austrougarskom upravom*, Ed. Risto Besarović, Sarajevo 1968, p. 567–573, 583–591; *Српска њравославна Херцеговачко-захумска мийџрополија*, p. 211–221;

On October 26th 1893, the Great Gymnasium opened in Mostar, as one of the most important educational institutions in the city and the entire region of Herzegovina. Until the formation of the Yugoslav state, it was the only state gymnasium in Herzegovina and the second classical gymnasium in all of Bosnia and Herzegovina (after the one opened in Sarajevo in 1879). The decision to request a Gymnasium in Mostar be opened by the National Government was reached at a meeting of the Serbian Orthodox Church-School Municipality held on February 23rd, 1893. The opening of the gymnasium was also a desire of the Roman Catholic population in Mostar, and its establishment would relieve the gymnasium in Sarajevo. Although the National Government proposed the establishment of only a lower gymnasium to the Joint Ministry of Finance, a full gymnasium was opened. Initially, the house of Husaga Komadina was purchased for the needs of the Gymnasium, and a new gymnasium building was constructed from 1898 to 1902. The first director was Professor Martin Bedjanić (1893–1900), and the first teacher was Antun Pihler. The first class enrolled 65 students, of which 34 were Orthodox, 22 were Roman Catholics, eight were Muslims, and one was Jewish. Among the first generation of students were Jefto Dedijer, Osman Đikić, Đorđo Perin, Risto Radulović, and Cvitan Spužević. As of the school year 1900/01, the Gymnasium started all eight grades. This important educational institution served a much wider area than just Mostar, attracting children from both urban and rural areas. The Gymnasium produced new generations of educated Herzegovinians,

Педесет година Српској пјевачкој друшћива „Гусле“ у Мостару 1888–1938, Мостар 1938; Edin Čelebić, „Srpsko pjevačko društvo *Gusle* (1888–1914) i njegova istorijska uloga. Prilog istoriji nacionalnih pokreta“, *Hercegovina*, Nr. 5/1986, p. 123–138; С. Тутъевић, „Књижевни и културни живот Мостара“, p. 350–366; С. Тутъевић, *Мостарски књижевни крућ*, p. 19–55; Борјанка Трајковић, „Српско пјевачко друшћтво *Гусле*“, in: *Српска проза данас. Културна и духовна историја Херцеговине*, Ed. Никола Асановић, Билећа/Гацко 2004, p. 429–438; Јован Радуловић, „Od osnivanja *Gusala* do pokreta *Zore*“, in: *Knjiga o Mostaru*, Ed. Borivoje Pištalo, Beograd 2006, p. 60–67; Vladimir Ćorović, „Proslava mostarskih *Gusala*. Nacionalne i kulturne zasluge jednog pjevačkog društva“, in: *Knjiga o Mostaru*, Ed. Borivoje Pištalo, Beograd 2006, p. 68–70; Branislav Banić, „Tragom Spomenice izdate povodom 50-te godišnjice *Gusala* 1938. godine“, in: *Knjiga o Mostaru*, Ed. Borivoje Pištalo, Beograd 2006, p. 419–424; Ј. Радуловић, *Славно доба Мостара*, p. 278–307; Снежана Илић, *Аџанасије Шола. Прилоћ изучавању културне и политичке историје Срба у Босни и Херцеговини*, Нови Сад 2011, p. 36–54.

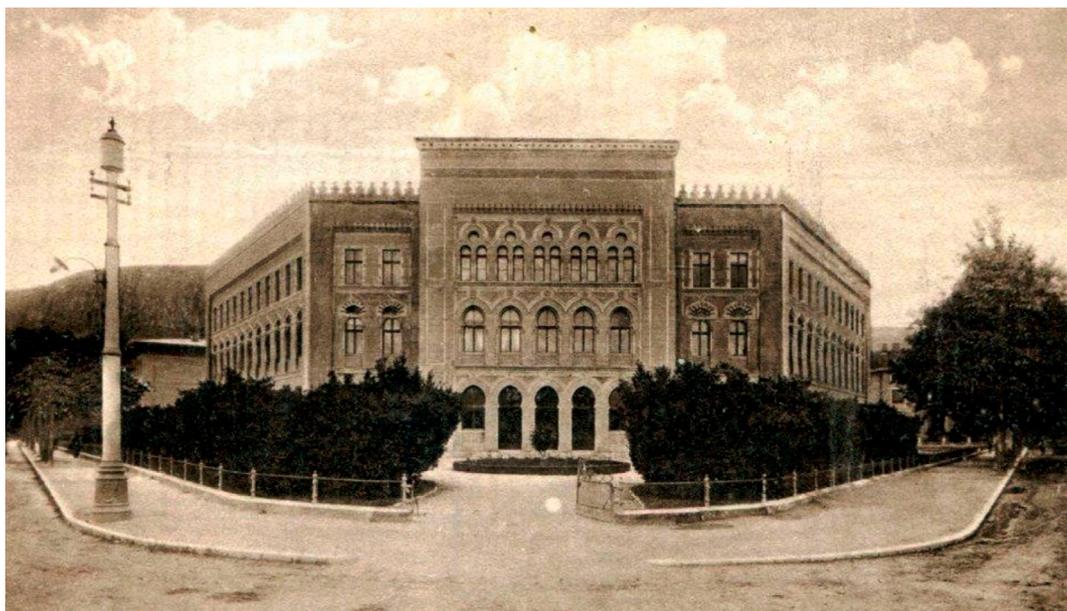
who later continued their education at European universities, had a clear awareness of the difficult conditions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and intended to change them. Among others, Pero Slijepčević from Samobor near Gacko and Vladimir Gaćinović from Bileća were educated at the Gymnasium.⁴⁴ The students of the Mostar Gymnasium were undoubtedly among the leaders in the struggle against Austro-Hungarian rule, participating in the preparation of the Sarajevo assassination, fighting as volunteers in the Balkan Wars and World War I, being arrested, imprisoned, and dying in jails.

In the mid-1890s (1895), Austria-Hungary conducted its third census in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to the data from that year, Mostar had 14,370 inhabitants, of which 6,946 were Muslims, 3,877 were Orthodox Christians, 3,353 were Roman Catholics, and 164 were Jews. It is noticeable that the number of Roman Catholics continued to increase by about 1,000 compared to the previous census, which would not be surprising if there had not been a total of 1,366 Roman Catholics in the 1879 census. The census showed that the number of Muslims had almost stagnated compared to the previous census, meaning that natural growth was almost nullified by emigration. In ten years (1885–1895), the number of Muslims in Mostar increased by only 121. On the other hand, the increase in the number of Orthodox Christians proceeded as was to be expected.⁴⁵

However, a strengthened Mostar was bound to, sooner or later, openly conflict with the Austro-Hungarian authorities. This conflict

⁴⁴ 75. godina gimnazije u Mostaru 1893–1968, Mostar 1968, p. 12, 20–22, 24–29, 116–117; M. Pačić, *Školstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini za vrijeme austrougarske okupacije*, p. 110–112; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 34, 388–390; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, p. 432–433, 504; Ђ. Пејановић, *Srednje i stručne škole u Bosni i Hercegovini*, p. 94–96; Митар Папић, *Школство у Босни и Херцеговини (1918–1941)*, Сарајево 1984, p. 102–104. The first secret youth associations were formed in the gymnasium. Initiated by Dimitrije Mitronović, originally from Poplat between Ljubinje and Stolac, a secret library was established, from which the secret youth association *Matica* emerged. Bogdan Žerajić, originally from Miljevac near Nevesinje, founded the secret association *Sloboda* (Freedom). The secret society of Serbian gymnasium students, *Srpska svijest* (Serbian Consciousness), secretly published the newspaper *Srpstvo* (Serbianhood) in 1897. It was edited by Risto Radulović, and a total of 10 issues were published. (Đorđe Pejanović, *Bibliografija štampe Bosne i Hercegovine 1850–1941*, Sarajevo 1961, p. 37–38).

⁴⁵ I. Šarac, „Hercegovina u razdoblju Austro-Ugarske uprave“, p. 32.



The Gymnasium Building in Mostar (Library of Matica Srpska)

occurred in the mid-1890s. The struggle for church-school autonomy for Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina began in Mostar of all places, rooted in the conflict between the Mostar Church-School Municipality and the National Government in Sarajevo over the opening of the Serbian Higher Girls' School in Mostar in 1893, and the conflict between the Municipality and Metropolitan Serafim (Perović), who ascended to the metropolitan throne after the death of Metropolitan Leontije and remained in that position for 14 years (1889–1903). Metropolitan Serafim sided with the abbot of the Žitomisljić Monastery, Simeon (Todorović), in the dispute over the jurisdiction of the Church-School Municipality over the monastery school, which had been undisputed for years but which the abbot decided to sever. He received support from the Metropolitan, who promoted him to archimandrite, as well as from the National Government, which decorated him. The conflict between the Municipality and the Metropolitan led to mutual accusations and a final break in relations. The Metropolitan believed that the Municipal-

ity wanted to ensure excessive lay influence in church matters, while the Municipality accused the Metropolitan of being a collaborator of the Austro-Hungarian authorities.⁴⁶

As the Municipality had severed contacts with the Metropolitan and had poor relations with the National Government, it was decided in November 1895 to send a delegation led by Vojislav Šola to Vienna, so as to present their problems directly to the Emperor. Along with Šola, Vladimir Radović, Mićo Bilić, and Pero Šantić traveled. However, the delegation was not allowed to see the Emperor and was only received by Benjamin Kállay, who promised only to open the Higher Girls' School in Mostar. The issue of the conflict with the Metropolitan was not even raised. However, since nothing had changed, in November 1896, Šola led another delegation to the Emperor in Vienna. Accompanying him again were Radović and Šantić, but also Nikola Ćorović and Risto Zec. Their stay in Vienna might have gone unnoticed if they had not been joined by a delegation from the Serbian Church-School Municipality from Sarajevo, led by Gligorije Jeftanović, as well as 12 other delegations from Serbian church-school municipalities from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Clearly, this move by Mostar exceeded the boundaries of the city on the Neretva River, demonstrating how much it led the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Even this "expanded" delegation was not received by the Emperor but drafted a memorandum sent to him through Kállay. The memorandum highlighted the systematic suppression of Serbian national sentiment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the prohibition of the Cyrillic script, favoritism shown towards Catholicism and the banning and censorship of Serbian books, among other issues. Additionally, it provided an overview of the state of Serbian church-school autonomy during Ottoman rule and in the first decade and a bit of Austro-Hungarian rule. On Kállay's recommendation, all Serbian demands were flatly rejected.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, р. 409–410.

⁴⁷ В. Ђоровић, *Мостар и његова српска православна оштинина*, р. 100–101; Б. Маџар, *Покрећ Срба Босне и Херцеговине*, р. 160–164, 171–177, 181–194; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, р. 410–412.

Not only did the authorities ignore Serbian demands, but they also took a step further. In February 1897, a decision was made to again ban the Church-School Municipality in Mostar from working. In response, Mostar's Serbs sent a delegation to Vienna for the third time, consisting of Šola, Radović, Šantić, and Zec. They were joined in the capital of the Monarchy by Jeftanović from Sarajevo and Kosta Kujundžić, president of the Church-School Municipality in Livno. After two months of waiting, they were received by the Emperor, to whom they presented a memorandum similar in content to the previous one, with additional examples of new repressive actions by Austro-Hungarian authorities. On Kállay's advice, the Emperor rejected this as well. However, Jeftanović and Šola continued to expand their front in Bosnia and Herzegovina, gathering dissatisfied Serbian church-school municipalities. In March 1898, they sent another delegation to Vienna, but it was not received by the Emperor, only by Kállay.⁴⁸

Besides the Orthodox Christians who were defending their church-school autonomy, the Muslims also began their struggle for waqf (endowment) and educational autonomy. Together with representatives of the Orthodox community, the Muslims went to Budapest in 1900, where the Emperor was at the time, to present him with a third memorandum. However, they could not reach the Emperor, and the memorandum was only delivered in May of 1901. As their demands were ignored again, a fourth memorandum was submitted in 1902. Nevertheless, the years-long struggle gradually exhausted both sides. The Austro-Hungarian authorities began to fear the broad front among the Orthodox, who were joined by the Muslims, and there was also the danger of the issue becoming international, as the Serbs had sent a memorandum to Russian Tsar Nicholas II Romanov through the royal Serbian envoy in Russia, Stojan Novaković. On the other hand, the Serbs' capacity for legal struggle and financial resources were also depleting, leading many to lean towards reaching some sort of agreement.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Б. Маџар, *Покрејџ Срба Босне и Херцејовине*, р. 197–205; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцејовина кроз вијекове*, р. 412.

⁴⁹ В. Ђоровић, *Мосџар и њејова срјска љравославна ојшјина*, р. 103; Б. Маџар, *Покрејџ Срба*

While Serbian representatives tried to present their issues at the highest levels, the conflict between the Metropolitan and the faithful in Mostar deepened. People stopped attending church because priests close to the Metropolitan were being replaced after their deaths by those appointed by Metropolitan Seraphim. The Austro-Hungarian authorities supported him, “rubbing their hands” over the conflict, while the Metropolitan complained that people had stopped attending services, baptizing children, and even that burials were conducted without priests or church rites. The boycott lasted until the Metropolitan’s death in 1903. His successor, Peter (Zimonjić, 1903–1920), sought to resolve the conflict and conclude the struggle for church-school autonomy as favorably as possible for the Orthodox Serbs in Mostar and Herzegovina, thus overcoming the animosity between the faithful and their Metropolitan.⁵⁰

Negotiations between representatives of church-school municipalities, the Metropolitan, and the clergy began in June 1903 through the mediation of Austro-Hungarian authorities. These negotiations occurred in several phases, as the Austro-Hungarian authorities frequently raised objections to the proposed text of the statute for church and school self-governance of the Serbian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The final round of negotiations was held in Vienna in December 1903. The agreed-upon text of the statute was sent for approval to the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Joachim III, who was expected to resolve issues on which the negotiators could not agree. Given that the Patriarch received support from Austro-Hungarian diplomacy in his struggle against opposition in the Synod, he resolved all contentious issues in a manner most favorable to the Austro-Hungarian authorities. Although little remained of their initial demands, the Serbs did not want to restart the process, so on August 13th 1905, the Emperor finally signed the Statute for the organization of church and

Босне и Херцеговине, p. 315–322, 337–338, 347–350; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, p. 415.

⁵⁰ В. Ђоровић, *Мосџар и његова српска православна ојшћина*, p. 103–105; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, p. 412–414.

school administration of the Serbian Orthodox dioceses (Metropolises) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, granting the Serbs some degree of autonomy in church and educational matters.⁵¹

Mostar was also an important center for the Serbian press, which, at the turn of the century, played a crucial role in shaping the consciousness of the segment of the public that carried the national movement, despite its limited reach. In September 1891, Vladimir Radović opened the first bookstore and printing house in Mostar, named the First Serbian Printing House of Vladimir M. Radović. It played a significant role in distributing Serbian books, while its publishing efforts were limited. Under the editorship of Svetozar Ćorović, it published two volumes of the calendar *Neretljanin* for the years 1894 and 1895. The printing house operated until 1904, when it was sold and then moved to Sarajevo.⁵²

The first magazine in Mostar was started by Aleksa Šantić and Svetozar Ćorović under the name “Dawn” (*Zora*). “Dawn” served as a link between the “Serbian Review” of Ljubomir Nedić and the “Serbian Literary Herald” (*Srpski književni glasnik*) of Bogdan Popović. The procedure for starting the magazine began at the end of November 1895, and the first issue was presented to the reading public on April 1st 1896. The magazine was conceived as an “exclusive publication for science, entertainment, art, and economy, bringing poems, stories, scientific discussions, economic articles, folk creations, musical works, etc., but all solely related to science, entertainment, and economy, with no other mission than to endear beautiful literature and economy to the reading public.” Since the founders of the magazine were Aleksa Šantić, Jovan Dučić, and Svetozar Ćorović, the magazine was closely associated with the “Gusle” society. In addition to Šantić and Ćorović, “Dawn” was edited by Jovan Dučić and Atanasije Šola. “Dawn” ceased publication in 1901, both due to financial difficulties and to avoid hin-

⁵¹ В. Ђоровић, *Мосѧар и њеѧова срѧска ѧравославна оѧишѧина*, p. 105; V. Bogićević, *Istorija razvitka osnovnih škola u Bosni i Hercegovini u doba turske i austrougarske uprave*, p. 188; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеѧовина кроз вијекове*, p. 414–416.

⁵² Đorđe Pejanović, *Štamparije u Bosni i Hercegovini 1529–1951*, Sarajevo 1952, p. 32–33.

dering the “Serbian Literary Herald”, which was published in Belgrade and viewed as the “central magazine of Serbian literature.”⁵³

A year after “Dawn”, Vladimir Radović launched a newspaper focused on politics, education, and economy called “Serbian Herald” (*Srpski vjesnik*). Following the death of Vladimir Radović in 1899, his brother Dušan took over the position of editor. The newspaper was published regularly until the end of 1901, irregularly until 1904, and then ceased entirely.⁵⁴ Until the launch of “Serbian Word” (*Srpska riječ*) in 1905, the “Serbian Herald” was the only Serbian opposition newspaper. Due to preventive censorship, it could not achieve all that was expected of it or fully realize its intended purpose. However, as “Serbian Word” fought for church-school autonomy, many important issues for the Serbian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina were overlooked. Consequently, a group of intellectuals around Vasilj Grđić requested permission on October 12th, 1905, to start a newspaper named “People” (*Narod*), intended to be the voice of the entire Serbian population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The first issue was presented to readers in January of 1907, announcing that the paper would cover “politics, education, and economy, standing on democratic principles and critiquing all public work from the standpoint of truth and justice without sparing anyone.” The first chief editor was Risto Radulović, with Jovo Đugumović as the editor in charge. Due to its sharp criticism of the authorities, the pa-

⁵³ Владимир Ђоровић, *Босна и Херцеговина*, Београд 1925, р. 118–119; Ђорђе Пејановић, *Штјамџа Босне и Херцеговине 1850–1941*, Сарајево 1949, р. 53; *Bibliografija knjiga i periodičnih izdanja štampanih u Hercegovini (1873–1941)*, Ed. Lina Štitić, Hamid Dizdar, Mostar 1958, р. 123; Ђ. Пејановић, *Bibliografija štampe Bosne i Hercegovine*, р. 36; Hamdija Kapidžić, *Bosna i Hercegovina pod austrougarskom upravom. Članci i rasprave*, Sarajevo 1968, р. 301–309; *Kultura i umjetnost u Bosni i Hercegovini pod austrougarskom upravom*, р. 133–138, 140–142, 146; Един Челебић, „Културне прилике у Мостару крајем XIX и почетком XX вијека“, *Херцеговина*, Нр. 4/1985, р. 247–275; С. Тутњевић, *Мостарски књижевни крућ*, р. 57–109; Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, р. 148–149; С. Тутњевић, „Књижевни и културни живот Мостара“, р. 381–390; Predrag Palavestra, „Pripovedački krug mostarske Zore“, in: *Knjiga o Mostaru*, Ed. Borivoje Pištalo, Beograd 2006, р. 80–91; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, р. 443; Ј. Радуловић, *Славно доба Мостара*, р. 318–330; С. Илић, *Аџанасије Шола*, р. 55–72; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, р. 515–516.

⁵⁴ Ђ. Пејановић, *Штјамџа Босне и Херцеговине*, р. 54; *Bibliografija knjiga i periodičnih izdanja štampanih u Hercegovini*, р. 123; Ђ. Пејановић, *Bibliografija štampe Bosne i Hercegovine*, р. 37; *Kultura i umjetnost u Bosni i Hercegovini pod austrougarskom upravom*, р. 462–466; Е. Челебић, „Културне прилике у Мостару“, р. 251.

per was frequently censored, confiscated, and penalized, and the chief editor was arrested. The significance of “People” was such that an entire group of Serbian political leaders and intellectuals from Herzegovina was called the “People’s Group.” One of the leaders from Mostar, Dr. Uroš Krulj, shaped the group’s program, emphasizing that their goal was “the complete political autonomy of Bosnia and Herzegovina as part of the Ottoman Empire with a democratic regime, expressed in constitutional and parliamentary governance.” However, Dr. Krulj wrote, “Autonomous independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina was, of course, not our ultimate goal and purpose, but only a transitional stage for unification with Serbia and Montenegro at an opportune moment and after necessary preparations, following the example of Eastern Rumelia and its union with Bulgaria.” Following the outbreak of the Annexation Crisis, the issue of the newspaper published on October 18th 1908, was entirely confiscated, leading to its suspension. Alongside the launch of the newspaper, the printing house “People” Ltd. (*Štamparija Narod* d.d.) was established, operating in Mostar until 1910, when it moved to Sarajevo. As a result, “People” was “resurrected” on October 22nd, 1911. It was published in Sarajevo until June 27th, 1914, when it released what turned out to be its final issue.⁵⁵

According to data on the number of books sold in various cities, Mostar had the second-largest reading audience in Bosnia and Herzegovina, right after Sarajevo. Significant publishing activity in Mostar was associated with Risto Kisić, whose small bookbinding shop soon transformed into a publishing house with its own printing establishment. Kisić achieved this advancement in 1895, after partnering with Anton Pacher, a German who had operated a small printing shop in Mostar since 1878. They established a company called Pacher and Kisić Bookstore and Printing House (*Knjižara i štamparija Pahera i Kisića*), which

⁵⁵ Ђ. Пејановић, *Штампа Босне и Херцеговине*, p. 62; Ђ. Пејановић, *Bibliografija štampe Bosne i Hercegovine*, p. 55; *Kultura i umjetnost u Bosni i Hercegovini pod austrougarskom upravom*, p. 494–496, 518–519; С. Тутњевић, *Мостарски књижевни круг*, p. 189–194; Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, p. 149–150; С. Тутњевић, „Књижевни и културни живот Мостара“, p. 423–427; Uroš Krulj, „*Narodova grupa, njen rad i ideologija*“, in: *Knjiga o Mostaru*, Ed. Borivoje Pištalo, Beograd 2006, p. 71–76; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, p. 418–420.

included a bookshop and a printing house with photographic and book-binding departments. Additionally, the printing house was intended to function as a publishing enterprise that would release specialized book editions. From 1901, the firm was known as the Pacher and Kisić Printing and Artistic Institute (*Štamparsko-umjetnički zavod Pahera i Kisića*), and was the best-equipped printing house in Mostar. Their publishing bookstore launched a monthly publication in February 1902 called the Review of the Little Library, which served as a literary supplement to the Little Library. Risto Kisić edited the publication until 1906, after which Jovan Protić took over until it ceased publication in 1910. After the death of Đorđe Kisić, Anton Pacher managed the printing house until World War II, when it was seized by the new Ustasha authorities.⁵⁶

The development of the commercial class in Mostar and the Serbian people's struggle for their rights under Austro-Hungarian rule also led to investments in banks and financial institutions, shifting the fight from the political, cultural, and educational realms to the economic sphere. Mostar merchants were among the founders of the "Serbian Bank" (*Srpska banka*) in Zagreb in 1895, and in 1903, they established the Commercial Bank and Savings Bank Ltd. (*Trgovačka banka i štedionica d.d.*) in Mostar with a capital of 180,000 forints. This was the first bank with purely local capital and the first national financial institution established on the soil of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The founders of the bank included Risto Ivanišević, Ilija Grković, Miho Peško, Risto Šain, Špiro Dokić, and Risto Pičeta. Since its founders were Serbs, the following year the bank's name was changed by adding a national prefix, so as to reflect that fact, to the Serbian Bank Ltd. (*Srpska banka d.d.*) in Mostar. As its capital grew, the bank expanded beyond Mostar, opening its first branches in Konjic and Nevesinje.⁵⁷

The beginning of the 20th century brought with it a flourishing of the press and printing, economic strengthening and the formation

⁵⁶ Đ. Pejanović, *Štamparije u Bosni i Hercegovini*, p. 33–34; Đ. Pejanović, *Bibliografija štampe Bosne i Hercegovine*, p. 43; *Bibliografija knjiga i periodičnih izdanja štampanih u Hercegovini*, p. 124; *Kultura i umjetnost u Bosni i Hercegovini pod austrougarskom upravom*, p. 210–216, 232–234; Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, p. 150–152.

⁵⁷ Marko Marković, *Bankarstvo Bosne i Hercegovine*, Sarajevo 1938, p. 10; Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, p. 107–108; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, p. 408.

of new societies that further solidified national sentiment and spread national ideas among the Serbs in Mostar. The most important cultural institution among the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the Serbian Educational and cultural society “Education”, founded in Sarajevo on August 18th, 1902. The society was established with the goal of “providing material assistance to Serbs from Bosnia and Herzegovina who are studying in secondary and higher schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Austro-Hungarian Empire.” Over time, it undertook much broader activities and became the backbone of Serbian cultural development in that area. Humanitarian, cultural, and national motives characterized “Education’s” direction of action. The expansion of its field of activity was formally carried out at the fourth assembly held in August 1905, when the goals proclaimed included “the establishment and support of agricultural cooperatives, aiding Serbian schools, establishing evening schools for apprentices, and a women’s vocational school in Sarajevo. The society worked on educating the Serbian population, distributing tens of thousands of primers for this purpose. Its first subcommittee was formed in Mostar just a few days after the society’s founding, on September 1st, 1902. In 1909, the “Education” student dormitory opened in Mostar in a building provided by the Serbian Orthodox Church Municipality. The first manager of the dormitory was Luka Grdić Bjelokosić. In 1913, “Education” also opened a permanent library in Mostar. Its operations were interrupted by Austro-Hungarian authorities. On the night of June 25th-26th, they raided its premises, and on July 11th, 1914, they introduced a commissariat.⁵⁸ As the center of Serbian cultural organizations, “Education” was declared a “hotbed of high treason” and was thus shut down on July 8th, 1915. However, later events showed that this shutdown was only a hiatus, and “Education” was resurrected in the new state with a much broader territorial base on which it operated.

⁵⁸ *Двадесет и пет година рада Просвјетне 1902–1927*, Сарајево 1927; *Споменица Васиља Грђића*, Сарајево 1935, p. 122–130; *Kultura i umjetnost u Bosni i Hercegovini pod austrougarskom upravom*, p. 339–344, 351–360; Божидар Мацар, *Просвјетна. Српско просвјетно и културно друштво 1902–1949.*, Бања Лука/Српско Сарајево 2001, p. 63–190; Шћепан Грдић, „Друштво Просвјета s obzirom na rad u Hercegovini“, in: *Knjiga o Mostaru*, Ed. Borivoje Pištalo, Beograd 2006, p. 77–79; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 401–402; Т. Дугина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, p. 509–510.

The first sports society in Mostar, named the “Obilić” Gymnastics Society (Gimnastičko društvo “Obilić”), was also founded at the beginning of the 20th century. The gymnastics society originated from the Mostar subcommittee of “Education”. Although the application for the society’s establishment, signed by Atanasije Šola, Dr. Pero Ivanović, and Đorđe Perin, was submitted to the Austro-Hungarian authorities in November 1903, the society was formed on April 14, 1904, when Baron Isidor Benka approved the statute of the “Obilić” Gymnastics Society. Dr. Pero Ivanović was elected its first head, Ilija Ivanišević as his deputy, and Stevan Žakula, a high school professor who played an exceptionally important role in the society’s founding and operation, as the secretary. The establishment of Obilić in Mostar gave a general impetus to the Sokol movement in the area and enabled the founding of numerous Sokol societies throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, leading to the creation of the umbrella organization, the Serbian Sokol Association of Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁵⁹

Among other institutions with a strong Serbian national orientation in Mostar were the Serbian Craftsmen’s Association (founded in 1903), the Benevolent Society of Serbian Women (1905), the Serbian Youth Commerce (1907), Brotherhood (1911), Serbian-Croatian Club (1911), Serbian Sokol Association (1911), and Serbian Economic Society “Privreda” (1912). The activities of these societies expanded into the surrounding areas of Mostar, with committees of “Education” (1911) and “Brotherhood” (1912), and a Serbian reading room (1911) in Bijelo Polje, an “Education” committee (1912) in Blagaj, and a “Brotherhood” committee (1912) in Malo Polje.⁶⁰

The Austro-Hungarian provisional administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina lasted exactly 30 years. Officials in Vienna decided in

⁵⁹ Edin Čelebić, „Političke i kulturne prilike u Bosni i Hercegovini krajem XIX i početkom XX vijeka sa posebnim osvrtom o djelatnosti i ulozi kulturno-prosvjetnih društava“, *Hercegovina*, Nr. 7–8/1990, p. 69–84; Петар Д. Павловић, „Соко у Херцеговини до 1918. године“, in: *Српска ѓроза данас. Културна и духовна историја Херцеговине*, Ed. Никола Асановић, Билећа/Гацко 2004, p. 439–459; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 434–435; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, p. 513.

⁶⁰ Ђорђе Пејановић, *Културно-просветна хумана и социјална друштва у Босни и Херцеговини за време аустројугословенске владавине*, Сарајево 1930, p. 103–104.

1908 to exploit the conflicts within the Ottoman Empire, represented by the Young Turk Revolution, to declare the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, thereby formally incorporating it into the Habsburg Monarchy. This act was vehemently opposed by both Serbs in Serbia and those living in Austria-Hungary, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Prominent Serbs from Bosnia and Herzegovina toured Europe, persuading the great powers of the harmfulness of Vienna's move. Among them were Mostar residents Dušan Vasiljević, Risto Radulović, Atanasije Šola, and Murat Sarić, who traveled to European capitals for over a year, explaining the Serbian perspective on this action. Their activities lasted until the annexation was openly recognized by the great powers and, under the threat of war, the Kingdom of Serbia.⁶¹

The annexation significantly contributed to changing the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (and beyond) and influenced the methods of struggle of all those who were dissatisfied with the conditions in that province to become more radical. At the beginning of June 1910, Mostar gymnasium student Bogdan Žerajić planned to assassinate Emperor Franz Joseph in Mostar during his visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina. He did however not do so, although the emperor was briefly in close proximity to him. However, a few days later, he did not hesitate. In Sarajevo on June 15th he fired several shots at the governor of Bosnia and Herzegovina, General Marijan Varešanin, and then shot himself. He hit himself, but not Varešanin. Nevertheless, his sacrifice did not go unnoticed. His grave became a pilgrimage site for “young Bosnians,” and his act became an example to strive for. Žerajić, “that grey falcon,” as he was immortalized in the poem by the imprisoned Gavrilo Princip, was in the minds of the young men who decided to raise their hand against the heir to the throne on Vidovdan 1914.⁶²

⁶¹ Karl Kaser, „Die Annexion Bosniens und der Herzegowina im Jahre 1908 und ihre Auswirkungen auf die Politik der Bosnisch-Herzegowinischen Serben“, in: *Glasnik arhiva i Društva arhivskih radnika Bosne i Hercegovine*, XXII/1982, pp. 195–208; Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, р. 185–187; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, р. 422–424.

⁶² Стеван Мољевић, „Жерајићев атентат“, *Развјишак*, 1. II 1936, р. 41–45; Стеван Мољевић, „Жерајићев атентат (2)“, *Развјишак*, 1. III 1936, р. 72–75; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, р. 35–36.

In 1910, Austria-Hungary conducted its last census of the population. The number of inhabitants in Bosnia and Herzegovina increased over 30 years from 1,159,015 to 1,898,044. In line with the general population growth, the number of inhabitants in the Mostar region also increased. In 1910, Mostar and its surroundings had 66,618 inhabitants, of whom 41,596 were Catholics, 14,235 Muslims, 10,443 Orthodox, 256 Jews, and 88 others. While the number of Catholics almost doubled, the number of Muslims and Orthodox grew slowly. In the city of Mostar itself, there were 16,392 inhabitants, and in the surrounding villages, 50,226. The emigration of Serbs and Muslims, as well as the fact that Austria-Hungary was a predominantly Catholic state and that the Catholic Church actively worked on conversions, contributed to this increase in the number of Catholics in an already predominantly Catholic region.⁶³

The June 28th 1914 assassination in Sarajevo turned out to be a watershed of global proportions. Since the assassin of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Countess Sophie Chotek, was Gavrilo Princip, a Serb from Obljaj near Bosansko Grahovo, public outrage was directed against Serbs as a collective. Anti-Serb demonstrations were held in many cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including Mostar. Anti-Serb incidents in the city on the Neretva occurred the day after the assassination, as well as in the days when mobilization was declared and when it was quite clear that the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was going to war against the Kingdom of Serbia, using the Sarajevo assassination as a pretext. The instigator of the demonstrations in Mostar was Dr. Rade Smoljan, who first delivered a speech to Croats and Muslims assembled in the premises of the Croatian Music Society “Hrvoje”, and then personally led them through the city. Along the way, the property of prominent Serbs in Mostar was destroyed. In addition to the homes and shops of Mostar Serbs, attacks were also launched against the Serbian school, church, and the seat of the metropolitan. As Vladimir Ćorović notes, during these demonstrations, the merchant Jefto Gmizović was killed in his shop.

⁶³ Dragoslav Ljubibratić, *Buđenje Hercegovine*, Mostar 1966, p. 30–35; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 68–70; I. Šarac, „Hercegovina u razdoblju Austro-Ugarske uprave“, p. 32.

This vandalism was condemned publicly by Mostar Bishop Fra Alojzije Mišić.⁶⁴

In addition to these “controlled” disturbances, the Austro-Hungarian authorities, as a means of pressure on Serbs, also resorted to arresting the most prominent Serbs throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Mostar, in the first days of the war, around forty Serbs were arrested, including: Atanasije Šola, landowner; Dr. Uroš Krulj, physician; Aleksa Šantić, writer; Manojlo Jelić, hotelier; Dinko Zec, merchant; Ljubo Zec, merchant; Nikola Kojo, priest; Đorđe Doder, merchant; Nikola Doder, merchant; Veljko Doder, painter; Đorđe Perin, merchant; Božidar Zečević, professor; Risto Radulović, editor of *Narod*; Luka Grđić Bjelokosić, merchant; Jefto Knežić, manufacturer; Risto Bošković, merchant; Đorđe Labalo, landowner; Luka Kusalo, blacksmith; Petar Mandrapa, innkeeper; Risto Sjeran, merchant; Dr. Murat Sarić, physician; Smailaga Ćemalović, landowner; Svetozar Ćorović, merchant and writer; Marko Popović, priest; Čedo Milić, merchant; Spasoje Zelenović, baker; Ilija Ivanišević, barber; Blagoje Šarenac, carpenter; Husađa Ćišić, landowner; Salih Alajbegović, gymnasium student; Ibrahim Alajbegović, philosopher; Alija Simitović, high school graduate; Radmilo Grđić, gymnasium student;⁶⁵ Ljubica Stokanović, student; Stevan Šiniković, priest; Đorđe Radulović, merchant; Tomo Bratić, priest; and Dušan Semiz. According to summary data, only from Mostar, Bijelo Polje, Blagaj, and Žitomislići, 139 people were interned. Mass arrests were undertaken throughout Herzegovina, and the detainees were imprisoned and interned in camps across the Monarchy – Arad, Komo-

⁶⁴ Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, р. 216; Т. Дутина, Д. Мастиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, р. 439; Драга В. Мастиловић, *Српска елита из Босне и Херцеговине у јулијинчком живоју Краљевине СХС/Југославије (1918–1941)*, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Београд 2013, р. 102; Владимир Ђоровић, *Црна књија. Пајинье Срба Босне и Херцеговине за време Свејској рајна 1914–1918.*, Нови Сад/Београд 2015, р. 43–62.

⁶⁵ Radmilo Grđić was severely injured during World War II, as he was attacked by an unknown person on the evening of April 7th, 1942, and struck three times in the head with an axe. In critical condition, he was taken to the Italian military hospital. (Hrvatski državni arhiv (HDA), Опче управно повјереништво Независне Државе Хрватске код II. armate талијанске војске Вишег заповједништва талијанских оружаных снага Slovenija-Dalmacija (OUP-491), box 15, 3571/42; HDA, Zbirka mikrofilmova gradiva iz inozemnih arhiva koje se odnosi na Hrvatsku (1450), rola D-200, snimak 637–639).

ran, Shopronyek, Kecskemét, Doboј, and others. There were also murders, such as the case of the merchant Jovo Komlenović. Some of the imprisoned individuals never returned. Among those who perished in Austro-Hungarian camps was Risto Radulović, an ideologist of the People's Group. In order to completely demoralize and decapitate the Serbian population, fabricated legal proceedings were initiated against its leaders. The most famous of these proceedings – the Banja Luka treason trial from November 1915 to April 1916 – was conducted against 156 prominent Serbs from the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including Vasilj Grđić, Vladimir Ćorović, and Atanasije Šola.⁶⁶

The remaining population, especially the Serbs, was terrorized by so-called protective squads (“šuckori”). Arrests, terror, mobilization, and hunger devastated the entire Herzegovina, and the proximity to Montenegro made this area partially a war zone as early as 1914. Extraordinary circumstances and government repression are evident in the fact that on October 31st, 1914, the gymnasium in Mostar was closed for a year “due to continuous children’s unrest and riots, and even lamentable manifestations of anti-dynastic and anti-monarchist sentiments, which particularly erupted in the last year.” The gymnasium was reopened in the school year 1915/16, but only the lower grades, with higher grades gradually being reopened in the following years.⁶⁷ Unlike the gymnasium, all Serbian national associations remained permanently banned until the end of the war. Suspicion towards Serbs went so far that using the Serbian national name was also prohibited. The war dealt severe blows to the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina and

⁶⁶ Светозар Ђоровић, *Белешке једној шаоца*, Београд/Сарајево 1919; *Споменица Епархије захумско-херцеговачке*, p. 78–81; Перо Слијепчевић, „Босна и Херцеговина у Светском Рату“, in: *Најор Босне и Херцеговине за ослобођење и уједињење*, Сарајево 1929, p. 219–277; Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, p. 217–218; Svetozar Ćorović, „Beleške jednog taoca“, in: *Knjiga o Mostaru*, Ed. Borivoje Pištalo, Beograd 2006, p. 161–180; Marko S. Popović, „Patnje Srba 1914–1918. godine“, in: *Knjiga o Mostaru*, Ed. Borivoje Pištalo, Beograd 2006, p. 181–187; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 37–41; С. Илић, *Аџијаназије Шола*, p. 117–127; Т. Дугина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, p. 439–442; Драга Мاستиловић, *Између српства и југословенства. Српска елија Босне и Херцеговине и стварање Југославије*, Београд 2012, p. 167–174; Д. В. Мاستиловић, *Српска елија из Босне и Херцеговине у јолијичком животију Краљевине СХС/Југославије*, p. 102–107; В. Ђоровић, *Црна књија*, p. 63–125.

⁶⁷ 75. godina gimnazije u Mostaru, p. 27–28.

Mostar, from disrupted normal development, extinguished institutions, ruined families and estates, to lost human lives. Such was the fate of the Serbs of Mostar in the Great War.

The total number of civilians who were killed or died during the war remains unknown, as well as the number of Herzegovinians who perished as volunteers in the armies of Serbia and Montenegro. From the city of Mostar, 53 volunteers are known, and from the surrounding villages of Blagaj, Bogodol, Baćevići, Vrapčići, Vihovići, Goranci, Željuša, Zijemlje, Gnojnice, Kutilivač, Žitomislići, Ortiješ, Malo Polje, Prigradani, Raštani, Raška Gora, Ravno, Slipčići, Hodbina, and Humilišani, a total of 100.⁶⁸ Only the number of those who lost their lives on the fronts across Europe as part of the armed forces of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy was more precisely determined. Out of 39,128 soldiers mobilized in the territory of Herzegovina, 4,692 were killed or died, of which 1,445 were from the area of Mostar. According to data collected for the purpose of the Yugoslav delegation participating in the Peace Conference in Paris, material damage in the amount of 43,086,679 crowns was inflicted in the area of Mostar, making Mostar fourth in the Herzegovina region in terms of damage caused, behind Gacko, Trebinje, and Bileća, and ahead of Nevesinje, Stolac, Ljubuški, Ljubinje, and Konjic.⁶⁹

Overall, the Great War left deep scars on the Mostar region, and it took many years for the wounds to heal. However, the year 1918, which marked a turning point in every sense, however difficult, was a year of hope, salvation, and liberation. As recorded in the Monuments of the Zahumlje-Herzegovina Diocese: “With dear mother Serbia – Karadjordje’s Šumadija, Herzegovina also, in this terrible world war, paid its great tribute in blood for the liberation of all our brethren – regardless of religion and ethnicity. And in our great homeland – the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, on the splendid crown of the immor-

⁶⁸ *Споменица Епархије захумско-херцеговачке*, р. 82–86; *Херцеговци српски рајини добровољци у рајтовима Црне Горе и Србије 1912–1918.*, Београд 2002, р. 401–404.

⁶⁹ Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, р. 56–57; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, р. 445–446, 456–457.

tal Karadjordjević dynasty shines a gemstone on which it is written: Herzegovina, the Duchy of Saint Sava!”⁷⁰ For Herzegovina and Mostar, after 40 years, the rule of the Habsburg dynasty and the Austro-Hungarian monarchy ended.

⁷⁰ Сїоменица Еїархије захумско-херцеїовачке, р. 90.

SERBS IN MOSTAR IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD (1918–1941)

The autumn of 1918 brought about the complete collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Before the eyes of contemporaries, one of the greatest states of Europe at the time collapsed like a house of cards. The lost war brought much more than defeat on the battlefield and withdrawal from occupied territories. The liberated Kingdom of Serbia and its army, which had unstoppably advanced from Thessaloniki to the banks of the Sava and Danube rivers, crossed its former borders at the beginning of November breached the lands that had until then been ruled by Vienna. Yugoslav unification was within reach. The victorious and liberating Serbian army entered the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and brought freedom to Mostar. Within the first few days of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy dissolving, the need arose to prevent the outbreak of chaos. From Yugoslav territories, which had until then been under Habsburg rule, the State of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs was formed. It existed for only a few weeks as a transitional stage between the Austro-Hungarian and the Yugoslav state and was led by the National Council (Narodno vijeće) of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs based in Zagreb. The Government of the National Council of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs was formed in Sarajevo, which took over control of Bosnia and Herzegovina when it was symbolically relinquished by Austro-Hungarian General Stjepan Sarkotić at noon on November 1st. The head of this government was

Mostar native Atanasije Šola, who had just been liberated from the Travnik prison.⁷¹

According to the decision of the Government of the National Council, efforts were immediately made to form district, municipal, and village committees of the National Council. Šćepan Grdić, Fra Didak Buntić, Đuro Đamonja, and Hamid Svrzo were responsible for organizing popular authority in the Mostar district. However, Herzegovinians self-organized even before people were sent from Sarajevo. In Mostar, on November 2nd, the District Committee of the National Council for Herzegovina was formed, with Pero Šantić as president and Husain Ćišić and Dr. Cvitan Spužević as vice presidents. All newly formed authorities had the very complex task of preventing anarchy, looting, revenge, and general chaos, as well as ensuring the collection of taxes and the provision of food for the population. However, before the arrival of the Serbian army, they had little success in attempting to prevent looting and extortion. A detachment of the Serbian army under the command of Major Milivoje Dragutinović entered Mostar on November 2nd/15th 1918, and was greeted by a large number of enthusiastic Mostar residents. The city was adorned with Serbian and Croatian flags, toasts were made to King Peter and the Serbian army, and the liberators were welcomed with words of welcome by Pero Šantić, Metropolitan Petar (Zimonjić), Dr. Cvitan Spužević, and Smailaga Ćemalović.⁷²

⁷¹ Bogdan Krizman, „Osnivanje Narodnog vijeća Slovenaca, Hrvata i Srba u Zagrebu 1918“, *Historijski zbornik*, Nr. 1–4/1954, p. 23–32; Hamdija Kapidžić, „Rad Narodnog vijeća SHS Bosne i Hercegovine u novembru i decembru 1918.“, *Glasnik arhiva i Društva arhivista Bosne i Hercegovine*, III/1963, p. 147–328; Nusret Šehić, „Narodno vijeće SHS za Bosnu i Hercegovinu i njegova djelatnost nakon sloma Austro-Ugarske (novembar–decembar 1918)“, *Prilozi*, Nr. 19/1982, p. 163–202; Д. Берић, „Срби у Мостару“, p. 232, 234; Sonja Mišković, *Srpsko građanstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini 1918–1941*, unpublished M.A. Thesis, Sarajevo 2004, p. 55–56; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 49–52; С. Илић, *Атанасије Шола*, p. 128–144. The government of the National Council of the State of Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs lost most of its authority with the declaration of unification and existed until the end of January 1919. After the abolition of the National Government in Sarajevo, a Provincial Government (Zemaljska vlada) for Bosnia and Herzegovina was established, which was accountable to the government in Belgrade. Its authority was limited to the areas of internal affairs, agriculture, education, justice, culture, and religious matters. The Provincial Government existed until July 1921, when it was abolished following the adoption of the Vidovdan Constitution.

⁷² Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 52–53; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, p. 452–453, 458–459.

The significance of that day in the history of Mostar and the Serbs of Mostar is best expressed by these words: “We remember that significant day in history – a day of our joy, when the White Eagles came to Mostar on November 2nd/15th 1918, flying over the bloody Kajmakčalan, Dobro Polje, and Veternik, bringing us greetings from our brothers from Avala, shouting: *Victory! Freedom! Justice!* The White Eagles came from the river Timok, that golden stream, to liberate our tame city of Mostar. Who among us does not remember that dear day, when we, by the excitement, by the happiness, were struck silent? Tears of joy rolled down our faces, for with our own eyes we witnessed that the long-held dream of liberation had come true; the long held and cherished thought had been realized. Oh how we then, in our greatest enthusiasm, embraced the Serbian soldiers who brought us freedom!”⁷³

In the following weeks and months, the situation in Mostar and Herzegovina gradually normalized. Smailaga Ćemalović (1918–1929) was appointed as the first mayor in the new state. Ljubomir Vuković was appointed as the district chief in Mostar, Haki-beg Kapetanović as the chief of the city district, and Zvonimir Turina as the chief of the rural district. The Mostar district consisted of the following counties: Bileća, Gacko, Konjic, Ljubinje, Mostar, Nevesinje, Stolac, and Trebinje. When Yugoslav unification was declared on December 1st 1918, Mostar became part of the newly established state – the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. At the time of Yugoslav unification, Mostar had about 21,000 inhabitants. On the first day of March 1919, the first parliament of the Yugoslav state began working, under the name Provisional National Representation (Privremeno narodno predstavništvo). It was supposed to “bridge” the period between the formation of the new state and the calling of the first parliamentary elections. Among the 270 delegates from all Yugoslav provinces, there were 42 from Bosnia and Herzegovina, including two from Mostar – Vojislav Šola and Dr. Uroš Krulj. The Temporary National Representation laid the foundations of the new Yugoslav state in legislative and institutional terms.

⁷³ Сјоменица Ејархије захумско-херцејовачке, р. 89.

It worked until October 1920 when it was dissolved, and elections were called for the Constitutional Assembly.⁷⁴

In the first months of life in the new state, some cultural, educational, and sports institutions were renewed. Čedo Milić renewed the work of the Sokol in Mostar area in 1919. The renewed Sokol District in Mostar held its first assembly in June 1921. It participated in important events, such as the funerals of Aleksa Šantić (1924) and celebrating the thousandth anniversary of the Croatian kingdom in Zagreb in September of 1925. In honor of the deceased poet, this district was renamed Sokol District “Aleksa Šantić” on June 9th 1925. From 1919 to 1928, the Mostar Sokol District, apart from Herzegovina, covered parts of Montenegro and Dalmatia, but then its responsibilities were reduced, and a separate district with its seat in Cetinje was formed. Despite these changes, the District grew and developed year by year, and by 1933, it had 29 societies and 120 Sokol squads with a total of 16,498 members of all categories (members, youth, and children).⁷⁵

The work of the Serbian Singing Society “Gusle” was formally renewed on March 5th 1919, when, after almost five years, the society’s management met again. “Gusle” continued its activities at the church, participating in liturgical events, and also took part in welcoming vojvoda Stepa Stepanović, the funerals of Svetozar Ćorović (1919), Aleksa Šantić (1924), and Vojislav Šola (1930), and in celebrations of volunteers, chetniks, and Sokols. In the interwar period, there were hardly any important events in Mostar and its surroundings where “Gusle” did not participate. However, the deaths of Ćorović and Šantić, and the fact that many prominent Mostar residents continued their work in other places, especially in Sarajevo, as well as the changed socio-political circumstances, meant that neither Mostar nor “Gusle” played as signif-

⁷⁴ Branislav Gligorijević, *Parlament i političke stranke u Jugoslaviji (1919–1929)*, Beograd 1979, p. 17–36; Neda Engelsfeld, *Prvi parlament Kraljevstva Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca – Privremeno narodno predstavništvo*, Zagreb 1989, p. 101–102; Nusret Šehić, *Bosna i Hercegovina 1918–1925. Privredni i politički razvoj*, Sarajevo 1991, p. 135–150.

⁷⁵ Споменица II юкoрајинској слeјџи Сокола Краљевине Југославије 1909–1914–1934, Сарајево 1934, p. 100–108; Маја Миљковић, „Политичке прилике у Мостару 1918–1941.“, in: *Срби у Мосцјару. Расцјраве и оцјлеги* (Ed. Боривоје Пиштало), Београд 2001, p. 245–292.

icant a role as they did before the First World War. “Gusle” no longer had a national but only a cultural role to play. Although the Society’s activities were alive, until 1930, it operated only as a singing society, and it was only then that an amateur theater group was renewed. The Society toured neighboring Herzegovinian and coastal towns (Čapljina, Jablanica, Nevesinje, Blagaj, Makarska, Metković, Trebinje, Dubrovnik, and Sarajevo), but also throughout the country (Herceg Novi, Kotor, Nikšić, Podgorica, Danilovgrad, Cetinje, Kragujevac, Belgrade, Jagodina, Niš, Leskovac, and Skopje). It collaborated with choirs and singing societies from all over the country, as well as from abroad (Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria). During the interwar period, the Society was led by: Petar Šotrić (1920–1924, 1925–1929), Dr. Branko Šantić (1924–1925), Bishop Dr. Jovan Ilić (1929–1932), Ljubomir Šain (1932–1937), and Dr. Milan Đokić-Davidović (since 1937).⁷⁶

In the first months following liberation and unification, “Education” also resumed its activities. The activity of its Main Committee (Glavni odbor) was renewed in the early days of freedom – on November 17th 1918. The oldest committee of “Education”, the one in Mostar, resumed its work on March 16th 1919, and soon other committees in the Mostar region followed. The committee in Bijelo Polje resumed work on May 10th 1919, and the one in Blagaj on May 8th 1921. However, the committee in Bijelo Polje ceased activity on May 31st 1923. After the war, a new committee was established in the Mostar region – in Hodžina, on May 2nd 1920 – but it was only active until May 31st 1924. “Education” continued its work during the interwar period as well. It provided scholarships to students and pupils from poor families, established schools and student dormitories. It operated at full capacity until the beginning of the Second World War when its work was hindered, and its property plundered by the Ustasha.⁷⁷

Although it lost its prominence as a centre of banking activity after the Serbian Bank (Srpska banka) didn’t continue operating, but merged

⁷⁶ С. Тутњевић, „Књижевни и културни живот Мостара“, р. 366–369; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, р. 423–425;

⁷⁷ *Двадесет и пет година рада Просвјете*, р. 126–136; Б. Маџар, *Просвјета*, р. 196–279.



Mostar, view of the Neretva River bank and part of the city in the early years after the unification (Library of Matica Srpska)

with the Serbian People's Bank (Srpska narodna banka) from Sarajevo, after unification Mostar became an important cooperative center for Serbs living in Bosnia and Herzegovina. During the year 1920, two significant cooperatives were formed. First, the Serbian Trade and Crafts Credit Cooperative (Srpska trgovačko-zanatlijska kreditna zaduga) was established under the management of Ljubomir Krulj, which had the task of providing credit to support the work of craftsmen – its members. Somewhat later, at the initiative of district Chief Ljubomir Vuković, the District Consumer Union for Herzegovina (Okružni potrošački savez za Hercegovinu) was founded. It was tasked with procuring higher quality groceries for its members at more affordable prices. Unlike other cooperatives, although its formation was primarily led by Serbs, it did not have a national character.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, р. 200–202, 206–207.

Political Struggles of the 1920s

The first elections in the new state were held in November of 1920. In accordance with electoral law, the entirety of Herzegovina belonged to a single electoral unit. In the Mostar District, there were nine registered lists with 81 candidates, 14 of whom were from Mostar itself. Dr. Murat Sarić was a candidate on the list of the People's Radical Party (Narodna radikalna stranka - NRS). The Croatian People's Party (Hrvatska pučka stranka - HPS) was represented by Friar Didak Buntić, a Franciscan provincial from Mostar. Professor Salih Baljić was a candidate on the list of the Yugoslav Muslim Organization (Jugoslovenska muslimanska organizacija - JMO). The Yugoslav Democratic Party (Jugoslovenska demokratska stranka - JDS) nominated lawyers Dr. Cvitan Spužević and Božidar Božić. Marko Dragoje from Gnojnice was the candidate of the Croatian Peasant Party (Hrvatska težačka stranka - HTS). The Communist Party of Yugoslavia (Komunistička partija Jugoslavije - KPJ) list was led by a tinsmith from Mostar, Gojko Vuković. Svetozar Kuić, a goldsmith from Mostar, was on the list of the Social Democratic Party (Socijaldemokratska stranka - SDS). Professor Salih Ćišić was a candidate on the list of the Muslim Peasant Party (Muslimanska težačka stranka - MTP). In the Mostar District, there were 67,177 eligible voters, and 49,817 (76.28%) voted, the highest turnout in all electoral districts in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The JMO received the most votes in the Mostar District (11,515), followed by the HPS (10,040), NRS (8,944), HTS (7,325), Agrarian Party (Zemljoradnička stranka) (7,140), KPJ (2,787), and JDS (1,367). In the Mostar srez, out of 18,971 eligible voters, 12,809 (67.53%) voted. The HPS received 4,026 votes, JMO 2,849, HTS 2,182, NRS 1,548, KPJ 883, JDS 845, etc. Although the Croatian option won 15 out of a total of 27 polling stations in the county, the Muslim option dominated in the city itself and received the most votes at all polling stations. In the city, 4,567 citizens were eligible to vote, and 2,973 voted, with 1,351 for the JMO, 639 for the NRS, and 509 for the KPJ. The two major Croatian parties, with strong support both in the district and in the county, received a negligible number of votes in the city: HTS 216 and HPS 99. In total, nine deputies were elected

to the Constituent Assembly (Ustavotvorna skupština) from the Mostar District. The JMO (Sakib Korkut, journalist from Sarajevo; Salih Baljić, professor from Mostar; and Dr. Hamdija Karamehmedović, physician from Sarajevo) and the HPS (Friar Didak Buntić, Franciscan provincial from Mostar; Dr. Marko Rebac, lawyer from Banja Luka; and Dr. Nikola Mandić, lawyer from Sarajevo) each received three deputies, while the NRS (Dr. Lazar Marković, minister from Belgrade), HTS (Dr. Matko Laginja, banker from Zagreb), and the Agrarian Alliance (Savez zemljoradnika) (Đorđo Perin, secretary of the Union of Serbian Agrarian Cooperatives from Sarajevo) each received one representative.⁷⁹

The election results showed that the Serbian population in Bosnia and Herzegovina was politically divided and scattered among several political parties and options. The Croatian population was split between two strong political currents. Although shaken by serious internal conflicts that would gradually subside in period to follow the Muslim population was predominantly supporting the Yugoslav Muslim Organization. Elections, both local and national, seemed to have only widened the existing gaps and radicalized the existing political situation. After the first elections, the Yugoslav state focused on adopting its first constitution, which, along with the addressing of the so-called Croatian question, preoccupied public attention in the following period. The addressing of the Croatian question in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was closely tied to the activities of Stjepan Radić, who declared his political party republican – the Croatian Republican Peasant Party (Hrvatska republikanska seljačka stranka - HRSS). The political squabbles that followed inevitably had to, to a certain extent; reflect on the territory of Herzegovina and Mostar. The activity of the HRSS in Herzegovina became stronger and more open from January 1922 when HRSS's parliamentary deputy Josip Predavec arrived in Mostar and held a meeting with a group of Radić's supporters. When a month

⁷⁹ *Стайистички преглед избора народних посланика за Уставотворну Скупштину Краљевине Срба, Хрватиа и Словенаца, извршених на дан 28. новембра 1920. год.*, Београд 1921; Nedim Šarac, *Gojko Vuković*, Mostar 1959, p. 58–61; М. Миљковић, „Политичке прилике у Мостару“, p. 248–249; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 264–276.

later the leader of the HPS, Friar Didak Buntić, who represented the most important political figure among Croats in Herzegovina, died, his political option suffered an irreplaceable loss, and Radić's current became a strong wind at his back for rooting in Herzegovina. However, the strengthening of Radić's political option in Herzegovina fueled intolerance between different ethnicities and religions.⁸⁰

Although the election results from 1920 did not show a strong influence in Mostar and Herzegovina, the People's Radical Party, whose organization in Mostar began with a "trust meeting" called by Vojislav Šola and Kosta Kostić on May 2nd 1919, had a significant impact especially among Herzegovinian Serbs. Presenting itself as a political force that had united the traditions of a national movement with the activities of pre-war revolutionary youth, it attracted members of old Mostar trading families such as Pero Šantić, Vojislav Šola, Smailaga Ćemalović, Murat Sarić, Vukan Kablar, and Uroš Krulj. Alongside them, the party also garnered the sympathies of smaller traders, innkeepers, priests, etc., thus expanding its base. The party's local committee in Mostar was led by Ćemalović (until July 1923), then Ristić (until spring 1924), and later by Dušan Tamindžić, director of the Teacher Training School (Učiteljska škola).⁸¹

The new Yugoslav state conducted its first census in 1921. The results of the census showed how much the First World War had devastated Herzegovina because the population there was about 1,000 people fewer compared to the Austro-Hungarian census 11 years earlier. In total, in Herzegovina, i.e., the Mostar District, there were 265,998 inhabitants, with the highest number of Roman Catholics at 114,087, followed by Orthodox at 89,848 and Muslims at 61,349. In the city of Mostar itself, there were 18,176 inhabitants, and in the Mostar district, in 80 municipalities, there were 51,921. While the majority in the surrounding areas was Roman Catholic, Muslims formed the majority

⁸⁰ Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 277–282.

⁸¹ Томислав Краљачић, „Организовање и структура Радикалне странке у Босни и Херцеговини“, *Годишњак Друштва историчара Босне и Херцеговине*, XIX/1970–1971, p. 205–228; М. Миљковић, „Политичке прилике у Мостару“, p. 251, 253.

in the city itself. In the surrounding area, there were 38,674 Roman Catholics, 7,036 Muslims, and 6,209 Orthodox, while in the city itself, there were 8,009 Muslims (44.06%), 5,102 Orthodox (28.06%), 4,835 Roman Catholics (26.71%), 307 Slovenes, 187 Jews, 133 Germans, and 127 Czechoslovaks. In total, in the area of the Mostar district, there were 43,531 Roman Catholics, 15,045 Muslims, and 11,311 Orthodox.⁸² The population census from 1921 enabled the establishment of an administrative division of the country that would not follow historical provinces but would be oriented, among other things, on the number of inhabitants. A year later, the Law on the Division of the Country into Regions was adopted, dividing the Yugoslav state into 33 regions. In the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, six regions were formed: Bihać, Sarajevo, Travnik, Tuzla, Vrbas, and Mostar. According to this division, the Mostar region practically encompassed the entire Herzegovina. In the Mostar region, there were 264,843 inhabitants, of which 113,933 were Catholics (43.01%), 89,441 were Orthodox (33.77%), 61,242 were Muslims (23.12%) and 227 were Jews (0.08%).⁸³

The second elections in the Yugoslav state were held just over two years after the first. Political instability prevented both the parliamentary assembly and formed governments from stabilizing. However, in that short period, political conditions in the Mostar region noticeably changed. Although overall security had significantly improved in comparison to the previous elections, political conflicts were far sharper. There were conflicts even within the strongest political parties in Herzegovina, so within the NRS, some members were dissatisfied with the party leadership's decision to appoint Dr. Lazar Marković to head their list in the Mostar region. They proposed that that position should go to Professor Petar Ivanišević, but

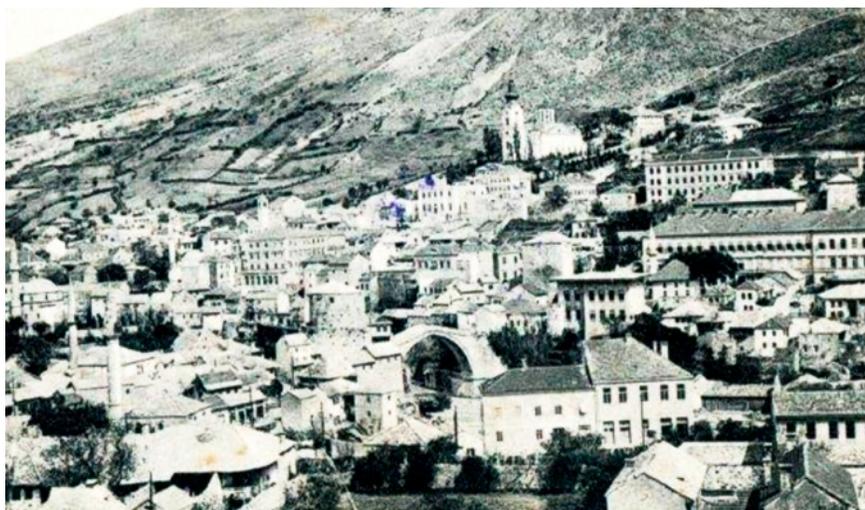
⁸² Дефиницијивни резултати и войиса сїановнишиїва од 31 јануара 1921 год., Сарајево 1932, р. 174–175, 182–184; S. Mišković, *Srpsko građanstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini*, p. 77; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 73–76.

⁸³ Branislav Gligorijević, „Unutrašnje (administrativne) granice Jugoslavije između dva svetska rata 1918–1941.“, *Istorija 20. veka*, Nr. 1–2/1992, p. 27–34; Mira Radojević, „Bosna i Hercegovina u raspravama o državnom uređenju Kraljevine (SHS) Jugoslavije 1918–1941. godine“, *Istorija 20. veka*, Nr. 1/1994, p. 7–41.

since the party did not accept their proposal, he entered the elections heading the so-called dissident list.⁸⁴

For the second Yugoslav elections in Herzegovina, 67,655 citizens eligible to vote were registered, and 54,516 (80.6%) voted. Of those, 16,879 people had the right to vote in the Mostar district, and 13,952 (82.7%) voted. Once again, Herzegovina recorded exceptional voter turnout, which speaks not so much to the voters' awareness but more to how politically volatile the situation was in that part of the country. The most votes were received by the dissidents from the HRSS led by Matej Kordić with 11,164 (20.5%), followed by HRSS itself with 10,815 (19.8%), then JMO with 10,455 (19.2%), NRS with 8,802 (16.2%), the Alliance of Farmers with 5,520 (10.1%), the radical dissident list led by Prof. Ivanišević with 4,479 (8.2%), Yugoslav Muslim People's Organization (Jugoslovenska muslimanska narodna organizacija - JMNO) with 1,431 (2.6%), and HPS with 1,260 (2.3%). In the Mostar district, HRSS received the most votes with 4,553 (32.6%), followed by Kordić's dissidents with 3,326 (23.8%), JMO with 2,671 (19.1%), and radicals with 1,556 (11.2%), then farmers with 627 (4.5%), HPS with 528 (3.8%), YMPO with 432 (3.1%), radical dissidents with 139 (1.0%), and democrats with 120 (0.9%). Based on this, we see that Croatian parties in the Mostar district received more than half of the votes. In the city itself, they won at four out of six polling stations, while the radicals received more votes on the remaining two. Looking at polling stations, out of a total of 27 in the Mostar district, Croatian parties won in 17, with the HRSS winning in nine and Kordić's dissidents in eight. Of the remaining 10 polling stations, the JMO received the most votes in seven, while mostly Serbian parties won the most votes in only three. Radicals won the majority in two polling stations in the city itself, and farmers received the most votes in Potoci, where they received almost a third of the total votes in the Mostar district (185 out of 627). Thus, in the Mostar district in the elections held on March 18th 1923, Kordić's dissidents, HRSS, and

⁸⁴ Ђорђе Ђ. Станковић, „Радикална странка на парламентарним изборима 1923. године“, *Историјски гласник*, Nr. 2/1972, p. 7–42; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 285–292; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, p. 475–476.



A panorama of Mostar in 1923
(Library of Matica Srpska)

JMO each won two mandates, while radicals won one mandate. Dr. Lazar Marković, minister; Salih Balić, professor; Matej Kordić, teacher; Matiša Mlinarić, farmer; Nikola Preka, merchant, and Dr. Bariša Smoljan, legal associate, were elected as deputies.⁸⁵ It is evident that divisions lead to a slight decrease in the number of JMO and NRS voters. However, if we include the votes for Ivanišević's dissident list, there is a noticeable strengthening of the radical position in Herzegovina. On the other hand, among Herzegovinian Croats, the HPS disappeared as the strongest political factor, but the HRSS emerged, whose strongest foothold in that area was the Mostar region, where it won four mandates (2+2) out of a total of seven that this increasingly powerful party won in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

⁸⁵ *Статистика избора народних посланика Краљевине Срба, Хрватиа и Словенаца одржаних 18 марта 1923. године*, Београд 1924, р. 7, 73–75, 140–146, 163–167; В. Gligorijević, *Parlament i političke stranke*, р. 145–146; Tomislav Išek, *Djelatnost Hrvatske seljačke stranke u BiH do zavođenja diktature*, Сарајево 1981, р. 152; М. Миљковић, „Политичке прилике у Мостару“, р. 252–253; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, р. 288, 294–302; Ivica Glibušić, „Izborni uspjesi Hrvatske republikanske seljačke stranke na skupštinskim izborima 1923. u Mostarskoj oblasti“, in: *Hum i Hercegovina kroz povijest.*, II, Ed. Ivica Lučić, Zagreb 2011, р. 317–330.

However, the second parliamentary elections also failed to bring a solution to the political crisis in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. The period between the second and third elections in Yugoslavia, was even shorter than the time that passed than between the first and second – less than two years. These two years were filled with even fiercer political confrontations, with the Croatian question at the center of the disputes and the activities of the Croatian Republican Peasant Party (HRSS) bordering on anti-state actions. Actions by the HRSS's were increasingly mirrored by the Yugoslav Muslim Organization (JMO) and the Slovene People's Party (Slovenska ljudska stranka - SLP), forming the Federalist Block, against which stood only the People's Radical Party, not a unified Serbian political front. The signing of the so-called "Marko's Protocol" was an attempt to reach an agreement between the Federalist Block and the People's Radical Party, but with no lasting success. The severity of the conflict between the HRSS and the state authorities is evidenced by the fact that the Law on State Protection (*Zakon o zaštiti države*) was applied to the HRSS, effectively placing the work of that political party outside the law. In such circumstances, there was no other solution but to call for new elections.

New elections were held on February 8th 1925. The electoral campaign took place in an atmosphere so tense that conflicts and confrontations were almost everywhere. As part of the preparations for the elections, and in light of the events over the previous months and years, Nikola Pašić managed to achieve unity among the radicals in Herzegovina. He informed Petar Ivanišević that it would be very dangerous to go to the elections again in two columns, requested to be on the list led by someone chosen by Pašić himself, and in return, he would be guaranteed a parliamentary mandate. Thus, the NRS list in the Mostar District was once again led by Dr. Lazar Marković. The JMO list in Herzegovina was again led by Dr. Salih Baljić, whose policy and strong connection with Croats did not find support at all party levels. Although formally banned, the HRSS had the opportunity to participate in the electoral race, and its list in Herzegovina was led by Stjepan Radić himself. Encouraged by the success of the 1923 elections, Matej

Kordić again headed a list, and the third Croatian “column” was the Croatian Peasant Party (HPS), whose list was led by Stjepan Barić.⁸⁶

A total of 68,289 voters had the right to take part in the elections held in the Mostar electoral district, and 58,039 (84.99%) of them voted. The HRSS convincingly received the most votes, 24,339 (41.9%), followed by the NRS 17,189 (29.5%), JMO 10,868 (18.7%), and the Democratic Peasant Party (Demokratska zemljoradnička stranka) led by Vasilj Grdić 4,871 (8.5%). These elections showed that the HRSS had completely taken over support among the Croats in Herzegovina, while the old Croatian political forces remained without support. The Croatian Popular Party received 441 votes (0.8%), and Matej Kordić’s list barely received 103 (0.2%) votes. Radić’s party received the most votes in 17 out of 27 polling stations in the Mostar District, once again showing its dominance in the vicinity of Mostar but weaker support in the city itself. This time, JMO had the most votes in all six polling stations in the city, and besides, they had a majority in two more polling stations in the Mostar District. The radicals had a majority in two polling stations – in Buna and Potoci. The NRS achieved a significant increase in support in Herzegovina, doubling the number of votes it received in that region in the previous two electoral cycles, although the joint list of the Alliance of Farmers and the Yugoslav Democratic Party led by Vasilj Grdić received 4,871 votes and attracted some Serbian votes in Herzegovina. There was also a homogenization among Muslims, so the JMO received slightly more votes compared to the previous elections, but due to homogenization among Croats and Serbs in the distribution of mandates, it fared worse. Ultimately, the HRSS received four, NRS two, and JMO one mandate. The mandates were won by Stjepan Radić, a writer; Nikola Preka, a merchant; Ivan Andrić, a farmer; and Tomo Kovačević, a farmer (HRSS); Dr. Lazar Marković, a minister at disposal, and Petar Ivanišević, a professor (NRS); and Salih Baljić, a professor (JMO).⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, р. 320–334.

⁸⁷ *Статистика избора народних посланика Краљевине Срба, Хрватиа и Словенаца одржаних 8. фебруара 1925. године*, Београд 1926, р. 67–69, 140–147, 152–157; М. Миљковић, „Политичке

However, despite attempts by political leaders from Belgrade and Zagreb to reach an agreement, and despite the fact that the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS) entered the Yugoslav government, stabilization of political conditions was not possible. The imprisonment of Stjepan Radić and his recognition of the state, dynasty, and Constitution could not quell the hotbed that was political conditions in Yugoslav. Not even an agreement between the NRS and the HSS could contribute to calming political conflicts in the long run. Less than three years after the third elections, the fourth elections were held in the Yugoslav state. The final break of the fragile cooperation between the NRS and the HSS had nowhere to lead but to new elections. The fourth parliamentary elections in the Yugoslav state were held on September 11th 1927. Since Nikola Pašić was no longer relevant, the NRS split for the elections in Herzegovina. Lazar Marković, a former minister from Belgrade, again headed the NRS list in Herzegovina. Petar Ivanišević, a former parliament member and director of the Teacher Training School in Belgrade, headed the list of the Great People's Radical Party (*Velika narodna radikalna stranka*). Although the JMO participated in the elections together with the JDS within the Democratic Community, it went solo in Herzegovina. Once again, the list was led by Salih Balić, a professor from Mostar. The HSS list in Herzegovina was led by August Košutić, an engineer from Zagreb. For these elections, the Croatian Popular Party (*Hrvatska pučka stranka*), which based its activities on attacks against Radić, was revived. The list was led by Fra Dominik Mandić, a professor from Mostar. However, along with the HSS and HPS, two more lists rushed for the votes of Croats in Herzegovina in those elections. The list of the Croatian Block (composed of the Croatian Federalist Party, Croatian Right Party, and Croatian Peasant Republican Alliance) was led by Dr. Zvonimir Bjelovučić, a lawyer and writer from Janjina. The Croatian Community (*Hrvatska zajednica*) gathered around Dr. Cvitan Spužević, a lawyer from Mostar, was counting on the supporters of Radić being dissatisfied. The list of

прилике у Мостару“; р. 253–254; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, р. 334–335.

the Alliance of Farmers was led by Špiro Soldo. Although independent, the JDS in Herzegovina participated in the elections as the Democratic Community, and its list was led by Vasilj Grdić, the chief secretary of Education from Sarajevo. For the first time since 1920, communists appeared in the Herzegovina elections with the list of the Workers-Peasants Republican Block. The list was led by Gojko Vuković, a tinsmith from Mostar.⁸⁸

For the 1927 elections in Herzegovina, 72,038 citizens with the right to vote were registered. 55,037 (76.39%) voted, which, although high, was a slightly lower turnout compared to previous elections. In Mostar itself, there were 18,287 registered voters, and 14,303 (78.2%) voted. The HSS convincingly received the most votes in the Mostar District, 18,425 (33.5%), which was a significantly weaker result compared to previous elections, and based on that, it can be concluded that divisions had a significant impact on the HSS in Herzegovina. The JMO list received 10,643 votes (19.3%), showing that it had been able to garner approximately the same number of votes since 1920. The divisions within the NRS significantly affected the election results, so the radicals received about 7,000 votes less than in the previous elections – 10,154 (18.4%). These votes were largely drawn by Petar Ivanišević, whose list received 5,885 votes (10.7%). The HPS received a significant number of votes: 3,936 (7.2%), Agrarian Party 3,405 (6.2%), and the Democratic Community 1,740 (3.2%). In Mostar itself, the victory of the HSS was even more convincing than at the regional level. They received 6,695 votes (46.8%), which was close to half of the votes. Far behind the HSS in Mostar were the JMO with 2,317 votes (16.2%), HPS with 1,966 votes (13.7%), and NRS with 1,728 votes (12.1%). However, only three lists won parliamentary mandates – HSS three, and JMO and NRS two each, so August Košutić, Dr. Bariša Smoljan, and Nikola Preka (HSS), Salih Baljić and Alija Salih Kadić (JMO), and Dr. Lazar Marković and Ratko Parežanin (NRS) were elected to parliament.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ *Статистика избора народних посланика Краљевине Срба, Хрватиа и Словенаца одржаних 11 септембра 1927.*, Београд 1928, р. 305–308; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, р. 350–362.

⁸⁹ *Статистика избора народних посланика Краљевине Срба, Хрватиа и Словенаца одржаних*

The January 6th Regime

However, years of political instability and divergent views among parties on how the the Yugoslav state should be organized could not be overcome. On the contrary, conditions only worsened, and the parliament became a mirror of social instability. The culmination came in the summer of 1928 when Radical party deputy Puniša Račić drew his pistol on HSS deputies. He killed two of them, while the third one (Stjepan Radić) succumbed to his wounds several days later. This act heightened tensions in the country to extreme levels. In such circumstances, King Alexander suspended the Constitution, dissolved the National Assembly, and imposed dictatorship on the night of January 5th/6th 1929. A series of decisions followed this act, including the Law on the Name and Division of the Kingdom into administrative regions (*Zakon o nazivu i podeli Kraljevine na upravna područja*). By the first article of this Law, the former Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, symbolically demonstrating the national integration of the state. The state received a new administrative-territorial structure by forming nine banovinas (Drava, Sava, Primorje, Vrbas, Drina, Zeta, Danube, Morava, and Vardar), while the City of Belgrade with Zemun and Pančevo constituted the tenth administrative unit. The division of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia into banovinas also affected the former Mostar District, which found itself divided between two newly formed banovinas – Primorje and Zeta. The city of Mostar was assigned to the Primorje Banovina with its center in Split, which meant that the city on the Neretva River was more oriented towards the coast than towards the hinterland and Sarajevo for the first time in its history and, it was clear, left to the Croatian sphere of interest. Attempts to change this state decision, embodied in a report drafted by the prominent Mostar native Vladimir Ćorović, did not succeed. The Serb demand for the Neretva Valley to be included in the Zeta Banovina was not met. Influential political figures from Mo-

11 септембра 1927., p. 7, 88–93, 363–368; М. Миљковић, „Политичке прилике у Мостару“, p. 255; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 362–363.

star, such as Salih Baljić and Nikola Preka, sided with the January 6th regime. In 1930, Balić was appointed a member of the Supreme Legislative Council,⁹⁰ and Preka became the Minister of Social Policy in General Petar Živković's government.⁹¹

During the January 6th regime, the Yugoslav kingdom conducted its second and, as it turned out, final census. Mostar was enumerated within the Primorje Banovina, which had the smallest population among all nine banovinas and was considered the most underdeveloped. During the decade of the Primorje Banovina's existence, three individuals held the position of ban in Split – Ivo Tartalja (1929–1932), Josip Jablanović (1932–1938), and Mirko Buić (1938–1939). Within the Primorje Banovina, there were 901,660 inhabitants (6.47% of the total population of Yugoslavia). After Split, the Mostar district was the second largest of the 21 districts in that Banovina. The census from 1931 showed that, demographically, the Mostar district had recovered from the damages inflicted during the Great War, with the population significantly increasing in the 10 years between the two censuses. In 1931, the Mostar district had 83,190 inhabitants, of which 52,869 were Roman Catholics (63.55%), 17,400 were Muslims (20.92%), 12,730 were Orthodox (15.30%), while 191 individuals were listed under “others” (0.3%). The Mostar district at that time included the City of Mostar and 10 municipalities: Bijelo Polje, Blagaj, Donje Brotnjo, Drežnica, Gornje Brotnjo, Kočerin, Mostar-Sela, Mostarsko Blato, Široki Brijeg, and

⁹⁰ Salih Baljić was working as a professor in Mostar at the time of the collapse of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and in August 1941, he moved to Zagreb. Following the recommendation of Mladen Lorković, he entered the diplomatic service of the Independent State of Croatia as a consul in Ljubljana in November 1942. He remained in that position until the collapse of that state entity. After the war, he was sentenced to death, but his sentence was commuted to 20 years in prison with forced labor. He served eight years and was released early, almost completely blind. (*Tko je tko u NDH. Hrvatska 1941.–1945.*, Zagreb 1997, p. 21).

⁹¹ Nedim Šarac, „Promjena naziva i podjela na banovine jugoslovenske monarhije 1929. godine“, *Prilozi*, Nr. 10/1974, p. 319–330; Nedim Šarac, *Uspostavljanje šestojanuarskog režima 1929. godine sa posebnim osvrtom na Bosnu i Hercegovinu*, Sarajevo 1975, p. 276–286; Мира Радојевић, „Споразум Цветковић-Мачек и Босна и Херцеговина“, in: *Босна и Херцеговина од средњеј века до новијеј времена* (Ed. Славенко Терзић), Београд 1995, p. 123–133; М. Миљковић, „Политичке прилике у Мостару“, p. 256, 274; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 370; Т. Дутина, Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина кроз вијекове*, p. 485–486.

Žitomislić. In the city itself, there were 20,295 inhabitants, including 8,844 Muslims, 5,764 Roman Catholics, and 5,502 Orthodox. The Bijelo Polje municipality had 4,636 inhabitants and included several settlements. Blagaj municipality had 6,731 inhabitants and encompassed several settlements as well. Donje Brotnjo municipality had 4,561 inhabitants and included several settlements. Drežnica municipality, with its seat in Donja Drežnica, had 2,929 inhabitants and included several settlements. Gornje Brotnjo municipality had 4,917 inhabitants and included several settlements. Kočerin municipality had 6,617 inhabitants and encompassed several settlements. Mostar-Sela municipality had 12,009 inhabitants and included several villages. Mostarsko Blato municipality had 5,824 inhabitants and included several settlements. Široki Brijeg municipality had 10,900 inhabitants and encompassed several settlements. Žitomislić municipality had 3,777 inhabitants and included several settlements.⁹² In these organized municipalities, the Orthodox population was a majority only in Bijelo Polje, Roman Catholics in Donje Brotnjo, Drežnica, Gornje Brotnjo, Kočerin, Mostar, Mostarsko Blato, Široki Brijeg, and Žitomislić, while Muslims were the majority in Blagaj.

Creating the illusion that the grip of dictatorship had loosened and that the situation in the country had calmed down, King Alexander gifted the country with a Constitution in September 1931. It was the second constitution of the Yugoslav kingdom and, as it turned out, the last one adopted by that country under that name and in that system. The adoption of the Constitution allowed the parliament to return to public life, hence the need for elections to be called. The elections were held on November 8th 1931, and were certainly specific in that there was only the one, government list for which, of course, people voted. Heading the People's candidate list (*Zemaljska kandidatska lista*) was Petar Živković, President of the Ministerial Council (*Ministarski savet*)

⁹² *Definitivni rezultati popisa stanovništva od 31 marta 1931 godine*, II, *Prisutno stanovništvo po veroispovesti*, Beograd 1938, p. X, 9, 81; *Upravno, sudsko i crkveno razdjeljenje i imenik prebivališta Primorske banovine po stanju od 1. maja 1938*, Zagreb 1938, p. 3, 6–7, 45, 63–65; S. Mišković, *Srpsko građanstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini*, p. 81; Д. Мاستиловић, *Херцеговина*, p. 80–86; Д. В. Мاستиловић, *Српска елиџа из Босне и Херцеговине у иолийичком живоију Краљевине СХС/Југославије*, p. 615.

and Minister of Internal Affairs. That list received 2,342,520 votes and won all 306 seats in the National Assembly. Heading the list in the Mostar district was Nikola Preka. In the Mostar district, 19,300 people had the right to vote, and 6,959 voted, all of course, for the People's list. The Primorje Banovina, to which Mostar belonged at that time, was among three banovinas (along with *Vrbaska* and *Zetska*) that sent the fewest deputies to the Assembly (20 each). Considering that the Primorje Banovina had 21 electoral districts, on average, one delegate was elected from each to the Assembly in Belgrade.⁹³

The Emergence of the Ustasha Movement

The imposition of the monarchist dictatorship provided new impetus to separatist forces within the Yugoslav kingdom, particularly in Croatia. The ban on the activities of political parties applied to all, including the Croatian Party of Rights (Hrvatska stranka prava - HSP), several of whose leaders went into exile. Among them was Dr. Ante Pavelić, an attorney and former representative in the city and regional assembly and a member of parliament elected in Zagreb in the 1927 parliamentary elections. Pavelić, a Zagreb law doctor whose political activities during the 1920s were clearly aimed at the creation of an independent Croatian state, left the country on the night of January 19th/20th, 1929, fleeing from the border town of Sušak to Italy, and from there to Austria. Pavelić then joined the Croatian Emigrant Committee led by Ivo Frank, and in April of the same year, he stayed in Sofia.⁹⁴ However, since he was denied the right of residence in Austria in 1929, Pavelić permanently moved to Italy. In Italy, where he had previously present-

⁹³ *Статистика избора народних посланика за Прву Југословенску Народну Скупштину одржаних 8 новембра 1931. год.*, Београд 1935, p. 3–5, 131.

⁹⁴ Fikreta Jelić-Butić, „Prilog proučavanju djelatnosti Ustasha do 1941.“, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, Nr. 1–2/1969, p. 55–91; Mladen Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska 1941.*, Beograd 1973, p. 19–20, 22–24; Fikreta Jelić-Butić, *Ustasha i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska 1941–1945.*, Zagreb 1977, p. 13–18; Срђа Трифковић, *Усташе – балканско срце њаме на европској политичкој сцени*, Београд 1999, p. 34; Mario Jareb, *Ustaško-domobranski pokret od nastanka do travnja 1941. godine*, Zagreb 2006, p. 68–86; Ђуро Затезало, *Јадовно. Комплекс усташких логора 1941.*, I, Београд 2007, p. 29–30.

ed his actions and future plans, Pavelić developed further activities aimed at overthrowing the Yugoslav kingdom and creating an independent Croatian state.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ Ante Pavelić (1889–1959), born in Bradina near Konjic, where his parents had settled from Lika. He attended elementary school and high school in various places in Bosnia and Herzegovina, eventually graduating in Zagreb. As a high school student, he became a member of the Croatian Party of Rights. He graduated from the Faculty of Law in Zagreb in 1914 and earned his doctorate in 1915. He gained experience in a law office in Zagreb until 1918, when he became a lawyer. That same year, he entered the leadership of the Croatian Party of Rights. He was a member of the Executive Board, then secretary and vice president of the Party. He was elected as a representative in the Zagreb City Council in 1921 and as a regional representative of the Zagreb Region in 1927. When returning from the European Congress of Cities in Paris in June 1927, he stopped in Rome and submitted a memorandum offering Italy assistance in overthrowing the Yugoslav state. In the 1927 elections, he was elected as a member of parliament in the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes representing the Croatian Bloc. From the parliamentary podium, he spoke in favor of Croatian independence. He launched the newspapers „Starčević“ and „Kvaternik“. After the assassination in the Assembly in 1928, he joined the Peasant-Democratic Coalition and launched the newspaper “Hrvatski domobran” (Croatian Home Defender) in which he advocated for an independent Croatian state. In the fall of the same year, he established an organization of the same name. After the declaration of the January 6th Dictatorship, he went into exile, first to Vienna, then Budapest, and later resided in Sofia. In July 1929, he was sentenced to death in absentia by the Court for the Protection of the State in Belgrade. He found more permanent refuge in Italy, where at the end of 1930, he founded a secret revolutionary nationalist organization called the Ustasha – Croatian Revolutionary Organization (Ustasha – Hrvatska revolucionarna organizacija). Its primary goal was the dismantling of Yugoslavia and the creation of an independent Croatian state with Italian support. Since the organization was based on military principles, the first training camp was established in Bovegna in the second half of 1931. Starting in 1932, members of his organization carried out several terrorist actions in Yugoslavia. After the assassination of the Yugoslav king in Marseille, Pavelić was arrested and imprisoned in Turin until 1936. After the rapprochement between Italy and Yugoslavia, in April 1937, he decided to disband the Ustasha camps, after which the Ustashes were dispersed and isolated throughout Italy, and he was detained in Siena (1937–1939). After the fall of Milan Stojadinović and the Italian action in Albania in January 1940, he agreed with Italian Foreign Minister Galeazzo Ciano to initiate an uprising in Croatia, followed by an Italian military intervention and the proclamation of a Croatian state that would be in a monetary and customs union, and later also in a personal union, with Italy. Two days after the March coup in Belgrade in 1941, he was received by Benito Mussolini (March 29th). Mussolini hosted him again the day after Slavko Kvaternik proclaimed the Independent State of Croatia (April 11th). A few days later, he returned to Croatia at the head of a group of Ustasha. He arrived in Zagreb on April 14th, and the next day, as the leader of the Independent State of Croatia, he appointed the Croatian state government, in which he held the positions of president and foreign minister. In the new state, he established a totalitarian system modeled after the Nazi regime in Germany. The Ustasha – Croatian Liberation Movement (Ustasha – hrvatski oslobodilački pokret - UHOP) represented the sole representative of political will, the Main Ustasha Headquarters (Glavni ustaški stan) the basic organizational-political lever, and the Ustasha Army (Ustaška vojnica) and Ustasha Supervisory Service (Ustaška nadzorna služba) the military and police forces of the regime. His regime adopted racial and repressive legal provisions, conducted terror, and created concentration camps where genocide was carried out in a monstrous manner against Serbs, Jews, and Roma. He completely tied the fate of the Independent State of Croatia to the fate of the Third Reich. As German forces collapsed in the Southeast, so did his state. He left Zagreb on May 6th 1945, and through Austria and

Italy supported the work of Pavelić and his supporters because it saw them as a convenient and effective means of pressure on the Yugoslav state, with which it had “unsettled accounts.” Among Pavelić’s closest collaborators were: Eugen Kvaternik, Mijo Babić, Andrija Artuković, Mile Budak, Erich Lisak, Ivo Herenčić, Vilko Pečnikar, Zvonimir Pospišil, Ante Moškov, Jure Francetić, Vjekoslav Servatzy, Stanko Hranilović, Mijo Bzik, Tomislav Sertić, Jerolim Katić, Ante Pejković, and others. The name “Ustasha” first appeared in May 1930 in the name of the “Messenger of Croatian Revolutionaries” (*Vijesnik hrvatskih revolucionara*), entitled “Ustasha”. It was clear that it was a revolutionary organization that used its own military terminology. The first Ustasha armed groups were formed during 1931 and camps for their training were initially located in Italy, and then Gustav Perčec organized an Ustasha camp near the Yugoslav border on a property owned by Janko Pust, near Nagykanizsa in Hungary. The fact that his political goals (breaking up Yugoslavia) coincided with Italy’s official policy allowed him to develop his activities and form a separate organization on Italian soil. Its formal establishment likely occurred in early 1932. In the summer of the same year, the Constitution of the Ustasha - Croatian Revolutionary Organization (Ustasha – Hrvatska revolucionarna organizacija - UHRO) was shaped, clearly indicating its goal of “liberating Croatia from foreign rule through armed uprising (revolution), to become a completely independent and sovereign state in all its national and historical territories.” The organization consisted of camps (*tabor*), campsites (*logor*), and headquarters (*stožer*), lead by the Main Ustasha Headquarters (*Glavni ustaški stan*), headed by the leader (*poglavnik*), along with deputy leaders (*poglavni pobočnici*). A camp represented the Ustasha organization in the territory of an administrative municipality, and the campsite was a gathering of all camps in the territory of one district. Based on this, it can be concluded that

Italy, he managed to reach Argentina. There, in 1956, he founded the Croatian Liberation Movement (Hrvatski oslobodilački pokret - HOP). An assassination attempt was made on him on April 10th 1957, in the Argentine town of Lomas del Palomar near Buenos Aires, where he was living under a false name. Realizing that he was no longer safe in Argentina, he moved to Chile, and later to Spain. He died as a free man in Madrid on December 28th 1959. (*Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 306–310; Hrvoje Matković, *Povijest Nezavisne Države Hrvatske*, Zagreb 2002, p. 267–268).

the organization was not structured solely as an emigrant one, but so as to be immediately transferred into the country. In addition, the organization had a military component and represented an armed formation of military type. The Ustasha army was an integral part of the UHRO. As early as November 1932, the Ustasha organized the first terrorist action in Yugoslavia when they attacked the police station in Brusane near Gospić. This action remained known as the Velebit Uprising, organized by Vjekoslav Servatzy. The Ustasha organization grew into a movement in 1933, showing that it had much broader political goals. The principles of the Ustasha Movement were published in 1933, proclaiming the struggle by all means, including weapons, for the independence of Croatia. Thanks to attorney Andrija Artukovic, the Ustasha Movement had its beginnings within Yugoslavia - in Lika, before spreading to Dalmatia, Herzegovina, and Bosnia.⁹⁶

By the end of 1932, the Ustasha had undertaken several more diversions in Yugoslavia, such as those at the railway station in Osijek, on the train on the Osijek-Vinkovci railway line, in front of the Orthodox Church in Zagreb, in the vicinity of the barracks of the 32nd Infantry Regiment, and so on. Similar actions were supposed to culminate in 1933 with an assassination attempt on King Alexander I Karadorđević during his visit to Zagreb in December. However, the plan was not executed, and the would-be perpetrators were arrested (Josip Begović, Petar Oreb, and Antun Pogorelec). What the Ustasha failed to achieve then, they succeeded in collaboration with the Bulgarian terrorist organization VMRO (Internal Macedonian Rev-

⁹⁶ „Ustav Ustasha Hrvatskoga oslobodilačkoga pokreta“, *Hrvatski narod*, 31. V 1941, pril. p. I; Fikreta Jelić-Butić, „Ustaški pokret i hrvatsko nacionalno pitanje“, *Jugoslavenski historijski časopis*, Nr. 4/1969, p. 185–190; M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 24–38, 58–60; F. Jelić-Butić, *Ustasha i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 18–28; Bogdan Krizman, *Ante Pavelić i Ustasha*, Zagreb 1978, p. 53–83; С. Трифковић, *Устааше*, p. 35–37; Н. Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 36–41; Вељко Ђурић Мишина, *Злочин је њоуче раније. Прилози за историју стварања Срба у бановинама Приморској и Савској 1934–1939. и Бановини Хрватској 1939–1941. године*, Београд 2004, p. 16, 19–21; М. Jareb, *Ustaško-domobranski pokret*, p. 101–183, 247–267, 281–298; Ђ. Зарезало, *Јаговно*, I, p. 30–31, 33–34; James J. Sadkovich, *Italija i Ustasha 1927.–1937.*, Zagreb 2010, p. 176–185; Amir Obhodaš, Mario Werhas, Bojan Dimitrijević, Zvonimir Despot, *Ustaška vojnica. Oružana sila Ustaškog pokreta u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj 1941.–1945.*, I (travanj 1941.–rujan 1943.), Zagreb 2013, p. 19–20; Bojan B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska Nezavisne Države Hrvatske 1941–1945*, Beograd 2016, p. 19–25.

olutionary Organization - Внатрешна македонска револуционерна организација) in Marseilles on October 9th 1934, when the Yugoslav monarch arrived on a visit to France, which was one of the pillars of his foreign policy. The immediate executor was Vlado Černozemski (Veličko Georgiev Kerin). To prevent further unwanted consequences, shortly after the assassination, Italian authorities interned all members of the Ustasha organization in Italy on the Lipari Islands. As a result, Ustasha activity significantly declined by the end of 1934.⁹⁷



Ante Pavelić, Leader of the Independent State of Croatia
(Military Museum)

⁹⁷ F. Jelić-Butić, „Prilog proučavanju djelatnosti Ustasha do 1941.“, p. 67–68; M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 39–46; Богдан Кризман, „Усташе и ВМРО“, in: *Catena Mundi. Српска хроника на свейским веријама*, II, Ed. Предраг Р. Драгић Кијук, Краљево/Београд 1992, p. 32–37; В. Ђурић Мишина, *Злочин је почео раније*, p. 21–23; М. Јареб, *Усташко-домобрански покрет*, p. 215–246, 298–343, 415–432; Ђ. Затезало, *Јаговно*, I, p. 31–32; В. В. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 33–35.

The political situation in the 1930s and the creation of the Banovina of Croatia

The assassination of King Alexander in Marseille in October 1934 brought with it a change in political circumstances and the complete collapse of the regime established in 1929. The new circumstances led to elections being called. These were the second elections after the establishment of a dictatorship but the first with an alternative to the government list. Alongside the government list led by Bogoljub Jevtić, the elections featured lists headed by Dr. Vladko Maček, Dimitrije Ljotić, and Božidar Maksimović. Five lists participated in the elections held in Mostar, on May 5th 1935. Competition was most intense between the government list, led by Nikola Preka and Dr. Muhammed Ridanović, and two opposition lists jointly led by Vladko Maček. One opposition list was led by Dr. Bariša Smoljan and Marko Suton, and the other by Husain Ćišić and Dr. Pero Mandić. The list of Dimitrije Ljotić was led by Risto Bošković and Spasoje Matrak, and the list of Božidar Maksimović by Vojin Milićević and Jovo Miljević. In the Mostar region, 21,484 citizens had the right to vote, of which 16,859 (78.47%) voted. Smoljan and Suton's list received the most votes, 9,875 (58.57%), the government list 4,457 (26.44%), Ćišić and Mandić's list 2,122 (12.59%), Ljotić's list 371 (2.20%), and Maksimović's list only 34 (0.20%). Out of a total of 38 polling stations in the Mostar region, Maček's list received the most votes in 27 polling stations, with Smoljan and Suton leading in 24, and Ćišić and Mandić in three. The government list received the most votes at 11 polling stations, mainly in the urban zone of Mostar. In the city itself, the government list led by Preka and Ridanović won convincingly with 2,558 votes, while Smoljan and Ćišić's list won significantly fewer votes – 836 and 748, respectively. Ljotić received 151 votes in the city, and Maksimović barely 29. Overall, the People's Candidate List (Zemaljska kandidatska lista) of Dr. Vladko Maček⁹⁸ achieved

⁹⁸ Vladko Maček (1879–1964), born in Jastrebarsko. He studied law in Zagreb and earned his

a convincing victory in the Mostar region, winning 11,997 votes (71.16%).⁹⁹

Despite being formally banned, the HSS did much to homogenize the Croatian national spirit. It sought to influence the strengthening of Croatian national consciousness in broad segments of the population through various means. Games, songs, declarations, proclamations, new and old societies were intended to keep Croats united and confident in their national goals. The work of these societies was generously supported by the Roman Catholic Church. In 1935, within the HSS, the formation of an armed force began – the so-called Maček Guard, which served for his personal protection and the protection of party gatherings. A detachment of around 50 people was led by Zvonimir

doctorate in 1903. He worked in courts in Zagreb, Petrinja, Samobor, and Ivanec. From 1904, he was involved in political activities as a member of the Croatian People's Peasant Party. He ran for the Croatian Parliament but was not elected. He worked as a legal apprentice in Krapina and then opened his own office in Sveti Ivan Zelina. He was mobilized into the Austro-Hungarian armed forces during the Great War and fought on the Serbian and Italian fronts. He was wounded in combat in Serbia. After the war ended in 1918, he opened a law office in Zagreb. He was elected vice president of the party in 1920. He was elected as a member of parliament in the elections of 1920, 1923, 1925, and 1927, and briefly served as vice president of the National Assembly in 1924. After the death of Stjepan Radić in 1928, he took over the leadership of the Croatian Peasant Party and, along with Svetozar Pribičević, led the Peasant-Democratic Coalition. He was imprisoned several times (April 1919–March 1920, early 1925, during 1930, and 1933–1934). In the elections of 1935 and 1938, he was the leader of the national list, first for the National Agreement Bloc and then for the United Opposition. On August 26th 1939, he signed an agreement with Prime Minister Dragiša Cvetković that established the Banovina of Croatia as a special unit within Yugoslavia, and he became the Vice President of the Government. He retained this position in the government of General Dušan Simović, which was formed after the coup on March 27th, 1941. He witnessed the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) in Zagreb. He called on all supporters of the Croatian Peasant Party to comply with the new authorities and then retreated to his estate in Kupinec. In the fall, he was arrested and spent five months in the Jasenovac camp (October 1941–March 1942). He remained under house arrest at his estate in Kupinec until early 1943, when he was detained in the Zagreb apartment of Vjekoslav Luburić (January–March 1943). He was then returned to Kupinec, where he stayed until December of the same year. He was then moved to his apartment in Zagreb and held under heavy guard until May 5th, 1945. The next day, he left the country with his entire family and went to Paris, and in 1946 to Washington. He died in the American capital in mid-May 1964. His remains were transferred to Croatia and buried at the Mirogoj cemetery in Zagreb on May 15th 1996. (*Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 247–249; H. Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 264–265)

⁹⁹ *Статистика избора народних посланика за Народну скупштину Краљевине Југославије извршених 5 маја 1935 године*, Београд 1938, p. 82, 221, 231, 237, 258–261; М. Миљковић, „Политичке прилике у Мостару“, p. 258–259.

Kovačević. When new detachments created by regions across Croatian territories were added to Maček's Guard in 1936, the Croatian Peasant Defense (Hrvatska seljačka zaštita - HSZ) emerged. Although not officially registered, like the party it was associated with, its work was certainly felt. The Croatian Peasant Defense had over a hundred district units, while the Croatian Civic Defense existed in 15 major Croatian cities. The defense was organized on military principles and divided into swarms (roj), platoons (vod), companies (satnija), and battalions (bataljon). It had cavalry as well as a motorized unit with several cars and motorcycles. The defense experienced an expansion as early as 1937 and was in full power in 1938.¹⁰⁰

Gatherings held in all regions inhabited by Croats played a particularly important role in homogenizing the Croatian community. This policy gained more and more supporters in all layers of society – from peasants to administrative workers and judges. Larger gatherings often ended with 'spontaneous' outbursts of hatred, such as in Slavenska Požege in May 1936, where around 40 officer residences and houses were demolished. We also note the assaults on representatives of state authority, such as those against Senator Jovan Banjanin near Imotski in the spring of 1935 and against the ban of the Primorje Banovina, Josip Jablanović, on the road from Split to Šibenik. Among a series of incidents in those years, we will mention that a group of Croats attacked the house of Voja, Vlado, Ilija, and Dušan Matković in Bogodol near Mostar on January 1st 1936. Vojo Matković's arms were broken, and this family was threatened that their house would be set on fire on Orthodox Christmas. Intolerance was also expressed towards Orthodox churches, Serbian weddings, and the Cyrillic script. Incidents, some of which resulted in fatalities, occurred throughout the Savska and Primorska banovinas. It's obvious that everything was unfolding in accordance with the plans of Maček's HSS, aiming to homogenize the Croatian national corpus, and with the

¹⁰⁰ Велимир Терзић, *Југославија у Априлском рају 1941.*, Титоград 1963, p. 42–44; В. Ђурић Мишина, *Злочин је почео раније*, p. 79–99; Tomislav Aralica, Višeslav Aralica, *Hrvatski ratnici kroz stoljeća*, III, *Oružane snage Nezavisne Države Hrvatske i druge hrvatske postrojbe na osovinskoj strani 1941.–1945.*, Zagreb 2010, p. 7–8; Sabrina P. Ramet, „Vladko Maček i Hrvatska seljačka zaštita u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji“, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, Nr. 1/2011, p. 137–154.

instructions of Ante Pavelić, who from abroad advocated that the people should obey commands and be ready for a general uprising.¹⁰¹

In the Mostar region, everything culminated on July 12th 1936, when members and supporters of the former HSS held a large public assembly. Croatian flags, expressions of support for Dr. Maček, and demands for the creation of an independent Croatian state marked this gathering. According to police reports, there were 14–15,000 people present. The assembly was held at the grounds of the Croatian Sports Club “Zrinjski” in Mostar. The assembly was first addressed by Bariša Smojan, followed by speeches from 11 others, including member of parliament Juraš Šutej and one of the party leaders, Jakov Jelašić. However, the fact that Serbs were celebrating Petrovdan that increased the possibility of conflict, so the city authorities ordered them to gather on the other bank of the Neretva River. Regardless of the physical distance, after the assembly ended, sparks flew, igniting both sides. In a letter to Dr. Lazar Marković, Đorđe Dragić described it like this: “Around three-thirty in the afternoon, one participant rode a horse with a Croatian flag through a circle of Serbian peasants. In response to his insults, the Serbs reacted and took his flag and destroyed it. He then fled on horseback and immediately told the rest of his brethren how he was treated among Serbs with a Croatian flag. These agitated masses then rushed over the old bridge towards the Serbs; and naturally, our people do not retreat easily, and within an hour, knives flashed, leaving four of ours seriously wounded, as well as four Catholics, and one dead. It’s fortunate that the army intervened immediately, otherwise there would have been blood and flesh for both the eagles and crows.” The village headman of Gnojnice, Blaž Krtalić, was killed, and several Croats and Serbs were wounded. Dragić further writes: “The Croatian leaders do not want this state, especially not the dynasty, and as can be seen from their speeches, they don’t hide it at all. Mr. Dr. Maček seems not to live up to his calling and is not the master of these masses, with the real master being that bandit Pavelić with his band of

¹⁰¹ В. Ђурић Мишина, *Злочин је њочео раније*, p. 30–71.

outlaws; and the Catholic clergy, which diabolically hates this country, especially the Serbian people. Dragić's words were very sharp, but they seem to have outlined the situation well in that area.¹⁰²

The serious tension between different ethnic groups was further exacerbated by the municipal elections held on November 15th 1936. Contemporary accounts claim that after these elections, Mostar definitively split into Serbs and Serbs-Muslims on one side, and Croats and Croats-Muslims on the other side. "Catholics openly profess the end of Yugoslavia," wrote Đorđe Dragić in a letter to Dr. Lazar Marković, an old Radical leader who enjoyed great influence in the Mostar region. Dragić writes that "for the Croats, there is no Yugoslavia," and that "where they are the majority, municipalities have made some decisions that contradict positive land laws, state emblems have been thrown off municipal buildings, and in their place, separatist Croatian emblems have been put up." In such circumstances, it's not surprising that a delegation of Mostar Serbs went to see Prime Minister Dr. Milan Stojadinović and handed him a petition to annex Mostar with its surroundings to Serbia.¹⁰³

Maček's contacts with the leadership of the Ustasha emigration, including Pavelić personally, allowed him good insight into their activities and some control over their work. Mladen Lorković informed Maček about the plans of the Ustasha movement, highlighting that Italy was behind the actions of the Ustasha emigration, which planned to infiltrate Croatia in multiple locations and incite a popular uprising leading to the declaration of an independent state. Lorković conveyed that Pavelić noticed "how well Maček is working inside the country" and acknowledges his leadership. Therefore, it's not surprising that in the following years, members and supporters of the Ustasha movement operated within the

¹⁰² Arhiv Jugoslavije (AJ), Zbirka Lazara Markovića (85), folder 2, *Đorđe Dragić, Lazaru Markoviću, Mostar, 16. jula 1936*; AJ, 85–2, *Pismo nepoznatoga Jovi Veselu, Mostar, 16. jula 1936*; В. Ђурић Мишина, *Злочин је почео раније*, p. 60–61; М. Миљковић, „Политичке прилике у Мостару“, p. 269–270, 273–274; Маја Миљковић, „Nacionalni identitet Srba i Hrvata u Mostaru u међуратном периоду“, in: *Dijalog povjesničara-istoričara*, III, Ed. Hans-Georg Fleck, Igor Graovac, Zagreb 2001, p. 103–118.

¹⁰³ AJ, 85–2, *Đorđe Dragić Lazaru Markoviću, Mostar, 22. decembra 1936*; AJ, 85–2, *Đorđe Dragić Lazaru Markoviću, Mostar, 26. maja 1937*.

HSS and thus insidiously expanded their organization in regions with a significant Croatian population. In other words, the change in political circumstances allowed the focal point of Ustasha activity to shift to Yugoslavia starting from 1935.¹⁰⁴ It raises the question of how much awareness existed at the top of the government in Belgrade about this.

Furthermore, Milan Stojadinović's policy of cooperation with Italy and Germany enabled a partial return of the Ustasha emigration to Yugoslavia. Stojadinović was motivated to facilitate their return (made possible by the Belgrade Agreements), as he expected that the majority of Ustasha returning to Yugoslavia would weaken the emigration and that the "returnees" would be placed under supervision by Yugoslav authorities. On the other hand, the Ustasha had other plans. In addition to the pressure by Italian authorities who pledged to resettle them, there was also the intention to strengthen the organization within Yugoslavia. In mid-November 1937, the return of Ustasha from emigration began. This process was notably intensified by the arrival of writer Mile Budak, one of the leaders of the Ustasha movement, in Yugoslavia, in June of 1938, after which the bulk of those who decided to return arrived. By mid-1939, around 260 Ustasha had returned to Yugoslavia. Alongside Budak, other prominent members of the Ustasha movement returned, such as Jure Francetić, Josip Milković, and Mladen Lorković. With the arrival of influential members of the Ustasha movement, its activities were keenly felt in parts of the Yugoslav territory. Upon his return to the country, Mile Budak connected with Slavko Kvaternik, Jozo Dumandžić, Dr. Nikola Kaić, Mirko Puk, and Leonard Grivičić. From the ranks of this group of Ustasha emerged the society "Uzdanica" (Hope), and its legal publication "Hrvatski narod" (The Croatian people) was launched. "Uzdanica" became a gathering point for all those who supported the Ustasha ideology. It is estimated that there were around 2,000 Ustasha in the country at that time. More than half of the Ustasha organization's members were in Zagreb, while the rest were scattered

¹⁰⁴ Ljubo Boban, *Maček i politika Hrvatske seljačke stranke 1928–1941. Iz povijesti hrvatskog pitanja*, Zagreb/Rijeka 1974, p. 403–405; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 26.

throughout Slavonia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina. After all those Ustasha covered by amnesty returned to Yugoslavia, around 250 Ustasha emigrants remained in Italy (mostly on the Lipari Islands – around 170 of them). These only arrived in Zagreb in April 1941, embedding themselves in the ruins of the Yugoslav kingdom.¹⁰⁵

In increasingly intense political circumstances, both in Yugoslavia and in Europe, the last elections in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia were held on December 11th 1938. The race was between the government's list led by Milan Stojadinović and the opposition list led by Vladko Maček, with Dimitrije Ljotić leading a list of his own. Overall, the Government's list won 54.09% of the votes (1,643,783), the opposition list 44.90% (1,364,524), while Ljotić's list garnered a negligible number of votes (30,734). In the Primorje Banovina, the opposition list achieved a resounding victory, winning as much as 77.92% of the votes (159,174), compared to 20.91% of the votes for the government's list (42,281). In the Mostar district itself, the victory of the opposition was even more convincing – 14,764 votes compared to 3,794 votes for the government's list. In Mostar, as candidates for deputies to the Yugoslav National Assembly, the list led by Vladko Maček included the then-mayor Husein Čišić (1935–1940) and Jovan Radulović.¹⁰⁶

The rise of extreme ideologies and German expansion towards the southeast of Europe pressured Yugoslav leadership into, so far as possible, pacifying internal conditions, as they couldn't influence international events. The first priority was to resolve or at least alleviate the so-called Croatian question. With an agreement signed by Dragiša Cvetković and Vladko Maček at the end of August 1939, the Banovina of Croatia was formed. This Banovina was supposed to have much broader authority than all other banovinas and consisted of the entire Sava and Primorje banovinas, as well as the districts of Dubrovnik, Šid, Ilok, Brčko, Gradačac, Derventa, Travnik, and Fojnica from the Zeta, Drina, Vrbas,

¹⁰⁵ M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 52–53, 62–63; F. Jelić-Butić, *Ustasha i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 45–47; M. Jareb, *Ustaško-domobranski pokret*, p. 525–544; Ђ. Затецало, *Јаговно*, I, p. 34–35.

¹⁰⁶ Tomislav Išek, *Hrvatska seljačka stranka u Bosni i Hercegovini 1929–1941.*, Sarajevo 1991, p. 249–251; Ivo Perić, *Vladko Maček. Politički portret*, Zagreb 2003, p. 207–212.



Mostar in 1940 - Hotel "Neretva" and the Bridge of King Peter I Liberator
(Library of Matica srpska)

and Danube banovinas. Thus, Mostar, for the first time in its history, came under direct Zagreb authority, in an administrative unit under predominantly Croatian influence. The Banovina of Croatia had jurisdiction in agriculture, trade, industry, forestry, mining, construction, social policy, public health, physical education, justice, education, and administration. Dr. Ivan Šubašić was appointed as the first ban of the new Banovina.¹⁰⁷

Judging by contemporary accounts, the position of the Serbian population in the Mostar region became noticeably worse in the Bano-

¹⁰⁷ *Aprilski rat 1941.*, Zbornik dokumenata, I, Ed. Dušan Gvozdenović, Beograd 1969, Doc. Nr. 79, p. 307–312; Ljubo Boban, *Sporazum Cvetković-Maček*, Beograd 1965; Ljubo Boban, *Hrvatske granice od 1918. do 1993. godine*, Zagreb 1995, p. 39–43; Vladko Maček, *Memoari*, Zagreb 2003, p. 191–194; *Vladko Maček i stvaranje Banovine Hrvatske*, Ed. Franjo Gaži, Zagreb 1991; Саво Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеговачко 1941–1942*, I, Пале/Београд 2000, p. 29–31; В. Ђурић Мишина, *Злочин је иочео раније*, p. 113–124; I. Perić, *Vladko Maček*, p. 223–228.

vina of Croatia. This is best illustrated by the words of Smailaga Ćemalović in a letter to Milan Jakovljević dated November 4th 1940: “Lately, Serbs in the city of Mostar, both Orthodox and Muslims, have been experiencing many unpleasant days. Authorities pay very little or almost no attention to us Serbs, although only 25% of those living in the city of Mostar are Catholics, yet the current authorities have managed to drive away all Serbs who were in positions, and now the positions are left without a single Serbian official. There has never been a situation like this in the district, not even in the times when Austria was at war with Serbia, as during the war there was an assistant district chief in Mostar - a Serb.” Ćemalović writes that in the renowned Mostar Gymnasium, out of over 40 teachers, only three Serbs remained, “two only by birth, and one by sentiment and work.” In his opinion, “Serbian Muslims, in particular, are subjected to persecution, because they are being relocated without any reason, and lately they have started to dismiss them as well.” Why Ćemalović emphasizes the Gymnasium is quickly explained: “Because of the relocating and dismissing of Serbian professors from the local Gymnasium, we are very much worried about the upbringing of our children, because in no local school, especially not in the Gymnasium, can anyone say they are Yugoslav, and writing in Cyrillic is being prohibited even for Orthodox Serbs.”¹⁰⁸

The formation of the Banovina of Croatia caused much joy among Croats and apprehension among Serbs. In such an administrative-territorial formation, one nation was undoubtedly above all others. The creation of a separate administrative unit within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which was, so to speak, a state within a state, and the return of a large number of Ustasha emigrants from Italy, significantly changed the situation in the newly formed banovina. Its high degree of autonomy allowed Ustasha emigrants to “nest” within the state apparatus and practically dominate the administration, police, and army in the area of the Banovina. Groups gathered around “Uzdanica” or the Cro-

¹⁰⁸ AJ, Zbirka Milana Jakovljevića (82), f. 1, unit 8, *Смаилага Ћемаловић, Мосџар, Милану Јаковљевићу, 4. новембар 1940*; М. Миљковић, „Политичке прилике у Мосџару“, р. 286–287; Т. Дутина, Д. Мастиловић, *Херцеџовина кроз вијекове*, р. 490–491.

atian Scout-Home Guard (Hrvatski skaut-domobran), as well as around the newspapers “Hrvatski narod”, “Hrvatski list”, and “Hrvatsko jedinstvo”, had an increasing influence. Throughout regions populated by Croatian inhabitants, smaller Ustasha groups (swarms) were formed. Along with Ustasha members who were in the ranks of Macek’s Croatian Peasant Party, it is estimated that tens of thousands of supporters of the Ustasha Movement awaited the outbreak of war on Yugoslav soil.¹⁰⁹ The political framework of the Banovina of Croatia allowed, starting from 1939, for Ustasha swarms to be organized more extensively. Members of the Ustasha Movement held public exercises more frequently and were trained to handle bombs, explosives, and conduct sabotage. The first public appearance of illegal Ustasha military formations occurred on All Saints’ Day, November 1st 1940, when around 1,000 Ustasha visited the graves of Croatian politicians at the Mirogoj graveyard in Zagreb.¹¹⁰

By the decision of the authorities of the Banovina of Croatia, the Croatian Peasant Defense was legalized on January 13th 1940, as an “auxiliary formation of the Croatian Peasant Party.” It, so to speak, represented an “auxiliary police” with around 200,000 members. The president of the Croatian Peasant Party was its supreme commander; hence it was often referred to as Maček’s Defense. The day after it was legalized, it had a large manifestation and celebrated its “big day.” Although threats, intimidation, and even murders of prominent Serbs were part of the “activity description” of Macek’s armed formations, they made sure to maintain public order and peace on January 14th 1940, when Prince Regent Paul Karadordević and his wife Princess Olga visited Zagreb. Around 15,000 protectors demonstrated their strength, training, but also their armament, and even motorized units. Upon returning to Belgrade, Prince Regent Paul decorated its leaders, thereby elevating this armed formation. On the anniversary of the creation of the Banovina of Croatia, August 26th 1940, members of the Croatian Peasant Protection received their uniforms - brown with matching hats. It was clear that the

¹⁰⁹ A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 26–27.

¹¹⁰ M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 63.

“Mačekians” had become a serious military factor in the Yugoslav kingdom just before the imminent outbreak of war on its territory.¹¹¹

The creation of a separate federal unit further distanced Croats and Serbs. The sense of hostility toward the Yugoslav state, coupled with the spread of hatred toward Serbs and a suspicious view of the Yugoslav army, further complicated the situation both in the Banovina of Croatia and in the entire Kingdom of Yugoslavia. All this, along with the more than complex international relations and the war raging across Europe, made Yugoslavia a country better prepared for dissolution than for defending itself in the war approaching its borders. An increasingly weak Yugoslavia was increasingly encircled by an increasingly more powerful Germany. The German grip was felt more and more strongly, and the Yugoslav leadership sought to loosen it and get a little more air. A shadow of fear hung over the young Yugoslav state. Unrest seeped into every corner of this land, announcing a storm and a dark night that would engulf it in a few years. Under significant Croatian domination, Mostar also welcomed the last days of peace.

¹¹¹ В. Бурић Мишина, *Злочин је почео раније*, p. 138–139, 148, 151–155.

THE APRIL WAR AND THE PROCLAMATION OF THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA

Yugoslavia's decision to join the Tripartite Pact on March 25th 1941, so as to alleviate German pressure was not met with approval from the majority of the Yugoslav public, nor from a portion of the military and political elite. During the night of March 26th/27th, a coup was carried out, overthrowing the government which had signed the accession to the Tripartite Pact, led by Dragiša Cvetković. King Peter II Karadorđević was declared of age, and a new government was formed under General Dušan Simović. Great Britain was delighted, claiming that "Yugoslavia has found its soul," while Adolf Hitler felt betrayed. The ascension of the young king was celebrated as a joyous event throughout the country. Even the Bishop's Ordinariate in Mostar issued a circular on March 28th informing the Catholic parish offices of King Peter II's ascension to the throne, ordering services held in all churches "for the life, health, and happiness of His Majesty King Peter II."¹¹²

In the night following the coup, a meeting was held at the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht (Oberkommando der Wehrmacht), during which Hitler, analyzing the situation in Yugoslavia in light of the coup and German plans in the Balkans, decided to "ready all measures to break Yugoslavia militarily and as a state entity without waiting for possible declarations of loyalty from the new government." The attack

¹¹² Ivica Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja. Hrvati Hercegovine i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska. Od proklamacije NDH do talijanske reokupacije (travanj–rujan 1941.)*, Mostar 2012, p. 255.

was to be carried out “as soon as the appropriate means and troops are in order,” with military support expected from Italy and Hungary, and to some extent from Bulgaria. It was emphasized that it was particularly important that the strike against Yugoslavia “be carried out with relentless brutality and that the military disintegration be executed in a lightning fast operation.” Hitler specifically noted that “we should expect that the Croats will side with us during our attack” and that they would be given “appropriate political concessions (later autonomy).” As a result, Italy once again played the card of the formally appeased Ustasha emigration. On April 1st 1941, Ante Pavelić called from the Main Ustasha Headquarters for all members of the Ustasha Movement in the Kingdom of Italy “to return to active Ustasha service and under arms.” The next day, Pistoia was designated as the assembly camp from where they would head to the Italian-Yugoslav border. A total of 230 men gathered, forming the Penetration Unit. Three days later (April 4th), Ustasha radio broadcasts began via the so-called Radio Station of the Main Ustasha Headquarters.¹¹³

The Kingdom of Yugoslavia entered the war insufficiently prepared, with mobilization incomplete. After 1939, Mostar became an important military center, judging by the organization of the Yugoslav army. According to the peacetime distribution, the Headquarters of the Coastal Army District was stationed in Mostar, one of six army districts of the Yugoslav armed forces. Along with Mostar, the Army District headquarters were located in Novi Sad (First Army District), Sarajevo (Second Army District), Skopje (Third Army District), Zagreb (Fourth Army District), and Niš (Fifth Army District). Under the Coastal Army District, commanded by Army General Miloško Janković, were the Adriatic Divisional Area headquartered in Mostar and the fortress garrisons of

¹¹³ *Aprilski rat 1941.*, Zbornik dokumenata, II, Ed. Antun Miletić, Beograd 1987, Doc. Nr. 125, p. 342–345; *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima u Prvom i Drugom svetskom ratu*, Zbornik dokumenata, I, *Zločini Nezavisne Države Hrvatske 1941.–1945.*, Ed. Slavko Vukčević, Beograd 1993, Doc. Nr. 1, p. 1–5; Ferdo Čulinović, *Okupatorska podjela Jugoslavije*, Beograd 1970, p. 49–51; Velimir Terzić, *Slom Kraljevine Jugoslavije 1941. Uzroci i posledice poraza*, I, Beograd/Ljubljana/Titograd 1982, p. 469–482; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 27; Виктор Новак, *Магнум Crimen. Пола вијека клерикализма у Хрватској*, II, Beograd 2015, p. 18–19; B. V. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 35–36.

Boka Kotorska and Šibenik. The Adriatic Divisional Area, commanded by General Jovo Kukavičić from Trebinje, included the 11th Infantry Regiment in Benkovac, the 13th Infantry Regiment in Sinj, the 32nd Infantry Regiment in Mostar, the 54th Infantry Regiment in Knin, the 7th Artillery Regiment in Sinj, and the 23rd Independent Artillery Battalion. During the April War, the troops of the Coastal Divisional Area were commanded by Army General Živko Stanisavljević, the Chief of Staff was Brigadier General Đorđe Glišić, and the Assistant Commander was Divisional General Petar Aračić. The Adriatic Division was commanded by General Kukavičić, the Infantry Commander of the Adriatic Division was Brigadier General Linus Dekaneva, the Command of Šibenik was led by Divisional General Živojin Pavlović, and the Command of Boka Kotorska by Divisional General Vojislav Kuzmanović.¹¹⁴

According to the Yugoslav R-41 War Plan, the troops of the Coastal Army District were tasked with defending the coastal strip from Karlobag to Budva in cooperation with the Navy. The Adriatic Division's mission was to capture Zadar by surprise, the Čapljina Detachment was to close and defend the direction of the Neretva Valley, and the Trebinje Detachment was to close and defend the Dubrovnik-Trebinje-Bileća route. The war found the troops of the Coastal Army District in the midst of mobilization, which was ongoing with a rather poor response from the summoned military conscripts. This was influenced by the actions of the Ustasha organization, which was well infiltrated into the army and navy. Conscripts were reluctant to respond to the call, and livestock and vehicles were rarely provided to the military. Even some civilian authorities obstructed mobilization, such as the president of the municipality in Sinj, who did not submit the conscript lists because they were written in Cyrillic script.¹¹⁵

The attack by German forces on the Kingdom of Yugoslavia during the night of April 5th/6th 1941, and the devastating bombing aimed

¹¹⁴ Velimir Terzić, *Slom Kraljevine Jugoslavije 1941. Uzroci i posledice poraza*, II, Beograd/Ljubljana/Titograd 1982, p. 103–104, 710; Mile S. Bjelajac, *Generali i admirali Kraljevine Jugoslavije 1918–1941. Studija o vojnoj eliti i biografski leksikon*, Beograd 2004, p. 351–355.

¹¹⁵ V. Terzić, *Slom Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, II, p. 168, 266–267.

at causing heavy losses and damage, as well as inciting panic, was also felt in the Mostar region. German and Italian bombers struck Mostar and the surrounding area. On April 6th the airport in Jasenica near the city was bombed. Pavle Neimarević left a vivid testimony of this event: “The first rays of the sun on April 6th 1941, found me in the garden below the house. From that spot, I had a clear view of the the airport in Jasenica. In front of the hangars, the planes gleamed in the morning sun. Line ups and inspections were carried out every Sunday, which I watched with pleasure. Suddenly, between 6 and 7 o’clock, a large group of planes appeared from the southwest, flying not very high, right over the airport. A terrifying roar followed; explosions echoed one after another. I neither saw nor heard any planes drop a load because I wasn’t paying attention to that. After the explosions, columns of smoke appeared over the airport – from the hangars and the planes in front of them. That group of planes flew over the city from south to north, and then explosions were heard again and columns of smoke and dust appeared around the coal mines. Then part of the planes veered off and continued west, while some returned at a lower altitude over the city and began strafing the remaining planes on the ground with machine-gun fire.”¹¹⁶

The chronicle of the Herzegovinian Franciscans contain a similar account of the first bomber strike on Mostar: “At 7 o’clock, a loud hum of airplanes was heard, flying low over the church. Gunshots were heard. We ran out of the monastery and wondered if it was maneuvers or enemy planes. Just then, some women from Rodoč came crying: “Bombs are falling on Rodoč,” they said. It was clear to us all that this was a war attack. The people were agitated, left the church, and soon everyone dispersed. The planes flew over Mostar to the airport in Jasenica. Explosions were barely heard in Mostar. This lasted until noon. Three people who were wounded had already arrived at the hospital. They say there were three dead. At 1 o’clock, another

¹¹⁶ Pavle Neimarević, „Pred ratnim zadatkom“, in: *Hercegovina u NOB, april 1941.–jun 1942.*, II, Ed. Sveto Kovačević, Beograd 1986, p. 197–206; Pavle Neimarević, „Među neustrašivim kuririma“, in: *Zbornik sjećanja o ilegalnom NOP-u Mostara 1941–1945*, II, Mostar s.a.

alarm sounded. Then a third, a fourth... and the last one at 9:30 in the evening. Bombs fell on the airport; it was only one plane that dropped two bombs on the northern camp."¹¹⁷ Alarms echoed through Mostar in the following days, but there were no new air strikes on the city.

From April 4th to 11th, Ante Pavelić's voice could be heard from the aforementioned radio station every day, calling for desertion from the Yugoslav army, promising the imminent establishment of "an independent and sovereign Croatian state, from the Mura and Drava to the Drina, and from the Danube to the blue Adriatic Sea." On April 7, a group of Yugoslav soldiers of Croatian nationality in the Bjelovar area refused to fight against German forces. About 300 soldiers fled into the woods, then started firing from about 50 rifles, shouting: "Long live Croatia, we won't go to the front, we want to go back to Bjelovar." Most of them then disobeyed orders and went home. The group of Bjelovar rebels was led by Sergeant Ivan Čvek. The rebels were also supported by the head of the Bjelovar municipality, Julije Makanec, a close associate of the HSS and a reliable Ustasha member, so on April 8, the Yugoslav garrison in that city laid down its arms. Makanec controlled dozens of armed men, and Croatian flags were raised throughout the city. When the main group of rebels entered the city, Makanec gave a speech from the balcony of the town hall and proclaimed the "resurrection of the Independent State." Thus, Ustasha rule was established in Bjelovar two days before the formal proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia and just two days after the German attack on Yugoslavia.¹¹⁸

The chaos caused by the attack quickly undermined the defensive capabilities of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and turned it into a land of anarchy. In the first hours of the war, pro-Ustasha and anti-Yugoslav elements in Široki Brijeg, Ljubuški, Čapljina, Stolac, and Mostar retrieved hidden weapons or deserted from the ranks of the Royal Yu-

¹¹⁷ I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 29.

¹¹⁸ *Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 252–253; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 33–36; Bojan B. Dimitrijević, „Formiranje Ustaške vojnice 1941.“, *Istorija 20. veka*, Nr. 1/2013, p. 67–84; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 37–38.

goslav Army and began to undermine the Yugoslav defense, which was already inadequate, from within. They disarmed parts of the shattered army, looted military warehouses, Serbian shops, and craft workshops, cut telephone and telegraph lines, and intercepted trains on the Mostar-Dubrovnik railway, threatening or completely halting traffic. Although the number of pro-Ustasha Herzegovinians was small in the early days of the war, it gradually grew.¹¹⁹ Despite the Coastal Army District commander insisting that the Adriatic Division, in accordance with the war plan, strike at Zadar, the commander of the division itself, General Kukavičić, claimed that the attack could not be undertaken until April 11th. Due to the poor response of conscripts, the Division had only about 6,000 men under arms, so it was estimated that an attack on Zadar would not be effective. The collapse was most visible in the Šibenik Command, where general disarray began in the early days of the attack.¹²⁰

Such a collapse of Yugoslav authority in the parts of Herzegovina that were integrated into the Banovina of Croatia in 1939 was entirely to be expected, given the personnel policies pursued by the Banovina authorities in the previous almost two years. Consequently, people in leadership positions in the military and police structures in Mostar, were mostly very disloyal to the Yugoslav state, and denounced its authority as soon as the war started. Such individuals included the chief of the local police station Ivan Hočevan, the commander of the Aviation School of Marksmanship (Vazduhoplovna škola gadanja), Colonel Jakov Makijedo,¹²¹ the commander of the Bombardment School (Škola bombardovanja), Major Nikola Mikec, and the commander of the Sev-

¹¹⁹ Savo Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba '41.*, Beograd 1991, p. 9.

¹²⁰ V. Terzić, *Slom Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, II, p. 337, 353.

¹²¹ Jakov Makijedo (1891–1945), originally from Hvar. He was educated at the Air Force Officer School in Wiener Neustadt. As an officer, he first served in the Austro-Hungarian military and later in the Yugoslav army. The collapse of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia found him holding the rank of colonel and serving as the commander of the Air Force Gunnery School. After the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), he briefly worked in the Command of the Air Force, then transferred to the Leader's Office, where he worked from September 1941 until May 1944. He was appointed as the Consul General in Munich, but while serving in Bavaria, he contracted pneumonia and soon after passed away. (*Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 246–247).

enth Air Base, Lieutenant Colonel Jovan Basarić (who later died in the Allied bombing of Mostar on January 14th 1944). As early as April 9th a large group of pro-Ustasha Croats gathered in the courtyard of the County Prefecture (*Sresko načelstvo*) building and, under the leadership of Ivan Hočevan, took the Ustasha oath. The oath read: “I swear by Almighty God that I will be faithful to the leader of the Free State of Croatia, Dr. Ante Pavelić, and to the homeland, the Free State of Croatia, within its historical borders.” The next day, April 10th, leaflets were printed in the printing house of the Franciscan monastery in Mostar. These informing the public that the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) had been proclaimed in Zagreb, that a municipal Ustasha protection and police force (*ustaška zaštita i redarstvo*) had been formed, and calling for order, peace, and submission to the new Ustasha authorities.¹²²

From the Main Ustasha Headquarters, a proclamation was issued on April 10th that all Ustasha “throughout Croatian lands” must be ready to join the “penetration units” (*prodorni odjeli*) together with the “people’s Ustasha” (*pučke Ustasha*) when these units reach their areas. In regions where the penetrating units had not yet arrived, the Ustasha were to prepare the “people’s Ustasha” to seize an opportune moment and take over all offices, public buildings, warehouses, means of transport, railways, buses, telegrams, telephones and the like. Afterward, they were to take over local authority and establish complete order and security, set up guards, and thus secure all important points in those places. Additionally, their task was to disarm Yugoslav soldiers of Serbian nationality and military deserters, as well as those passing through those places individually or in groups.¹²³

¹²² *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупираној у Херцеговини 1941–1945*, I, Зборник докумената, Ed. Саво Скоко, Милан Граховац, Гацко/Београд 2011, doc. Nr. 1, p. 21–30; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 10.

¹²³ *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 5, p. 9–10; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 28; B. B. Dimitrijević, „Formiranje Ustaške vojnice 1941.“, p. 68–69.



Slavko Kvaternik
(Arhives of Yugoslavia)

The rapid collapse of the Yugoslav army, both due to the powerful enemy assault and the breakdown of its defensive forces, aided the Ustasha. A symbolic turning point was April 10. On that day, Pavelić called upon Croats to “welcome the brave soldiers of our friends and protectors everywhere and always with joy, enthusiasm, respect, and brotherly love.” One only needs to look at the film footage made when German forces entered Zagreb to see how many people responded to Pavelić’s call. Encouraged by the German units entering Zagreb around 4 PM, the chief organizer of the Ustasha in the country, Slavko Kvaternik, on behalf of the leader, announced to the Croatian people via a Zagreb radio station at around 5:45 PM that: “Divine Providence

and the will of our ally, as well as the arduous centuries-long struggle of the Croatian people and the great sacrifice of our Leader Dr. Ante Pavelić and the Ustasha movement in the country and abroad, have determined that today, before the day of resurrection of the son of God, our independent Croatian State is also resurrected.” He had the full support of Dr. Edmund Veessenmayer, the envoy of the German Foreign Minister, who arrived in Zagreb immediately after the March coup to connect with radical elements within the Croatian population. With this proclamation, Kvaternik, as the leader’s plenipotentiary, took over “all authority and command over all armed forces,” as well as all transportation (railways, roads, rivers, coasts, post, telegraph, telephone, and radio). Immediately after taking power in Zagreb, Kvaternik sent a telegram to Adolf Hitler thanking him, on behalf of the Croatian people, “for the protection that the German army provides to the Croatian national uprising” and requested the recognition of the Independent State of Croatia “by the Great German Reich,” emphasizing that “at the moment of liberation, for which we Croats fought and suffered so hard, our joy is mingled with acclamation for the arrival of your magnificent armed forces.” That same day, Kvaternik enacted two laws - the “Law on the Establishment of the Army and Navy of the Croatian State” (*Zakon o osnutku vojske i mornarice Države Hrvatske*), which stipulated that all military and naval conscripts of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia from any municipality “which today is a constituent part of the Croatian State” form the Croatian army and navy, and the “Law on the Oath of Allegiance to the Croatian State” (*Zakon o prisezi vjernosti Državi Hrvatskoj*), which required all state employees to swear loyalty to the new state. On the same day, the leader of the HSS and former Vice President of the Yugoslav Government, Vladko Maček, called on “the entire Croatian nation to submit to the new authority” and “all HSS supporters in administrative positions, all district councilors, municipal mayors, and councilors, etc., to wholeheartedly cooperate with the new government.”¹²⁴

¹²⁴ „Proglašena je Nezavisna Država Hrvatska“, „Proglas Dra Mačka“, *Hrvatski narod*, 10. IV 1941, p. 1; „Hrvatski narode!“, „Zakon o osnutku vojske i mornarice Države Hrvatske“, „Zakon o prisezi vjer-

Slavko Kvaternik played a key role during the first days of the NDH existing. On April 11th, as the “deputy leader,” he issued an order that, until Pavelić’s return, the administration of the Banovina should continue to perform its duties. On the same day, the Croatian Ustasha Supervisory Staff was formed, led by head Dr. Mirko Jerec. The task of the Staff was to manage the existing Ustasha combat units and create new Ustasha armed groups. However, the primary task of the Staff was constructing the Ustasha political, rather than military, organization, although these two things intertwined in the early days of the NDH existing. On April 12th, the Provisional Croatian State Leadership was formed, headed by Dr. Mile Budak and Mirko Puk, to govern the country until Pavelić took full control. By the decision of the leader’s plenipotentiary for internal affairs, Dr. Milovan Žanić, the Croatian Gendarmerie Command was established on April 13, tasked with maintaining order and peace.¹²⁵ Thus, by the time Pavelić returned to Zagreb, all significant actions aimed at fully taking over power had been carried out. The new state was born using German bombs and arrived on Nazi and Fascist tanks.

On the day the Independent State of Croatia was proclaimed, the Ustasha, led by the president of the local District Court, Ante Nikšić, took control of all major facilities in Karlovac, and the next day, German units arrived in the city. On the same day, a group of Ustasha led

nosti Državi Hrvatskoj“, *Narodne novine*, 11. IV 1941, p. 1–2; *Aprilski rat*, II, Doc. Nr. 188, p. 548–550; *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 2–4, p. 5–9; Nikola Živković, Petar Kačavenda, *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj. Izabrana dokumenta*, Beograd 1998, Doc. Nr. 1, p. 73; *Документи о ієноциду над Србима у Босни и Херцеговини од априла до августа 1941*, Ed. Здравко Антонић, Бања Лука/Српско Срајево 2001, doc. Nr. 1–2, p. 147–149; F. Čulinović, *Okupatorska podjela Jugoslavije*, p. 209–211; M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 89–95, 412–415; B. Krizman, *Ante Pavelić i Ustasha*, p. 377–396; Bogdan Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, Zagreb 1980, p. 11–12; V. Terzić, *Slom Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, II, p. 372–375; Fikreta Jelić-Butić, *Hrvatska seljačka stranka*, Zagreb 1983, p. 43; Mirko Peršen, *Ustaški logori*, Zagreb 1990, p. 23–24; Ладислаус Хори, Мартин Бросцат, *Усташка држава Хрватска 1941–1945.*, Београд 1994, p. 75–78; I. Perić, *Vladko Maček*, p. 245–248; С. Трифковић, *Усташе*, p. 109–113; Н. Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 56–61; Jozo Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji 1941–1945. Okupacija i kolaboracija*, Zagreb 2010, p. 59–60; B. Новак, *Magnum Crimen*, II, p. 24–26.

¹²⁵ „Imamo državno vodstvo!“, *Hrvatski narod*, 13. IV 1941, p. 1; „Proglaš o uspostavi Hrvatskog oružničkog zapovjedništva“, *Narodne novine*, 15. IV 1941, p. 1; F. Čulinović, *Okupatorska podjela Jugoslavije*, p. 211–216; F. Jelić-Butić, *Ustasha i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 74–76; B. Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, p. 12–13; M. Peršen, *Ustaški logori*, p. 24–25; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 149.

by Delko Bogdanić took power in Otočac, and a group led by Ustasha commissioner Jurica Frković did the same in Gospić. In the Dalmatia region, the Ustasha movement had an extensive network with 1,754 sworn members. In Omiš, the takeover was led by Josip Avdić, in Šibenik by the police chief/warden of public order Marijan Nikšić, and in Drniš by Fra Petar Berković. On April 14th, Ante Luetić established the Ustasha commission in Split, and on April 15th, the leader's plenipotentiary for Dalmatia with ministerial powers, Edo Bulat, arrived in the city. However, they soon had to withdraw from the city under the Marjan hill due to the Italian forces arriving. Following this pattern, in the following days, in many areas with a significant Croatian population, the Yugoslav authority collapsed, and the new Ustasha state authority was established.¹²⁶

The Croatian Peasant Guard played an important role in the early days of the NDH. Its commander, Zvonimir Kovačević, swore an oath to Kvaternik on the same day he proclaimed the new state. Its role was described as follows: "The Croatian Peasant and Civic Guard, ready and armed, was particularly active and ready to assist: it disarmed Serbian soldiers and captured Chetniks, guarded public buildings, roads, and bridges, as well as military and other warehouses, but also private property and the lives of Croats threatened by Serbian retaliation. It made utmost efforts to ensure that friendly and allied armies had as few problems and losses as possible in their honorable task of helping establish the Independent State of Croatia."¹²⁷ Its "great merits on the occasion of the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia" were repeatedly highlighted by military leader Kvaternik, especially the role of its commander Kovačević, who, as Kvaternik wrote, "truly contributed the most to the establishment of the NDH, because as the commander of Maček's guard, he made the entire guard available to me for maintaining order and peace, and I considered this his Ustasha merit." On April 21st, Slavko Kvaternik de-

¹²⁶ A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 36–37, 39; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 38–42.

¹²⁷ S. P. Ramet, „Vladko Maček i Hrvatska seljačka zaštita u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji“, p. 151.

cided to name the members of the Croatian Peasant and Civic Guard (Hrvatska građanska zaštita) as Croatian Protective Hunters (Hrvatski zaštitni lovci) in gratitude for their efforts “during the days of the creation of the Croatian state, the Croatian Peasant and Civic Guard did everything to realize the aspirations of the Croatian people and to maintain order at a dignified level.” However, only a few days later, this right was reserved solely for the Croatian Civic Guard of the City of Zagreb. Nevertheless, some Ustasha were certainly dissatisfied with giving privileged status to the former “Mačekians.”¹²⁸

The proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia reflected on the part of the Yugoslav territory controlled by the troops of the Coastal Army District. Most of the Croatian personnel left their units and went home. Simultaneously, the civilian authorities ceased cooperation with the Yugoslav military authorities and recognized the newly proclaimed state. In such circumstances, the Adriatic Division was ordered to take positions from which it could undertake artillery actions against Zadar. However, the commanders of the 12th Supplementary Regiment and the 83rd Infantry Regiment (Lieutenant Colonels Franjo Kubeš and Arnold Redlstein) in Drniš handed over their units to the Ustasha. By the evening of April 11, the collapse had affected all other units of the Coastal Army District troops, and the Ustasha took control of almost all places except Mostar. The commander of the Čapljina detachment disbanded his unit and handed over their weapons to the Ustasha who took control of the communication lines Mostar-Čapljina-Trebinje.¹²⁹

As soon as the radio in Zagreb announced the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia, a group of Croatian officers, led by

¹²⁸ Because of all this, and despite their merits, the Croatian authorities disbanded and disarmed the units of the Croatian Protective Guards, which is, the Croatian Peasant Guard and the Croatian Civil Guard, at the beginning of June 1941. Some of their members merged into Ustasha formations, marking the definitive end of Maček's armed party formation, which had significant importance in the second half of the 1930s and especially at the beginning of World War II in the Yugoslav region („Zahvala Poglavnika Führeru i Duceu na priznanju Nezavisne Države Hrvatske“, *Hrvatski narod*, 17. IV 1941, p. 2; „Hrvatski zaštitni lovci“, *Sarajevski list*, 22. IV 1941, p. 2; M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 106–111; Nikica Barić, *Ustroj Kopnene vojske Domobranstva Nezavisne Države Hrvatske 1941.–1945.*, Zagreb 2003, p. 96–98).

¹²⁹ V. Terzić, *Slom Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, II, p. 377–378, 393.

Colonel Jakov Makijedo and Major Nikola Mikec, attempted to take control of the airport near Mostar. Colonel Makijedo ordered the reserve troops, composed of older military conscripts, to go home because the war was over. Major Mikec disarmed an aviation unit from the Coastal Military Area. The collapse of the artillery forces had a devastating effect on the remaining army, which was already disintegrating. The pro-Ustasha segment of the soldiers in the northern camp, along with like-minded civilians, took complete control of the northern part of Mostar. To take control of the entire city, Ustasha forces from Široki Brijeg rushed to assist them, disarming the police station in the town and taking over all important facilities during the night of April 10th/11th. They were joined by the Ustasha from Ljubuški, and together they tried to take control of all of Mostar. However, after a brief clash with the Yugoslav army, they were driven out of the city center. Consequently, the rebellion was quickly suppressed, and the organizers managed to escape.¹³⁰

On the night of April 10th/11th, the commander of the Military District in Mostar, Colonel Mirko Gregorić, requested from Army General Milojko Janković that he hand over military authority to him as a representative of the newly created state. General Janković refused but did not take any action against Colonel Gregorić. However, there was little he could do. The next day, April 11th, after mass in front of the Catholic church, police chief Ivan Hočevar, together with the former deputy district chief Petar Budak, distributed weapons to the citizens present, intending to create armed guards to take over civil authority. Hočevar and Budak's actions were joined by some Yugoslav army officers, such as the aforementioned Colonel Gregorić, Mirko Pavlović, and Josip Berwald.¹³¹ Although the Yugoslav army (the Headquarters

¹³⁰ A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 41.

¹³¹ Mirko Gregorić (1897–1945), originally from Maja near Glina. He was educated at the Austro-Hungarian Cadet School and the Yugoslav Higher Military Academy. He entered the war with the rank of infantry colonel, serving as the commander of the Mostar Military District. He joined the Croatian army and remained in Mostar until December 1941. Until July 1942, he worked in the Instruction Department of the General Staff, after which he was appointed commander of the Second Mountain Brigade. From December 1942 to August 1943, he commanded the Second Infantry Division, and from

of the Coastal Military Area and the Command of the Military District) was still present in Mostar, armed men with Ustasha insignia appeared on the streets. Therefore, it is not surprising that there were fights in the city between armed Ustasha, members of Maček's Croatian Civic, and Croatian military deserters against the remaining Yugoslav army members. However, the initial Ustasha rebellion was quickly suppressed, as a battalion of troops from Trebinje came to the aid of the forces in Mostar, but the fighting continued the next day and lasted until the arrival of Italian forces. Gunfire was still heard in the city on the morning of April 12th and that day Mostar experienced the heaviest bombing since the beginning of the war. This led to the flight of part of the population from the city and the hiding of the remaining citizens in cellars, houses, and other places deemed safe. Furthermore, the fighting between armed Ustasha groups and the Yugoslav army continued, spreading to the outskirts of the city – in the neighborhoods of Ilići and Cim. General Janković reported to the Supreme Command about the constant shooting and fighting with the Ustasha.¹³²

On April 12th, thanks to Križan Ostojić, an Ustasha radio station was brought to Mostar. That day, on the road from Čitluk to Mostar, Ostojić encountered the peasant Mirko Božić, who was traveling in the opposite direction with two horses, goods, and a rifle on his back. When Božić ignored Ostojić's demand to hand over the rifle, Ostojić killed him. In response to a complaint by Božić's widow Manda, submitted to the authorities of the newly established Croatian state, the

October 1943 to August 1944, the Third Mountain Brigade. In February 1944, he was promoted to the rank of general. During August and September 1944, he headed the Central School of the Armed Forces, and then the Command of the City of Zagreb. From December 1944, he commanded the Second Croatian Division. In February 1945, he was placed at the disposal of the Ministry of Armed Forces. In the days of the state collapsing, he fell into the hands of the new Yugoslav authorities, and the Supreme Court of the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia sentenced him to death on September 19th 1945. He was executed in Belgrade five days later. (*Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 138).

¹³² AJ, fond Državna komisija za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača (110), f. 477, Zapisnik sastavljen 31 jula 1946 go. po delegatu Zem. komisije za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača u Mostaru; *Aprilski rat*, II, Doc. Nr. 263, p. 714–715; Drago Karlo Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, in: *Hercegovina u NOB, april 1941.–jun 1942.*, II, Ed. Sveto Kovačević, Beograd 1986, p. 109–122; Milan Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida i suđenje Andriji Artukoviću 1986. godine*, I, Beograd 1988, p. 616; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 29–30.

court replied that the accused Križan Ostojić, known as Kalaba, was acquitted of the charges “because he killed the deceased while performing his duty as a sworn Ustasha, namely as a representative of the authorities, who in the meantime were performing police duties.” Ostojić’s cold-blooded murder of Božić just two days after the proclamation of the NDH, in the days when the authority of the Yugoslav state was collapsing and the Croatian one had not yet been established, and the court’s response just a few weeks later, best illustrated the nature of the state in question.¹³³ Such incidents kept repeating, so on April 13, members of the Croatian Peasant Guard at the Mostar airport arrested five Serbs, took them to the Mostarsko Blato, and killed them there. The next day, April 14, the families of the airport workers tried to leave the airport complex, exposed to several days of bombardment, so they boarded trucks and headed towards Nevesinje. At a place called Bakračuša, an explosive device was thrown into one of the trucks. At that time, Tatomir Palavestra, Ubavko Bokić, Ljubomir Vujović, and another airport worker, a Croatian from Banja Luka, were killed.¹³⁴

Ante Pavelić, along with his entourage, arrived in Zagreb from Karlovac on April 15th and assumed supreme authority in the newly formed state in St. Mark’s Square. He formed its first government the next day, April 16th, after having consulted German representatives. Pavelić personally presided over the first government of the NDH and also headed the foreign affairs ministry. He appointed Dr. Osman Kulenović from Bihać as Vice President of the Government and Slavko Kvaternik from Zagreb as the commander of the army and minister of Croatian Home Guard (Hrvatsko domobranstvo) – land, air, and naval forces and weaponry. Other members of the government were: Dr. Mirko Puk from Glina (Minister of Justice), Dr. Andrija Artuković from Ljubuški (Minister of the Interior), Dr. Ivan Petrić from Šolta (Minister of Health), Dr. Lovro Sušić from Mrkopalj (Minister of National Economy), Dr. Mile Budak

¹³³ M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 616; Божидар Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини у Друјом свјетском рају*, II, Требиње 2003, p. 247.

¹³⁴ Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, II, doc. Nr. 224, p. 693–699; D. K. Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, p. 111; M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 617; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 10–11.

from Sveti Rok (Minister of Worship and Education), engineer Ivica Frković from Lički Novi (Minister of Forests and Mines), and Dr. Jozo Dumanžić from Klobuk near Ljubuški (Minister of Association – minister udružbe). Dr. Milovan Žanić from Senj was appointed as the President of the Legislative Commission (predsednik Zakonodavnog povjereništva). This government lasted just over two months, as a new one with more ministers was formed on July 1st 1941.¹³⁵

The Kingdom of Yugoslavia and its armed forces were disappearing day by day under simultaneous external and internal attacks. The Coastal Army District disintegrated, as did its units. On April 16th, around 5 PM, an armistice was signed between the conflicting parties in Mostar, and units of the Yugoslav army began to withdraw from the city on the Neretva. That same day around 8:30 PM, Italian motorized forces of the Littorio Division from the Autotransport Army Corps entered Mostar. Around midnight, German forces from the 14th Panzer Division, coming from Sarajevo, also arrived in the city.¹³⁶ The day before the Yugoslav army formally laid down its arms and ceased all resistance (effectively capitulated), German and Italian troops entered Mostar, ending Yugoslav authority in the city on the Neretva after more than 21 years. The occupiers were greeted joyfully by part of the local population (mostly Croats), with hand-waving and flower-throwing. There was no need to hide the joy felt over the collapse of the “hated” Yugoslav state on the banks of the Neretva in those days.

¹³⁵ N. Živković, P. Kačavenda, *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*, Doc. Nr. 4, p. 76–77; *Документи о ієноциду наг Србима у Босни и Херцєговини*, doc. Nr. 6, p. 151–152; „Одредба о именованју Прве Хрватске Државне Владе“, *Narodne novine*, 17. IV 1941, p. 1; „Суверен државе Хрватске і прва хрватска државна Влада положили присегу“, *Hrvatska narod*, 18. IV 1941, p. 1; F. Jelić-Butić, *Ustasha i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 81–82; M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 103; M. Peršen, *Ustaški logori*, p. 27–28; Л. Хори, М. Бросцат, *Усташка гржава Хрватска*, p. 117–119; Enver Redžić, *Bosna i Hercegovina u Drugom svjetskom ratu*, Sarajevo 1998, p. 117–118; Ivan Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo u Drugom svjetskom ratu*, Zagreb 1992, p. 53–54; Т. Затецало, *Јаговно*, I, p. 41; В. Новак, *Magnum Crimen*, II, p. 32–34. During the existence of the Independent State of Croatia, a total of seven governments were formed. Ante Pavelić led the first five (April 16th 1941 – February 1st 1944), while Dr. Nikola Mandić headed the remaining two (February 1st 1944–May 1945). (Ivan Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo u Drugom svjetskom ratu*, II, Zagreb 1994, p. 235–240).

¹³⁶ V. Terzić, *Slom Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, II, p. 456; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 14; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 35.

Of the two states whose troops participated in the attack on Yugoslavia, the Italian armed forces were the first to reach Mostar. Italy assigned its Second Army to the war against the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the occupation of part of its territory. The Second army included the V, VI, and XI Army Corps. It was supposed to break through the Yugoslav front and then continue its advance into the depths of Yugoslav territory.¹³⁷ The three army corps were to divide responsibilities in the occupied Yugoslav territory, with the V Army Corps (with two divisions – Lombardia and Bergamo) first stationed in Crikvenica, then in Rijeka; the VI Army Corps (with the Sassari and Assietta divisions) first in Čabar, then in Šibenik; and the XI Army Corps (with the Re, Isonzo, and Ravenna divisions) first in Ribnica, then in Ljubljana. Additionally, the Fast Army Corps (Corpo d'armata celere) with three fast divisions was stationed first in Bihać, and the Autotransport Army Corps (with the Pasubio, Torino, and Littorio divisions) first in Split. However, the area of Herzegovina was placed under the jurisdiction of the Higher Command of the Armed Forces of Albania, i.e., the Italian troops in that country. Thus, this area was to be under the jurisdiction of the XVII Army Corps, headquartered in Cetinje. However, it was determined that, temporarily, the Mostar-Dubrovnik area would be occupied by the Autotransport Corps. Thus, the Littorio Armored Division was deployed to Mostar and the Torino Motorized Division to Dubrovnik.¹³⁸ The morning after the entry into Mostar, "Italian soldiers appeared everywhere on the streets and intersections of the city." After the Italian army arrived in Mostar, "orders to respect the occupier's authority were issued, threats in case of non-compliance were intensified, movement was restricted, a curfew was imposed, and the ceremony of raising and lowering the occupier's flag in front of their command was

¹³⁷ In addition to the Second Army, the Italian Ninth Army was also involved in the war against the Yugoslavia, operating from the territory of Albania toward Montenegro, Metohija, and Macedonia.

¹³⁸ *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu naroda Jugoslavije*, tom XIII, knjiga 1, *Dokumenti Kraljevine Italije 1941.*, Beograd 1969, Doc. Nr. 2, 4, p. 11–14, 17–18; Momčilo M. Radović, *Ustanak u Sjevernoj Hercegovini 1941–1942*, Beograd 1978. (unpublished M.A. Thesis), p. 14; V. Terzić, *Slom Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, II, p. 80–84; Dragan S. Nenezić, *Jugoslovenske oblasti pod Italijom 1941–1943.*, Beograd 1999, p. 43–55.

introduced, with an obligatory salute from the citizens present during the playing of the music accompanying this ceremonial act.” As noted by Pavle Neimarević, “a series of other measures were also introduced that restricted freedom, work, and movement.”¹³⁹ Thus, the first morning under occupation dawned on April 17th.

The day after Italian forces entered Mostar, the Ustasha descended into the city from the surrounding hills. Authority in Mostar was assumed by Ivan Hočevar, a former officer and police station chief. On April 17th, following the order of Interior Minister Andrija Artuković, Hočevar was appointed as the Ustasha commissioner of the city on the Neretva.¹⁴⁰ Shortly after the proclamation of the NDH and the takeover of power in Mostar, the Ustasha headquarters was formed, headed by Stanko Šarac as the chief. Members of the headquarters included Mostar police chief Ivan Hočevar, lawyer Stjepan Barbarić, judge Đuro Spužević, professor from Imotski Petar Vrdoljak, director of the Crafts School Mato Buntić, surveyor from Duvno Mirko Udiljak, merchant Šimun Buntić, Križan Ostojić, Napredak cooperative official Ante Zličarić, director of the Teacher Training School Jozo Babić, professor Slavko Zovko, and merchant Ahmet Badžak. Closely associated with the headquarters were, among others, professor of the Franciscan Gymnasium in Široki Brijeg fra Radoslav Glavaš, journalist Omer Sefić, physician Dr. Drago Marušić, lawyer Dr. Božo Nikolić, and others.¹⁴¹

Shortly after entering the city, the Ustasha killed Đuro Borozan in front of his house. The murder of the head of the Borozan family foreshadowed the fate awaiting the entire Serbian population in the Mostar area, especially the Borozan family. The next day, Đuro’s fourteen-year-old son Drago was killed. However, the suffering of this large Serbian family did not end there. Đuro’s sixteen-year-old son, and Dra-

¹³⁹ P. Neimarević, „Pred ratnim zadatkom“, p. 202.

¹⁴⁰ M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 617.

¹⁴¹ *Документи о іеноциду над Србима у Босни и Херцејовини*, p. 57; *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајтора у Херцејовини*, I, doc. Nr. 2, p. 31–60; Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 265–266.

go's brother, Lazo, an apprentice tinsmith, were killed on May 3rd only ten days after the establishment of Ustasha rule. Đuro Borozan's widow Sava, after burying her husband and two sons within a few days, was sent to the Caprag camp near Sisak. She was accompanied by her two other sons, Anđelko and Danilo. Both were later transferred to the Jasenovac camp. According to data from the Ustasha surveillance service (Ustaška nadzorna služba), Danilo Borozan was killed on December 22nd, and Anđelko Borozan on December 27th 1941. Of Đuro Borozan's six sons, only two survived the Ustasha terror.¹⁴² The suffering of Đuro Borozan and his sons in the early days of Ustasha rule represents a paradigm of Serbian suffering over the nearly four years the Independent State of Croatia ruled over the Mostar area and its surroundings. However, the unresolved issue of demarcation meant that, apart from the Ustasha headquarters, no other organs of the new state's authority were formed, and in the first weeks after being conquered, Mostar remained under Italian occupation.

¹⁴² HDA, OUP, b. 27, 11159/42; Mensur Seferović, *Mostarski kolopleti*, Mostar 1985, p. 79–80, 83; D. K. Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, p. 111; M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 617; Мeнcyp Ceфepовић, „Иcтpeбљeњe мocтapcкиx Бopozанa“, *Бopбa*, 8. II 1990, p. 13; Drago Karlo Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, in: *Knjiga o Mostaru*, Ed. Borivoje Pištalo, Beograd 2006, p. 188–204; Б. Н. Чyчкoвић, *Злoчини у Хepцeгoвини*, II, p. 205–206, 248.

ESTABLISHING THE RULE OF THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA IN MOSTAR

When it became clear that the final collapse of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was imminent, Adolf Hitler approved the Temporary Guidelines for the Division of Yugoslavia (Vorläufige Richtlinien für die Aufteilung Jugoslawiens) on April 12th. These temporary guidelines differed significantly from the original General Plan for the Future Organization of Administration in the Yugoslav Territory, which was likely drafted on the day of the attack on April 6. This division was somewhat simpler. Former parts of Austria were to be given to Germany, former parts of Hungary to Hungary, the coast to Italy, Macedonia to Bulgaria, Old Serbia would be under German military administration, and Croatia would become an “autonomous state, predictably under Hungarian influence.” However, since the Hungarian regent Miklós Horthy refused to agree to the annexation of Croatia, Germany turned to a solution where it would be an independent state “within the framework of the new European order.” A decision was made to create a demarcation line dividing the former Yugoslav territory into German and Italian spheres of influence. The German-Italian demarcation line started from the former Yugoslav-Italian border, then went north from Ljubljana to the Litija mine towards Samobor, Glina, Bosanski Novi, Sanski Most, north of Bugojno, south of Sarajevo, and further to Priboj, Novi Pazar, east of Priština, across the Sharr Mountains, east of Tetovo, towards Lake Ohrid and Lake Prespa. North of this line would be German, and south

Italian sphere of interest. Within these two spheres were four occupation zones: the German, the Italian, the Hungarian, and the Bulgarian. According to the Temporary Guidelines, Lower Styria and Carniola would be occupied by German troops, Prekmurje would belong to Hungary, Banat would be under temporary German “protection,” Southern Serbia would belong to Bulgaria, and Old Serbia would be under German military administration. The “political organization” of Bosnia and Herzegovina was left to Italy. For Croatia, it was envisaged that it would be “an independent state within national borders,” that the Reich would not interfere in its internal affairs but would protect its interests in that area. Therefore, Edmund Glaise von Horstenau was appointed as the special representative of the German Supreme Command of the Armed Forces in Zagreb. This former Austro-Hungarian officer arrived in the Croatian capital on April 14th.¹⁴³

In the days following Yugoslavia being “erased from the map”, important steps were taken towards the fragmentation of its territory. Several days after the capitulation of its armed forces (April 21st and 22nd), a conference of the foreign ministers of Germany and Italy (Joaquim von Ribbentrop and Count Galeazzo Ciano) was held in the Vienna “Imperial” Hotel, where guidelines were adopted for the division of the occupied territory of Yugoslavia. The former Yugoslav state was completely fragmented. Germany annexed Carinthia, Lower Styria, and Upper Carniola, Italy annexed the areas around Ljubljana and Rijeka, a significant part of Dalmatia, and the Bay of Kotor, Hungary annexed Bačka, Baranja, Međimurje, and Prekmurje, while Bulgaria occupied most of Macedonia and parts of Southern and Eastern Serbia. As early as July 1941, these parts were annexed to the territory of the Bulgarian state. Western Macedonia, Metohija, parts of Kosovo, and Montenegro were annexed to Greater Albania under Italian dom-

¹⁴³ *Aprilski rat*, II, Doc. Nr. 213, 301, p. 606–608, 783–785; F. Čulinović, *Okupatorska podjela Jugoslavije*, p. 52–56; M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 127; Vojmir Kljaković, „Bosna i Hercegovina u njemačko-talijanskim dogovorima do ustanka 1941. godine“, in: *1941. u istoriji naroda Bosne i Hercegovine*, (Ed. Enver Redžić), Sarajevo 1973, p. 50–62; M. Peršen, *Ustaški logori*, p. 12–13, 25–26; Enver Redžić, *Bosna i Hercegovina 1941–1945. u njemačkim i italijanskim dokumentima*, Sarajevo 1996, p. 17; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 27.

ination, while Central Serbia and Banat were occupied by Germany, and Montenegro by Italy.¹⁴⁴ However, the largest part of the territory formerly making up Yugoslavia was turned into the Independent State of Croatia (NDH). Nevertheless, to determine the exact dimensions of the Italian and Croatian territories that came to be from the ruins of Yugoslavia, Rome and Zagreb had to negotiate directly.

In the first days of the existence of the Independent State of Croatia, individual Ustasha, without a detailed plan of organization for the Ustasha regime, took over political, administrative, and military authority in municipalities, districts, and even some provinces. In May of 1941, expanding the organized network of the Ustasha movement became the duty of Blaž Lorković, an assistant for organizational affairs in the Main Ustasha Headquarters. The Ustasha authorities created a whole network of provisional commissioners (*privremeni povjerenici*) who were supposed to show where the Independent State of Croatia aimed to extend its authority (Eastern Slavonia and Srem, Bjelovar, Varaždin, Lika, Dalmatia). Jure Francetić¹⁴⁵ was appointed as the com-

¹⁴⁴ F. Čulinović, *Okupatorska podjela Jugoslavije*, p. 60–73, 90; M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 115–117; M. Peršen, *Ustaški logori*, p. 13; D. S. Nenezić, *Jugoslovenske oblasti pod Italijom*, p. 56–65; E. Redžić, *Bosna i Hercegovina u Drugom svjetskom ratu*, p. 118; С. Трифковић, *Усташае*, p. 137–139.

¹⁴⁵ Jure Francetić (1912–1942), originally from Prozor near Otočac. After finishing high school in Križevci, he enrolled in the Faculty of Law in Zagreb. He was very active in nationalist youth circles, which led to his arrest and imprisonment. He fled the country in March of 1933, first to Austria and then to Italy. From 1934 to 1936, he stayed in Hungary, and upon returning to Italy, he was interned on one of the islands, where he remained until the end of 1937, when he returned to Yugoslavia. His attempt to continue his law studies was interrupted by a call to serve in the military in Niš. Since he was very active in spreading Ustasha propaganda in Zagreb, he was arrested, and in early 1941, he left for Germany. After the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), he returned to Zagreb, and at the end of April, Pavelić appointed him as the commissioner for Bosnia and Herzegovina. In September 1941, he took command of the Sarajevo Ustasha camp, from which he formed the Black Legion (*Crna legija*). As the leader of this unit, he fought on the Drina, near Kupres, and Bugojno. He and his armed formation were responsible for a series of mass atrocities against the Serbian population. In the summer of 1942, he was appointed commander of the active standing brigades of the Ustasha military (*stajaći djelatni zdrugevi Ustaške vojnice*). Later that year, while en route to a new assignment, his plane malfunctioned and made an emergency landing near the village of Močila, in the vicinity of Slunj. There, he fell into the hands of members of the Communist resistance movement, who evidently knew very well who he was. Severely wounded, he was transferred to Slunj, where he died on December 27th 1942. He was posthumously declared a knight and a general (*krilnik*) of the Ustasha military. (*Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 117–118).

missioner (povjerenik) for all of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and he was superior to specific commissioners appointed by the Leader for individual regions and places: Dr. Dragutin Kamber for Doboj, native of Bileća Hakija Hadžić for Tuzla, Dr. Viktor Gutić for Banja Luka, Nikola Jurišić for Travnik, Dragan Urumović for Livno, Reverend Božidar Bralo for Sarajevo, Dr. Pavao Canki for Mostar, and Professor Alija Šuljak, a member of the Auxiliary Corps in the Main Ustasha Headquarters, for Eastern Herzegovina. Their task was to firmly connect Bosnia and Herzegovina with the state center. They were supposed to manage the organization of Ustasha camps (logori), encampments (tabori), and assemblies (zbirovi) on the ground, and based on their proposal, camp, encampment, and assembly leaders were selected. Their work lasted until the complete formation of large parishes when they were replaced by headquarters. Accordingly, the entire Ustasha action in the area of Mostar and its surroundings in the first weeks of the existence of the Independent State of Croatia was led by Dr. Pavao Canki, a former judge and lawyer from Čapljina.¹⁴⁶ Canki's deputy in Mostar was the pre-war Ustasha Stjepan Barbarić.¹⁴⁷

Based on the composition of the first Government of the Independent State of Croatia alone, it was already clear that this state considered Bosnia and Herzegovina as its integral part, although this was

¹⁴⁶ Pavao Canki (1892–1945), originally from Nin near Zadar. He was educated in Zadar and earned both his degree and doctorate from the Faculty of Law in Zagreb. He worked as a judge at the District Court in Mostar until 1922, after which he was a lawyer in Čapljina (1922–1941). Politically active in the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS), he was expelled in 1939 due to his close ties with the Ustasha movement and his disagreement with the Cvetković-Maček Agreement. After the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia, he served as the Ustasha commissioner in Mostar, and then from June 1941 to October 1943, as State Secretary in the Ministry of Peasant Economy (Ministarstvo seljačkog gospodarstva). From January to June 1943, he was the government's plenipotentiary in Sarajevo. He was appointed Minister of Justice and Religious Affairs (Ministar pravosuđa i bogoštovlja) in the NDH government on October 11th 1943, and held that position until the state's collapse. He was among the ministers who opposed the withdrawal and abandonment of state territory. Nevertheless, he left Zagreb on May 6th 1945, and fled to Austria. The British arrested him on May 17th in Tamsweg and handed him over to Yugoslav authorities in Rosenbach the next day. The Military Court of the Yugoslav Second Army in Zagreb sentenced him to death on June 6th 1945. The sentence was carried out the following day. (Antun Miletić, *Koncentracioni logor Jasenovac 1941–1945.*, *Dokumenta*, III, Beograd/Jasenovac 1987, Doc. Nr. 228, p. 519–521; *Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 64–65).

¹⁴⁷ M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 159.

not established in the Temporary Guidelines of April 12th. In order to demonstrate its claims to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Department was sent from Zagreb to Sarajevo on April 22nd, formed two days earlier (April 20th), with the aim of establishing military and police authority of the Independent State of Croatia in that area. The department consisted of one Home Guard battalion with three companies from Zagreb, Bjelovar, and Sisak, a battalion of protective hunters (under the command of Zvonimir Kovačević), a company of returning Ustasha (led by Jure Francetić), a company of guards, and a weapon squad. This temporary military formation was commanded by Colonel Matija Čanić. In order to consolidate the authority, Petar Petković was sent to Sarajevo as the “envoy of the State of Croatia for the area of Bosnia and Herzegovina public security and order.”¹⁴⁸ A symbol of Croatian authority having been established in Bosnia and Herzegovina was the arrival in Sarajevo of the Minister of Croatian Home Guard, field marshal Slavko Kvaternik¹⁴⁹ (as the commander of the armed forces), accompanied by the German representative in Zagreb, Glaise von Horstenau, on April 24th.¹⁵⁰

Despite all these efforts, nowhere in Hercegovina was full control by the Independent State of Croatia possible before the signing of the Rome Agreements with the Kingdom of Italy had been signed on May 18th 1941. These included the Treaty on Defining the Borders between the Kingdom of Italy and the Kingdom of Croatia (*Ugovor o odredivanju granica između Kraljevine Italije i Kraljevine Hrvatske*), the Agreement on Military Matters Relating to the Adriatic Coastal Area (*Sporazum o pitanjima vojničkog značaja koja se odnose na jad-*

¹⁴⁸ Rafael Brčić, „Okupacioni sistemi u Bosni i Hercegovini 1941. godine“, *Vojnoistorijski glasnik*, Nr. 1/1970, p. 19–87; F. Jelić-Butić, *Ustasha i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 99–100; Lj. Boban, *Hrvatske granice*, p. 45–46; E. Redžić, *Bosna i Hercegovina u Drugom svjetskom ratu*, p. 120; T. Aralica, V. Aralica, *Hrvatski ratnici kroz stoljeća*, III, *Oružane snage NDH*, p. 13.

¹⁴⁹ According to the Ustasha military handbook, marshal (vojskovođa) is one of the highest ranks in its organization. The highest ranks are war leader (ratovođa), supreme commander (nadvojskovođa), and general (vojskovođa). (A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 21–22).

¹⁵⁰ „Vojskovođa Kvaternik stigao u Sarajevo“, *Sarajevski hrvatski list*, 26. IV 1941, p. 1; „Hrvatska vojska na putu u Bosnu stigla je u Sarajevo“, *Hrvatski narod*, 29. IV 1941, p. 5–6; E. Redžić, *Bosna i Hercegovina 1941–1945.*, p. 20–21.

ransko primorsko područje), and the Treaty on Guarantees and Cooperation between Italy and Croatia (Ugovor o jamstvu i suradnji Italije i Hrvatske). These agreements were signed by Benito Mussolini and Ante Pavelić. The Treaty on the Definition of Borders ceded to Italy the districts of Čabar, Kastav, part of the Delnice district, and the islands of Krk and Rab. In Dalmatia, Italy received Split, Šibenik, Trogir, Benkovac, and all Dalmatian islands except Brač and Hvar. Additionally, Italy acquired the entire Bay of Kotor with part of southern Konavle. The Agreement on Military Matters stipulated that Croatia would not establish military bases in the wider coastal area that it controlled. This demilitarized zone included Gorski Kotar, the Croatian Littoral, Lika, parts of Dalmatia that belonged to Croatia, and Herzegovina. Moreover, Croatia agreed not to have a navy stationed along the part of the Adriatic coast that belonged to it, only a maritime police service. The Treaty on Guarantees and Cooperation committed Italy to guarantee the independence and territorial integrity of the Independent State of Croatia for the next 25 years.¹⁵¹

The Rome Agreements confirmed that the majority of the former Yugoslav coastal area would be annexed by Italy. This area covered 22,931 square kilometers and had about 1,550,000 inhabitants living in it. Administratively, this area was divided into the Ljubljana Province, the Rijeka Province, and the Governorship of Dalmatia, which included the provinces of Zadar, Split, and Kotor. This area was considered the first zone of Italian presence in the former Yugoslavia, covering Nin, Benkovac, Kistanje, Biograd na Moru, Vodice, Šibenik, Skradin, Trogir, and Split. The second zone stretched from the borders of the annexed area to a line that began at the Montenegrin-Croatian border and ex-

¹⁵¹ *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o NOR-u*, XIII-1, Doc. Nr. 19–20, p. 60–64; Bogdan Krizman, „Razgraničenje ustaške države“, *Jugoslavenski historijski časopis*, Nr. 1–2/1971, p. 107–144; B. Krizman, *Ante Pavelić i Ustaša*, p. 439–474; B. Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, p. 36–37; M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 119–124, 426–429; Lj. Boban, *Hrvatske granice*, p. 47–48; С. Трифковић, *Усташае*, p. 145–149; Nada Kisić Kolanović, *NDH i Italija. Političke veze i diplomatski odnosi*, Zagreb 2001, p. 98–108; H. Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 72; J. Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji*, p. 267–271; Nikica Barić, *Ustaša na Jadranu. Uprava Nezavisne Države Hrvatske u jadranskoj Hrvatskoj nakon kapitulacije Kraljevine Italije*, Zagreb 2012, p. 37–63; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 62–64.

tended through Gacko, Nevesinje, Konjic, Livno, Bosansko Grahovo, Donji Lapac, Udbina, Korenica, and Slunj up to the Italian-Croatian border between Vrbovsko and Karlovac. This zone included Delnice, Ogulin, Senj, Otočac, Karlobag, Gospić, Gračac, Bosansko Grahovo, Knin, Drniš, Sinj, Livno, Duvno, Omiš, Makarska, Posušje, Mostar, Metković, Nevesinje, Trebinje, and Dubrovnik. Although this territory formally belonged to the NDH, it did not have the right to station military units or build military facilities there, making the second zone demilitarized. The third zone covered the area from the aforementioned Delnice-Gacko line to the German-Italian demarcation line that divided the NDH into two parts. This zone included Karlovac, Vojnić, Slunj, Bihać, Bosanska Krupa, Korenica, Sanski Most, Bosanski Petrovac, Ključ, Glamoč, Bugojno, Prozor, Konjic, Čajniče, Foča, Gacko, and Bileća.¹⁵²

Based on the German-Italian agreement in Vienna and the Italian-Croatian agreement in Rome, the borders of the NDH were also established. The Independent State of Croatia thus encompassed a significant portion of the territory of the former Yugoslav state. It stretched over an area of 115,133 square kilometers, including Srem, Slavonia, Zagorje, Banija, Kordun, Lika, Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina. According to German intelligence officer Arthur Hefner and based on the ethnographic map by geographer Dr. Zvonimir Dugački, the territory was inhabited by 3,069,000 Croats (50.78%), 1,847,000 Serbs (30.56%), 717,000 Muslims (41.86%), and 410,000 others (6.80%), totaling 6,043,000 inhabitants.¹⁵³ Although the NDH did not conduct a census during its existence, the data published in the “Hrvatski narod” (Croatian People) newspaper on May 19th 1941 can be considered “official”. According to these figures, the NDH had 6,966,729 inhabit-

¹⁵² *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o NOR-u*, XIII-1, Doc. Nr. 19, p. 60–62; B. Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, p. 20–22; E. Redžić, *Bosna i Hercegovina 1941–1945.*, p. 20; M. Peršen, *Ustaški logori*, p. 13–14; Dragan Nenezić, „Italijanski okupacioni sistem u Jugoslaviji“, *Vojnoistorijski glasnik*, Nr. 1–3/1992, p. 49–60; Dragan Nenezić, „Југословенске области под фашистичком Италијом 1941–1943. Планови и последице“, in: *Друђи свјеђуски рађи – 50 година касније*, I (Ed. Владо Стругар), Подгорица 1997, p. 503–513; D. S. Nenezić, *Jugoslovenske oblasti pod Italijom*, p. 65–83; J. Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji*, p. 279–280; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 75–76.

¹⁵³ B. Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, p. 128–129; S. Skoko, *Pokolj hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 23; C. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеговачко*, I, p. 36–37.

ants. This included 4,817,000 Croats (Roman Catholics and Muslims), 1,848,000 Serbs, 145,000 Germans, 70,000 Hungarians, 37,020 Kranjci and Styrians (Slovenians), 44,267 Czechs and Slovaks, and in the “others” category, among 35,442 counted, most were Jews and Roma.¹⁵⁴ Nearly half of the then Croatian state territory was Bosnia and Herzegovina (51,233 square kilometers). This territory had 2,635,928 inhabitants, the majority of whom were Serbs (1,289,307), followed by Muslims (around 700,000), Croats (620,016), Jews (13,059), and others (13,546). Because of this fact, Bosnia and Herzegovina was of great importance to the new state, established by the will of Hitler’s Third Reich, to which the “love and admiration of the Croatian people” were “boundless,” as Ante Pavelić wrote upon his arrival in Zagreb on April 15th, in gratitude for the recognition of the Independent State of Croatia by the leader of the German Reich on that same day.¹⁵⁵

The day after the signing of the Rome Agreements, the command of the Italian Second Army informed its subordinate units that, starting May 20th, the civilian administration of the territories assigned to the NDH, which had until then been under Italian military occupation, would be transferred to Croatian authorities. From that day on, Italian forces in that area lost their ‘significance and rights of occupation forces’ and gained the ‘significance of troops stationed in the territory of the friendly and allied Independent State of Croatia.’¹⁵⁶ However, although Bosnia and Herzegovina was handed over to the NDH, it was far from being neglected by Germany and Italy regarding their own interests in the area. This was especially true of Italy, which “covered” the area with diplomatic and consular representations, opening consulates in Sarajevo and Mostar and a vice-consulate in Banja Luka.

¹⁵⁴ I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 52–53.

¹⁵⁵ *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 8–9, p. 14–15; *Документи о геноциду над Србима у Босни и Херцеговини*, doc. Nr. 3–5, p. 149–151; Здравко Антонић, „Српски народ у Босни и Херцеговини 1941. Између геноцида и борбе за слободу“, in: *Други свјетски рат – 50 година касније*, I (Ed. Владо Стругар), Подгорица 1997, p. 643–653; Здравко Антонић, „Геноцид над Србима од априлског рата до августа 1941. године“, in: *Геноцид у 20. веку на њослорима југословенских земаља* (Ed. Јован Мирковић), Београд 2005, p. 167–173.

¹⁵⁶ *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o NOR-u*, XIII-1, Doc. Nr. 23, p. 70–71.

In the second half of May, under new circumstances, Dr. Šefkija Balić accepted the position of mayor in Mostar on behalf of the new state. According to his post-war indictment, he issued a proclamation upon the arrival of Pavelić's army, in which he praised Pavelić, his genius, the Independent State of Croatia, and the newfound freedom in the most eloquent terms. Balić was appointed by decree of the Minister of the Interior Andrija Artuković on May 21st replacing the former mayor Husein Metiljević (1940-1941). The handover of civilian authority in Mostar took place on May 22nd. Shortly after his appointment, Dr. Balić traveled to Zagreb, where he met with Minister Artuković and leader Pavelić, who told him that "his eyes are always set on Herzeg-Bosna, that without it there is no Croatia, that it is dear to his heart, and that he has decided to establish the capital of our State there."¹⁵⁷

Ivan Zovko was appointed as the Ustasha commander in the Mostar area, and Ante Zličarić as the Ustasha commissioner. On the same day, based on instructions from the Ministry of the Interior, the Ustasha commissioner in Mostar issued a proclamation warning the populace to strictly maintain order and obedience to the Ustasha military and civilian authorities; that within 48 hours of this proclamation, all Cyrillic inscriptions must be removed and that Cyrillic should not be used in public or private life; that Jews and Serbs must not wear any Croatian insignia or tricolors and must not display the Croatian flag on their houses. The proclamation further stated that they must not decorate shops or houses with pictures of prominent Croatians or allied personalities; the sale of alcoholic beverages was suspended; Jews were prohibited from visiting public places; all events, entertainments, dances, and gatherings without special permission were banned; and Jewish and Serbian owners of radio devices had to immediately hand them over to the city police headquarters.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ „Novi gradonačelnik Mostara preuzeo službu“, *Sarajevski novi list*, 21. V 1941, p. 7. Šefkija Balić was briefly the mayor of Mostar. As early as June 1941, he assumed the position of deputy prefect of the Great County of Hum, where he remained until November 1943. After the war, he was put on trial. (AJ, 110–477, Okružni sud u Mostaru, Broj: Ko -7/45–2).

¹⁵⁸ M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 617–618.

Croatian armed forces ceremoniously entered Mostar by train from Konjic on May 28th, and a formal reception was held for them at Liberty Square at around 4:45 PM. This symbolically marked the end of almost a month and a half of Italian rule in Mostar. According to the order of the Ustasha headquarters, all state and local government officials had to attend the ceremonial reception of the Croatian armed forces in Mostar. However, this did not apply to Serbs. According to a subsequent order from the Ustasha commissioner, “Serbian officials are not to participate in the reception of the army.” Thus, in the judicial office,¹⁵⁹ Sergije Govedarica, Dr. Ljubomir Ivanišević, Boro Petrić, and Dr. Ilija Šain were exempted from this “honor.” On that day, an infantry company, a machine gun company, a cyclist platoon, and the headquarters of the Adriatic Division arrived in Mostar. At Liberty Square, they were first greeted by Mayor Dr. Balić, who said it was a ‘significant moment when the heroic foot of our Croatian soldier steps on the free soil of the city of Mostar.’ Speeches were also given by commander Stanko Šarac, friar Mladen Barbarić,¹⁶⁰ and Colonel Mirko Gregorić. After that, there was a symbolic handover of military authority from Colonel Rus to General Ivan Prpić, commander of the Adriatic Division. General Prpić thus represented the highest-ranking Croatian military official in Mostar.¹⁶¹ A small number of Italian soldiers remained

¹⁵⁹ The Court Desk was the former District Court.

¹⁶⁰ Mladen Barbarić, a professor of the Mostar Gymnasium, was later awarded the Order of the Crown of King Zvonimir with a star (Red krune kralja Zvonimira sa zvijezdom) “in recognition of his pioneering, fearless, and Ustasha effort, as well as his comprehensive work in the school, countryside, and city in creating and developing the Independent State of Croatia. (*Dokumenti o protunarodnom radu i zločinima jednog dijela katoličkog klera*, Ed. Joža Horvat, Zdenko Štambuk, Zagreb 1946, p. 195).

¹⁶¹ Ivan Prpić (1887–1967), originally from Vlasenica. He was educated at the Infantry Cadet School in Budapest and the War School in Vienna. He served as an officer in the Austro-Hungarian army during World War I and later in the Yugoslav army. He completed General Staff training in Belgrade (1920). He held various positions in the Yugoslav army (November 1921–April 1936), was the commander of the 17th Infantry Regiment (from April 1936), Chief of Staff of the First Army District (1937), Chief of Staff of the Coastal Army District (from January 1938), and an instructor at the Military Academy from January 1940. In September 1939, he was promoted to the rank of general and sent to Germany as an unofficial military observer. In the second half of 1940, he was recalled to Belgrade and appointed Chief of Staff of the Land Defense Inspection. After the capitulation of the Yugoslav army, he joined the Croatian armed forces. He was appointed commander of the Adriatic Divisional Area, tasked with establishing NDH authority in the south and southeast. However, on August 1st 1941, he was dismissed due to conflicts with Ustasha officials.

in the city, stationed in the southern camp. Among the Croatian forces that arrived in Mostar in the last days of May were about 100 Croatian protective hunters. Several incidents occurred between these hunters and the remaining Italian forces, and given the mutual suspicion, General Prpić soon ordered them to leave Mostar and go to Sarajevo. As an old Austro-Hungarian officer, General Prpić valued order and was disturbed by disorder. However, after clashes with Ustasha officials in August 1941, he had to leave Mostar and return to Zagreb. Despite being one of the most capable high-ranking officers in the Croatian Home Guard, he failed to gain the favor of the top authorities in Zagreb. Prpić was succeeded as commander of the Adriatic Division by General Đuro Iser, who remained in that position until October 1941.¹⁶²

By the end of May 1941, the Armed Forces of the Independent State of Croatia - comprising the Home Guard, the Ustasha Military, and the Police Forces – occupied all garrisons and police stations previously held by Italian troops. Alongside the Home Guard, the Gendarmerie assumed its duties in Herzegovina by the end of May. On May 28th the Gendarmerie Wing Command was established in Bileća, with platoons

In April 1942, he was appointed head of the General Staff of the Leaders Main Headquarters, which was established to coordinate the work of the Ustasha military and the Croatian Home Guard. From October 1942 to September 1943, he headed the Home Guard's General Staff. The Ustasha accused him of being pro-Yugoslav and of having a Serbian wife (Zora, daughter of Milan Srećković, the governor of the Kosovo region). On August 23rd 1943, an assassination attempt was made on him by order of Ustasha Colonel Herenčić. In February 1944, he was promoted to the rank of general and immediately retired. He soon went into exile, first to Slovakia and then to Prague, where he remained until the end of the war. At the end of August 1945, he was arrested by Czechoslovak authorities and handed over to Yugoslavia. He was briefly detained in Belgrade and Zagreb, and at the end of 1945, he was released. As of 1946, he worked as an accountant in a stonemasonry workshop in Zagreb. (*Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 333; M. S. Bjelajac, *Generali i admirali Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, p. 254–255; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 99; Далибор Ж. Денда, *Југословенска војска у Трећу рајх 1933–1941*, unpublished PhD thesis, Београд 2016, p. 542, 583, 600–601).

¹⁶² „Oduševljen doček hrvatske vojske u Hercegovini“, *Sarajevski novi list*, 29. V 1941, p. 2; „Hrvatska se zastava vije nad Neretvom“, *Sarajevski novi list*, 30. V 1941, p. 3; „Hrvatska je vojska primljena u Mostaru s nezapamćenim oduševljenjem i pozdravljena burnim ovacijama i klicanjem“, *Sarajevski novi list*, 31. V 1941, p. 3; „Proslava oslobođenja u Mostaru“, *Sarajevski novi list*, I. VI 1941, p. 6; Владо Ивковић, *Невесуње 1941.*, Мостар 1980, p. 71; Drago Karlo Miletić, „Italijanska reokupacija Mostara (septembar 1941–jun 1943)“, *Hercegovina*, Nr. 7–8/1990, p. 119–155; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 17–19; D. K. Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, p. 111; N. Barić, *Ustroj Kopnene vojske Domobranstva*, p. 97; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 35; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 91.

in Bileća, Trebinje, Nevesinje, and Gacko, along with 27 gendarmerie posts. Another Gendarmerie Wing Command for the Herzegovina region was formed in Mostar, also with four platoons (in Ljubuški, Posušje, Mostar, and Konjic) and multiple gendarmerie posts. Within the Grand County (Župa) of Hum, there were two additional wing commands—in Omiš and Dubrovnik.¹⁶³

The expansion of the NDH's military and police structures also facilitated the consolidation of the civil administration in this territorially extensive puppet state. Administratively, the NDH was divided into grand counties (velike župe), district areas (kotarske oblasti), city (gradska poglavarstva), and municipal administrations (općinska poglavarstva). The grand counties, as larger administrative units of the new state, were established by a legal decree on June 10th 1941. A total of 22 grand counties were formed, each headed by a governor personally appointed by the leader and holding the rank of a minister.¹⁶⁴ Within the grand counties, there were 139 district areas and 18 district offices. The district areas were led by prefects. Moreover, 29 cities, including Mostar, had special self-governing status, independent of the district areas, and were directly subordinated to the governor. Within the district areas, there were 978 self-governing municipalities led by mayors. The territorial division into districts and municipalities mostly followed the divisions of counties and municipalities from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, except for some name changes, the creation of seven new districts and ten municipalities, and the abolition of 13 municipalities.¹⁶⁵

The eastern part of Herzegovina, comprising the counties of Gacko, Ljubinje, Stolac, Trebinje, Bileća, and Čapljina, was included

¹⁶³ *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 33, p. 54–56; D. K. Miletić, „Italijanska reokupacija Mostara“, p. 119; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 19–20; C. Skoko, *Krvaavo kolo hercegovacko*, I, p. 33–35; Davor Marijan, „Lipanski ustanak u istočnoj Hercegovini 1941. godine“, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, Nr. 2/2003, p. 545–576.

¹⁶⁴ „Zakonska odredba o velikim župama“, *Narodne novine*, 10. VI 1941, p. 1; *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајора у Херцеговини*, I, doc. Nr. 2, p. 31–60; F. Jelić-Butić, *Ustasha i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 103–104, 110–111; В. Ивковић, *Невесинье*, p. 71; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 20.

¹⁶⁵ M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 156–157; H. Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 87–89.

in the Grand County of Dubrava, with its seat in Dubrovnik. Ante Buć, a lawyer, was appointed as the governor, and the county began operations on June 30th.¹⁶⁶ The western part of Herzegovina, with the districts of Mostar, Ljubuški, Posušje, Metković, Konjic, and Nevesinje, was incorporated into the Grand County of Hum, established on June 6th, with its seat in Mostar. The Croatian Roman Catholic population constituted the majority in five districts of the Grand County of Hum, the exception being the area of Nevesinje. Josip Troyer was appointed as the governor in Mostar, and the former police official Krešimir Kr-talić from Gnojnice was appointed as the district prefect. Troyer assumed his duties in Mostar on June 23rd,¹⁶⁷ and the county officially began operations on August 5th in a building on Fra Paškal Buconjić Street.¹⁶⁸ The district of Mostar included ten administrative municipalities: Bijelo Polje (with its seat in Potoci), Blagaj, Donje Brotnjo (seat in Čitluk), Drežnica (seat in Donja Drežnica), Gornje Brotnjo (seat in Čerin), Kočerin, Mostar-Sela (seat in Mostar), Mostarsko Blato (seat in Ljuti Dolac), Široki Brijeg, and Žitomislić.¹⁶⁹ Clearly, this organization mirrored the previous Mostar district structure from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

¹⁶⁶ „Objava o početku poslovanja Velike župe Dubrava sa sjedištem u Dubrovniku“, *Narodne novine*, 30. VI 1941, p. 1.

¹⁶⁷ M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 619. Josip Troyer, upon the establishment of the NDH, served as the head of the General Department and legal advisor for Bosnia and Herzegovina from April 30th until mid-June 1941. He then became the governor of the Grand County of Hum from June 1941 until the fall of 1942. After leaving Mostar, he worked in the Ministry of the Interior in Zagreb (from the fall of 1942 to January 1943) and was then appointed governor of the Great county of Krbava and Psat in Bihać. He held this position from January 1943 until the collapse of the NDH (AJ, 110, *Dosije Troyer Dr. Josipa*). His conduct during his more than a year of service in Mostar is best illustrated by the testimony of Danica Komljenović, whose husband Veselin was captured by the Ustasha on June 24th 1941, as he was returning from the doctor. After a brief detention, he was killed on the banks of the Neretva River and then thrown into the river. Unaware of what had happened to him, Danica went to the governor to find out about Veselin's fate, but Troyer told her: “Why have you come? Can't you see what's happening around Nevesinje? All of you should be thrown into the Neretva”. (Б. Н. Чучкович, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 254).

¹⁶⁸ HDA, Ministarstvo unutrašnjih poslova Nezavisne države Hrvatske - MUP NDH, b. 25, Pr. 20241; Vojni Arhiv - VA, Nezavisna država Hrvatska - NDH, b. 220, folder 2, doc. Nr. 8.

¹⁶⁹ I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 40–41.

INSTRUMENTS OF THE REPRESSIVE APPARATUS OF THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA

The Armed Forces of the Independent State of Croatia consisted of three parts: the Home Guard, the Ustasha Military (Ustaška vojnica), and the Gendarmerie (Oružništvo). In the initial phase of organizing the Armed Forces between April and July 1941, it is estimated that the Home Guard had about 45,000 members, the Gendarmerie about 6,000, and the Ustasha Military about 4,500. However, their numbers grew daily, especially the Ustasha Military, which by the summer of 1941 already had 25,000–30,000 armed members.¹⁷⁰ By the end of the NDH's first year, its armed forces were estimated to have around 115,000 members, including approximately 92,000 in the Home Guard, 15,000 in the Ustasha Military, and 8,000 in the Gendarmerie.¹⁷¹ They did not have a unified command; the Home Guard and Gendarmerie were under the Army Command and the Ministry of Croatian Home Guard, while the Ustasha Military had a separate command until 1943. From February 1943, the Ministry of Armed Forces oversaw them.

The Home Guard

The Home Guard represented the regular army and formed the main part of the Croatian armed forces during World War II. The first steps

¹⁷⁰ F. Jelić-Butić, *Ustasha i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 114–123.

¹⁷¹ M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 319.

towards forming the Croatian armed forces were taken on the day the state was declared, April 10th, when Kvaternik signed the "Law on the Establishment of the Army and Navy of the State of Croatia" (*Zakon o osnutku vojske i mornarice Države Hrvatske*). All military conscripts of the former Yugoslav army who originated from the areas that were now part of the NDH or whose fathers were from those territories became military conscripts of the new state. Kvaternik appointed retired Colonel Slavko Štancer as commander of the ground forces, Captain Đuro Jakčin as commander of the Croatian naval coasts, river navigation, and all naval forces, and Captain Vladimir Kren as commander of the air forces. This military organization lasted only a few days—until April 16th and the formation of the first NDH government. At that time, Pavelić appointed Kvaternik as the commander of the army and the minister of the Croatian Home Guard.¹⁷²

Although the Croatian army was modeled after the Croatian Home Guard as it existed in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy (until 1918), the Home Guard's land army honored the military-territorial division established in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Thus, the former division area headquarters evolved into division area commands, representing the highest instance within the military-territorial organization. The Command of the Sava Division Area (*divizijska oblast*) was formed in Zagreb on April 10th, the Vrbas Division Area in Petrinja on April 17th, the Osijek Division Area in Osijek on April 19th, the Bosnian Division Area in Sarajevo on April 24th, where the Command of the Adriatic Division Area was also established, moving to Mostar by the end of May. On April 24th, division areas were renamed division districts (*divizijska područja*), and military district commands became mobilization commands (*popunidbena zapovedništva*). A total of five division districts and 18 mobilization commands were formed in the NDH. Consequently, Mostar became the center of the Adriatic Division District (including the Mostar, Trebinje, Sinj, and Knin mobilization commands), commanded by

¹⁷² M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 193–195; I. Košutić, *Hrvatsko domobranstvo u Drugom svjetskom ratu*, p. 99–104; N. Barić, *Ustroj Kopnene vojske Domobranstva*, p. 19–21.

General Ivan Prpić, with Lieutenant Colonel Vjekoslav Klišanić as Chief of Staff.¹⁷³

The intensification of the uprising in several parts of the NDH and the entry of Italian forces first into the Second Zone and then the Third Zone forced the Croatian authorities to reorganize the newly established Home Guard (Domobranstvo) to increase efficiency. Starting from November 1st, 1941, division districts were abolished, and Home Guard Corps (Domobranski zborovi), Home Guard Corps Districts (Domobranska zborna područja), and Infantry Divisions (Pješačke divizije) were established. Home Guard Corps Commands were directly subordinated to the Ministry of Home Guard (Ministarstvo domobranstva). Each Home Guard Corps Command included the Home Guard Corps District Command (Zapovjedništvo domobranskih zbornih područja) and two Infantry Divisions. The Home Guard Corps headquarters were located in Sisak, Slavonski Brod, and Sarajevo. The First Home Guard Corps included the First Home Guard Corps District with its headquarters in Petrinja and the First and Second Infantry Divisions. The Second Home Guard Corps included the Second Home Guard Corps District with its headquarters in Banja Luka and the Third and Fourth Infantry Divisions, while the Third Home Guard Corps included the Third Home Guard Corps District and the Fifth and Sixth Infantry Divisions. Each of the Home Guard Corps included several grand counties. The Grand Counties of Hum and Dubrava belonged to the Third Home Guard Corps District, which included a total of six grand counties: Pliva and Rama, Lašva and Glaž, Vrhbosna, Cetina, Hum, and Dubrava. The commands of the infantry divisions from the Third Home Guard Corps District were located in Sarajevo (Fifth Division) and Mostar (Sixth Division). The Sixth Infantry Division included the 13th Infantry Regiment based in Mostar, the 14th Infantry Regiment

¹⁷³ Mladen Colić, „Kopnena vojska Domobranstva Nezavisne Države Hrvatske“, *Vojnoistorijski glasnik*, Nr. 2/1970, p. 169–230; Mladen Colić, „Oružane snage NDH u Bosni i Hercegovini 1941. godine“, in: *1941. u istoriji naroda Bosne i Hercegovine* (Ed. Enver Redžić), Sarajevo 1973, p. 498–517; M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 201–203; Krunoslav Mikulan, Siniša Pogačić, *Hrvatske oružane snage 1941.–1945. (Ustrojstvo, odore, oznake)*, Zagreb 1999, p. 13–22; H. Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 103–105; N. Barić, *Ustroj Kopnene vojske Domobranstva*, p. 21–22, 43–47.

based in Trebinje, the 9th Artillery Battalion based in Mostar, and the 6th Supply Company based in Mostar. The division was commanded by Colonel (later General) Franjo Pacak.¹⁷⁴

The Gendarmerie

The formation of the Croatian Gendarmerie began on April 13 with a proclamation by Dr. Milovan Žanko, the Leader's commissioner for internal affairs, advising members of the former Yugoslav Gendarmerie to remain at their posts and "perform their duties according to all previous regulations, as long as these are not contrary to the organization of the State of Croatia." Thus, the Gendarmerie was formed from members of the former Yugoslav Gendarmerie, following its organizational structure. The command of the Croatian Gendarmerie Brigade (established after the creation of the Banovina of Croatia) was transformed into the Command of the Croatian Gendarmerie, with General Milan Mizler appointed as the supreme commander. The Gendarmerie represented a "militarily organized guard, which, as part of the armed forces, has military significance," tasked with maintaining public peace and order, and public, personal, and property security. In other words, the Gendarmerie was an auxiliary branch of the army responsible for maintaining public order and security, i.e., performing police duties. The existing regiments (pukovi) of the Croatian Gendarmerie Brigade (Hrvatska žandarmerijska brigada) were transformed into gendarmerie regiments (žandarmerijske pukovnije). The Sava Gendarmerie Regiment in Zagreb became the First Gendarmerie Regiment (Zagreb), the Primorje Gendarmerie Regiment in Split became the Second Gendarmerie Regiment (Knin), the Vrbas Gendarmerie Regiment in Banja Luka became the Third Gendarmerie Regiment (Banja Luka), and the Drina Gendarmerie Regiment in Sarajevo became the Fourth Gendarmerie Regiment (Sarajevo). The "Law on the Gendarmerie of the NDH" (*Zakonska odredba o oružništvu NDH*) from August 21st 1941, firmly

¹⁷⁴ M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 235–240; N. Barić, *Ustroj Kopnene vojske Domobranstva*, p. 118–125.

established the Gendarmerie as one of the components of the NDH Armed Forces. The headquarters of the Second Gendarmerie Regiment was moved from Knin to Dubrovnik, and a Fifth Gendarmerie Regiment (Osijek) was formed. The Gendarmerie remained part of the Croatian Home Guard until July 17th 1942, when it became part of the Ustasha Military.¹⁷⁵

Gendarmerie regiments were divided into gendarmerie wing commands (*oružnička krilna zapovedništva*) (formerly gendarmerie companies – *žandarmerijska četa*), gendarmerie platoon commands (*zapovedništvo oružničkog voda*) (formerly gendarmerie platoons – *žandarmerijski vod*), and gendarmerie posts (*oružnička postaja*) (formerly gendarmerie stations – *žandarmerijska stanica*). Mostar initially served as the headquarters of a Gendarmerie Wing Command belonging to the Second Gendarmerie Regiment, headquartered in Knin. The Gendarmerie Wing Command in Mostar included three gendarmerie platoons – Mostar, Konjic, and Ljubuški. Subordinated to the Gendarmerie Platoon in Mostar were the posts in Mostar, Blagaj, Rujište, Široki Brijeg, Sjenčine, Čitluk, Buna, and Kočerina. The gendarmerie of Mostar was initially subordinated to Knin, and after the winter of 1941, to Dubrovnik. In the spring of 1942, during the reorganization of the Gendarmerie, the Sixth Gendarmerie Regiment was formed with its headquarters in Mostar, commanded by Gendarmerie Colonel Josip Boić. When the Gendarmerie was incorporated into the Ustasha Military in the summer of the same year, it was reorganized, and the previous six gendarmerie regiments were transformed into six gendarmerie wings (*oružnička krila*): the First Gendarmerie Wing (Sisak), the Second Gendarmerie Wing (Gospić), the Third Gendarmerie Wing (Banja Luka), the Fourth Gendarmerie Wing (Sarajevo), the Fifth Gendarmerie Wing (Travnik), and the Sixth Gendarmerie Wing (Mostar). The commander of the Sixth Gendarmerie Wing, formed from the Sixth

¹⁷⁵ HDA, MUP NDH, b. 26, Zakonska odredba o ustrojstvu oružništva Nezavisne Države Hrvatske; HDA, fond Zapovjedništvo Šeste pješačke divizije (ZŠPD), b. 1, Zakonska odredba o oružničtvu Nezavisne Države Hrvatske; M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 284–292; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, II, p. 85; Davor Kovačić, *Oružništvo Nezavisne Države Hrvatske. Redarstveno tijelo i vojna postrojba 1941.–1945.*, Zagreb 2014, p. 17, 43–64.

Gendarmerie Regiment, was Gendarmerie Colonel Stjepan Jakovljević. The Sixth Gendarmerie Wing included three county gendarmerie commands (župsko zapovedništvo oružništva) – in Dubrovnik (Grand County Dubrava), Omiš (Grand County Cetina), and Mostar (Grand County Hum). The county gendarmerie command in Mostar covered the county gendarmerie commands (in Konjic, Ljubuški, Metković, Mostar, Nevesinje, and Posušje).¹⁷⁶

The Ustasha Movement and the Ustasha Military

In May of 1941, the former Ustasha – Croatian Revolutionary Organization (Hrvatska revolucionarna organizacija - UHRO) was restructured into the Ustasha – Croatian Liberation Movement (Hrvatski oslobodilački pokret - UHOP) as the exclusive and sole political body and organization in the Independent State of Croatia. The movement was led by the Main Ustasha Headquarters, which replaced the former Ustasha Supervisory Staff (Ustaški nadzorni stožer). The Main Ustasha Headquarters, as the central governing body of the Ustasha Movement, consisted of the Leader Dr. Ante Pavelić, the Deputy-leader Council (Doglavnički zbor), the Deputy Council (Pobočnički zbor), and 17 commissioners in the Main Ustasha Headquarters. The honorary head of the six-member Vice-Leader Council was journalist Marko Došen. The four-member Deputy Council was headed by Professor Aljija Šuljak. According to the Leader's decree of June 24th 1941, the entire activity of the Ustasha Movement was divided into three branches: the political-organizational, the Ustasha Military, and the Ustasha Supervisory Service (Ustaška nadzorna služba - UNS). Politically and organizationally, the Ustasha Movement was structured so that each grand county had an Ustasha headquarters (stožer) with a commander (stožernik), each district had an Ustasha camp (logor) with a camp leader (logornik), each municipality had an Ustasha company (tabor) with a company leader (tabornik), and in the villages, there were gath-

¹⁷⁶ A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, II, p. 87–89; D. Kovačić, *Oružništvo Nezavisne Države Hrvatske*, p. 48–49, 55–56, 59–63.

erings (zbir) led by gathering leaders (zbirnik). All gatherings in a municipality formed a company, all companies in a district formed a camp, and all camps in a grand county formed a headquarters.¹⁷⁷ Ivan Zovko¹⁷⁸ was appointed as the first commander in the Grand County of Hum, and Ivo Rojnica in the Grand County of Dubrava. However, the first commanders in these two counties, which covered the region of Herzegovina, were relieved of their duties in early August 1941, and the process of appointing new commanders lasted from September 1941 to January 1942. While Zovko retained his position in Hum, Rojnica was succeeded by Vlado Herceg in Dubrava.

The Ustasha Military, as the second branch of the Ustasha Movement's activities, represented the political army, i.e., the military part of the Ustasha Movement, and its units were formed into squads (roj), platoons (vod), companies (satnija), battalions (bojna), regiments (pukovnija), and brigades (zdrug). As the armed formation of the Ustasha Movement, it modeled itself after the SS troops (Schutzstaffel) in Germany and the "Blackshirts" (Camicie Nere) in Italy. The creation of the military wing of the Ustasha Movement began on April 21st 1941, when the Main Ustasha Headquarters issued the "Decree on the Organization of the Ustasha Army" (Odredba o ustrojstvu ustaške vojske). Based on this Decree, the first appointments and promotions were made. Initially, the Ustasha Military was managed by the Military-Ustasha Staff (Vojno-ustaški stožer) (starting from April 25), headed by Ustasha captain (satnik) Vjekoslav Servatzy. However, the Military-Ustasha Staff was soon disbanded, and Ustasha lieutenant colonel (dopukovnik) Tomislav

¹⁷⁷ M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 161; M. Peršen, *Ustaški logori*, p. 34–35.

¹⁷⁸ Ivan Zovko (1908–1945), originally from Oklaj near Široki Brijeg. He was expelled from high school due to his political activities. In the late 1930s, he joined the Ustasha movement and operated in Herzegovina. He worked as a clerk in the bauxite mines (1939–1940), and then at the Tobacco Station in Široki Brijeg. From June 1941 to November 1942, he served as the chief of the Ustasha Headquarters Hum in Mostar. He then returned to work at the Tobacco Station but remained active in the Ustasha organization as a reserve officer. In late 1942, he was arrested by the Italians but was soon released. In April 1945, he retreated with Croatian armed forces towards Zagreb, and in May, continued towards Austria. He was captured and handed over to Yugoslav authorities. He endured the so-called "death marches", but managed to escape near Zagreb. However, he was soon recaptured, and the Military Court of the City Command of Zagreb sentenced him to death on July 2nd 1945. The sentence was carried out shortly thereafter. (*Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 432).

Sertić was appointed commander of all Ustasha military formations on May 3rd. The commander of the Ustasha Military was directly subordinate to Pavelić, as the leader of the entire Ustasha Movement. The foundations of the Ustasha Military were definitively laid on May 10th 1941, when Pavelić signed the “Decree on the Ustasha Military” (*Odredba o Ustaškoj vojnici*). Its primary task was to defend the state from internal enemies, unlike the Home Guard, which had functions typical of a conventional army of that time. However, the Ustasha Military was not a unified entity, but rather a collection of all the armed formations of the Ustasha Movement.¹⁷⁹

The officer cadre of the Ustasha Military consisted of members of the Ustasha Movement who had joined before April 10th 1941. There was evidently a careful selection of personnel. According to the rank structure of June 1st 1941, the Ustasha Military had the following ranks: Ustasha, squad leader (*rojniki*), corporal (*razvodnik*), platoon leader (*vodnik*), guard (*stražnik*), junior officer (*časnički namjesnik*), ensign (*zastavnik*), lieutenant (*poručnik*), senior lieutenant (*nadporučnik*), captain (*satnik*), major (*bojnik*), lieutenant colonel (*podpukovnik*), colonel (*pukovnik*), wing leader (*krilnik*), assembly leader (*zbornik*), commander-in-chief (*vojskovođa*), and war leader (*ratovođa*). According to the initial organizational scheme, the Ustasha Military had several parts: the Battalion on Duty with the Leader (*bojna na službi pri Poglavniku*), regular active battalions (*redovite djelatne bojne*), preparatory Ustasha battalions (*pripremne ustaške bojne*), and reserve Ustasha battalions (*pričuvne ustaške bojne*). This structure later changed, and according to the “Legal Decree on the Ustasha Military” (*Zakonska odredba o ustaškoj vojnici*) of July 17th 1942, it had nine parts: Standing Active Brigades (*Stajaći djelatni zdrugevi*), Leader’s Bodyguard Brigades (*Poglavnikovi tjelesni zdrugevi*), Transport Brigades (*Prometni zdrugevi*), Croatian Gendarmerie (*Hrvatsko oružništvo*), Police Guard (*Redarstvena straža*), Supervisory Service (*Nadzorna služba*), Ustasha Schools

¹⁷⁹ A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 45, 53, 149–150, 171; B. B. Dimitrijević, „Formiranje Ustaške vojnice 1941.“, p. 72–73; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 49–50.

(Ustaška učilišta), Ustasha Preparation (Ustaška priprema), and Disciplinary and Penal Court (Stegovni i kazneni sud).¹⁸⁰

The basic unit of the Ustasha Military was the battalion (bojna). Up until the uprising, in the summer of 1941, only one Ustasha battalion had been formed in Zagreb, while Ustasha companies (satnije) were formed in other parts of the state. Between September and the end of 1941, 12 regular active Ustasha battalions were formed: in Sarajevo (I), Hrvatska Mitrovica (II), Brčko (III), Jasenovac (IV), Glina (V), Dvor na Uni (VI), Bosanski Novi (VII), Banja Luka (VIII), Zagreb (IX), Karlovac (X), Zagreb (XI), and Kostajnica (XII). At the beginning of 1942, subordinated to the Main Headquarters of the Ustasha Military, apart these 12 battalions, were also the Francetić Group of Battalions – The Black Legion (Skupina legija Francetić – Crna legija) with four battalions, the Leader’s Bodyguard Battalion (Poglavnikova tjelesna bojna - PTB), the First Battalion of the Ustasha Railway Military (Prva bojna Željezničke ustaške vojnice), the Preparatory Battalion “Grič” (Pripremna bojna *Grič*), and the Active Battalion of the German National Group “Prince Eugen” (Djelatna bojna njemačke narodne skupine *Princ Eugen*). By May of 1942, the Ustasha Military had 24 active battalions (djelatna bojna), and on June 23rd of the same year, it had 414 officers, 795 non-commissioned officers, and 15,915 soldiers – a total of 17,434 men. In August 1942, during a new reorganization of the Ustasha Military, Leader Pavelić himself was appointed as its new commander, with Ustasha colonel Dragutin Balenović as his deputy. This command structure was abolished on April 6th 1943, when the Ustasha Military Staff (Stožer Ustaške vojnice) was established, headed by Ustasha colonel Oton Čuš, and later Ustasha colonel Tomislav Sertić. The head of the Staff (Glavar stožera) was subordinate to the Minister of Armed Forces. Thus, the Ustasha Military became part of the Armed Forces of the NDH.¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 152–153; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 273–274.

¹⁸¹ M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 269–280, 323; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 175–184, 188–191, 213–227; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 167–168.



Eugen Dido Kvaternik
(Archives of the Genocide Victims' Museum)

In October 1943, the Ustasha Military had 34 battalions organized into five standing active brigades (*stajaći delatni zdrug*) and four battalions within the Ground Army of the Home Guard. The number of personnel in the battalions varied, each having between 300 and 800 members. By the beginning of 1945, a total of 25 standing active brigades had been formed. Mostar became the headquarters of the Ninth Herzegovinian Ustasha Brigade, established on April 21, 1944. It existed until the collapse of the NDH, and it was commanded by Ustasha lieutenant colonels Krešimir Kuraja (April–September 1944) and Vladimir Majer (October 1944–May 1945). The brigade's headquarters was located in Mostar. The brigade initially consisted of three, and later five, active battalions (First in Gabela, Second in Makarska, Third

initially in Trebinje and later in Grabova Vrela, Fourth in Tasovčići, and Fifth in Ostrošac), garrison battalions (posadne bojne) in Makarska, Gacko, and Hutovo, and a Supplementary Battalion (doknadna bojna) in Mostar. It had a total of about 4,000 members. As of December 1944, the brigade operated within the Ninth Croatian Mountain Division (Deveta hrvatska gorska divizija), and in January of 1945, it was renamed the Ninth Mobile Active Brigade (Pohodni djelatni zdrug). The headquarters was then moved to Bijelo Polje, consisting of four battalions (Blagaj, Široki Brijeg, Nevesinje, and Mostar) and a Supplementary Battalion.¹⁸²

The Ninth Croatian Mountain Division was formed as part of an effort to create unified Croatian armed forces by merging all units in a specific area. This intention became apparent after talks between Hitler and Pavelić in the autumn of 1944 and the dire situation for German forces following the fierce advance of the Red Army from the east and the withdrawal of Bulgaria and Romania from Hitler's coalition. Pavelić had significant credibility in these talks as one of Hitler's few remaining allies in Europe. Hitler indicated that the railway routes Belgrade-Zagreb and Slavonski Brod-Sarajevo-Mostar-Dubrovnik had special strategic significance in the NDH. In October 1944, the merging of the NDH Armed Forces and the Ustasha Military began. To this end, 19 divisions and one bodyguard division were created. Mostar became the headquarters of the Ninth Croatian Mountain Division (Deveta hrvatska gorska divizija), initially commanded by General Božidar Zorn, later by Colonel Miho Bajd, then General Stjepan Grlić. The division was comprised of the Second Mountain Brigade (Drugi gorski zdrug), the Sixth Standing Active Brigade of the Ustasha Military (Šesti stajaći delatni zdrug Ustaške vojnice), the Ninth Standing Active Brigade of the Ustasha Military (Deveti stajaći djelatni zdrug Ustaške vojnice), the Ninth Artillery Group (Deveti topnički sklop), a Reconnaissance Battalion (Izvidnička bojna), a Signal Company (Dojavna satnija), an

¹⁸² Amir Obhodaš, Mario Werhas, Bojan Dimitrijević, Zvonimir Despot, *Ustaška vojnica. Oružana sila Ustaškog pokreta u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj 1941.–1945.*, II (rujan 1943.–svibanj 1945.), Zagreb 2013, p. 18–21, 37–39; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 171–174, 380–383.

Engineering Company (Opkoparska satnija), a Medical Company (Zdravstvena satnija), a Supply Company (Opskrbna satnija), a Transport Company (Samovozna satnija), a Gendarmerie Platoon (Oružnički vod), a Supply Office (Opskrbni ured), and a German liaison headquarters.¹⁸³

The Ustasha Supervisory Service (Ustaška nadzorna služba), as the third branch of the Ustasha Movement's activities, represented an intelligence formation tasked with overseeing the entire work of Ustasha and state officials and ensuring that the work of Ustasha organizations and state institutions adhered to Ustasha principles. It's safe to say that the Ustasha Supervisory Service functioned as a political police force independent of the Directorate for Public Order and Security (Ravnateljstvo za javni red i sigurnost - RAVSIGUR), which was established on May 4th 1941, as the central police institution of the NDH. The Directorate for Public Order and Security also established the first camps in the NDH and managed their operation until the formation of the Ustasha Supervisory Service. The Ustasha Supervisory Service was formed by the "Legal Decree on the Ustasha Supervisory Service" (*Zakonska odredba o Ustaškoj nadzornoj službi*) on August 14th 1941. Until the end of 1942, the RAVSIGUR and the Ustasha Supervisory Service were united under the leadership of Eugen Dido Kvaternik, who was simultaneously the head of the RAVSIGUR and the Ustasha Supervisor-Commander (nadzornik-zapovednik) of the Ustasha Supervisory Service. Holding both institutions under his command, he represented one of the most powerful figures in the first two years of the NDH's existence. The Directorate aimed to create a unified police organization in the NDH and coordinate the work of all police regions, whose formation began under the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the first days after the proclamation of the NDH. Thus, the RAVSIGUR represented a department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs responsible for organizing all police regions in the state, overseeing political and criminal offenses, and managing the railway and border police. In each of the grand counties, regional police areas were established, with

¹⁸³ A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, II, p. 73–74, 78–79; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 425–426.

Mostar being the center of a regional police area. The regional police areas were subordinate to the district police areas, and each city had a city police directorate.¹⁸⁴

The Ustasha Surveillance Service consisted of four offices: Ustasha Police (Office I), Ustasha Intelligence Service (Office II), Ustasha Defense (Office III), and Ustasha Personal Office (Office IV). Later, the Ustasha Security Service (Office V) was added. The most organized was Office I – Ustasha Police, which had an extensive network of local offices and police stations, with special outposts in certain locations. It was responsible for all political cases and had multiple departments (Communist, Serbian, Jewish). The task of Office II – Ustasha Intelligence Service was to organize and manage intelligence activities. Office III – Ustasha Defense was responsible for the establishment and maintenance of concentration camps. Initially led by Ustasha captain Mijo Babić (until his death in Herzegovina in the summer of 1941), it was later headed by captain Vjekoslav Luburić, known as Max, and finally Stanko Šarac, a former Ustasha district chief in Mostar. These individuals were in charge of the entire concentration camp system of the NDH. Office IV – Ustasha Personal Office oversaw the security of Leader Pavelić and was managed by Ustasha colonel Ico Kirin. The Ustasha Surveillance Service was abolished on January 21st 1943, and all its functions, as well as the work of the then-existing RAVSIGUR, were taken over by the Main Directorate for Public Order and Security (Glavno ravnateljstvo za za javni red i sigurnost - GRAVSIGUR). The first director of the newly established GRAVSIGUR was Filip Crvenković (December 1942 – October 1943).¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ A. Miletić, *Koncentracioni logor Jasenovac*, III, Doc. Nr. 15, p. 43–44; „Eugen Kvaternik ravnatelj za javni red i sigurnost“, *Hrvatski narod*, 19. IV 1941, p. 1; „Ravnateljstvo za javni red i sigurnost“, *Hrvatski narod*, 5. V 1941, p. 6; M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 161–162, 348–351; F. Jelić-Butić, *Ustasha i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 107–109; B. Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, p. 122–123; M. Peršen, *Ustaški logori*, p. 34; Davor Kovačić, *Redarstveno-obavještajni sustav Nezavisne Države Hrvatske od 1941. do 1945. godine*, Zagreb 2009, p. 71–88, 109–115, 135–138.

¹⁸⁵ Antun Miletić, *Koncentracioni logor Jasenovac 1941–1945.*, *Dokumenta*, I, Beograd/Jasenovac 1986, p. 15–44; Antun Miletić, *Koncentracioni logor Jasenovac 1941–1945.*, *Dokumenta*, II, Beograd/Jasenovac 1986, Doc. Nr. 240, p. 579–581; N. Živković, P. Kačavenda, *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*, Doc. Nr. 127, p. 222–223; M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 351, 446–447; B.

Under Office III, the entire concentration camp system in the NDH was managed. Formally, camps were divided into four groups based on their purpose: gathering camps, immigration-emigration camps, collection camps, and labor camps. However, this division was quite conditional, and there was very little difference in the treatment of detainees between the camps. The first camps were established in Kerestinec near Zagreb and in the former chemical factory “Danica” near Koprivnica in the second half of April 1941, in the early days of the NDH. The first group of detainees arrived in Kerestinec on April 19th and in “Danica” on April 28th although there is a record of detainees being sent on April 20th. The first ones to be sent to Kerestinec were prominent Serbs and Jews from Zagreb – civil servants, lawyers, and others. Kerestinec operated until mid-July 1941, and the “Danica” camp was disbanded during March and April 1942. In May 1941, the Stara Gradiška camp began operating, initially functioning as a “penitentiary” and “forced labor institution”, until in February 1942 it became a concentration camp. By June 1941, the Gospić-Jadovno-Pag camp complex was opened, and the Kruščica camp near Vitez began operating. During the summer of 1941, other camps were established throughout Croatia. From early July to late September 1941, a collection camp operated in Caprag near Sisak, where detainees were housed in two buildings that were stables during Austro-Hungarian rule and ammunition storage facilities in the Yugoslav era. After the Gospić-Jadovno-Pag camp complex closed down in August 1941, some of the remaining detainees were housed in auxiliary buildings on the estate of the Erdödy Castle in Jastrebarsko near Zagreb. From July 9th to the end of October 1941, a “collection, emigration, and immigration camp” existed near Slavonska Požega in the barracks, cannon sheds, and stables of a former artillery camp. Around that same time, an immigration-emigration camp was also in operation in Bjelovar. In the summer of 1941, the infamous Jasenovac camp group was established. In the second half of 1941, camps

Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, p. 123; M. Peršen, *Ustaški logori*, p. 36–37; D. Kovačić, *Redarstveno-obavještajni sustav Nezavisne Države Hrvatske*, p. 139–194, 210–219.

were established in Lobar near Krapina (early October), Lepoglava near Ivanec, and Gornja Rijeka near Križevci (mid-November), Đakovo (early December), and during 1942 in Tenja near Osijek (in January) and Sisak (in August). There were also camps in Lipik, Vinkovci, Brčko, and other places. Overall, about thirty camps were operated in the NDH during 1941 and 1942.¹⁸⁶

“Wild Ustasha” Units

In the early days of the Independent State of Croatia, particularly during May and June of 1941, armed groups of locals, colloquially known as “wild Ustasha” or “Ustasha Militia,” were formed under the guidance of local Ustasha leaders and the Ustasha returning to Herzegovina, Lika, and Bosnia from Italy. The motivation for establishing these formations varied, ranging from a desire for revenge, the influence of propaganda and ideology, to economic motives such as the intent to gain significant property through looting.¹⁸⁷ These “wild Ustasha” units emerged in ethnically mixed areas, and their members would raid Serbian villages, burning, looting, and killing. Their numbers grew daily, and as they threatened to become a parallel Ustasha organization, the Croatian Ministry of the Home Guard addressed the issue. It was found that these so-called “wild Ustasha” were mostly pre-war criminals, fail-

¹⁸⁶ M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 233–242; Antun Miletić, *Ustaška fabrika smrti 1941–1945.*, Beograd 1988, p. 61–75; Milan Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida i suđenje Andriji Artukoviću 1986. godine*, II, Beograd 1988, p. 174–178, 199–206; Dušan Lukač, „Denacionalizacija, iseljavanje i genocid na Balkanu u toku Drugog svetskog rata“, *Istorija 20. veka*, Nr. 1–2/1988, p. 53–85; Vladimir Dedijer, Antun Miletić, *Proterivanje Srba sa ognjišta 1941–1944. Svedočanstva*, Beograd 1989, p. 36–48; Milan Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida i suđenje Andriji Artukoviću 1986. godine*, III, Beograd 1989, p. 307–331, 344–365; Milan Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida i suđenje Andriji Artukoviću 1986. godine*, IV, Beograd 1989, p. 816–826; M. Peršen, *Ustaški logori*, p. 40–45, 53–75, 80–102, 104–106, 116–147, 228–266, 279–286, 288–291; Radomir Bulatović, *Koncentracioni logor Jasenovac s posebnim osvrtom na Donju Gradinu. Istorijsko-sociološka i antropološka studija*, Sarajevo 1990, p. 69–78; Nataša Mataušić, *Jasenovac 1941.–1945. Logor smrti i radni logor*, Jasenovac/Zagreb 2003, p. 20–26; J. Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji*, p. 447–450; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, II, p. 91–92; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 182–185.

¹⁸⁷ Lovro Kralj, *The Ustashe Politics of Ethnic Cleansing. Relation between the state-organized and wild ethnic cleansing in the Independent State of Croatia during 1941*, unpublished M.A. Thesis, Budapest 2015, pp. 67–78.

ures, and bullies who saw an opportunity to do whatever came to mind in this power vacuum.¹⁸⁸

Reverend Tugomir Soldo, explaining the composition of Ustasha groups led by Ivo Herenčić, Herman Togonal, and Franjo Sudar, wrote: “Their first gangs were truly made up of scum, the dregs: vagabonds, porters, pickpockets, urban failures, and a few village madmen who called themselves Ustasha. But gradually they managed to cultivate a few rural bandits by telling them that it was not a sin to kill when ordered by the authorities.”

Although these elements were extremely unruly and unreliable, there was little difference in the actions of the so-called “wild Ustasha” and the regular Ustasha Military. The criminality of their policy towards Serbs differed only in nuances, not in essence. This was particularly evident in Herzegovina, where Ivo Herenčić and Mijo Babić led attacks on Serbian villages together with members of the Ustasha Military and the so-called “wild Ustasha”. Such behavior threatened to turn a significant portion of Croats against the new state, according to intelligence reports. To prevent this and to shift all blame for the atrocities of the summer of 1941 onto the so-called “wild Ustasha”, Pavelić issued an order on August 9th that “units formed as armed assistance, the so-called “wild Ustasha”, must immediately cease all activities.” However, only a small number of them were actually disarmed. Most remained as active as before, with only a portion integrated into the “legal” formations of the Ustasha Military. It seems there was no real intent to disarm any formations, as the Ministry of the Home Guard soon issued an order prohibiting the Home Guard and the Gendarmerie from disarming Ustasha forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This task was left to Ustasha commissioners, with the weapons kept “at hand.” Moreover, complaints about the so-called “wild Ustasha” came only from the Home Guard and the Gendarmerie, never from Ustasha ranks.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸ Tugomir Soldo, „Držanje katoličkog svećenstva u Hercegovini za vrijeme Drugoga svjetskog rata“, *Hercegovina franciscana*, Nr. 7/2011, p. 379–456.

¹⁸⁹ M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 280–282; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 215; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnika*, I, p. 79–80.



Jure Francetić
(Military Archives)

The potential direction these uncontrolled actions could have gone is best illustrated by an incident on the night of August 5th/6th 1941, in Zagreb. After a shooting, a group of Ustasha stormed the apartment of General Slavko Štancer, the supreme inspector of all armed forces, dragged him out of bed, and ordered him to lie on the floor while they searched his apartment. When Vjekoslav Servatsi arrived in Banja Luka to organize the Second Leader's Bodyguard Battalion (*Druga poglavnikova tjelesna bojna*), he arrested and sent to Zagreb the Ustasha responsible for crimes against Serbs in that area. However, generally they "were not punished, but reassigned to other duties." It appears that disarmament of "wild Ustasha" units occurred only in the Second Zone after the arrival of Italian forces. Even then, they were essentially

not disarmed but moved to the German influence zone and committed new atrocities there. This is evidenced by a report from Lieutenant General Vladimir Laxa on September 10th 1941, stating that Ustasha from Herzegovina were crossing into Bosnia “continuing with killings and looting.” Laxa warned: “Dissatisfaction with Ustasha actions is generalized, regardless of religion. It could lead to a general uprising in Bosnia. Order the removal of these Ustasha from Bosnia before it is too late.” Consequently, 417 Ustasha who fled from Italian forces in Herzegovina (mostly Muslims from Gacko and Mostar) established terror in Jajce and its surroundings. On September 16th, they slaughtered 158 Serbs in an Orthodox church, and even the governor of the Piva and Rama Region, Bahrija Kadić, fell out of favor with them.¹⁹⁰

Field Marshal Kvaternik conducted a thorough analysis of the “wild Ustasha”. He linked their emergence to the regions where the Chetnik organization was spreading, equating the two phenomena. Additionally, he somewhat justified their behavior, highlighting that among their members, “half of them were persecuted and tortured by the old Yugoslav police, and they were filled with hatred and wanted revenge against the Serbs.” For the others, he noted they were ‘speculators who joined the ranks of the “wild Ustasha” to avoid being called to military exercises (in the Home Guard), idlers, and people who loathed work but loved living well.’ Kvaternik emphasized that they were recruited “from all layers of the populace—peasants, workers, teachers, private and state officials, craftsmen, traders, etc.” He concluded that “this composition of the “wild Ustasha” clearly shows their mental disposition and what their goal and actions might be: nothing but violence, revenge, and looting.” However, he admitted that such units could not have emerged without the will of local or higher authorities, including Pavelić himself. He stressed that Pavelić protected the so-called “wild Ustasha” by defending the organizers of these units (such as Jure Francetić, Juco Rukavina, Mijo Babić, Ivo Herenčić, Franjo Sudar, and others) and that they did not act on their own initiative but in accordance

¹⁹⁰ A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 81–82.

with Pavelić's approval. In this way, Kvaternik believed, Pavelić wanted to intimidate the entire population of the NDH, including government officials, to strengthen his position as the sole and untouchable ruler. The highest number of "wild Ustasha" members was during the summer of 1941, when 25,000–30,000 "wild Ustasha" were active throughout the NDH. However, their numbers later decreased as they joined the ranks of the Ustasha Military, but their activities did not cease as long as the NDH existed.¹⁹¹ Consequently, the independent or, rather, "independent" actions of the "wild Ustasha", although formally outside the main levers of power, aligned with the state policy of persecution and killing. The "wild Ustasha", in a brutal manner and formally outside the system, implemented what the political and state leadership of the NDH wanted to achieve.

¹⁹¹ A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 83–84; L. Kralj, *The Ustashe Politics of Ethnic Cleansing*, pp. 87–97; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 64–66.

THE JUNE WAVE OF CRIMES AGAINST THE SERBS OF MOSTAR

Nothing good came from the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia for Serbs living in the Mostar region, just as it didn't in other parts of former Yugoslav territory where the NDH's authority extended either. The early days of Croatian rule, its treatment of Serbs, and statements from high-ranking state officials suggested that one of the main goals of the NDH was ethnic cleansing, primarily targeting the Serbian Orthodox population, which made up a third of the state's population. Soon, the creation of a legal framework began, that represented a complete break with the legacy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and in which, for all intents and purposes there was no place for Serbs. They were placed outside the law, and Croats were given the "legal right" to apply repressive measures. As early as April 17th a "Legal Decree for the Defense of the People and the State" (*Zakonska odredba za odbranu naroda i države*) was enacted. This decree stipulated that "whoever in any way harms or has previously harmed the honor and vital interests of the Croatian people or in any way endangers the survival of the Independent State of Croatia or state authority, even if the act remains only an attempt, is guilty of the crime of high treason", punishable by death. This legal decree gave the state system free rein to interpret "high treason" very broadly and to sentence it with the only prescribed penalty—death. The legislator deliberately gave free rein to "extraordinary people's courts" to interpret treason whenever and however they want-

ed and even to judge retroactively. The first such court was established in Zagreb on April 17th and then they were established throughout the NDH, leading thousands of innocent people to their deaths. The following day, on April 18th, a “Legal Decree on the Real Estate of So-Called Volunteers” (*Zakonska odredba o nekretninama tzv. dobrovoljaca*) was enacted, which confiscated land previously awarded to volunteers from World War I and their families (mainly Serbs) and declared it “Croatian national property.” On April 24th, the Ministry of Internal Affairs issued a “Legal Decree on the Prohibition of Possessing and Wearing All Decorations (“Orders and Medals”) of the former Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes and the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and all privileges acquired with those decorations” (*Zakonska odredba o zabrani držanja i nošenja svih odlikovanja (“ordenja i medalja”) bivše Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca i bivše Kraljevine Jugoslavije i svih povlastica stečenih tim odlikovanjima*), as well as a “Legal Decree on the Property of the Sokol Organization of the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia” (*Zakonska odredba o imovini Sokola bivše Kraljevine Jugoslavije*)), making all movable and immovable Sokol property the possession of the NDH. As early as April 25th, a “Legal Decree on the Prohibition of the Cyrillic script” (*Zakonska odredba o zabrani ćirilice*) and an “Implementation Order from the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the Legal Decree on the Prohibition of Cyrillic script” (*Provedbena naredba Ministarstva unutrašnjih poslova Zakonskoj odredbi o zabrani ćirilice*) were enacted, depriving a third of the population of the country of the right to even have inscriptions on their gravestones in their own script. All use of Cyrillic script in public and private life had to cease immediately, and all public inscriptions written in Cyrillic script had to be removed within three days.¹⁹² The “Legal Decree on the Transition from One Faith to Another” (*Zakonska odredba o prelazu iz jedne vjere u drugu*), adopted May 3rd, enabled the conversion of the Serbian Orthodox population to Catholicism, but

¹⁹² The manner in which this was enforced in Mostar during the existence of the NDH is best illustrated by an example from late April 1944, when Andrija Ivanković reported Stevo Janjić, with whom he had traded grain, to the police authorities because Janjić had used Cyrillic script in their business correspondence. (VA, NDH, b. 157, f. 15, doc. Nr. 52).

only its poorer and less educated segments. In the following days and weeks, “The Legal Decree on Extraordinary Courts” (*Zakonska odredba o prijekim sudovima*), the “Legal Decree on Sending Undesirable and Dangerous Persons to Forced Residence in Concentration and Labor Camps” (*Zakonska odredba o upućivanju nepoćudnih i pogibeljnih osoba na prisilan boravak u sabirne i radne logore*), thus enabling the creation of an entire system of camps in the NDH that were nothing more than death camps, the “Legal Decree on the Protection of Aryan Blood and the Honor of the Croatian People” (*Zakonska odredba o zaštiti arijevske krvi i časti hrvatskog naroda*), the “Legal Decree on the Mandatory Declaration of Jewish Property and Jewish Enterprises” (*Zakonska odredba o obaveznoj prijavi imetka Židova I židovskih preduzeća*) and many other decrees were adopted, aimed at giving primacy to one people over another, whose homes, properties, villages, and cities were found on the territory of the newly created NDH.¹⁹³

The many statements of high-ranking political representatives also clearly indicated what awaited the Serbs in the new state. Min-

¹⁹³ *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 10–12, 17, 30, 41, 341, p. 16–17, 25–27, 49–51, 66, 851–852; A. Miletić, *Koncentracioni logor Jasenovac*, I, Doc. Nr. 1, 2, 33, p. 47–51, 98–100; N. Živković, P. Kačavenda, *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*, Doc. Nr. 6, 24–25, 36, 133, p. 78, 97–98, 106–107, 231–232; *Документи о геноциду над Србима у Босни и Херцеговини*, doc. Nr. 7, 9, p. 152–153, 155–156; Буро Затезало, *Јаговно. Зборник докумената*, II, Београд 2007, doc. Nr. 2–3, p. 24–25; „Zakonska odredba za obranu naroda i države“, *Narodne novine*, 17. IV 1941, p. 2; „Zakonska odredba za obranu naroda i države“, *Hrvatski narod*, 18. IV 1941, p. 3; „Zakonska odredba o zabrani ćirilice“, „Provedbena naredba ministarstva unutarnjih poslova zakonskoj odredbi o zabrani ćirilice“, *Narodne novine*, 25. IV 1941, p. 1; „U državi Hrvatskoj zabranjena je upotreba ćirilice“, *Hrvatski narod*, 26. IV 1941, p. 5; „Zakonska odredba o prelazu s jedne vjere na drugu“, *Narodne novine*, 5. V 1941, p. 1; „Zakonska odredba za obranu naroda i države“, *Sarajevski hrvatski list*, 6. V 1941, p. 3; „Zakonska odredba o prelazu s jedne vjere na drugu“, *Hrvatski narod*, 6. V 1941, p. 6; „Zakonska odredba o prijekim sudovima“, *Sarajevski novi list*, 22. V 1941, p. 3; Сима Симић, *Прекршићавање Срба за време Другој светској рату*, Титоград 1958, p. 27–30, 34–35; M. Colić, *Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 415–418, 424–425; B. Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, p. 117–121; M. Peršen, *Ustaški logori*, p. 28–30, 33–34; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 25–26; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеговачко*, I, p. 32–33; Саво Скоко, „Злочини геноцида Независне Државе Хрватске у Херцеговини током 1941.“, in: *Геноцид над Србима у II светском рату* (Ed. Милан Булајић), Београд 1995, p. 262–283; Н. Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 286, 293–294; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 58–60; Сања Савић, „Законодавна делатност у служби геноцидне политике Независне Државе Хрватске“, in: *Геноцид и злочини Независне Државе Хрватске над Србима, Јеврејима и Ромима у Другом светском рату*, Зборник саопштења и сјећања (Ed. Смиља Аврамов), Бања Лука 2014, p. 391–401; Filip Škiljan, *Organizirana prisilna iseljavanja Srba iz NDH*, Zagreb 2014, p. 40–47.

ister-President of the Legislative Commission Dr. Milovan Žanić said at a Ustasha rally in Nova Gradiška on June 3rd, 1941: “This state, our homeland, must be Croatian and no one else’s. And therefore, those who came here must leave. This should be the land of the Croats and no one else, and there is no method we Ustashas will not use to make this land truly Croatian and to cleanse it of Serbs who have threatened us for hundreds of years and would threaten us again at the first opportunity. We do not hide this; it is the policy of this state, and when we finish, we will only be executing what is written in the Ustasha principles.” On the same day, at a rally in Glina, the Minister of Justice and Religion, Mirko Puk, said: “Serbs in Croatia are a foreign element that poses a danger to the survival of the Croatian people.” Puk, a native of Glina, added: “It is already written in Emperor Leopold’s charter that these elements (i.e. Serbs) who settled among us will go back when the time comes, and now that time has come.” The newspaper “Hrvatski narod” from Zagreb published a statement by the Minister of Religion and Education, Mile Budak, in its issue of June 16th 1941: “We have not only the right but also the duty to request that the local Orthodox population recognize what they are that they act accordingly. We therefore have the right to say that if someone is a Serb, he has Serbia, and that is their homeland.” The aforementioned Žanić once again “impressed” at a rally in Daruvar on June 24th, when he said: “We Ustasha know that as long as the Serbian question is not resolved, this state will be disturbed.” Minister of Foreign Affairs Mladen Lorković said at a rally in Donji Miholjac on June 28th: “The Croatian people must cleanse themselves of all elements that are a misfortune for that people, who are foreign and alien to that people, who dilute its healthy forces, and who have pushed that people from one evil to another for decades and centuries. These are our Serbs and Jews.” According to some accounts, Minister Budak declared at an Ustasha rally in Gospić: “Part of the Serbs we will kill, part we will deport, and the rest we will convert to the Catholic faith and thus turn them into Croats.”¹⁹⁴ Given

¹⁹⁴ C. Симић, *Прекршћаванье Срба*, p. 41–45; F. Jelić-Butić, *Ustasha i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, p. 162–167; B. Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, p. 123–124; A. Miletić, *Ustaška fabrika*

such statements, it is evident that anti-Serb hysteria and the blaming of Serbs for all past misfortunes were noticeable at all levels of the Ustasha authorities. In such circumstances, it did not take much for the first bloodshed to occur.

On May 29th, one day after Croatian armed forces entered Mostar, a conference of Ustasha commissioners was held at the local Franciscan monastery. The participants of this conference agreed to take action against the Serbian and Jewish populations and formulated a comprehensive plan to exterminate the Serbs of Herzegovina. Present were all key figures involved in Ustasha activities, both in the Mostar area and across Herzegovina: Tomislav Mesić, the then Ustasha commander in Mostar, Dr. Ivan Musa, Stjepan Barbarić (a lawyer with a degree from the University of Belgrade), Ivan Zovko, Dr. Pavao Canki, Pero Jukić, Franjo Vego from Čapljina, Herman Togonal, Alija Šuljak and Smajo Kurtović from Gacko, Meho Salčin from Borač, future Governor Josip Troyer, Mate Roko, as well as recent Ustasha émigrés who were now “meritorious” fighters for the Ustasha cause: Jure Francetić, Mijo Babić, Zvonimir Pospíšil, and Ivo Herenčić.

It became clear from this meeting that the genocidal policy of the NDH in Herzegovina was led by Ustasha Ivo Herenčić and that he would have the broadest support in his “endeavor.” The evening meeting was also attended by representatives of the Catholic Church: reverend Andrija Majić, parish priest in Trebinje; Father Dr. Leo Petrović, the general vicar of Bishop Mišić and, from 1943, the provincial of the Herzegovinian Franciscans; Father Mijo Čuić, chaplain in Tomislavgrad; reverend Marko Zovko, parish priest in Stolac; reverend Ilija Tomas, parish priest in Klepci; reverend Tugomir Soldo, chaplain and catechist in Čapljina; Father Mladen Barbarić, professor at the Franciscan Theological School in Mostar; and Father Nikola Ivanković, parish priest in Jablanica.¹⁹⁵ All these priests were ardent Croatian nationalists, and most were Ustasha

smrti, p. 14–17; M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 210–212; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 20; Fadil Ademović, *Novinstvo i ustaška propaganda u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj. Štampa i radio u Bosni i Hercegovini (1941–1945)*, Sarajevo 2000, p. 357–358; J. Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji*, p. 441; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 79; F. Škiljan, *Organizirana prisilna iseljavanja*, p. 48–57.

¹⁹⁵ M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 617; Б. Н. Чучкович, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 217–221.

sympathizers who had already built an idealized view of the Ustasha movement and Pavelić himself before the war had started. The subsequent Ustasha authority and the actions of its representatives in the field led many to change their attitude towards the movement.

In the first days of NDH rule in the Mostar region, fear and anxiety spread among the Serbs. From the state proclaimed in Zagreb on April 10th 1941, during the whirlwind of the April War and with the Yugoslav Army's attempts to defend against concentric attacks from almost all sides, nothing good could be expected. The dark premonitions soon came true. On the first day of June 1941, the Ustasha massacres of Mostar Serbs began. On the night of May 31st/June 1st, a group of Ustasha arrested five Mostar residents: Dr. Fedor Lukač, head of the Banovina Hospital in Mostar, Mihailo Blanić, servant of the District Court in Mostar, Ljubo Kulaš, Luka Kulaš, and merchant Milan Vojinović, and took them to the village of Ortiješ on the banks of the Neretva River. During Luka Kulaš's arrest, his 26-year-old daughter Anka was raped. The son of Dr. Lukač, Sergije, later testified about the arrest before the Commissariat for Refugees and Migrants (Komesarijat za izbeglice i preseljenike) in Belgrade: "On the night of May 31st to June 1st, 1941, after midnight, 15 armed Ustasha in protective hunter uniforms broke into my parents' house. As soon as they entered the apartment, they demanded to see my father. Since he was known as a surgeon in Mostar, we initially thought they were coming for a medical intervention. The Ustasha ordered my father to get up immediately, get dressed, and go with them. While my father was dressing, the Ustasha were searching the apartment under the pretext of looking for weapons. When my father was dressed, the Ustasha specifically instructed him to bring as much money as possible because he was going on a long journey. The Ustasha demanded this solely for the purpose of looting. After that, the Ustasha took my father out of the apartment, put him in a truck waiting in front of the house, and drove off with him in an unknown direction."¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁶ AJ, 110–477, *Svedočenje Stanković Riste*; M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 618; Растислав В. Петровић, „Извештај Федора Лукача“, *НИИ*, 27. V 1990, p. 42–45; Rastislav V. Petrović, *Zavera protiv Srba*, Beograd 1990, p. 127–129; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 171.

Dr. Lukač later described what happened next: “We were all taken out of the car and pushed with rifle butts to the very bank of the Neretva River. This was accompanied by the most derogatory curses. There they told us to strip, and as I was the only one who wasn’t tied up, I managed to break free from the hands of the leader of that gang and jump into the swollen Neretva River, while my companions were brutally struck down with rifle butts.” The jump into the Neretva was a desperate attempt by the esteemed doctor to save his life, which in those days evidently was not worth much. After the war, he described the event: “By diving through the water, I managed to save myself on the other bank. When I was on the other bank, I heard three separate shots which killed my companions and then the dull splashing of bodies thrown into the water. Their brains and hair were found at the execution site the next day. During the entire time I was swimming, they fired at me frantically, but due to me diving and the night being dark, they did not hit me.”¹⁹⁷ Over the next eight days, he hid in Baćevići with a local resident, who soon informed an Italian officer that a reserve officer of the Yugoslav Army was with him. As a prisoner of war, he was taken to captivity in Italy. He remained there until Italy capitulated, after which he moved to Switzerland. Shortly after Dr. Lukač was taken away, his wife knocked on the door of Mostar Bishop Alojzije Mišić and sought help. In the following days, the bishop received phone threats because his house had briefly sheltered the wife of a Serb, a Serb marked for liquidation no less.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ AJ, 110–477, *Saslušanje svjedoka: Fjodor Lukač; Zločini Nezavisne Države Hrvatske i nemачкој окупайћора у Херцејовини*, I, doc. Nr. 2, 84, 87, p. 31–60, 397–398, 409; *Zločini Nezavisne Države Hrvatske i nemачкој окупайћора у Херцејовини 1941–1945*, II, Зборник докумената, Ed. Саво Скоко, Милан Граховац, Гацко/Београд 2012, doc. Nr. 4, p. 15–54; Novica Savić, „Ilegalci Baćevića“, in: *Zbornik sjećanja o ilegalnom NOP-u Mostara 1941–1945*, II, Mostar s.a.; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 33–34; D. K. Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, p. 111; Саво Скоко, „Етничко чишћење становништва у Херцеговини у Другом светском рату“, in: *Босна и Херцејовина од средњеј века до новијеј времена* (Ed. Славенко Терзић), Београд 1995, p. 245–260; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцејовачко*, I, p. 40; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Zločini у Херцејовини*, II, p. 234; С. Скоко, „Злочине геноцида НДХ у Херцеговини“, p. 265.

¹⁹⁸ Tomo Vukšić, „Mostarski biskup Alojzije Mišić (1912.–1942.) za vrijeme Drugoga svjetskog rata. Prilog proučavanju međucrkvenih i međunacionalnih odnosa“, *Crkva u svijetu*, Nr. 2/2006, p. 215–234.

The June Uprising in Herzegovina

The June reprisals by the Ustasha authorities against the Serbian population throughout Herzegovina led to an uprising. In the early morning hours of June 1st, arrests and killings of Serbs began in the areas of Trebinje, Gacko, Nevesinje, Stolac, and Ljubinje. The massacre in the village of Udrežnje near Nevesinje in the early morning of June 2nd was the first mass Ustasha crime in the eastern part of Herzegovina. The village of Udrežnje was known for a large number of volunteers fighting on the Salonica front and a large number of members of the Sokol organization, which was one of the key motivating factors for the attack on the village and the crimes committed. That morning, 27 residents of Udrežnje were killed, or more precisely, slaughtered. The news of this caused fear throughout the area, and information spread that a similar action was planned the next day for the village of Donji Drežanj. The villagers gathered, pulled out some weapons they had, decided to hide the women and children in the forest, and organized a defense of the village. Indeed, when a bus with about twenty protective hunters (*zaštitni lovci*) appeared around 10 AM on June 3rd, the Drežanj residents, led by Obren Ivković, fired from all available weapons. The protective hunters, under the command of Mihovil Zimšek, came with the intention to confiscate “firearms and other war material.” The gunfire from the Drežanj residents marked the beginning of armed conflicts in Herzegovina, which lasted from June 3rd to 24th. Learning of the resistance provided to the protective hunters, reinforcements of about 300 soldiers, home guards, and Ustasha led by Franjo Sudar and Rudolf Kučer arrived, breaking the defense of the village and forcing the armed villagers to retreat. Croatian forces entered the village and burned down around twenty houses. Two women and a baby who had not been evacuated were killed. Even so, the resistance lasted long enough to allow for most of the villagers to retreat to the mountains and thus save themselves from certain death.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁹ Угљеша Даниловић, „Устанак у Херцеговини јун 1941–јун 1942“, in: *Херцеговина у НОБ*, Ed. Милинко Ђуровић, Слободан Шакога, Радомир Петковић, Београд 1961, р. 25–39; Branko Kovačević, Savo Skoko, „Junski ustanak u Hercegovini 1941.“, in: *Istorija radničkog pokreta*, I (Ed. Pero

In addition to the massacre in Udrežnje and the resistance of the Drežanj residents, a significant impetus for the uprising in Herzegovina was also given by the Ustasha massacre in Korita near Gacko. The task of the Ustasha units formed in the Gacko area was to “cleanse” the border zone towards Montenegro. In the last days of May, accompanied by about fifteen Ustasha, Ustasha captain Herman Krešo Togonal, originally from Travnik, arrived in Gacko to expand the authority of the new state to that area. Consequently, the Gacko Preparatory Ustasha Battalion was formed on May 29th with about 400 members.²⁰⁰ Around that time, a truck arrived in Korita carrying 30–40 armed men. They settled in the school building. In the days that followed, they confiscated supplies from the local store and, under the pretext of looking for weapons, searched several houses. On June 1st, they arrested two young men from Korita, beat them, and took them to Gacko. The next day, they summoned all male residents aged 16–60 to gather in front of the Sokol home, where representatives of the new authorities would explain the conditions under which they could cross the Croatian-Montenegrin border. However, it was a deception. The gathered men from Korita were arrested and detained in the premises of the Sokol home (125 of them) and the elementary school (11 of them). They were held there for three full days in small and stuffy rooms, and their families were only allowed to bring them food. On June 4, captain Togonal addressed them, demanding they hand over hidden weapons. Soon after

Morača), Beograd 1965, p. 89–167; Savo Skoko, Milan Grahovac, „Junski ustanak“, in: *Hercegovina u NOB, april 1941.–jun 1942.*, II, Ed. Sveto Kovačević, Beograd 1986, p. 409–439; Đoko Pašajlić, „Dru-ga Nevesinjska puška“, in: *Hercegovina u NOB, april 1941.–jun 1942.*, II, Ed. Sveto Kovačević, Beograd 1986, p. 449–463; Драган Војиновић, „Јунски устанак у Херцеговини и Тринаестојулски устанак у Црној Гори“, in: *Друџи свјетјски рай – 50 љодина касније*, I (Ed. Владо Стругар), Подгорица 1997, p. 703–712; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеџовачко*, I, p. 105–112; Ђорђе О. Пиљевић, „Јунски устанак у Херцеговини 1941. године“, in: *Српска љроза данас. Јунски устанак у Херцеџовини 1941.*, Ed. Радослав Братић, Билећа/Гацко/Београд 2002, p. 741–777; Божидар Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеџовини у Друџом свјетјском райу*, I, Требиње 2003, p. 484–486; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sječanja*, p. 93–94; Бошко Буха, „Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске над Србима, Јеврејима и Ромима од 1941–1945. године на подручју Невесиња“, in: *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске над Србима, Јеврејима и Ромима 1941–45 љодине на љросјџору Херцеџовине*, Зборник (Ed. Владимир Лукић), Бања Лука 2014, p. 129–160.

²⁰⁰ A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 193.

his speech, the mistreatment of the detainees began, followed by their transport to Kobilja Glava, where they were mostly killed with blunt objects and thrown into the Golubinka pit.²⁰¹ During the night of June 4/5, 140 residents of Korita were killed and thrown into the Golubinka pit. This was the first of two major atrocities against the residents of Korita perpetrated in the summer of 1941. In the following days, another 27 residents were killed and thrown into the same pit. This brought the total number of victims from Korita in those early June days to 167. The killers of the Korita Serbs were mostly Muslims from Gacko and the surrounding villages – Kula Fazlagića and Gračanica.²⁰² Due to the number of killed and the brutality displayed during their extermination, the Korita pit has remained a symbol of the suffering of Serbs, not only in the Herzegovina but during the existence of the NDH in general.

The news of the massacre in Korita quickly spread through the villages around Gacko and Bileća, causing fear and panic among the population, who began to hide en masse in the surrounding forests and hills, with some crossing into Montenegro. People retrieved hidden weapons and anything that could help and started attacking Ustaša gendarmerie stations. Around 300 armed Serbs gathered at dawn, on June 6th, on the hill of Gat. Raising the Serbian flag over the old Austro-Hungarian fortress, they marked the beginning of a full-scale uprising. On the night of June 6th/7th, the gendarmerie station in Ka-

²⁰¹ The Golubinka Pit on Kobilja Glava is 23 meters deep. (Dane R. Lastavica, *Bez dane jame Nezavisne Države Hrvatske ždernača srpskog naroda 1941–...?*, Beograd 2008, p. 169).

²⁰² AJ, 110, *Dosije Togonal Hermana Kreše; Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 62, p. 108–110; *Документи о іеноциду над Србима у Босни и Херцеговини*, doc. Nr. 31, p. 188–189; Radovan Papić, *Hercegovina u revoluciji (sjećanja, analize, dokumenti)*, Sarajevo 1985, p. 81–86; M. Vulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 473–481; C. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеговачко*, I, p. 47–61; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, I, p. 299–395; D. Marijan, „Lipanski ustanak u istočnoj Hercegovini“, p. 550–551; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 95–108; Саво Скоко, „Злочини геноцида Независне Државе Хрватске и њемачког окупатора у Гацку 1941–1944. године“, in: *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске над Србима, Јеврејима и Ромима 1941–45 іодине на іросііору Херцеговине*, Зборник (Ed. Владимир Лукић), Бања Лука 2014, p. 85–110; Милорад Носовић, „Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске над Србима, Јеврејима и Ромима од 1941–1945. на подручју општине Билећа“, in: *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске над Србима, Јеврејима и Ромима 1941–45 іодине на іросііору Херцеговине*, Зборник (Ed. Владимир Лукић), Бања Лука 2014, p. 369–399.

zanci was taken without a fight, and the next day, June 7th, the stations in Stepen and Jasenik were also captured. The attacks on the three gendarmerie stations were led by Dušan Mandić and Blagoje Boljanović. When the gendarmerie station in the village of Vrba fell into the hands of the insurgents, it was a notable success, as four gendarmerie stations were captured in just two days, forming a long front-line— from Jasenik to Kobilja Glava. Behind this line, lay a liberated territory of significant size, encompassing around ten villages with a Serbian majority. The plan to attack the Ustasha-Home Guard garrison in Avtovac was postponed because the Ustasha threatened to kill 150 the Serbs they had arrested in the town and its surroundings in the days prior.²⁰³ The initial attacks on the gendarmerie stations represented a small and limited, yet organized, sign of resistance against the Ustasha authorities, giving the Serbian population in that part of Herzegovina hope that they could defend themselves against the Ustasha massacres threatening the area.

Although sporadic conflicts occurred in the following days, a certain lull prevailed. The broader uprising in Herzegovina began about ten days later, lasting from June 24th to July 7th. A new impetus for the uprising was given by Germany's attack on the Soviet Union, which the Serbian population perceived as a blow by the Germans against the Russians. The attempt by Ustasha forces on June 23rd to punish the villages that had previously resisted them, clear the border zone, and regain the gendarmerie stations in Kazanci, Stepen, and Jasenik failed, simultaneously encouraging the insurgents. In that fierce battle, one of the assassins of King Alexander in Marseille, Zvonimir Pospišil, was killed. On the night of June 23rd/24th, the gendarmerie station in Luka-

²⁰³ *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 79, p. 144–148; B. Kovačević, S. Skoko, „Junski ustanak u Hercegovini 1941.“, p. 106–107, 109–111; S. Skoko, M. Grahovac, „Junski ustanak“, p. 415–418; S. Skoko, *Krvaavo kolo hercegovacko*, I, p. 112–125; Savo Skoko, „Заузимање хрватских оружничких постаја у Казанцима, Степену и Јасенику“, in: *Српска ђроза данас. Јунски усђанак у Херцеђовини 1941.*, Ed. Радослав Братић, Билећа/Гацко/Београд 2002, p. 695–710; Петар Б. Мандић, *Јунски усђанак Срба у Херцеђовини 1941.*, Београд 2003, p. 93–101, 117–136; D. Marijan, „Lipanski ustanak u istočnoj Hercegovini“, p. 551–554; Драга Мاستиловић, „О попу Радојици Перишићу и Јунском устанку херцеговачких Срба 1941. године“, *Религија*, Nr. 1–2/2004, p. 7–22; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 111–119.

vac was blocked, and by dawn, so was the one in Rilje. In Lukavac, the insurgents executed all 15 gendarmes who had surrendered to them, and in Rilje, all six. According to reports from the Croatian authorities, about 600 insurgents participated in these operations, of which about 400 were armed. On the same night, on the orders of Lieutenant Sudar, all Serbs over the age of 16 in Gacko were arrested, 26 of whom were killed that same night.

As the uprising spread to more territories, a plan was made to liberate Nevesinje. The attack on Nevesinje, which housed about 900 Ustasha, was launched from three directions on June 24th. However, the fierce resistance of the Ustasha prevented the capture of the town, and reinforcements arriving from Mostar further reduced the insurgent's chances. After a brief pause, it was agreed to attack Nevesinje again on the night of June 24th/25th.²⁰⁴ Despite using the element of surprise and the fact that significant insurgent forces were united for the first time, the Ustasha garrison in Nevesinje held out. On June 25th, around 5:30 PM, the insurgents attacked the gendarmerie station in Fojnica, killing one gendarme, causing three to flee, and capturing two. Clearly, the few gendarmes in the mentioned stations were easy prey for the armed insurgent units.

Beyond the Nevesinje area, the uprising also spread in the Gacko region. The insurgents, led by Captain Milorad Popović, Lieutenant Dušan Bajagić, and priest Radojica Perišić, decided to attack Kula Fazlagića, Avtovac, and Gacko. The attack began in the early morning hours of June 28th, Vidovdan. Despite fierce defense by about 300 home guards and Ustasha, Avtovac fell into the insurgents' hands by the evening of

²⁰⁴ *Зборник докумената и података о Народноослободилачком рату југословенских народа*, том IV, књига 1, *Борбе у Босни и Херцеговини 1941 год.*, Београд 1951, doc. Nr. 233, p. 520; Невенка Бајић, „Јунски устанак у горњој Херцеговини 1941 године“, *Годишњак Историјског друштва Босне и Херцеговине*, VIII/1956, p. 225–244; В. Ковачевић, S. Skoko, „Јунски устанак у Херцеговини 1941.“, p. 123, 125–128; S. Skoko, M. Grahovac, „Јунски устанак“, p. 423–427; Milosav Čabrilo, „Između Veleža i Sniježnice“, in: *Hercegovina u NOB, april 1941.–jun 1942.*, II, Ed. Sveto Kovačević, Beograd 1986, p. 790–804; Митар Буха, „Јуриши и узмаци устаника“, in: *Херцеговина у НОБ, април 1941.–јуни 1942.*, III, Београд 1986, p. 419–442; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеговачко*, I, p. 125–141; П. Б. Мандић, *Јунски усјанак*, p. 175–178, 202–207; D. Marijan, „Lipanski ustanak u istočnoj Hercegovini“, p. 556; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 125–129.

the same day. In the battles around Avtovac, there were dozens of deaths on all sides, and the events around Nevesinje and Avtovac also influenced the spread of the uprising to the surroundings of Bileća, Stolac, and Trebinje. However, the insurgents held Avtovac for only one day. On June 28th, Croatian aviation intervened several times, and the insurgents were very successful in firing at the planes. One hit plane made an emergency landing near Stepen, another returned to its airfield after repairs, and a third landed near Prača. During the battles around Avtovac, the insurgents also fired on two trucks with Italian soldiers sent from Bileća to Avtovac. Three were killed, and 17 Italian soldiers were wounded. It seemed that the insurgents had quite solid chances of capturing Gacko, defended by only 20 gendarmes and 30 Ustasha. In the battles for Gacko, eight soldiers and one officer were killed. However, the liberation of Gacko was prevented by the arrival of significant Italian forces on June 29th, who then continued from Gacko towards Avtovac.²⁰⁵

During the night of June 30th to July 1st, a decisive insurgent attack on Gacko was expected, but nothing happened. When an Italian tank unit arrived in the Herzegovinian town the next day, it became clear that the liberation of Gacko would not occur at that time. At the beginning of July, combined Italian and Croatian forces launched a coordinated action aimed at finally crushing the Herzegovinian uprising. A group of Ustasha led by Captain Mijo Babić, who had arrived from Zagreb the same day as Deputy Deputy-Marshal Laxa, began an operation on July 3rd to clear insurgent forces from the Stolac area. However, this operation did not go smoothly. The insurgents resisted, and during one firefight, Mijo Babić was killed. As the Italians managed to

²⁰⁵ Зборник докумената и њогајака о НОР-у, IV-1, док. № 228, 231, 236, р. 513–514, 517, 524–526; Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајора у Херцејовини, I, док. № 2, р. 31–60; В. Ковачевић, S. Skoko, „Јунски устанак у Херцеговини 1941.“, р. 133–136; S. Skoko, M. Grahovac, „Јунски устанак“, р. 428–434; Данило Јањушевић, „Напади на Автовач“, in: *Херцејовина у НОБ, април 1941.–јуни 1942.*, III, Београд 1986, р. 157–161; Ђорђе Пиљевић, „Ослободилачки покрет у Херцеговини у Другом светском рату“, in: *Друји свјетски рај – 50 година касније*, I (Ед. Владо Стругар), Подгорица 1997, р. 655–681; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцејовачко*, I, р. 142–157; Саво Скоко, „Ослобођење Автовца“, in: *Српска проза данас. Јунски устанак у Херцејовини 1941.*, Ед. Радослав Братић, Билећа/Гацко/Београд 2002, р. 711–726; П. Б. Мандић, *Јунски устанак*, р. 179–199; D. Marijan, „Lipanjki ustanak u istočnoj Hercegovini“, р. 563–565; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, р. 129–133.

secure the Gacko region, Croatian forces could focus on “clearing” the Nevesinje area, with the main goal of reaching the state border with Montenegro. This task was assigned to a special military unit named “Nevesinjska Gromada” (Nevesinje Colossus). The “Gromada” included four marching battalions (6th, 11th, 15th, and 17th), one company from the 18th battalion, and an artillery company. It consisted of 407 officers and non-commissioned officers and 1,728 soldiers. On July 5th, infantry colonel Franjo Šimić was appointed as its commander. The “Gromada” advanced in two columns - one towards Gacko and the other one towards Berkovac. Although the insurgents resisted until July 7th, the Italian and Ustasha-Home Guard forces took control of all major communications and settlements in the previously insurgent-held territory. Some insurgents crossed into Montenegro, while others retreated to the hills. The encounter between the Italian motorized column, which unblocked the Bileća-Avtovac-Gacko road, and the Home Guard unit advancing from Nevesinje near Fojnica on July 7th marked the symbolic collapse of the June Uprising in Herzegovina. Thus, the entire liberated territory was reoccupied, and the June Uprising was suppressed. However, despite being short-lived, the uprising demonstrated significant strength and achieved notable results. Ten gendarmerie stations (Kazanci, Stepen, Jasenik, Lukavac, Rilje, Morine, Fojnica, Krstače, and Zmijanac) and the Ustasha-Home Guard garrison in Avtovac were captured, significant quantities of weapons were seized, and substantial material and human losses were inflicted on the occupying forces. A larger liberated territory was briefly created in the regions of Bileća, Trebinje, and Ljubinje.²⁰⁶

The Vidovdan Massacres

The departure of Italian forces marked the beginning of repression by Croatian authorities against the Serbs and Jews of Herzegovina. They were expelled from their jobs, their shops and workshops were con-

²⁰⁶ B. Kovačević, S. Skoko, „Junski ustanak u Hercegovini 1941.“, p. 137, 146–147; S. Skoko, M. Grabovac, „Junski ustanak“, p. 437–439; C. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеговачко*, I, p. 158–176; D. Marijan, „Lipanjski ustanak u istočnoj Hercegovini“, p. 566–568.

fiscated, the normal practice of religious services was disrupted, and Jews were required to visibly wear the Star of David on their arms. The treatment of Serbs in those June days, at the very beginning of Independent State of Croatia exercising full authority over the area of Hercegovina, is best illustrated by two incidents. The few remaining Serbian officials were excluded when, on June 13th 1941, in Mostar, it was time to “celebrate for the first time in the liberated country” the name day of the leader Pavelić. According to the established program, the celebration was to be opened by the Croatian Music playing reveille at six o’clock in the morning. Then, at eight o’clock, there was supposed to be prayer at the Karadoz Bey Mosque, and at nine o’clock, a solemn mass in the Roman Catholic Church. All officials and employees of the Roman Catholic faith had to attend the mass in the church, while Muslims had to attend prayers at the mosque. During this period, all shops were to be closed, and in the afternoon, all guesthouses as well. A ceremonial academy was planned at ten o’clock in the premises of the Croatian Singing Society “Hrvoje”, and at eleven o’clock, the Croatian and Italian military parade would pass through the Freedom Square. However, the prayer in the mosque in honor of Pavelić was canceled by a subsequent decision. The celebration of “the leader’s day” ended with an evening concert by the Croatian Music in Freedom Square.²⁰⁷ On the other hand, as early as June 21st, the Ustasha commissioner in Mostar, Ivan Hočevan, summoned prominent Serbian figures in Mostar, such as Dr. Mile Dokić, priest Vladimir Gvozdrenović, Đorđe Peško, Dr. Vaso Semiz, Milan Čereković, and Aleksa Salatić, and demanded from them a “written guarantee for absolute order in Herzegovina.” Just based on these two June moves by the Croatian authorities, we can see that the Serbs were treated as second-class citizens and were already suspected of anything bad that might happen in the city in the coming period.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ *Койшарска обласћ у Мосџару, Свим државним и самоуправним уредима, друштвима и устјановама у граду Мосџару, Мосџар 11. лийња 1941, Нр. 837/41* (a privately owned copy of the document).

²⁰⁸ I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 172.

In the following days, things went even further. The Ustasha commander in Mostar, Ivan Zovko, issued an order on June 23rd which stated that: “1) More than two Serbs are not allowed to move together in the city or associate; 2) Jews and Serbs are not allowed to go out together or associate at all; 3) After eight o’clock in the evening, Serbs and Jews must be in their homes; 4) Jews and Serbs, when shopping in stores, must wait for Croats to have their needs met before making purchases; 5) Jews will only shop in their stores; 6) Serbs and Jews are not allowed to walk in public places or sit in Freedom Square; 7) Serbs and Jews are not allowed to dance in public venues. Any violation will be punished on the spot, without exception.” At that time, signs started appearing in the city, saying: “Entry Forbidden for Jews, Serbs, Gypsies, and dogs!” As witnessed by Danilo Bilanović: “The authorities ordered such notices to be written, but they were mainly put up by owners whose guesthouses were already known gathering spots for Ustashas, scoundrels. However, many owners did not put up such notices on the doors of their guesthouses.”²⁰⁹ Just three days later (June 26th), a new order signed by the Ustasha commander Ivan Zovko was issued: “I order that from the moment of the publication of this order, Serbs and Jews are not allowed to move freely in the streets or leave their homes until further notice. Violators of this order will be punished immediately.” It was known that the punishment was execution. Thus, Serbs were forced to be “safe” – at home, where the new authorities could most easily find them.²¹⁰

Fear for their lives and the intention to provoke the new authorities as little as possible, so as not to increase repression, made the Serbs, for the most part, obey the order. They stayed at their homes. Thanks to this fact, the Ustasha authorities began arrests on June 26th targeting

²⁰⁹ *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 71, p. 128–129; Danilo Bilanović, „Crvena mladost Mostara“, in: *Zbornik sjećanja o ilegalnom NOP-u Mostara 1941–1945*, I, Mostar, s. a.; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 26–27; D. K. Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, p. 112; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеџовачко*, I, p. 39–40; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеџовини*, II, p. 217–221; Ђ. Затезало, *Јаговно*, I, p. 266; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 172.

²¹⁰ Менсур Сеферовић, „Трг Слободе без Срба и Жидова“, *Борба*, 7. II 1990, p. 15; Ђ. Затезало, *Јаговно*, I, p. 266.

these people, whether in their homes, gardens, fields, or shops, as well as on the streets and squares if they happened to be there. They were arrested during the day and night, without warning, without suspicion, and without reason. The motive for their arrest was their national affiliation, their religion, and the collective guilt label that the new authorities mercilessly attached to them. Within three days (from June 26th to June 28th), about 450 Serbs from Mostar were arrested.²¹¹ They were imprisoned in the gendarmerie barracks or in the building of the school that until then bore the name of the Yugoslav queen Marija. The Ustasha authorities arrested almost everyone – intellectuals, workers, peasants, artisans, merchants, retirees. The educated and wealthy members of the Serbian community were specifically targeted, as the Serbs needed to be decapitated and left without potential leaders.

The arrests of Mostar Serbs at the end of June of 1941 were vividly described by Danilo Bilanović: “Mass arrests of Serbs began on June 26th 1941, and continued into July. The Ustasha wore civilian clothes, only wearing a cap with the U sign on their heads. Their rifles hung on straps. They went from house to house and took all males over 15, or those who appeared to be over fifteen. They herded them into the streets, and then, in a pile, towards the former gendarmerie barracks and elsewhere. They waited for trains at the railway station and sorted them like cattle - some to the side while others were allowed to return home. They also waited for people at the exit from the mining pit or at the factory gate when the shift ended, and took them away as they found them. Few were allowed to bring a coat or blanket from home. Women and children screamed. Mothers dragged their children by the sleeve and appealed to the Ustasas: “Don’t, in the name of God. He’s my only

²¹¹ *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајтора у Херцеговини*, I, doc. Nr. 2, p. 31–60; *Документна о џеноциду над Србима у Босни и Херцеговини*, p. 57–58; M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 619; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 165; Đorđe O. Piljević, „Ustanak u Hercegovini juna 1941. godine“, *Vojnoistorijski glasnik*, Nr. 1/1990, p. 29–94; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеговачко*, I, p. 99; Саво Скоко, „Страдање Срба града и среза Мостара 1941. године“, in: *Срби у Мостару. Расправе и ојледи* (Ed. Боривоје Пиштало), Београд 2001, p. 293–312; Ђорђе О. Пиљевић, „Геноцид у Херцеговини у Другом светском рату 1941–1945. године“, in: *Геноцид у 20. веку на њосјорима југословенских земаља* (Ed. Јован Мирковић), Београд 2005, p. 174–211; С. Скоко, „Злочини геноцида НДХ у Херцеговини“, p. 273–274.

child. Remember your mother!" No one paid attention. Some would get hit with a rifle butt. The hunt would abruptly end, as it had begun.²¹²

Among the Serbs from Mostar arrested in those days was Risto Ljoljić. As testified later by his son Ilija, a witness to the arrest, Risto Ljoljić was arrested on Vidovdan: "On Vidovdan of 1941, unknown Ustaša, young men from the Ljubuški district, wearing traditional attire called kikali, took my father Ljoljić Risto to the gendarme barracks in Mostar. The next morning, my mother went to the barracks to see what had happened to my father. They told her that he was ready and that he had been transferred to the hospital. In the hospital, she found him severely injured, beaten, bruised, and a pool of blood beneath him, all as a result of torture from the previous night. He succumbed to that torture."²¹³ In the days following these mass arrests of Serbs, "women were going from threshold to threshold with food and blankets," as testified by Danilo Bilanović: "They were preparing them from one place to another, from the police to the former Queen Maria elementary school, from there to the former gendarmerie station, Čelovina, etc. They laughed and cursed. They took food and other things, promising to deliver it to the prisoners, or they simply took what the women were carrying and threw them home. After that, almost the entire war, families comforted each other: some said they were taken to work in Germany, some to some camp, etc."²¹⁴

After the completion of the three-day arrest operation, a hellish night followed during which the detainees were killed on bridges over the Neretva, at Skakavac, in Sutina, near the Ortiževo cemetery, in Ilići, near the coal mine, and in other places. They were killed with knives, hammers, clubs, and other cold weapons, thrown into numerous pits that nature had created in the scarce Herzegovinian soil. One of the rare survivors, Dušan Aničić, who was a mechanic at the Mostar airport before the war, testified about the killings on the banks of the Neretva, which were carried out by bringing the captured Serb to the

²¹² D. Bilanović, „Crvena mladost Mostara“.

²¹³ M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 620.

²¹⁴ D. Bilanović, „Crvena mladost Mostara“.

shore, hitting him with a stone on the head, and then throwing him dead or half-dead into the Neretva. Aničić saved himself by jumping into the Neretva, just before he was pushed into it by the Ustasha Dizdar. Aničić later described: “When I saw that there was no escape, I jumped aside as if scared, and then I ran and jumped into the water. A big stone hit me on the head while running, and I was well-bloodied from it. I was an exceptional swimmer, so even though my hands were tied, I managed to dive and pull myself under a steep cliff from which I jumped. There was a strip of sand about a meter wide; I surfaced on that sand and kept quiet. Dizdar couldn’t approach the Neretva at that spot, and it was pitch dark, so he couldn’t spot me from the side. I don’t know what was happening above me, nothing could be seen because of the darkness, and the Neretva was breaking through many caves at that spot, so it was noisy. After some time, I heard some objects falling into the water next to me with some time intervals. I couldn’t see what it was because of the darkness, but I later found out that it was the bodies of Danilo Radović, Lazo Ivanišević, Špiro Prodanović, Branko Šupljeglav, Mihajlo Bilić, Lazo Vuković, Vidoje Medan, Vasilije Salatić, and Šćepan Ćirić. I waited for some more time, and when everything quieted down, I continued with attempts to cut the wire with which I was tied, rubbing it against the cliff. I managed to cut some wires, the copper ones, while I couldn’t cut the main, steel reinforcing wire, so it dug even deeper into my already swollen hands.”²¹⁵

A number of those arrested were taken towards Čitluk, Ljubuški, and Široki Brijeg by truck. Trucks left Mostar full, and returned empty. The only Serb who survived that trip was Stevo Milićević, whom his wife, a Muslim woman, almost pulled out of the pit. In the pit in the village of Služanj, as later testified by Milićević, prominent Mostar merchants Risto Čolović, Đorđo S. Čolović, Dušan Hamović, Mitar Hamović, Ilija Toholj, Milan Čereković, Đorđe Peško, Todor Njunjić, Dušan Komad, Mića Miljević, Veselin Komnenović, Pero Radulović, and former president of the Singing Society “Gusle”, Ljubomir Šain,

²¹⁵ Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 221–223, 251–252.

lost their lives. Along with them, Risto Vujičić, blacksmith Svetozar Toholj, wine cellar owners Branko Čereković, Ljubomir Krulj, and Jovo Oborina, priests Dušan Aškrabić, Vukašin Petković, and Petar Pejanović, Professor Dušan Mučibabić, tailor Savo Kablar, shop assistant Mladen Milutinović, engineer Mirko Kovačević, clerk Strahinja Čabak, farmer Miho Borozan, as well as Trifko Trklja, also perished. It is estimated that at least 160 Mostar Serbs were killed at that time.²¹⁶

The responsibility for the arrest of Ljubomir Šain, Pero Radulović, and Milan Kadijević directly lies with the Ustasha from Jara near Široki Brijeg, Marko Zelenika, and a member of the Ustasha headquarters in Mostar, originally from Čerin near Čitluk, Šimun Buntić. Their driver, Ibro Hromić, whom the District Court in Mostar sentenced to six years in prison after the war, as well as several other witnesses, confirmed the responsibility of the aforementioned two for the arrest of several Serbs, including Šain, Radulović, and Kadijević, and their taking to the Ustasha prison in the gendarmerie barracks. The former president of "Gusle", Šain, was taken out of prison the same evening, together with Milan Kadijević, Đorđe Peško, Risto Čolović, Ilija Toholj, and Risto Vujičić. They were taken out around ten o'clock in the evening by the aforementioned Šimun Buntić, Ustasha headquarters member Ivan Zovko, and Ustasha aide Križan Ostojić, and taken to the turning for Medugorje on the road from Čitluk to Ljubuški. There, they were liquidated by a group of Ustasha who were waiting for them at that spot. When the perpetrators returned to Mostar, some eyewitnesses recognized Ljubomir Šain's suit and shoes on Arslan Selimhodžić, who was the driver of Ustasha officials in Mostar. Selimhodžić used the car confiscated from bishop Nikolaj (Jokanović) for the needs of the Ustasha headquarters. However, besides driving services, Selimhodžić, in all likelihood, also participated in some liquidations (per-

²¹⁶ Vlado Skiba, *Na posljednjem ispitu*, Mostar 1971, p. 25–26; D. K. Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, p. 113; S. Skoko, *Pokolj hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 165–166; С. Скоко, „Страдање Срба града и среза Мостара“, p. 294–295; Данило Тунгуз Перовић, *Страдање Срба у Херцеговини за време „Независне Државе Хрватске“*, Нови Сад/Србиње 2006, p. 43–47.

haps including Ljubomir Šain), for which he was sentenced to death by firing squad in November 1945.²¹⁷

The last days of June in 1941 were tragic for the Serbs living in the villages of the former Mostar district, then the Kotar of Mostar – Žitomislići, Pijesci, Bogodol, and Hodžići. Among the first to suffer was the brotherhood of the Žitomislići Monastery (15th century). A group of Ustasha, including the pre-war teacher in Blizanci near Čitluk Mate Primorac, municipal registrar Pero Martinović, Ivan Krndelj, Drago Galić, Mate Galić, Jozo Galić, Salko Krvavac, and Antiša Bradvica, came to the monastery on June 26th and arrested the abbot and all others they found in the monastery (a total of eight people). The brotherhood of the monastery was tied with wire and, with blows from rifle butts, transported to the village of Blizanci near Čitluk (from where Krndelj was). There they were brutally tortured, then slaughtered and thrown into the Vidoje pit on the night of June 26th/27th.²¹⁸ On that occasion, the abbot Konstantin (Vučurević) from Zubac near Trebinje, hieromonk Dositej (Vukićević), a native of Mostar, hierodeacon Makarije (Pejak), from Bijelo Polje near Mostar, theologians Branko Bilanović from Avtovac and Marko Prodanović from Mostar, a fifteen-year-old novice Obren Okiljević, from Ulcinj, secretary of the Church court protodeacon Vladimir Čejović, who happened to be in the monastery, and Mladen Šaran, from Ljuta near Konjic, a novice in the Rakovica monastery, who was then staying in Žitomislići, perished. With the loss of the entire brotherhood, the monastery was abandoned, and its treasury was looted. German soldier-miners (45 of them) moved into the one-story monastery building, and on December 1st 1941, a fire broke out above the premises where they stayed, which easily engulfed the entire building, largely made of wood. Judging by the statement of the monastery's steward Vukan Vukanović, the fire appeared from the

²¹⁷ *Окружни суд у Мосџару, Пресуда, Nr. Ко 321/46, Мосџар 14 јуна 1946.* (a privately owned copy of the document); *Окружни суд у Мосџару, Пресуда, Nr. Ко 27/45, Мосџар, 27. новембра 1945.* (a privately owned copy of the document).

²¹⁸ The Vidonja Pit is located in the area of today's Čitluk municipality. It is about 15 meters deep, with an opening 1.5 meters in diameter. At its bottom, the remains of all eight people arrested at the Žitomislić Monastery were found. (D. R. Lastavica, *Bezdane jame Nezavisne Države Hrvatske*, p. 283–284).

chimney above the room where the German soldiers lived. The mortal remains of the slaughtered brotherhood were exhumed from the bottom of the Vidoje pit at the end of 1990 and laid to rest in the marble tomb next to the monastery church on February 3rd 1991. In mid-June of the following year, almost at the beginning of the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, members of the Croatian Defense Forces raised the monastery to the ground and mined the ossuary.²¹⁹

The morning after the brutal execution of the monastery brotherhood members, on June 27th, Ustasha again came to the village of Žitomislići, but not to the empty monastery, but they raided all the hamlets. They gathered up the men they found in the houses, fields, and gardens. About twenty residents of the village of Žitomislići were arrested. They were transferred to Mostar, where they were joined by the Žitomislići residents who worked in Mostar and who were arrested the day before. Their terrible fate brought them together, and their common end united them. It is not known how and where Branko Gačić, Vidoje Gačić, Vlado Gačić, Đoko Gačić, Ilija Gačić, Jovo Gačić, Lazo Gačić, Milan Gačić, Mirko Gačić, Savo I. Gačić, Savo P. Gačić, Stanko Gačić, Trifko Gačić, Ćetko Gačić, Lazar Ljoljić, Rajko Ljoljić, Borivoje Mićević, Branko Puhalo, Nikola Puhalo, Savo Puhalo, Branko Svrđlin, Rajko Svrđlin, Anđelko Simić, Božo Simić, Veselin Simić, Gojko Simić, Dušan Simić, Đuro Simić, Joksīm Simić, Maksim Simić, Nikola Simić, Risto Simić, Savo Simić and Dušan Sjeran died. According to the findings

²¹⁹ HDA, OUP, b. 7, 3986/41; Nezavisna Država Hrvatska, Oružnička postaja Buna, Velikoj župi Hum, Mostar, Manastir u Žitomisliću izgorijo izvešće dostavlja, Buna, 2 prosinca 1941. (private copy of the existing document); VA, NDH, b. 189, f. 7, doc. Nr. 56; *Документи о теноциду над Србима у Босни и Херцеговини*, p. 60; Љубинка Којић, *Манастир Житоумислић*, Сарајево 1983, p. 46–47; Митрополит добробосански Владислав, *Настојатељи манастира, монаштво и њихов рад на обнови и чувању манастира Житоумислића*, Житоумислић 1984, p. 21–22; М. Булајић, *Усташки злочини геносида*, I, p. 308, 313–314, 332, 346; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 168–169; Ђуро Екмечић, *Пребивовци нейреболна рана српска*, Београд 1994, p. 206, 208; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеговачко*, I, p. 100–101; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 201–204; Ђуро Сврđлин, *Житоумислић. Из прошлости села и манастира*, Српско Сарајево 2004, p. 205–212; Милијана Окић, *Васкрс Житоумислића*, Бања Лука 2005, p. 18; Б. Булатовић, *Спиритиштва у Босни и Херцеговини*, p. 59–60; Ј. Мирковић, *Страдање Српске православне цркве*, p. 539–540. The ones responsible for the brotherhood of the monastery perishing suffered different fates. Primorac emigrated to the USA, Martinović was killed while attempting to retreat from Yugoslav territory, and Krndelj was killed during the retreat in Slavonska Požega after someone recognized him.

of Đuro Ekmečić, all of them were killed in Jasenovac. This, however, presumably doesn't correspond to the truth. Some of the residents of Žitomislići perished in Jasenovac (certainly the brothers Branko and Ilija Gačić, as well as the namesake Vidoje), and some in the complex of camps Gospić-Jadovno-Pag (Savo and Vladimir Gačić were killed in Jadovno, and Maksim Simić was thrown into the Badanja pit), while for the majority, we do not have more relevant data on the place of suffering. Altogether, in the summer of 1941, 38 residents of Žitomislići perished, which is the majority of the victims of the war that this village suffered between 1941 and 1945.²²⁰

A group of about twenty Ustasha, led by Marko Puljić, an innkeeper from Gubavica,²²¹ Hajdar Kajtaz, also from Gubavica, Salko Đono, Božo Puljić from Mostar, Ahmet Rahimić, Ibro Rahimić, and Osman Rahimić, raided the Mostar village of Pijesci on June 27th. They arrested all Serbian residents present, even though they had previously guaranteed them freedom and peace if they continued to stay at their homes and perform agricultural work. One group of Serbs arrested, from Pijesci, was taken to Domanovići near Čapljina and locked up in the warehouse of the Tobacco Station (Duvanska Stanica). They were all quickly killed, and their bodies thrown into the Neretva or into a pit on Bivolje Brdo.²²² The second group was taken to Buna, briefly detained in the local school, and then killed. During those days, the following individuals suffered: Andrija Andrić, Vlado Andrić, Danilo Andrić, Dušan Andrić, Đorđe Andrić, Maksim Andrić, Mihajlo Andrić, Risto Andrić, Spaso Andrić, Vaso Kuzman, Danilo V. Kuzman, Danilo J. Kuzman, Đoko Kuzman, Ilija Kuzman, Milan Kuzman, Mitar Kuzman, Risto Kuzman, Branko Pudar, Danilo Pudar, Đorđe Pudar, Maksim Pu-

²²⁰ *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајтора у Херцеговини*, I, doc. Nr. 93, p. 424–426; *Žrtve rata 1941.–1945. Popis iz 1964. godine. SR Bosna i Hercegovina, Konjic-Sanski Most*, Beograd 1992, p. 1881–1882; Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 639, 648; Ђ. Екмечић, *Пребивовци*, p. 206–208; С. Скоко, „Страдање Срба града и среза Мостара“, p. 311.

²²¹ Marko Puljić was sentenced to 15 years in prison on May 23rd 1946.

²²² The pit on Bivolje Brdo is located about 11 kilometers from Čapljina. It is around 10 meters deep, and some authors claim that 456 bodies were thrown into it, which, considering its dimensions seems unlikely. (D. R. Lastavica, *Bezdanе jame Независне Државе Хрватске*, p. 161).

dar, Milan Pudar, Mitar Pudar, Novica Pudar, Panto Pudar, Risto Pudar, and Mirko Ćorluka. Their mutilated bodies speak of the tortures they endured. Andrija Andrić's brain was literally scattered from a severe blow with the butt of a rifle, Risto Pudar was impaled on a spit and rotated until he breathed his last breath, while Panto Pudar had his head literally crushed with a mallet. Risto Andrić seized a moment of inattention from the guards and jumped through a window, but, being on the third floor, he died from the fall. The circumstances under which the siblings, Đordo and Melanija Pavić, were killed in those June days remain entirely unclear. Đordo was 17, and Melanija was only 16 years old. The village of Pijesci lost a total of 30 residents, a majority of the casualties the village suffered during the war.²²³

In the early dawn of June 27th 1941, a group of around forty Ustaša, led by Andrija Rotim, Mijo Penava, Luka Musa, Božo Zelenika, and Martin Baričević, raided the village of Bogodol and arrested several men (Stevan Đ. Ivanišević, Spaso Ivanišević, Marko Ivanišević, Nikola Ivanišević, Luka Janjić, Boško Matković, Manojlo Matković, Milan Matković, Ljubo Matković, Pero Matković, Đorđe Matković, Ilija Matković, Savo Matković, and Spaso Matković) and two women (Stana Ivanišević and Veselinka Ivanišević). They were all taken to the village of Gradac near Široki Brijeg and massacred there. The men were thrown into one of the pits, while the women were buried in the courtyard of the elementary school in that village. Sixteen residents of Bogodol perished in just one day, which accounted for more than a third of the total casualties of World War II in that village. Thus, Bogodol became yet another village in the Mostar region to witness the black St. Vitus Day in 1941. However, the atrocities did not end there. Savo Bojanić, Luka Ivanišević, Pero Ivanišević, and Mitar Matković perished in Jasenovac,

²²³ The perpetrators of the killings in the village of Pijesci met different fates: Ibro Rahimić was killed by members of the communist resistance movement, Boško Puljić died as a Ustaša fighter, Salko Džono was sentenced to 18 years of forced labor but died during work in a quarry, Marko Puljić was sentenced to 15 years of forced labor and served 12, while Ahmet Rahimić and Osman Rahimić lived in Pijesci after the war. (*Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајтора у Херцеговини*, I, doc. Nr. 93, p. 424–426; *Spomenica Mostara 1941–1945.*, Mostar 1987, p. 112; *Žrtve rata 1941–1945. ВиН*, p. 1874; Ђ. Екмечић, *Пребиловци*, p. 208–210; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 195–196, 236–238).

while Stojan Matković was transported to Gospić and thrown into the pit of Badañ in August. In total, 38 residents of Bogodol lost their lives during the summer of 1941, which was the majority of the total number of Bogodol residents who perished in World War II.²²⁴

During those June days of 1941, the Serbian Orthodox Church in the Mostar area was decapitated. Bishop of Zahumlje and Herzegovina (1939–1943) Nikolaj (Jokanović), born in Šobadine near Bileća, escaped Ustasha repression thanks to the Italian military authorities and fled to Serbia, where he died on March 26th 1943. Protohierus Staurofor Savo Bukvić (1879–1941), born in Stolac, also escaped to Serbia at the beginning of the occupation, where he soon passed away. On the other hand, the priests who remained in their parishes endured a true tragedy. Deacon Dušan Aškrabić (1908–1941), born in Avtovac, a catechist in Mostar, was arrested with a large group of Mostar Serbs during the night of June 24th/25th. They were all loaded onto trucks on June 26th and sent to Široki Brijeg. However, Aškrabić was taken off the truck by the Ustasha on Marin's Bridge, slaughtered, and thrown into the Neretva River. Protohierus Staurofor Jefto Vujović (1894–1941), born in Simijova near Bileća, a member of the Church Court in Mostar, was, after horrific torture, thrown into a pit near the village of Služanj in the vicinity of Čitluk. A similar fate befell the then-arrested Mostar parish priests Protoierus Vladimir Gvozdenović (1866–1941), born in Duvno/Tomislavgrad, Vukašin Petković (1904–1941), born in Foča, and Petar Pejanović (1911–1941), a native of Mostar. Ognjen Radić (1907–1941), the parish priest in Mostar, born in Nevesinje, was also arrested on June 24th, and two days later, he was slaughtered on the Carinski Bridge and thrown into the Neretva. The suffering of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Mostar in the summer of the first year of the war was completed by the murder of military priest protoierus Dušan Krnjević (1882–1941), born in Fatnica near Bileća, who was arrested with a

²²⁴ Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајтора у Херцеговини, I, doc. Nr. 88, p. 410–412; *Žrtve rata 1941–1945*. ВиН, p. 1844–1845; С. Скоко, „Страдање Срба града и среза Мостара“, p. 298; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеговачко*, I, p. 101; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 191–193; Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 645.

large group of Serbs on July 20th, taken to the camp in Gospić, and thrown into a pit on Grgin's Brijeg on August 5th. Precisely because of that, as the District Administration for Public Order and Security (Ravnateljstvo za javni red i sigurnost) reported to the District of Mostar in mid-October 1941, there were no more Orthodox priests in the District of Mostar.²²⁵

Mission of Deputy-Marshal Vladimir Laxa

Seeing the uprising spreading throughout Herzegovina, with it mainly being provoked by Ustasha massacres, the Germans and Italians pressured the leadership of the NDH to take steps to stop this brutal wave of repression. The NDH authorities issued an “extraordinary legal provision” to halt the massacres. The provision was announced on June 27th threatening that “anyone who commits any violence against the lives or property of any citizen or member of the Independent State of Croatia will be promptly brought to justice.” Furthermore, “any member of the Ustasha organization or military personnel who commits such a punishable act will be immediately shot by the Ustasha court.” On the day the Provision was issued, the massacres of Serbs in Mostar were at their high-point. In addition to issuing the Provision, the Croatian authorities took an even more significant step – Deputy-Marshal Vladimir Laxa arrived in Mostar on June 28th as a special envoy of the leader for the large districts of Hum and Dubrava. Deputy-Deputy-Marshal Laxa assumed all state, civilian, Ustasha, military, policing, and regulatory authorities in the territories of those districts. His task was to crush the uprising while simultaneously stopping the massacres that provoked the uprising and were being carried out en masse by the

²²⁵ VA, NDH, b. 156, f. 6, doc. Nr. 53; M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 305–306, 315, 324, 334, 350; Драгослав Страњаковић, *Највећи злочини садашњице. Патиње и сйрадање српској народа у Независној Држави Хрвајској од 1941–1945*, Горњи Милановац 1991, p. 163; Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 414–415; Славко Шањевић, „Страдање православних свештеника у Захумско-херцеговачкој епархији од стране Независне Државе Хрватске 1941–1945. године“, in: *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске над Србима, Јеврејима и Ромима 1941–45 јодине на йросйтору Херцејовине*, Зборник (Ed. Владимир Лукић), Бања Лука 2014, p. 217–238; Јован Мирковић, *Сйрадање Српске йправославне цркве у Независној Држави Хрвајској. Фојмоноографйја*, Београд 2016, p. 544–546.

so-called “wild Ustasha”. The nature of his task regarding the “wild Ustasha” is best evidenced by the words of the military commander Slavko Kvaternik: “I emphasize that these are not Ustasha, but savages and looters, and consequently, Deputy-Deputy-Marshal Laxa and the commander of the Voikra [Military Frontier, ed.] in executing the leader’s orders had a duty, not just a right, to deal with such marauders regardless of who they are.”²²⁶ Kvaternik stated that these Ustasha marauders and savages “are the same kind of people as the Chetniks and do not deserve a different fate but should be brought to justice like them.” Kvaternik specified: “What is not organized within the Ustasha soldiers under the command of Ustasha officers is against the will of the Leader, and therefore, full responsibility should be taken for it, ensuring that the Leader’s will penetrates even to the last village.”²²⁷

Upon arrival in Mostar, Deputy-Marshal Laxa reported: “The Serbian populace was incited to rebellion by the actions of Ustasha organs and their organizations, which carried out various cleansings without any plan, and in masses, they killed not only men but also women and children, taking them out of their homes without regard to whether they were guilty or not, throwing corpses into various pits and rivers.” He believed that ‘so-called Ustasha trampled on the lofty ideals of the Ustasha movement, undermined its reputation, and aroused the ha-

²²⁶ Vladimir Laxa (1870–1945), born in Sisak. He graduated from the Military Academy and the War College in Vienna. From 1911 to 1916, he served as the military attaché of Austria-Hungary in Sofia, and from 1916 to 1917, he commanded the 18th Infantry Brigade. In November 1917, he was promoted to the rank of Major General. He retired in 1919. However, he was reactivated immediately after the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia and was appointed Deputy Commander of the Ground Forces on April 11th. In early June 1941, he became the Commander of the Ground Forces. During August and September 1941, he was the commander of the Adriatic and Bosnian Divisional Areas and the Military Frontier. From October 1941 to August 1942, he served as the head of the General Staff of the Ministry of the Croatian Home Guard. He was dismissed on the orders of Slavko Kvaternik. He retired in May 1943. At the time of the collapse of the NDH, he retreated to Austria, where he was arrested and extradited to the new Yugoslav authorities. He was sentenced to death on June 23rd 1945, and was executed a few days later. (*Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 231–232).

²²⁷ HDA, fond Zapovjedništvo Jadranskog divizijskog područja (ZJDIP), b. 2, V.T.V. 2605; *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 101, p. 208–210; N. Živković, P. Kačavenda, *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*, Doc. Nr. 94, p. 172–174; D. Marijan, „Lipanski ustanak u istočnoj Hercegovini“, p. 574–575; Tomislav Dulčić, *Utopias of Nation. Local Mass Killing in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1941–42*, Uppsala 2005, pp. 150–151; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 149–150; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 70–71, 80–81; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 94.

ted of the people.” As Deputy-Marshal Laxa stated: “When organizing Ustasha units, people were taken without any choice. Communists, notorious alcoholics, etc., were turned into Ustasha overnight, and there is no need to be surprised that such unpleasant incidents occurred.” Vladimir Laxa vividly describes the conditions in Mostar and throughout Herzegovina in the early weeks of the NDH government in Mostar: “During the Ustasha regime, not a single official, officer, citizen, woman, or child was safe day or night. These Ustasha ravaged wherever they went. Many of these people - Ustasha - boasted of how many people they killed; how many people they beat and abused to death. Men and women were dragged to prisons without choice, without being able to prove even the slightest offense.” According to Deputy-Marshal Laxa’s words, Ustasha actions suspended state authority: “Representatives of state and other authorities, military bodies, and so on were pushed aside by Ustasha actions, intimidated and shaken, so they did not dare to resist the savagery of these people.” From the Marshal’s words, the duality of power in the NDH can be seen, which characterized it throughout its existence. Regular civilian and military authorities, who were primarily in charge on paper, and Ustasha authorities, who essentially ruled “on the ground,” were constantly intertwined.²²⁸

Deputy-Marshal Laxa proclaimed summary judgment for the area of the large districts of Hum and Dubrava on the same day he arrived in Mostar and ordered “that no one should carry out any executions without his orders.” Upon his arrival in Mostar, Laxa issued a proclamation outlining the powers given to him and threatened summary judgment for anyone who disobeyed his orders. He emphasized that “every citizen of the Independent State of Croatia, regardless of their faith, if loyal (honest) to the Independent State of Croatia, guarantees the security of life and unhindered performance of daily tasks.” He called upon “all inhabitants of the Great Districts: Hum and Dubra-

²²⁸ *Посебни ойуномоћеник йоїлавника, зайвоједнику Коинене војске на руке йуковнику йосїодину Лулићу, Мосїар, 5. лийња 1941.* (a privately owned copy of the document); *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 101, p. 208–210; *Документиа о йеноциду наг Србима у Босни и Херцеговини*, doc. Nr. 49, p. 225–227; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 159, 339–340; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 70–71; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 83–84.

va, to immediately return to their homes if they fled, and to resume their regular work and life.” He warned that “anyone who voluntarily threatens the life and property of any citizen of the Independent State of Croatia, regardless of who they may be, will be subject to summary judgment and shot.” He urged all those who “illegally possess” any firearms to surrender them within 48 hours to the nearest military command or police station. His arrival in the city on the Neretva marked, at least temporarily, the cessation of brutal killings of Serbs in Mostar. The next day, according to his orders, around 260 Serbs from Mostar were released, and according to some information, around 800 arrested Serbs were released from the prison in Nevesinje.²²⁹

The call for surrendering weapons primarily targeted the Serbian population, whose retention of personal weapons the NDH saw as a major threat to its constitutional order. Repressive methods against the Serbian population, especially in Herzegovina, were justified by the Serbs’ refusal to surrender weapons to the Croatian authorities. Therefore, it was naive to expect that, after the initial moves of the Ustasha authorities and life in the early weeks of the NDH’s existence, the Serbs would easily be deprived of weapons that could help them defend themselves in such insecure times. Deputy-Marshal Laxa, understanding well where the main problem lay, explicitly ordered that Ustasha members be disarmed, creating a balance and showing that disarming applied to all who had no legal basis to be armed. The task of disarming the Ustasha was entrusted to the police. This is evidenced by the order of the governor Buć: “According to the telephone order of Deputy-Marshal Laxa, all weapons are to be immediately confiscated from all Ustasha, and they are to be withdrawn from the field to the barracks of the military police stations or the police. They can only serve with weapons and in any external service only under the lead-

²²⁹ B. Kovačević, S. Skoko, „Junski ustanak u Hercegovini 1941.“, p. 140–141; Махмут Коњхоџић, „Револт народа због усташких злочина“, in: *Херцеговина у НОБ, април 1941.–јуни 1942.*, III, Београд 1986, p. 513–545; Slavko Kosjerina Šuk, „Ilegalac rudnika uglja“, in: *Zbornik sjećanja o ilegalnom NOP-u Mostara 1941–1945*, I, Mostar, s. a; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 169–170; С. Скоко, „Страдање Срба града и среза Мостара“, p. 298–299; П. Б. Мандић, *Јунски устанак*, p. 208–218; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 150–151, 330.

ership of the police as their assistance. Weapons can only be obtained during training and for training purposes.”²³⁰

However, Deputy-Marshal Laxa could not completely stop the massacres that continued, albeit with reduced intensity, in Herzegovina. During those days, Serbs from the surroundings of Čapljina were struck particularly hard. On the day he arrived in Mostar (June 28th), the Ustasha invaded the village of Hodbin three times. During the first invasion three days earlier (June 25th), 16 Hodbin residents were arrested, who, after a few days, were released. When the Ustasha returned to the village on Vidovdan, they found Savo Palavestra and Đuro Palavestra sleeping in their homes. Sava was recovering from a beating in prison the day before, so he was killed in bed, while Đuro was killed in front of his house after trying to escape. The second day after Vidovdan, June 30th, the Ustasha killed Mitar Berberović, a 78-year-old man, as well as Anda Medan and Risto Medan in the village of Ortiješ.²³¹

For days, the Neretva River washed up the bodies of massacred Serbian civilians, mostly killed with blunt objects and rarely with firearms.²³² Thus, on June 27th, the Neretva washed up the body of Milan Šotra, a Mostar freight forwarder, with a wound to the head from a blow with a blunt object and several gunshot wounds to the chest. On the bank of the Neretva in Vrapčići on July 3rd, “one body of an unknown person buried in the sand so that the shoulders and thighs are visible” was found, with several wounds to the head. During the inspection and excavation of the body found in Vrapčići, it was determined that the body was so disfigured that “it is impossible to identify it from the face and head.” The report from the inspection stated: “There is a second large wound on the back of the head the size of a large egg, through which all the brain spilled out into the sand.” The blow was inflicted with a blunt object and was so strong that it caused “destruction of brain tissue.” The “corpse,” as stated in the inspection report, “is in a state of complete decomposition and smells from 100 meters

²³⁰ I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 156.

²³¹ *Žrtve rata 1941–1945. BiH*, p. 1873–1874.

²³² Др. Иван Кордић, одвјетник, Судбеном сјџолу Мосџар (a privately owned copy of the document).

away.”²³³ Near the Tobacco Factory, on July 14th, the body of aviation sergeant of the Yugoslav army Pantelija Papić was found, with two visible wounds to the head caused by a blunt object. His death occurred by drowning after being thrown into the river with serious injuries.²³⁴ On July 19th, the Neretva washed up a body with several gunshot wounds. Because of such cases, the Croatian population living in the Neretva Valley complained to the NDH authorities not to throw bodies into the Neretva anymore, as they polluted the water.

Following mass arrests at the end of June and with bodies being washed up by the Neretva, Mostar became a city of horror for its Serbian population. From a city where Serbian national and cultural spirit flourished, in the summer of 1941 Mostar turned into a city of death, oppression, fear, and dread of each new day. Perhaps this can be best seen in this description of the state of the city on the Neretva in the summer of 1941: “The streets in Mostar, in the area where Serbs live, became deserted and silent, houses closed, curtains drawn on windows. Very often, especially at night, from these desolate Serbian homes, loud cries and the weeping of widows and orphans could be heard. Like the early Christians through dark catacombs, the remaining Serbian women and children today hide in Mostar in newly built tombs and caves on the banks of the Neretva, emaciated and crazed, living in constant fear and dreadful knowledge that they could be mercilessly killed and massacred at any moment.”²³⁵ Danilo Bilanović vividly described it: “Fear has entered all houses. The gates were bolted even during the day, which no one had thought of doing before. People slept with one eye open, listening to every sound, shivering. There was fear that someone uninvited would knock on the door. In the dark

²³³ Независна Држава Хрватска, Предстојништво градоједарства у Мосћару, Државном шжжжжжж Мосћар, Nr. 5502/41, Мосћар 3. сриња 1941. (a privately owned copy of the document); М. Булајић, *Усташки злочини геночида*, I, p. 621; Д. К. Милетић, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, p. 113–114; С. Скоко, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 166–167; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцејовачко*, I, p. 99–100; С. Скоко, „Страдање Срба града и среза Мосћара“, p. 296.

²³⁴ Предстојништво градоједарства у Мосћару, Државном шжжжжжж Мосћару, Nr. 584/1941 јод., Мосћар, 14. сриња 1941 јод. (a privately owned copy of the document).

²³⁵ Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајјора у Херцејовини, II, doc. Nr. 2, p. 7–10.

or with the windows covered, people speculated about what tomorrow would bring. The older ones couldn't collect themselves because no authority had ever acted this way. Many Muslim neighbors kept watch, listened, kept their windows and doors open so that they could take refuge in their house. There was crying and questioning what had happened to those taken away and what would happen to us. The children's noise and screams were not heard. Anyone walking along the empty street moved with a somber and worried demeanor. Laughter could not be heard anymore.²³⁶

²³⁶ D. Bilanović, „Crvena mladost Mostara“.

THE SUFFERING OF THE SERBS OF MOSTAR IN JULY AND AUGUST

In the days following the arrival of Deputy-Marshal Laxa and the suppression of the uprising in Herzegovina, a Court-Martial was established on July 12th in Mostar for the jurisdiction of the Mostar judicial district (Sudbeni stol Mostar). This court was formed based on the “Legal Decree on Courts-Martial” (*Zakonska odredba o prijekim sudovima*) and was authorized to issue only the harshest punishment – death penalty by shooting, carried out by the gendarmerie. The Court-Martial was meant to institutionally demonstrate that the state would show no mercy towards anything considered a threat to the newly established order. These courts replaced the so-called Extraordinary People’s Courts (Izvanredni narodni sudovi), though in practice, they operated similarly. Despite some differences, the Extraordinary People’s Courts did not entirely disappear, and their activities often intertwined with those of the Court-Martial.

Franjo Žurović, a councillor of the Mostar judicial district, was appointed president of the Court-Martial in Mostar, with Šaćir Konjodžić, also a councillor, as his deputy. The judges were Ibrahim Karabeg, another councillor, and Krešimir Butigan, a district judge in Mostar. Their deputies were Salih Agić, a councillor, and Stjepan Katurdžija, a district judge. The Court-Martial’s actions targeted all citizens regardless of their national and religious affiliations. For example, on September 19th 1941, the Court-Martial in Mostar sentenced

Pero Pažin and Meho Zilić to death for murdering an elderly man, six women, and four children of Serbian Orthodox faith in Poplat near Stolac on the night of August 30th/31st, and throwing them into a pit. The convicted sought clemency, justifying their actions by claiming that Chetniks had killed some of their relatives in Berkovići eight days earlier. However, in a telegram to the Ministry of Justice and Worship, the president of the Court-Martial recommended that the clemency plea be rejected “given the severity and cruelty of the act.”²³⁷ The Court-Martial in Mostar was abolished in the spring of 1942 at the request of the Italian military authorities.²³⁸

While Deputy Deputy-Marshal Laxa was working towards stabilizing the situation in Herzegovina, which had deteriorated due to the mass killings of the Serbian population, a trusted Ustasha pioneer, Captain Ivo Herenčić, was sent to Mostar in July. On December 16th 1933, he was one of the assassins in the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate King Alexander and the only one who managed to escape across the border with a false passport. In exile, he commanded the First Ustasha Company, and following the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), he held many high-ranking positions, including the district head of Zagreb. His radical methods and dedication to the Ustasha cause were well known among the Ustasha. Reverend Tugomir Soldo, writing in exile in Italy after the war, stated, “I believe that Herenčić directed all the massacres in Herzegovina from Mostar.”²³⁹ Fra Soldo

²³⁷ *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 120, 288, tr. 313–314, 717; *Документи о ієноциду над Србима у Босни и Херцеговини*, doc. Nr. 58, p. 244; Šime Balen, *Pavelić*, Zagreb 1952, p. 64–75; B. Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, p. 121–122; H. Matković, *Povijest NDH*, p. 176–180; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 157.

²³⁸ VA, NDH, b. 191, f. 3, doc. Nr. 33.

²³⁹ Ivo Herenčić (1910–1978), born in Bjelovar. He was educated in Zagreb, where he completed secondary school and the Economic-Commercial College. In Sarajevo, he attended the Reserve Officers' School from 1930 to 1931. After that, he served as one of the personal bodyguards of Vladko Maček. He emigrated in 1933 and joined the Ustasha in Italy, also spending time in Austria. He participated in the preparation of the failed assassination attempt on King Alexander in Zagreb in December 1933. He managed to escape and remained in Italy until April 1941. On the Lipari Islands, he commanded the First Ustasha Company. He was a man of great trust for Pavelić and, as such, a member of the Main Ustasha Headquarters. His first duty in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) was in the Directorate for Public Order and Security, where he served as an Ustasha commissioner. At the same time, he head-

Mustafa Mujan, who lived there with his family, testified about their arrival: “As soon as they arrived, they threw the benches into the basement and brought in beds from somewhere. Within two days, the Ustaša started bringing in some citizens of Mostar. They usually brought in groups of citizens at night, and in the dark, they would also take them away. Some were taken in wagons, others in trucks. When they were taken by train, the locomotive with several wagons would come to the ramp, and they would be loaded into the wagons at night. Trucks came into the yard. Very often, during these removals, screams and wailing could be heard. Neither I nor my household members dared to go out, so I do not know the details. The Ustaša were housed in the lower part of the building, where their dormitories were, and also in the upper classrooms, while the detainees were locked in the classrooms facing the Gymnasium.”²⁴³

Just a few days after Herenčić’s arrival in Mostar, new arrests, deportations, and murders of Mostar’s Serbs, as well as Jews, Muslims, and Croats, began. Each day, one group of Serbs would be taken from the school while another group was brought in. The treatment they received is best illustrated by Esad Brkić, who spent several days imprisoned in that Mostar dungeon: “One day, a strong young man, dressed in summer women’s clothes, was brought into the school from somewhere. He hadn’t had time to dress properly and escape, so the women made him wear women’s clothes. Standing there, large and well-built, he was bewildered among his fellow villagers. Voloder stood in the right corner of the room, angrily observing the young man. In an instant, he was beside him, grabbed his penis, and pulled with all his might. The young man’s cry got stuck in his throat. He collapsed to the floor and remained lying there. At that moment, Voloder threw himself on him and began to beat him with his huge fists on the face, breaking everything and turning it into a bloody pulp. I glanced at the

²⁴³ Mustafa Mujan, „Škola Kraljice Marije ustaški zatvor“, in: *Zbornik sjećanja o ilegalnom NOP-u Mostara 1941–1945*, II, Mostar s.a.; M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 621–622; D. K. Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, p. 116; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 223–233; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 233.



Šaranova Jama today
(Photograph by Milorad Milošević)

young man's face. His eyelids, swollen and bluish from blood bruises, completely covered his eyes, and his skin was bruised and cut in many places, his nose crushed, and blood was flowing from his nostrils and the corners of his lips, forming small pools on the floor."²⁴⁴

Ksenija Gutić, arrested during one of the Ustasha raids, also provided a vivid testimony about the maltreatment in the former school: "During my stay in that prison, I often saw Ivo Herenčić, who frequently visited the cells where the prisoners were held. We were also visited by the well-known Ustasha Franjo Sudar. Herenčić would get drunk and then invent various ways to torture us. He wouldn't let us

²⁴⁴ Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, р. 227–228.

eat, drink water, threatened to kill us, mocked the prisoners, and so on. The Ustasha Franjo Sudar would often order prisoners to hit each other. At night, they would take the prisoners to the school basement, where Herenčić's Ustasha or Sudar would beat them and then return them bloodied to the cells." This witness precisely outlines the genocidal methods of the Ustasha authorities: "Many children were brought to that school along with their parents. These children came from neighboring districts, such as Stolac and Čapljina. They looked very miserable, as they were barefoot, poorly dressed, beaten, hungry, and thirsty. Nevertheless, the prisoners themselves helped them, by giving clothes, water, and food secretly. I remember one woman who was brought to the school directly after giving birth, along with her child. She was still covered in blood, filthy. One night, all these children, including that woman and her child, were taken in an unknown direction, and we never saw them again. It was later said among us that they had all been killed."²⁴⁵

One of those arrested, who survived the war and imprisonment because he was a Catholic, Ivo Ćorić, testified about the horrific conditions in the former school premises: "While I was in the school prison, the Ustasha constantly brought in new prisoners, who were bloody and beaten on the way. The Ustasha Serdanović searched me and then ordered me not to look anywhere. All night and the next day, the Ustasha brought people they arrested in the city to the school. When they gathered about a hundred people, the Ustasha ordered us prisoners to slap each other. Serdanović ordered me to slap Oskar Mandlbaum, who was also brought in. Since I refused to do so, Mandlbaum was ordered to hit me, which he did, nearly knocking me unconscious. The Ustasha brutally beat the prisoners in the school using their fists and rifle butts. Serdanović ordered me to kiss the toe of the Orthodox priest Krnjević and said I would no longer be a Catholic and that the priest would baptize me to become Orthodox. I followed the order but still replied to Serdanović that I was a Catholic and would die as such. He

²⁴⁵ M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 624–625; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 228–229.

ordered me to sit down. The judge Mujo Pašić, who was also brought in, was severely beaten by the Ustasha, so much so that he was covered in blood. They beat him because he had declared himself a Serb before the war. Then they ordered him to lick his own blood and not let a single drop remain on the floor.” This was just the beginning of Judge Pašić’s suffering, as he spent nearly three years in camps and died in the Stara Gradiška camp in 1944.²⁴⁶

However, Herenčić was merely following orders from Zagreb. According to a telephone directive from the Ustasha police in Zagreb to the Grand County of Hum in Mostar dated July 19th, it was required to start “gradually, every day,” sending the “financially and intellectually stronger” Serbs from the area to the Gospić concentration camp “in groups of 20–30 people from the so-called villages and hamlets with Orthodox inhabitants.” It was suggested that this action be approached “tactfully and decently.” From July 19th to August 4th, around 750 people were arrested, and mass arrests effectively lasted from July 17th to August 13th. These people were mostly sent to Gospić via Sarajevo by train, and from there to Jadovno, Jasenovac, Caprag, and other camps. The transfer of “undesirable Serbs and Jews” to Gospić was conducted according to the order of the Directorate for Public Order and Security dated July 8th. The order suggested that “Greek Easterners and Jews”²⁴⁷ be sent to the Gospić instead of the “Danica” concentration camp near Koprivnica, “when the interests of public security require the removal of undesirable persons from their residences.” The order was sent to all County Police Department.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, II, дос. Nr. 227, p. 702–705; *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупираној у Херцеговини*, I, дос. Nr. 2, 89, p. 31–60, 413–416; S. Skoko, *Pokoljji hercegovackih Srba*, p. 241–243; Саво Скоко, „Мученички пут мостарских Срба“, *Полишика*, 5. IV 1991, p. 25; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеговачко*, I, p. 214–215; С. Скоко, „Страдање Срба града и среза Мостара“, p. 299–308; Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 267–268; С. Скоко, „Злочини геноцида НДХ у Херцеговини“, p. 278–279.

²⁴⁷ By order of the Minister of Justice and Religion, Dr. Mirko Puk, dated July 18th 1941, it was strictly prescribed that the term “Serbian Orthodox faith” was no longer in accordance with the new state order and that, from that day forward, the term “Greek-Eastern faith” was to be used. (N. Živković, P. Kačavenda, *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*, Doc. Nr. 33, p. 103).

²⁴⁸ A. Miletić, *Koncentracioni logor Jasenovac*, I, Doc. Nr. 5, p. 56; N. Živković, P. Kačavenda, *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*, Doc. Nr. 119, p. 216; *Документи о ієноциду над Србима у Босни и*

The order also implied swift execution. Three known transports of Mostar's Serbs took several hundred people to Gospić. On the night of July 19th/20th, the first group of 186 Serbs from Mostar was sent to Gospić. This group included the military chaplain, Protojerež Dušan Krnjević. This group reached Gospić after four days of travel, during which they were starved, thirsty, beaten, and packed into three freight cars with barely enough air. Hakija Dugalić later testified: "They didn't give us a crumb of food or a drop of water during the journey." In the building of the District Court in Gospić, they were mistreated and then sent to the Jadovno camp, where they were soon killed with mallets and thrown into the Šaranova Jama on Velebit Mountain.²⁴⁹

Only two days later, on July 22nd at 6:30 AM, the second mass transport to Gospić ensued. This group consisted of 174 Serbs from Mostar who had previously survived days of torture in the former "Queen Marija" school. The prisoners, bound in pairs with wire, were escorted by Ustasha Lieutenant Franjo Sudar and 20 armed Ustasha. The group was packed into three passenger train cars and sent to Bosanski Brod, a journey that took nearly 24 hours. During this trip, the prisoners were mistreated and beaten, as vividly described by Ivo Ćorić. After disembarking in Bosanski Brod, they crossed the pontoon bridge into Slavonski Brod: "In Slavonski Brod, we were loaded again, this time into cattle cars, whose doors were sealed and window grates closed with shutters, so no air could come in." They were sent to Gospić without food or water, where they spent one night being tortured and beaten. Ćorić testified: "During the unloading from the cars, the Ustasha beat us using rifle butts and kicked us, and since we were bound, we fell over each other, so many prisoners were severely beaten." Ćorić describes the hellish scene he encountered in the Gospić camp: "Upon arrival, the Ustasha led us to the judicial prison in Gospić, bound with wire in pairs. There, we found at least a thousand people brought in from various places - Serbs, Croats, Muslims, and Jews, though mostly Serbs. The

Херцеговини, p. 58–59; Ћ. Затецало, *Јадовно*, II, doc. Nr. 11, 14, p. 34–35, 37; D. R. Lastavica, *Hrvatski genocid nad srpskim i jevrejskim narodom u Koncentracionom logoru Gospić*, p. 351.

²⁴⁹ Ћ. Затецало, *Јадовно*, II, doc. Nr. 229, p. 707–708; Ћ. Затецало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 267.

prison yard and the prison itself were overcrowded. Machine guns and strong Ustasha guards were stationed at the prison windows and in the yard. We spent the night in the prison yard, and the next day, we saw the Ustasha separate out about 250 Serbs, whom they chained together with a long chain, binding everyone's hands to it.²⁵⁰

As this procedure kept repeating with no one returning, Ćorić was curious to find out what had happened to them: “In prison, I managed to get close to the Ustasha usher Milica (Mile Vrkljan, nicknamed Milica, author's comment), a butcher from Gospić who escorted the detainees from the prison. I did some carpentry work for him, so one day I asked him where my fellow Mostar residents who were taken from the prison were. He told me never to ask that again, and if I wanted, I could go with them, but it would be better for me to stay in the workshop. From that, I unmistakably concluded that all these countrymen of mine were killed.” Except for five people (Ivo Ćorić, Mijo Rajić, Mujo Alajbegović, Hakija Dugalić, and Jovo Ivanišević), all the Mostar residents from those two mentioned transports perished in one of the Velebit pits and were killed in the complex of Ustasha camps Gospić-Jadovno-Pag.²⁵¹

However, those two transports were not the only ones taking Mostar Serbs on a one-way journey to Lika. The third and largest transport that July, with about 700 people in a freight train composed of 10 cars was sent from Mostar to Gospić during the night of July 23rd. The Directorate for Public Order and Security clearly established on July 30th that “in the interest of public security,” all Jews and Serbs who were “detained on suspicion of communism, but against whom there was otherwise no evidence to warrant bringing them before a summary court,” should be sent “to the collection camp of the District Police Directorate (Župsko redarstveno ravnateljstvo) in Gospić.” Therefore, arrests continued at the end of July and into the first days of August.²⁵²

²⁵⁰ Ћ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, II, doc. Nr. 227, p. 702–705; M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 622–623; Ћ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 268–269.

²⁵¹ *Документи о ієноциду над Србима у Босни и Херцеговини*, p. 59; Ћ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, II, doc. Nr. 227, p. 702–705; Ћ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 269.

²⁵² Ћ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, II, doc. Nr. 23, p. 49–50.

While the Serbs in Mostar were being arrested and deported to camps, Ustasha groups were ravaging the surrounding villages. Their raids targeted Serbs in their homes, leaving them no chance to hide. A group of about 300 Ustasha from Međugorje and Čitluk, led by Rafael Boban, blockaded the village of Baćevići on the night of July 24th/25th. With the help of Croatian locals from the nearby village of Jasenica, 18 Serbs from Baćevići were arrested (Dušan Golo, Risto Golo, Jefto Golo, Jovo Golo, Trifko Golo, Janko Savić, Jovo Savić, Žarko Savić, Vaso Sudar, Vidoje Sudar, Vlado Sudar, Ljubo Sudar, Nikola Sudar, Pero Sudar, Žarko Sudar, Risto Sudar, Vojislav Škoro, and a twelve-year-old girl, Spasenija Savić, the sister of Jovo Savić). The haul of Serbs arrested was smaller than the Ustasha expected, as the news of the planned attack on Baćevići had apparently leaked (it could be heard in those days: “Baćevići, beware, the Ustasha will get you!”). Many lives were saved by this warning, as people spent little time in their homes, especially at night. Those who stayed, “because they didn’t feel guilty” perished. Danilo Golo refused to let the Ustasha into his house. He met them with an axe but was soon shot and killed on his doorstep. His body was dragged to the banks of the Neretva. The further fate of the captured Serbs from Baćevići is not entirely clear. They were likely initially detained in the building of the former primary school in Mostar or in the village of Jasenica. Then they were bound, loaded onto a truck, and taken to a pit in Međugorje near Čitluk, which they were thrown into after being killed in various ways, mainly by blunt force. Božidar Škoro testified to how this Ustasha raid and the murder of several villagers affected the remaining residents of Baćevići: “The survivors seized working. No one had the courage to go out into the fields, fearing that they could be seen. We hid in vineyards and fences, and the crops were failing. Non-uniformed Ustasha came to the village, some carrying rifles on slings. They looted. They demanded gold, jewelry, money, took food and drink. All this instilled fear and increased uncertainty.”²⁵³

²⁵³ AJ, 110, *Dosije Boban Rafaela*; Božidar Škoro, „Preko Neretve i Sutjeske do Rabine“, in: *Zbornik sjećanja o ilegalnom NOP-u Mostara 1941–1945*, II, Mostar, s. a.; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцејовачко*, I, p. 219–222; С. Скоко, „Страдање Срба града и среза Мостара“, p. 310; *Од Косова до Јаговна*.

On July 27th, a group of Ustasha stormed the villages of Bogodol and Dobrič, arresting 12 Serbian men, claiming it was a preventive measure, stopping them from rising up the next day, July 28th against the new authorities. All were taken to the prison in Široki Brijeg. The mothers and wives of the detainees, not knowing whom to turn to, approached Ante Rožić Damjan, a young friar in nearby Goranci, pleading with him to use his pastoral influence to help their husbands and sons avoid the certain death they feared, which had already ominously loomed over the Mostar area in those weeks. Friar Damjan arrived in Široki Brijeg around 11 PM and headed to the school building where the Serbs were held. With a determined demeanor and invoking his friendship with the commander from their school days, he persuaded the guards to release the imprisoned Serbs, who were suffocating in a small room on a stifling July night in Herzegovina. He gave each guard a hundred dinars and advised the newly freed neighbors: ‘stay quiet and run home before anyone realizes what happened. Don’t take the road, but go through the shortcut, along the river, and up the gully.’ The residents of Bogodol avoided certain death thanks only to the young friar.²⁵⁴

In the final days of July, a group of Ustasha, led by gendarmerie officer (oružnički časnik) Ivica Usminijan, raided the village of Zijemlje and arrested around forty Serbian nationals. Among those arrested were: Anđelko Antelj, Gojko Antelj, Milan Antelj, Risto J. Antelj, Pero Antelj, Lazar Antelj, Risto Š. Antelj, Nikola Dabić, Risto Lečić, Lazar Trišić, Trifko Trišić, Janko Čalija, Jovo Čalija, Panto Čalija, Jovo Karišik, Pero Karišik, Damjan Matković, Miloš Matković, Mirko Matković, Radoje Matković, Lazar Mavrak, Todor Mavrak, Dušan Mavrak, Risto Mavrak, Anđelko Račić, Jeremija Račić, Draško Račić, Krsto Račić, Miloš Račić, Dušan Račić, Milan Račić, Đuro Račić, Jefto Pejdo, Milan Sjeran, Risto Vučić, Tomo Vučić, Stojan Jamina, and Vojin Šakota. Among the detainees were also two volunteers fighting on the Salon-

Пуїїни зайиси јеромонаха Аїїанасија Јевїїиїа, Врњци/Требиње 2007, p. 518–522; Б. Н. Чучковић, Злочини у Херцеговини, II, p. 189–190.

²⁵⁴ Ante Rožić-Damjan, „Spašavao fra Damjane“, in: *Hercegovina u NOB, april 1941.–jun 1942.*, II, Ed. Sveto Kovačević, Beograd 1986, p. 206–209.

ika front – Krsto Račić and Jovo Karišik. Among those arrested were also Marko Matković and his wife Marija, her being of Russian descent. Obrad Račić testified about the arrest of the people from Zijemlje: “They were being led to the gendarmerie station in Rujjište decently. In the station, they were tortured and beaten. The basement was all covered in blood. They tied them up with wire like cattle and, in pairs, took them to Bijelo Polje and from there to Mostar in trucks. They transported 35 locals in one group, bound in pairs with wire and rope in columns. At the head of that column were Marko Matković, a Russian prisoner, and Đuro Račić, the village leader. Through Bijelo Polje, they forced them to sing “Na Oplencu crn se barjak vije...” and other insulting and nationalist songs, and forced them to moo, bark, and make other animal noises with jeering and taunting. They loaded them onto trucks like cattle, or throwing them like objects onto a pile, as some were beaten, tortured, tired, and bound, which made it difficult to load them onto the truck.” They were all imprisoned in the basement of the former primary school “Queen Marija”, where they were tortured and then killed with blunt objects. Their bodies were taken away in trucks and thrown into the Herzegovinian pits. Some of the people from Zijemlje were transferred to Gospić and then killed in Jadovno (Risto J. Antelj, Pero Antelj, Nikola Dabić, Pero Karišik, Risto Lečić, and Đuro Račić), while others ended up in Jasenovac, where they perished (Janko Čalija, Jovo Čalija, Jeremija Račić, Krsto Račić, and Miloš Račić).²⁵⁵

During the night of August 1st/2nd, the Ustasha again raided Hodbina and took away several villagers: Savo Glavaša and his son Vukan, Jovo Marić, Trifko Vuković, Boško Vuković and his son Slavko, who was only 17 years old. From that night, they disappeared without a trace. In total, during the summer of 1941, the Ustasha killed 13 Serbs from

²⁵⁵ Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајтора у Херцеговини, I, doc. Nr. 90, p. 417–418; *Žrtve rata 1941–1945*. BiH, p. 1880–1881; Obrad Račić, „Zijemlje i njegova četa“, in: *Zbornik sjećanja o ilegalnom NOP-u Mostara 1941–1945*, II, Mostar s.a.; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 248–249; С. Скоко, „Страдање Срба града и среза Мостара“, p. 309–310; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеговачко*, I, p. 219; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 204–205; Ћ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 636, 640, 644, 647.

Hodbina.²⁵⁶ On St. Elijah's Day, August 2nd a group of Ustasha led by Slavko Markotić from Vihovići and Šimun Buntić raided the village of Goranci and captured 11 Serbs (Đorđe Janjić, Pero Je. Janjić, Jovo Janjić, Pero Jo. Janjić, Todor Janjić, Pero L. Janjić, Stojan Janjić, Todor Ivanišević, Spaso Ivanišević, Marko Ivanišević, and Lazar Vukašinović). Presumably, Todor Janjić was killed on the spot in Goranci, while the others were taken to Mostar and never returned. Pero Jeremije Janjić and Đorđe Janjić were transported to the Jadovno camp, where they were killed and thrown into the Velebit pit called Badanj. Pero Jovo Janjić, Marko Ivanišević, and Spaso Ivanišević were killed in Mostar, while Pero L. Janjić and Todor Ivanišević were killed in Široki Brijeg. In just one day, half of the total number of World War II victims suffered by the village of Goranci lost their lives.²⁵⁷

A group of Ustasha, lead by Ivica Usminijan and Avdo Karabeg, raided the village of Podgorani on August 3rd. In the hamlet of Zelenika, they captured 18 residents: Đoko Ivanišević, Lazo Ivanišević, Nikola Ivanišević, Simo Ivanišević, Tripo Ivanišević, Branko Telebak, Gojko Telebak, Gošo Telebak, Danilo Telebak, Đorđe Telebak, Jovo Telebak, Milan Telebak, Nikola Telebak, Obren Telebak, Sava Telebak, Todor Telebak, Tripo Telebak, and Spaso Škoro. What's certain is that they were all taken to the Mostar prison, after which they disappeared without a trace. Only the faiths of Sava and Milan Telebak are somewhat clearer. After torture, Sava was slaughtered that same day. Milan was sent to Gospić and killed in the Jadovno camp.²⁵⁸

In early August, the Ustasha raided the village of Slipčiči. They did not survive their bloody rampage through the village: Spaso Janjić, Vlatko Škoro, Lazo Škoro, Marko Škoro, Milan Škoro, and Simo Škoro. Exactly what happened to them is unknown, except that Vlatko Ško-

²⁵⁶ *Žrtve rata 1941–1945. BiH*, p. 1847–1848; Stevo Stević, „Među ilegalcima u Hodbini“, in: *Zbornik sjećanja o ilegalnom NOP-u Mostara 1941–1945*, II, Mostar s.a.; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 169; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 255–262.

²⁵⁷ *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајора у Херцеговини*, I, doc. Nr. 88, p. 410–412; *Žrtve rata 1941–1945. BiH*, p. 1846; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 249–250; С. Сकोко, „Страдање Срба града и среза Мостара“, p. 310–311; Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 641–642, 644.

²⁵⁸ Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 238–239.

ro and Milan Škoro ended up in the Jadovno camp, where they were thrown into the Badanja pit on Velebit. Thus, the majority of the residents of Slipčiči who perished in World War II lost their lives in August 1941.²⁵⁹ A massacre also occurred in the village of Vrapčiči. Several residents were arrested and never returned to their homes and village. Boško Antelj and Manojlo Kuzman were killed in the former “Queen Marija” school in Mostar, Nedjeljko Antelj, Risto Vučić, and Lazo Lozo in Jasenovac, and Nikola Došlo in the assembly point in Jablanica. In those August days, 12 Serbs from Vrapčiči were killed, which is more than half of the total number of war casualties from that village.²⁶⁰

In early August, the village of Raštani was not spared from the Ustasha campaign. Several residents were arrested and taken to Mostar. It is difficult to reconstruct their further fate. However, according to available data, we assume that Vladoje Đurasović, Anđelko Vujinović, Špiro Vujinović, Janko Savić, Milan Savić, Mitar Savić, Uroš Savić, Čedo Savić, and Šćepo Savić were killed in Mostar, Nikola Krzman, Branko Trifković, and Dušan Trifković in Jadovno, and Lazo Krzman and Jovo Kunovac in Jasenovac. In August 1941, 17 residents of the village of Raštani were killed, which is close to a third of the total casualties of World War II in that village.²⁶¹

In the massacres of Serbs in the Mostar region in 1941, the village of Malo Polje also suffered greatly. The Ustasha raided the village on the night of August 4th/5th and arrested all the male heads of households they found. The action, led by Mustafa Mujo Demirović from Buna, Pero Krtalić from Gnojnice, and Duran Memić from Blagaj, was carried out by blocking the village from two sides. Some people managed to escape by fleeing after hearing the cries of their neighbors, but many fell into the hands of the Ustasha. Those arrested included Branko Vanović, Danilo Vanović, Mitar Vanović, Vojin Jokanović, Vaso Jokanović, Rade Jokanović, Risto Jokanović, Savo Jokanović, Lazo

²⁵⁹ *Žrtve rata 1941–1945. BiH*, p. 1878–1879; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 254–255; Ђ. Затезало, *Јаговно*, I, p. 651.

²⁶⁰ *Žrtve rata 1941–1945. BiH*, p. 1880.

²⁶¹ *Žrtve rata 1941–1945. BiH*, p. 1877–1878; Ђ. Затезало, *Јаговно*, I, p. 639, 642–643, 648–649.

Kajgo, Vaso Kapor, Gojko P. Kapor, Gojko T. Kapor, Lazar Kuzman, Trifko Marić and his four sons - Luka, Milan, Risto, and Žarko, Nikola Marić, Spasoje Marić, Mitar Pantić, Branko Papić, Jovo Papić, Boško Samardžić, Đordo Hadžović, Luka Hadžović, Vlajko Čolović, and Đordo Čolović. Their further fate is mostly unknown, but it is presumed that the majority were killed at a location near Mostar. It is only known that Risto Jokanović was thrown into one of the pits near Mostar, and Vaso Jokanović into the Badanja pit on Velebit. Mitar Vanović and Vaso Kapor were killed in Jadovno, and Mitar Pantić in Jasenovac. The beginning of August 1941 took 31 Serbian lives in Malo Polje. All those killed shared the common fate of suffering without trial or guilt.²⁶²

The wave of liquidations, which began at the end of July, was supposed to be halted on August 4th. On that day, a dispatch arrived, sent by the Ustasha commissioner for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jure Francetić, ordering that “all executions of a political nature” be stopped within 48 hours, and that all district courts and offices strictly adhere to this order. However, the persecution of Serbs was not over.²⁶³ Regardless of Francetić’s order, hundreds of Ustasha descended on the village of Prebilovci near Čapljina from various directions on the same day. Before the Second World War, Prebilovci had around a thousand inhabitants in 116 households, of which 113 were Serbian and Orthodox, and three were Muslim. About 200 men, fearing the same fate as other Serbs in Herzegovina in the previous few days, had earlier taken refuge in the surrounding hills. Only 16 armed men remained in the village, who were killed as soon as the Ustasha entered the village. The elderly, women, and children did not attempt to flee, believing they wouldn’t be targeted. Most fell into the hands of the Ustasha, imprisoned in the school building, with the promise of being transported to Serbia. Some of the imprisoned women were mistreated and raped in front of the school building, then transferred and locked up in a silo near Tasovčići. The next evening, on August 5th women and children

²⁶² *Žrtve rata 1941–1945. BiH*, p. 1849–1850; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 233; Ђ. Загезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 642, 648.

²⁶³ М. Булајић, *Усташки злочини геноцида*, I, p. 625.

were transported by train to the village of Šurmanci. After two days of captivity, on August 6th around 7:30 AM, the killing of the Serbs from Prebilovci began and their bodies were thrown into the Golubinka pit, located several kilometers from that predominantly Croatian village.²⁶⁴ The slaughter of the population of the Herzegovinian village of Prebilovci lasted for a full six hours - until 1:30 PM. On that day, about 470 women and children from Prebilovci were killed and thrown into the Golubinka pit. The pogroms against Serbs in Čapljina and its surroundings were led by Franjo Vego, and the massacre in Prebilovci was organized by Ustasha camp member Andrija Buljan, village leader of Šurmanci Ivan Jovanović Crni, Ahmet Kapetanović, Niko Filipović, and Rudo Vrdoljak. Surviving villagers were killed in the following days in various ways, resulting in a total of 809 residents of Prebilovci suffering by the end of August 1941, including 298 children aged from a few months to 14 years old. Fifty-four Serbian families were completely destroyed, and only 168 Prebilovci residents survived the war. Due to such an outcome, Prebilovci are considered one of the largest Serbian massacres in the Independent State of Croatia.²⁶⁵

In order to make the “cleansing” of Mostar from Serbs more efficient, a temporary assembly camp was established in the barracks in Jablanica. The assembly camp was founded by the order of the commander of the Mostar Battalion, Ivo Herenčić, and began operating on August 2nd. The Jablanica camp was, presumably, outside the

²⁶⁴ The Golubinka Pit, into which the Serbs from Prebilovci were thrown, is about 120 meters deep, with an initial vertical drop of around 40 meters and a 500 square meter chamber at the bottom. (D. R. Lastavica, *Bez dane jame Nezavisne Države Hrvatske*, p. 280).

²⁶⁵ *Велика жуја Дубрава, Кошарској области Љубиње, Телеграм, Дубровник, 4. коловоза 1941.* (a privately owned copy of the document); *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупираној у Херцеговини*, I, doc. Nr. 2, 62, p. 31–60, 309–331; М. Булајић, *Усташки злочини генocide*, I, p. 535–559; М. Булајић, *Усташки злочини генocide*, III, p. 56; Саво Скоко, „Голубинка гута жртве“, *Полијтика*, 23. III 1991, p. 25; Саво Скоко, „Зауек угашена огњишта“, *Полијтика*, 26. III 1991, p. 21; Ђуро Екмечић, *Пребиловци неуреболна рана српска*, Београд 1994; Милан Надаждин, „Масован покољ српског народа у столачко-чапљинском крају у лето 1941. године“, in: *Геноцид над Србима у II светском рату* (Ed. Милан Булајић), Београд 1995, p. 324–341; С. Скоко, *Криво коло херцеговачко*, I, p. 179–196; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 71–178; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 218–226; Милан Тасовац, *Очи у очи: од сјрагања до Васкрсења Пребиловаца*, Чапљина/Стокхолм 2016, p. 23–52.

system of camps in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), meaning it represented Herenčić's independent decision. He appointed Ustasha officer Franjo Kos as the commander of the assembly camp, under whose command were 50–60 Ustasha serving as guards. Shortly after the establishment of the assembly camp in Jablanica, in the first days of August, two groups totaling around 480 individuals were sent there. In Jablanica, it was apparently planned to liquidate all the captured Serbs. It seems that a pre-dug grave about 30 meters long was intended for them. Ustasha Ivan Gril, an electrician, was preparing for their swift liquidation using electricity.²⁶⁶ Thanks to the intervention of some residents of Jablanica through the family of Fritz Šedresi, the Germans were informed about the Ustasha plans at the assembly camp in Jablanica. Several German officers arrived at the camp on August 4th. An inspection was carried out, the prisoners were registered, and their photographs taken. That same night, the mentioned grave was filled in, and the idea of killing the Serbs with electricity was abandoned. One of the detainees, Zorka Radovanović, testified after the war: "They prepared two large graves for us and installed electrical wires to kill us with electricity. However, some citizens intervened with the Schwabs, so their commission prevented it. A Muslim intervened with the Schwabs, a cafe owner from Jablanica."²⁶⁷

The reason why the Germans intervened in this case can be better understood based on the actions of the German military commander of Serbia, who warned Zagreb "not to gather more Serbs than can be resettled in Serbia, and that is only as many as Slovenes will be resettled in Croatia." At the beginning of the occupation of Yugoslavia, the Germans planned to relocate Slovenes from annexed areas of Lower Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola. According to an agreement between the Third Reich and the NDH signed on June 4th which was signed by German ambassador in Zagreb Siegfried Kasche and military leader

²⁶⁶ *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупацијора у Херцеговини*, I, doc. Nr. 45, p. 202–228; Саво Скоко, „Пресечен злочиначки ланац“, *Полијтика*, 7. IV 1991, p. 29; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 206–215.

²⁶⁷ *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 198, p. 473–475; Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, II, doc. Nr. 234–235, p. 713–715.

Slavko Kvaternik, part of the Slovenes would be relocated to Serbia and part to the NDH. Slovenes in the NDH would be settled in the place of Serbs who would be resettled in Serbia. This action of mass resettlement was to be carried out in three waves - from the beginning of June to the end of October 1941.²⁶⁸ The Germans allowed about fifty prisoners from the Jablanica assembly camp to receive permits and move to Serbia.²⁶⁹

Regarding the conditions in the assembly camp in Jablanica, after visiting it on August 7th, Air Force Major Nikola Mikec wrote in a report to the State Directorate for Repatriation. Mikec obtained permission to visit the camp in Jablanica personally from Herenčić, but with the remark that the State Directorate for Repatriation had no authority over that camp. The conditions in the rooms where the prisoners were held were appalling: “People lie on the bare floor without bedding. Some of them - but a very small number - have blankets or straw with them. Only in 3 smaller rooms, where a total of about 30 people were accommodated, did I find a little spread-out straw.” Major Mikec further noted: “All rooms, corridors, entrances, staircases, in short, all spaces are

²⁶⁸ *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 209, p. 497–498. In the first wave, from June 7th to July 5th, about 5,000 Slovenes, mostly intellectuals and “undesirable elements”, were to be resettled directly to Serbia. The only exception would be Catholic priests, who would move to the Independent State of Croatia, from where an equal number of Orthodox priests would be transferred to Serbia. In the second wave, from July 10th to August 30th, around 25,000 Slovenes who had settled in Styria after 1914 were to be relocated to the NDH, and from there, an equal number of Serbs would be transferred to Serbia. In the third wave, from September 15th to October 31st, around 65,000 Slovenes from the border areas of Lower Styria, as well as about 80,000 Slovenes from Carinthia, were to be resettled in the NDH, and from there, an equal number of Serbs would be moved to Serbia (mostly those from Sylvania), along with an additional 30,000 Serbs who were not recognized as citizens by the NDH. To oversee the resettlement of “foreign populations” from the NDH, the State Directorate for Renewal was established on June 24th. (N. Živković, P. Kačavenda, *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*, Doc. Nr. 175–177, 213, p. 297–300, 355–357; A. Miletić, *Koncentracioni logor Jasenovac*, III, Doc. Nr. 4, 14, p. 20–23, 41–42; *Документи о ієноциду над Србима у Босни и Херцеговини*, doc. Nr. 25, p. 177–180; B. Krizman, *Pavelić između Hitlera i Mussolinija*, p. 126; V. Dedijer, A. Miletić, *Proterivanje Srba sa ognjišta*, p. 27–31; M. Peršen, *Ustaški logori*, p. 107–115; J. Tomasevich, *Rat i revolucija u Jugoslaviji*, p. 442–446; Marica Karakaš Obradov, *Novi mozaici nacija u „novim poredcima“: Migracije stanovništva na hrvatskom području tijekom Drugoga svjetskog rata i poraća*, Zagreb 2014, p. 35–40).

²⁶⁹ According to the testimony of Slavko Barbarez, his brother Dobroslav was in the group that the Germans took from Jablanica. He was last heard of in Zemun, and since then, there has been no further news of him. It is believed that “the Germans killed them somewhere along the way.” (Slavko Barbarez, „Odvodili su i ubijali Srbe“, in: *Zbornik sjećanja o ilegalnom NOP-u Mostara 1941–1945*, I, Mostar, s. a.).

in a neglected state - dirty, uncleaned, muddy, full of all sorts of waste. Windows without glass, doors without locks and handles, and walls with no plaster. Electric light is only being introduced and is only in some corridors. The corridors are stained, and such a stench emanates from them that it is impossible to stay near them.²⁷⁰

In the first half of August, Jablanica fulfilled its role as an assembly camp. From there, people were transported to death camps according to the orders of the authorities in Zagreb. The transport sent from Mostar on August 3rd was immediately directed towards Gospić, but after a brief stay in Čapljina and Zagreb. Two more transports of Serbs from Mostar arrived in Jablanica on August 5th and 8th. It is estimated that around 750 people from the areas of Mostar, Ljubinje, Stolac, Trebinje, Dubrovnik, and Konjic passed through the Jablanica assembly camp in these few transports. Except for a portion of the prisoners saved by the Germans, who were given permits, all others (around 700) were transported from Jablanica to Gospić between August 8 and 13. Transports from Jablanica arrived in Gospić after two or three days. Upon arrival at the railway station, men were separated from women and children and mostly immediately sent to the Jadovno camp, while women with children were mostly imprisoned in the Collective Camp Ovčara, and then transferred to the Metajna camp on Pag or the Auxiliary Camp Stupčinovo near Baške Oštarije.²⁷¹

The Serbs who were transported out of Mostar on August 13th were sent to the Čapljina camp, and a smaller group, thanks to the Germans, arrived in Zemun. This was the last transport of randomly selected Orthodox Serbs. Starting from August 14th, entire Serbian families were systematically loaded into railway cars and taken north, under the explanation that they would be resettled in Serbia. The plan was clear – Mostar was to be completely cleared of the local Serbian population.

²⁷⁰ *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 198, p. 473–475; N. Živković, P. Kačavenda, *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*, Doc. Nr. 126, p. 220–222; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 71–72; F. Škiljan, *Organizirana prisilna iseljavanja*, p. 207; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 86.

²⁷¹ M. Seferović, *Mostarski kolopleti*, p. 81; D. K. Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, p. 118; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 244–247;

The entire city was plastered with posters ordering the forced eviction of Serbs, regardless of gender or age. The oldest person of Serbian nationality designated for eviction was Mara Perić, aged 98. On August 14th the order encompassed all Serbian families whose surnames began with the letters “A” and “B”. They were required to gather at the railway station by 22:00, and after boarding, the train would depart at 23:00. Serbs were allowed to take 50 kilograms of luggage per person, as well as all their money and valuables. They were supposed to lock their homes and houses and hand the keys over to the District Authority. It was threatened that anyone who did not respond to the call, hide, or escape would be severely punished. Under the threat of severe punishment, it was forbidden for anyone to receive anything “as a gift, food, or exchange in any form” from these Serbs. Those Serbs who attempted to destroy their movable or immovable property were particularly threatened with strict punishment. According to the Ustasha authorities’ report, around 350 Orthodox Serbs left that evening.²⁷² Anka Mesarović, born Telebak, the wife of Milan Mesarović, a civil servant killed in Jadovno, later testified to how difficult it was for the Serbs affected by that order: „We packed as best we could, said goodbye to our homes for the last time, and went to the station together with children, elderly, and disabled, because no one was allowed to stay at home. We were not allowed to remove anything from the house or sell anything. We had to take the house keys to the police station and hand them over there.”²⁷³

The Biljanović family was in the first transport. Danilo Biljanović recounts: ‘so there we were, in a cattle wagon at the Mostar railway station - my mother, two younger sisters, and I. Our neighbors saw us

²⁷² Предстојничийтво ірадскої редарсїйва у Мосїтару, Позив Србима (a privately owned copy of the document); Документи о ієноциду над Србима у Босни и Херцеїовини, р. 59; Ђ. Затезало, Јаговно, II, doc. Nr. 223, p. 687–692; D. K. Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, p. 117–118; Slobodan D. Milošević, *Izbeglice i preseljenici na teritoriji okupirane Jugoslavije 1941–1945. godine*, Beograd 1981, p. 119–120; M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 626–627; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеїовини*, II, p. 229–231; Ђ. Затезало, *Јаговно*, I, p. 289; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 234–235; F. Škiljan, *Organizirana prisilna iseljavanja*, p. 205–206; Hrvoje Mandić, „Hercegovački franjevci i spašavanje žrtava ustaških progona u Mostaru 1941.–1943.“, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, Nr. 3/2016, p. 709–726.

²⁷³ D. R. Lastavica, *Hrvatski genocid nad srpskim i jevrejskim narodom u Koncentracionom logoru Gospić*, p. 199–203; *Ог Косова го Јаговна*, p. 522–529.

off, crying and lamenting, handing us a few things to have on hand. Several families with their belongings were crammed into each wagon. We were escorted by the Ustasha. We traveled, it seems, for two or three days to Vrpolje or Brod. We stood for hours on sidetracks, mostly in locked wagons. Once a day, they would let us get water and use the bathroom.” After a long wait in the city on the banks of the Sava River, they were sent to Zagreb, and then to the Caprag camp. Biljanović writes about the reception at the camp: “We waited a long time in a line, in an open area. Family by family entered a building and did not return. We guessed what was happening because a lot of time passed between the entrance of one family and the next. Or so it seemed to us. Were they killing them? As our turn came, we saw what was happening. A group of Ustasha searched everyone down to their skin, ripped open pillows, unwound balls of yarn, took everything of value. They removed rings, bracelets, earrings. Women begged them to at least leave their wedding rings. They sneered and cursed.”²⁷⁴

Only after being searched could they settle into one of the barracks inside the camp. The Ustasha allocated half a meter of width in the barrack for each family member. Biljanović testified about the conditions inside the barrack: “The barrack is long, with a concrete floor, a thin layer of straw around and in the middle - these are the beds. There are passages in between.” He described their daily life in the camp: “Almost every day we were forced to work. We built some kind of road or embankment from morning until dusk. The food was slop: squash, turnips, cabbage leaves with caterpillars, sometimes soup mixed with a little flour. And in the evening, we would hear the gramophone and drunken singing coming from the building where the Ustasha lived.” The Caprag camp was part of an organized system of camps, not an incidental and secret project of a group of people: “The camp was large. A large number of barracks, boarded off by barbed wire, with several high towers. They had spotlights and guards with machine guns and rifles. The camp was well lit at night, it was almost impossible

²⁷⁴ D. Bilanović, „Crvena mladost Mostara“.

to move from one barrack to another. In one corner there was a square, also boarded off by barbed wire. That was a place for the disobedient. They had to stand and look at the sun as long as they deserved to do so, until they fainted onto the wire. And then there were of course the beatings.”²⁷⁵

The Balać family was also in the first transport. It was Slava Balać who testified to their fate. Instead of going to Serbia, the Ustasha transferred her and her mother to the Caprag camp, where they stayed for about a month. Her testimony about their stay in the camp is very telling: “The camp had neither the minimum hygienic nor any living conditions. We slept on smelly straw, and they fed us slop in which you could barely see a bean. We did the dirtiest jobs, cleaning rooms, stables, horse barns, courtyards, toilets, etc.” After a month, some families remained in the camp, some were distributed to houses as auxiliary labor, and some were finally sent to Serbia. The Balać family was in the latter group.²⁷⁶

The camp administration at Caprag was very dissatisfied with the composition of the transport from Mostar. The transport consisted mainly of women and children, whose husbands and fathers had already been transported to Gospić in the previous days. In the first transport, there were 90 cases where women simply did not know where their husbands were. Consequently, complete families were not arriving at Caprag, prompting the camp manager to threaten the district authorities in Mostar that he would not accept any transport unless the deportation was organized according to the instructions from the German-Croatian agreement on resettlement. The camp manager complained to the State Directorate for Renewal that the transport from Mostar lacked a leader and that families were given too little time to prepare even the most necessary items (barely 15 minutes, according to the correspondence).²⁷⁷

²⁷⁵ D. Bilanović, „Crvena mladost Mostara“.

²⁷⁶ Slava Balać, „Mladost ne zna za strah“, in: *Zbornik sjećanja o ilegalnom NOP-u Mostara 1941–1945*, I, Mostar, s. a.

²⁷⁷ F. Škiljan, *Organizirana prisilna iseljavanja*, p. 206.

The next day (August 15th) at 6:30 in the morning, a second transport with about 130 Serbs, selected according to the initial letter of their surnames, departed. About 750 Mostar residents, selected by the initial letter of their surnames, were sent in three transports to camps and execution sites throughout the NDH. On August 17th Mostar was again plastered with proclamations titled “Call to Serbs,” signed by the police chief Krešimir Krtalić.²⁷⁸ A fourth transport was thus being prepared, according to a call targeting Serbian families with surnames beginning with the letters “K,” “L,” “Lj,” “N,” and “Nj,” which was scheduled to depart at 5 PM. Due to the Italians intervening, this action was halted. The Mostar Serbs who had been gathered were sent back to their homes.²⁷⁹

Dissatisfied with the “incompleteness” of the families gathered, the camp administration at Caprag refused to take in 25 Mostar residents on August 17th, and 50 more on August 18th. They were transferred to Glina and then to Dvor na Uni. They were assigned to the homes of peasants where, under strict Ustasha control, they worked in the fields for about two months. When the Italians took command over their homeland, they were given passes to return to Mostar. Of the remaining Mostar residents at the Caprag camp, 242 were forcibly resettled to Serbia - 184 on August 22nd and 58 on August 25th. The rest of the Mostar residents at the Caprag camp mostly ended up in Banija. On September 14th a transport with 201 people from Mostar was sent from Caprag to Dvor na Uni. Among them were 43 men, 129 women, and 29 children.²⁸⁰

For all that happened to the Serbs in the Mostar region during that hot summer of 1941, the State Commission for Determining the Crimes of the Occupiers and Their Helpers established that the fol-

²⁷⁸ Krešimir Krtalić (1900–1948), originally from Banja Luka. After the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia, he became one of the most important figures of authority in Mostar, as head of the local police. He was later transferred from Mostar to the position of head of the police in Bijeljina. It is believed that he was removed from Mostar after a complaint by a German officer that he was in a romantic relationship with a woman of Jewish origin from Mostar. He was captured by the new Yugoslav authorities and was executed in Mostar on January 9th 1948 (I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 234).

²⁷⁹ *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупираној у Херцеговини*, I, doc. Nr. 2, p. 31–60; D. K. Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, p. 119; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 247; C. Skoko, „Страдање Срба града и среза Мостара“, p. 308–309; Ђ. Затезало, *Јаговно*, I, p. 289–290.

²⁸⁰ F. Škiljan, *Organizirana prisilna iseljavanja*, p. 206–207.

lowing were responsible: Krešimir Krtalić, head of the city police in Mostar, originally from Gnojnice; Stjepan Barbarić, lawyer;²⁸¹ Đuro Spužević, judge; Stanko Šarac, member of the Ustasha headquarters in Mostar; Ivan Hočevar, Ustasha commissioner in Mostar; Petar Vrdoljak, high school teacher from Imotski, member of the Ustasha headquarters; Mate Buntić, director of the Crafts School; Mirko Udiljak, surveyor from Tomislavgrad, member of the Ustasha headquarters; Šimun Buntić, merchant from Cerna, member of the Ustasha headquarters; Križan Ostojić, driver from Čitluk, Ustasha supporter, member of the Ustasha headquarters; Ante Zličarić, clerk from Travnik, member of the Ustasha headquarters; Jozo Babić, former director of the Teacher's School in Mostar, member of the Ustasha headquarters; Slavko Zovko, high school teacher from Konjic, originally from Blagaj; Ahmet Badžak, merchant from Mostar, member of the Ustasha headquarters; Dr. Ivan Kordić, lawyer from Mostar; Dr. Drago Marušić, doctor from Mostar, member of the Ustasha headquarters; Friar Radoslav Glavaš, professor at the Franciscan High School in Široki Brijeg; Josip Troyer, governor of the Grand County of Hum; Petar Budak, penal referent of the District Office in Mostar, originally from the Croatian coast; Mehmed Jahić, court technician from Mostar; Esad Kotla, student from Mostar; Mirko Buhač, blacksmith at the railway station in Mostar;²⁸² Mirko Bebek, train driver from Mostar; Marko Zelenika, Ustasha from Jara near Široki Brijeg; Stanko Zelenika, Ustasha from Jara; Slavko Serdarušić, student from Mostar; Mujo Omerika, Ustasha from Zijemlje; Niko Miličević, painter from Ilići; Božo Komadina, Ustasha from Ilići; Alojz Matić, medical assistant from Mostar; Marko Cvitković, farmer from Cim; Marko Drmač, police agent from Gnojnice; Vjekoslav Keko Komljenović, barber from Mostar;²⁸³ Zdravko Čosić, student from

²⁸¹ Stjepan Barbarić held important positions within the Ustasha system of power. He was the deputy Ustasha commissioner for Herzegovina (April–July 1941), Ustasha camp commander in Mostar (July–September 1941), head of the Ustasha Youth in Mostar (from September 1941), secretary of the Grand County of Hum (until October 1943), and a member of the Ustasha Headquarters in Sarajevo (October 1943–April 1945). (AJ, 110, *Dosije Barbarić Stjepana*).

²⁸² AJ, 110, *Dosije Buhač Mirka*.

²⁸³ He was sentenced to death by firing squad on April 24th 1946.

Mostar; Alija Demirović, merchant from Mostar; Salko Dizdar from Mostar; Stojan Cvitković, police agent from Rodoč; Stjepan Zeljko, locksmith at the Tobacco Factory in Mostar; Jakov Barbarić, Ustasha captain from Mostar; Franjo Jurica, bricklayer from Ilići; Salko Huremović, property owner from Mostar; Stjepan Soldo, merchant from Hodbine;²⁸⁴ Martin Zovko, guard at the Banovina Hospital; Salko Mirica, policeman from Mostar; Rafo Ondelj from Mostar; Asim Ramić, servant at the Tobacco Factory; Avdija Muratagić, servant at the railway station; Vicko Mijan, worker from Mostar; Karlo Kljajo, worker at the locomotive shed from Ilići; Jure Popović, miner from Mostar; Hussein Jusić, police agent from Mostar; Cvitan Zovko, railway official in Mostar; Pavo Magazin, train driver from Mostar; Jozo Križanac, Ustasha from Mostar; Mehmed Novo, police agent from Mostar; Franjo Sudar, tax official from Sarajevo, Ustasha colonel; Ante Mandić, worker at the Tobacco Factory in Mostar; Tomo Falak, clerk from Mostar; Ivan Turk, policeman from Mostar; Julius Hofer, driver, originally from Zagorje; Andrija Buljan, Ustasha camp leader from Čapljina; Zvonko Mišetić, clerk at the Tobacco Factory; Andrija Jarak, policeman from Mostar; Ante Rozić, locksmith from Mostar; Silvester Dragoje, railway official from Mostar; Mijo Rajić, clerk at the Tobacco Factory; Džemal Konjhodžić, deputy Ustasha commissioner Hočevar; Ilka Juričin, innkeeper from Mostar; Hakija Begović, Ustasha from Mostar; Boris Smoljan, student from Mostar; Šimun Benić, police agent from Mostar; Mujo Trbonja, police agent from Mostar; Franjo Jakiša, painter from Mostar; Ivo Gril, mechanic from Mostar; Franjo Majsner, manager at the Tobacco Factory; Franjo Kikaš, police scribe from Mostar; Petar Šimunović from Mostar; Fehim Pašić, merchant from Avtovac; and Omer Sefić, journalist from Mostar.²⁸⁵

After the war, the District Court in Mostar sentenced several more Ustasha criminals to death by shooting and the permanent loss of civ-

²⁸⁴ Executed by decision of the Italian authorities on October 22nd 1941, for the unauthorized carrying of a rifle (VA, NDH, b. 213, f. 4, doc. Nr. 23; VA, NDH, b. 221, f. 5, doc. Nr. 18).

²⁸⁵ *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајтора у Херцеговини*, I, doc. Nr. 85, p. 399–404; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 251–253, 430–431.

il rights. Drago Blažević from Buna was convicted for the mistreatment of prisoner Rade Glavaš, as well as for participating in the murder of several residents of Ortiješ and Lakševine (Jovo Medan, Gojko Ivanišević, and Vlado Šupljeglav). Jozo Cvitković, a farmer from Cim, and from 1942 a policeman, was sentenced to death by shooting on November 23rd 1945, for the arrest, mistreatment, and killing of several Serbian workers from the Mostar mine in the summer of 1941. Franjo Jakiša was convicted, among other things, for leading four Serbs, including Vojislav Vojko Kulidžan, Vaso Ilić, and Marko Sudar, from the railway station on St. Elijah's Day (Sv. Ilija) in 1941, who never returned. Ferdinand Barbarić, originally from Klobuk near Ljubuški but residing in Mostar, was convicted for issuing arrest orders and inciting the arrest of Mostar Serbs, who were later killed in prison.²⁸⁶

After everything previously stated, the question arises about the final outcome of the massacres and deportations of Serbs in Mostar during June, July, and August. According to the 1931 census, 5,502 Serbs lived in the city of Mostar. An unofficial census of Orthodox Serbs was conducted in Mostar for the needs of the Ustasha authorities between August 21st and 25th, 1941.²⁸⁷ According to data from a report by the City Police Office sent to the Grand County of Hum on August 26th, 1941, only 852 people of Serbian nationality lived in Mostar. This number did not include those from mixed marriages or Serbs who converted to Catholicism.²⁸⁸ The figure becomes even more alarming if we assume that the number of Serbs in Mostar increased by at least 1,000–1,500 people, if not by as much as 2,500, as some literature suggests. It is estimated that during the summer of 1941, 1,093 Serbs from Mostar were killed, of which 676 were in the city itself, and 417 in the surrounding villages. Thus, after the first year of the war, most of the Serbs from Mostar who would lose their lives in World War II

²⁸⁶ *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајтора у Херцеговини*, II, doc. Nr. 43–47, p. 281–296.

²⁸⁷ VA, NDH, b. 189, f. 3, doc. Nr. 11.

²⁸⁸ VA, NDH, b. 189, f. 9, doc. Nr. 2; „За само шест сати усташе у Голубинку бациле 506 Срба“, *Српско коло*, VII 2016, p. 15.

had already perished. According to data from the District Office in Mostar dated October 25th 1941, the District of Mostar had 77,988 inhabitants, of which 58,410 were Roman Catholics, 10,616 Muslims, and 8,962 Orthodox Christians.²⁸⁹ Therefore, compared to the 1931 census, the number of Roman Catholics had increased by almost 6,000, the number of Muslims by almost 7,000, while the number of Serbs had decreased. Compared to the results of the census conducted a decade earlier alone, 3,768 Orthodox Christians were missing. If we add the natural population increase over the ten-year period, the results of the genocidal policies of the Croatian Ustasha authorities in the Mostar region become more than evident.

²⁸⁹ VA, NDH, b. 190, f. 1, doc. Nr. 34.

JADOVNO CAMP – THE LARGEST GRAVEYARD OF SERBS FROM MOSTAR

The first concentration camp system in the the Independent State of Croatia conceived with that intent of mass killings was the Gospić-Jadovno-Pag camp complex. Originally, this camp system was the prison of the District Court (Okružni sud) in Gospić. The new Croatian authorities imprisoned the first Serbs in the Gospić prison on April 11th, a



The prison in Gospić
(Archive of the Genocide Victims' Museum)



A cross on the clearing where the Jadovno camp was located
(Photograph by Milorad Milošević)

Camp at Stupačinovo, and the Slana and Metajna camps on the island of Pag. Often, detainees were not even held in Gospić but were immediately sent from the railway station to execution sites and camps in Velebit or Pag. The commander of the camp in Gospić was Stjepan Rubinić, head of the County Police Department.²⁹¹ The prison direc-

²⁹¹ Stjepan Rubinić was born in 1909 in Jastrebarsko. He completed a trade school and worked as a traveling salesman. He was active within the Ustasha movement and, after the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia, became involved with the Main Ustasha Headquarters. At the end of April 1941, he was appointed the Ustasha commander and state commissioner (*ustaški zapovednik i državni poverenik*) for the districts of Kostajnica, Dvor na Uni, and Bosanski Novi. He was soon appointed head of the County Police Department in Gospić, with a special task: “To establish a camp in Jadovno and temporarily supervise the camp on Pag.” From June to August 1941, he managed the Gospić-Jadovno-Pag camp system. When the order arrived to liquidate the camp in Jadovno and transfer the remaining prisoners to Jastrebarsko, the camp no longer existed, and the prisoners had been killed. Due to this unauthorized action, Rubinić was subjected to proceedings before the Ustasha Disciplinary and Penal Court (*Stegovni i kazneni sud*). He was arrested in Jastrebarsko in mid-September 1941 and was tried from October 1941 to February 1942. He was expelled from the Ustasha ranks and sentenced to one year of forced labor in a camp for “improper conduct with the camp’s female prisoners, with which he had engaged in a romantic relationship”. He was sent to the camp in Stara Gradiška, where he held a privileged position, lived with the camp administration, and assisted them in their work. After being released from the camp, he managed two shops whose owners were Jews. Yugoslav agents knew that he was in Austria at least until 1948, but after that, he disappeared without a trace. (Davor Kovačić,

tor was Milan Staraček, and the warden in charge of political prisoners was Ustasha lieutenant Janko Mihalović. The camp's security was managed by members of two Ustasha battalions under the leadership of Juraj Juco Rukavina.²⁹²

In the summer of 1941, the District Court Prison in Gospić became a mass torture site for Serbs, Jews, and others whom the Ustasha authorities considered to be threatening the newly established order. The murdered, tortured, and mutilated prisoners were transported from the prison and thrown into numerous Velebit pits. Transports going to the execution sites were overseen by prison director Milan Staraček. Daily, groups of detainees were sent from Gospić to the execution sites. The prisoners often walked to Velebit, tied two by two, with a long chain forming the "column of death." As the prison in Gospić became too small for the masses of people arriving from all parts of the NDH, the Jadovno camp in Velebit was established. The first detainees arrived in Jadovno on June 24th. Initially, the camp covered only a small clearing, enclosed by barbed wire, no longer than 50 meters and no wider than 25 meters. However, it was expanded daily, eventually covering an area of 170 by 90 meters, enclosed by four-meter-high barbed wire. The Jadovno camp was located about twenty kilometers from Gospić, in a place called Čačić dolac, deep in the Velebit massif forest at an altitude of 1,200 meters. It could accommodate between 2,500 and 3,000 detainees at the same time. The location for the camp was chosen by Juco Rukavina and Jurica Frković, who, as long-time members of the Ustasha movement and participants in the Velebit uprising

„Vlado Singer i Stjepan Rubinić – od visokih policijskih dužnosnika Nezavisne Države Hrvatske do zatočenika koncentracijskih logora“, in: *Logori, zatvori i prisilni rad u Hrvatskoj/Jugoslaviji 1941.–1945., 1945.–1951.*, (Ed. Vladimir Geiger, Martina Grahek Ravančić, Marica Karakaš Obradov), Zagreb 2010, p. 75–89).

²⁹² Ђ. Зазезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 106–107; *Ог Косова го Јадовна*, p. 421–423, 428–432; Dane R. Lastavica, *Hrvatski genocid nad srpskim i jevrejskim narodom u Koncentracionom logoru Gospić (Lika) 1941–45, a Srbima i 1991–...?*, Novi Sad 2011, p. 58–59, 64–66, 72, 80, 86–87, 90–91; Момчило Диклић, „Јадовно – први концентрациони логор у НДХ 1941. године“, in: *Грађански рај у Хрватској 1991–1995.* (Ed. Милојко Будимир), VII, Београд 2011, p. 195–218; Душан Ђаковић, „Јадовно (које се сакрило у земљу)“, in: *Грађански рај у Хрватској 1991–1995.* (Ed. Милојко Будимир), VII, Београд 2011, p. 219–228; Vladimir Geiger, Mario Jareb, Davor Kovačić, *Jadovno i Šaranova jama. Kontroverze i manipulacije*, Zagreb 2017, p. 8–12.

knew this part of Lika well. The Jadovno camp was subordinated to the Ustasha Defense Office III (Ured III Ustaške odbrane), part of the Ustasha Surveillance Service, and directly subordinated to the County Police Department and its head, Stjepan Rubinić.²⁹³

The manager of the Jadovno camp was a former teacher and then Ustasha lieutenant, Rude Ric, while the commander was Ustasha lieutenant Bešlić. The camp was well “covered” with guards armed with machine guns, and not far from there were two wooden barracks intended for the camp manager and the guards. The prisoners had no facilities whatsoever. They were outdoors, exposed to the weather. It was especially difficult during the night due to the high humidity and low temperatures. Only in July were the prisoners allowed to erect some shelters to protect themselves somewhat from the weather. The camp was characterized by very poor nutrition and hard labor, mainly cutting down trees in the surrounding forests.²⁹⁴ Unlike other camps, isolation in Jadovno was complete – no inmate received letters or packages, could contact their family, or have any visitors. No one except the responsible Ustasha had access to the camp. Two inspections briefly visited the camp, neither speaking a word to the inmates – one led by Vjekoslav Maks Luburić, head of the Ustasha Surveillance Service Office III, and the other by Jurica Frković, governor of the Grand County of Gacka and Lika. Thanks to the persistence of the Jewish religious community, packages for the detainees were sent in the first half of August, arriving in Gospić. Some of the packages reached the Metajna and Slana camps, but none made it to Jadovno.²⁹⁵

The day after the first prisoners arrived at Jadovno, on June 25th two new camps from the Gospić complex – Slana and Metajna on the island of Pag – took in their first prisoners. These two camps were under the jurisdiction of the County Police Department in Gospić and

²⁹³ Мирко Рапайћ, *Личка њраједина. Хрвајски злочини јеноцида над српским народом 1941. до 1945.*, Београд 1999, р. 77–79; Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, р. 112–113; Ђуро Затезало, „Јадовно. Комплекс усташких логора 1941.“, in: *Зајџирање Срба у Хрвајској* (Ed. Богдан Златар), Београд 2008, р. 201–211.

²⁹⁴ Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, р. 114–115.

²⁹⁵ D. Kovačić, „Vlado Singer i Stjepan Rubinić“, р. 81–82.

were integral parts of the camp complex centered in Gospić. Prisoners from all parts of the NDH arrived at Slana and Metajna. They were first transported to Gospić and then taken by trucks or on foot to Karlobag, from where they were ferried across the Pag Channel to Pag. The location of Slana, deemed suitable for a camp, was chosen by Mijo Babić, in consultation with those familiar with this large Adriatic island. Slana is located at Cape Saint Christopher, about six kilometers from the town of Pag. This location, surrounded by hills, was battered by the Velebit bora winds in winter and suffered unbearable heat in summer. Due to these harsh conditions and the absence of any vegetation, this part of the island had never been inhabited. The Slana camp was divided into a Jewish and a Serbian section. The Jewish section could accommodate 600–1,000 prisoners, while the Serbian section could hold up to 5,000. Only a small number of prisoners could fit into the few small wooden barracks, while the rest had to stay under the open sky. The camp commander was Mijo Babić, with his deputy Ivan Devčić. The camp crew consisted of 130–180 Ustasha.²⁹⁶ At the same time as the Slana camp for Serbs and Jews was established in the bay, a women's camp, Metajna, was formed about three kilometers away. The camp was located in several uninhabited houses at the end of the village. The camp, which housed Serbian and Jewish women with children, was managed by Maks Očić. These women were previously separated from their husbands, who were also imprisoned, to serve the sexual needs of the Ustasha. Mass rapes and murders of these prisoners characterized the Metajna camp. The first prisoners in this camp were four Jewish women from Zagreb.²⁹⁷

In the last days of June and the first days of July 1941, due to a lack of space in the Gospić prison, the Ovčara Collection Camp was established about three kilometers away, on the left bank of the Novčica River. Three barns, measuring 30 by 10 meters, belonging to the

²⁹⁶ Franjo Zdunić Lav, „Ustaški zločini na Jadovnom i u nekim drugim logorima smrti uz osvrt na njihove korijene“, in: *Kotar Gospić i Kotar Perušić u Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu 1941–1945*, Zbornik (Ed. Đuro Zatezalo), Karlovac 1989, p. 168–200; Ћ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 126–128; Ћ. Затезало, „Јадовно“, p. 205–206.

²⁹⁷ Ћ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 145–152.



The pit beneath Grgin Brijeg today
(Photograph by Milorad Milošević)

Serbian trader Matija Maksimović, were used for the Ovčara camp. These barns were only part of his wealth, which included a printing press, a bookstore, and a reading room. Maksimović, along with his family members, was killed and thrown into the Macolina pit, and his property was seized. The Ovčara camp was commanded by Ustasha lieutenant Dragutin Pudić, and the camp was guarded by members of Juco Rukavina's Ustasha formations, who also secured the prison itself. The camp complex covered an area of 80 by 50 meters. Entire Jewish families were brought to Ovčara, as well as Serbian women and children. Prisoners were used for fieldwork on estates whose Serbian owners had been killed or arrested. There were generally no killings in the camp, but there was maltreatment and exhaustion. The camp could accommodate between 1,000 and 1,600 prisoners at a time. However, this did not mean that those imprisoned in Ovčara stayed alive. They

arrived at Ovčara from the Gospić railway station or the prison, only to meet their deaths later when transferred to the Stupačinovo camp or Pag.²⁹⁸

Given the majority of prisoners in the Gospić camp complex arrived there by train and the prison's capacity was long exceeded, with transportation to Velebit and Pag being slow, the Ustasha fenced off part of the railway station used for loading and unloading livestock with a two-meter-high wooden and barbed wire fence. This area could temporarily accommodate 500–700 prisoners. They were registered and allocated here under the direction of Ustasha lieutenant Janko Mihalović. Jews and Croats were taken to Ovčara or the prison, while Serbs were mostly sent to execution sites in Velebit and Pag.²⁹⁹ In early July, an auxiliary camp named Stupačinovo was established near the Gospić-Karlobag road, named after the nearby village in the vicinity of Baške Oštarije. The camp was located in a clearing, enclosed by a four-meter-high barbed wire fence, and managed by Ivan Devčić, the commander of the Slana camp, assisted by Ivica Brkljačić. Groups of Serbs from the Gospić prison, Ovčara, or directly from the railway station were brought to the camp. Surrounding the camp were several pits where the prisoners met their deaths (Badanj, Duliba, Bliznica, Kijevac, Ploče, Varnzina pit). The camp was guarded by a group of 60 to 80 Ustasha. As Stupačinovo served as an auxiliary camp for Gospić and Jadovno some of its inmates were sent to Jadovno where they were killed.³⁰⁰

The Gospić-Jadovno-Pag camp complex was marked by unique places where the bodies of the murdered were disposed of. Mostly, the karst pits on Velebit or the sea in the Velebit Channel were used. A series of Velebit pits swallowed up the prisoners of Gospić and Jadovno. They were thrown into these pits dead, half-dead, and often alive. There was no escape from them, and throwing unwanted inhabitants of the new state into the Velebit pits incurred no special costs. It was a

²⁹⁸ Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 152–153; Ђ. Затезало, „Јадовно“, p. 206.

²⁹⁹ Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 154–155.

³⁰⁰ Ђ. Затезало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 155–157.

monstrous use of nature. According to the research of Đuro Zatezalo, 32 pits are known where the Ustasha threw prisoners from the Gospić-Jadovno-Pag camp complex: Šaranova Jama, Grgin Brijeg, Jarčija Pit, Badanja, Duliba, Bliznica, Ploče, Kijevac, Vranzina Jama, Jasenovac, Jamina, Šević Jama, Kulaševa Strana, Orešković Stanovi, Macolina Jama (named after Ustasha captain Stipe Marković Macola), Peratove Drage, Ugljenča, Duman, Sveta Ana (named after the church in Gornji Kosinj near which it is located), Pavkuša, Nezdravka, Ošporoča, Golubnjača, Snježnjača, Kvarte, Runjevac, Dupčan, Čošić Pit, Križanovo Brdo, the pit on Pag, and two unnamed pits near the Jadovno camp. The most infamous is Šaranova Jama, which is 47.5 meters deep.³⁰¹

When on August 15th Italy made the decision to reoccupy the Second Zone, the accelerated liquidation of the Gospić-Jadovno-Pag camp complex began. This implied either killing or further deporting the remaining prisoners and removing traces of the crimes. Until August 18th, the Jadovno camp was still receiving prisoners. The task of liquidating the camp complex in Lika and on Pag was given by the leader Pavelić to Vjekoslav Maks Luburic. Mid-August saw this factory of death in full swing as a human slaughterhouse. The climax ensued on August 17th when around 700 Serbs, mainly from Herzegovina, including a large number from Mostar, were sent from the Gospić prison to Jadovno, where they were massacred and thrown into the Šaranova Jama. These were the last prisoners sent from Gospić to the death sites of that camp complex. The prisoners prepared the next day for the journey to Jadovno (around 1,100 of them), were, however, on August 19th placed in railway compositions and sent to Zagreb. At dawn on August 20th, this composition arrived in Jastrebarsko, and in the evening, the majority of these people (around 900) were sent to the newly established camp Jasenovac. With the arrival of this group of prisoners at the Jasenovac camp, the central camp complex in the Independent State of Croatia began its operation, effectively establishing the largest death factory in the occupied territory of Yugoslavia.

³⁰¹ Ђ. Затецало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 169–189.

The last transport from Gospić, consisting of around 900 Jews and Serbs, departed on August 21st. These were the former prisoners of the Ovčara camp and Slana. Thus, the Gospić-Jadovno-Pag camp system was extinguished on August 21st 1941.³⁰² This striking testimony about the relocation of the last prisoners of the Gospić-Jadovno-Pag complex is provided by Zorka Radovanovic from Mostar: “In Baške Oštarije, we remained without food for two days, and then they sent us back to Gospić, and from there to Jastrebarsko, where we stayed for 12 days. From there, we were sent to the Kruščica camp near Travnik. During the three-day journey, they did not give us food or water, nor allowed us to relieve ourselves, but we had to, at the Ustasha’s order, relieve ourselves in our portions, and when they gave us food on the second day after arriving in Kruščica, then we had to take those same portions that we had washed and eat the food.”³⁰³

Estimates of the number of those killed in that camp system vary from several thousand to several tens of thousands. Whichever figure it may be, the camp was undoubtedly a true factory of horrors because it existed for barely two months and had the characteristics of a classic death camp. According to the research of Đuro Zatezalo, 10,502 victims of the Gospić-Jadovno-Pag camp complex were identified by name, of which 9,663 were Serbs, 762 Jews, and 55 Croats. According to his estimates, 42,246 people passed through the camp, of which 40,123 were killed (38,010 Serbs, 1,988 Jews, 88 Croats, and 11 Slovenes). The remaining 2,123 prisoners were deported to Jastrebarsko and Jasenovac shortly before the entry of Italian troops into the demilitarized/Second Zone. The number of victims cited by Zatezalo is not sufficiently supported by sources. Realistic estimates, based on a revision of the 1964 census of war victims, lead to a figure of 15,300 to 15,900 killed, among them 13,400–13,800 Serbs (87.18%), 1,800–2,000 Jews (12.18%), and about 100 others (0.64%). According to confirmed data so far, between 173,800 and 184,800 people perished in concen-

³⁰² Ђ. Затецало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 345–358; Рафаел Израели, *Лојори смртии Хрвајтске. Визије и ревизије, 1941–1945*, Бања Лука 2015, p. 74–75, 80.

³⁰³ Ђ. Затецало, *Јадовно*, II, doc. Nr. 234, p. 713–714.

tration camps in the Independent State of Croatia. Among them were 58.03% Serbs (101,400–106,700), 16.09% Jews (27,800–29,900), 12.83% Roma (22,200–23,800), 6.97% Croats (11,900–13,200), 0.95% Muslims (1,600–1,800), and 5.13% members of other or unidentified nationalities (8,900–9,500). Thus, every seventh Serb from Mostar suffered in the camps in the Independent State of Croatia within the Gospić-Jadovno-Pag camp complex.³⁰⁴

Most of the people from Mostar sent to Gospić perished on Pag, in Jadovno, or in other mass graves around Velebit. Some were drowned in the sea, like the pharmacist from Mostar, Olga Ninkovic, nee Neic. According to the research of Đuro Zatezalo, out of 10,502 specifically identified victims of the Gospić-Jadovno-Pag camp complex, there were 440 from Mostar, placing Mostar fifth in terms of the number of victims. There were more victims, known by name, from the areas of Gospić (3,259), Grubišno Polje (557), Korenica (513), and Zagreb (460).³⁰⁵ Although our research has determined a slightly smaller number of Mostar residents who certainly perished in Jadovno (361), this camp complex undoubtedly consumed a large number of Serbs from Mostar. For this reason, it can rightfully be said that the Jadovno camp was the largest tomb of Mostar's Serbs.

³⁰⁴ Ђ. Затецало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 377–384, 731–732; Ђ. Затецало, „Јадовно“, p. 207–209; Dragan Cvetković, „Stradanje stanovništva NDH u logorima – numeričko određenje“, in: *Logori, zatvori i prisilni rad u Hrvatskoj/Jugoslaviji 1941.–1945., 1945.–1951.*, (Ed. Vladimir Geiger, Martina Grahek Ravančić, Marica Karakaš Obradov), Zagreb 2010, p. 41–56.

³⁰⁵ Ђ. Затецало, *Јадовно*, II, doc. Nr. 232, p. 710–711; Ђ. Затецало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 272, 289, 731–732.

JASENOVAC CAMP - A PLACE OF MASS SUFFERING OF SERBS FROM MOSTAR

In the second half of July, by order of Eugen Dido Kvaternik, the Jasenovac camp system was formed. The location chosen for the construction of such a camp system was the vicinity of Jasenovac on the banks of the Sava River, for several reasons - the proximity to the railway line, along with the flat terrain that was easy to control and defend, and even harder to attack. Also, there were industrial facilities near by (chain factory, sawmill, mill, and brickyard) owned by the Serbian Jovan Bačić and his heirs - sons Ozren and Uroš. These were confiscated as the owners left the Independent State of Croatia because they didn't feel safe there. Since that area was rich in raw materials for continued production in the brickyard and sawmill, and extensive land melioration work was needed on the nearby marshy land, the camp was initially supposed to be a labor camp. It was presented to the public as such, with the prisoners being depicted as workers involved in draining the Lonjsko Polje. Preparatory work for the formation of the camp began on July 24th 1941, when wood was ordered for the construction of barracks.³⁰⁶

The first Jasenovac prisoners were housed in camps near the villages of Krapje and Bročice. Camp I Krapje was built on the marshy

³⁰⁶ N. Mataušić, *Jasenovac 1941.-1945.*, p. 29-30; Милан Кољанин, „Концентрациони логор и логор смрти Јасеновац“, in: *Грађански рат у Хрватској 1991-1995* (Ed. Милојко Будимир), XI-XII, Београд 2016, p. 28-45.

fields near the Upper Krndija forest, not far from the village of Krapje, 12 kilometers from Jasenovac. Camp II Bročice was erected along the Veliki Strug river, near the Krndija forest, not far from the village of Bročice, about two kilometers from Jasenovac on the road to Novska. The command of both camps was in Jasenovac, with each camp having its own command. Ustasha Lieutenant Ante Marić was the commander of Camp I, while Lieutenant Ivan Rako was the commander of Camp II. The first prisoners arrived at these two camps on August 23rd 1941. They were survivors of the Jadovno camp, who were removed from there due to the disbandment of that camp complex. Shortly after them, Serbs and Jews from all parts of the Independent State of Croatia arrived in the first two camps of the Jasenovac complex. They were sent to Jasenovac by decisions of the guard directorates or the Ustasha supervisory service. Hard labor, poor nutrition, and poor hygiene conditions led to disease and contagion. Until the fall of 1941, everyone brought to Jasenovac was housed in one of these two camps.³⁰⁷

When the rains flooded the land where the two camps were located in the fall of 1941, it became clear that a more adequate solution had to be found. In early October, work began on arranging the brickyard so that it could accommodate prisoners. Camps I and II were relocated between November 14th and 16th. A larger portion of their prisoners were killed or perished from hunger, so out of 3,000-4,000 prisoners in camps Krapje and Bročice, only about 1,500 arrived at Camp III Brickyard. Those who were too weak to make the journey through rain and mud, starving and sick, were left to die in the cold sheds of the former camps, without food and water. The relocation was overseen by Vjekoslav Maks Luburić. It is estimated that between 8,000 and 12,000 people lost their lives in these two camps.³⁰⁸

Camp III Brickyard (Cigлана), or Collection Camp III, had two commanders - the camp commander and the commander of the la-

³⁰⁷ *Zločini u logoru Jasenovac*, Zagreb 1946, p. 3-4; R. Bulatović, *Koncentracioni logor Jasenovac*, p. 149-151; Славко Комарица, Славко Одић, *Зашићо Јасеновац није ослобођен*, Београд 2005, p. 39, 43; *Ог Косова до Јадовна*, p. 551-552; N. Mataušić, *Jasenovac 1941.-1945.*, p. 30-33.

³⁰⁸ *Zločini u logoru Jasenovac*, p. 40-42; M. Кољанин, „Концентрациони логор и логор смрти Јасеновац“, p. 33-34.



Entrance to Camp III Brickyard - the central camp of the Jasenovac complex
(Archive of the Genocide Victims' Museum)

bor service. The first camp commander was Jozo Matijević. Under his command were armed units that controlled the camp area, supervised the prisoners during work, and carried out their liquidation. After Matijević, the camp commanders were Ustasha captains Ivica Brkljačić, Miroslav Majstorović Filipović, Josip Mataja, Ustasha lieutenant Mirko Slišković, and Ustasha lieutenant Dinko Šakić. The first commander of the labor service was Ljubo Miloš. Under his jurisdiction were the work of prisoners in the camp and outside, their nutrition, and health conditions. From the spring of 1942, when Miloš left that position, the commanders of the labor service were Ustasha captain Milovan Pavličević, Ustasha lieutenant Tihomir Kordić,

and Ustasha lieutenant Ivo Hrstić.³⁰⁹ With the formation of Camp III Brickyard, the Command of Collection and Labor Camps was also established, located in the house of Ozren Bačić in Jasenovac. The command served as a link between the Jasenovac camp and Office III - Ustasha Defense, of the Ustasha Supervisory Service. The first commander was Ivica Matković. In the spring of 1942, he was replaced by Ljubo Miloš, and at the beginning of 1943, the Command was abolished, and its duties were taken over by the Defense Association Command.³¹⁰

Camp III Brickyard was located on a plain along the banks of the Sava River, not far from the town of Jasenovac, covering an area of 1.5 square kilometers. The camp was fenced off on three sides by high walls, while the fourth side was naturally bordered by the Sava River. The Jasenovac concentration camp was defined by continuous psychological and physical torture of the prisoners, sadistic abuse of the sick and helpless, killings for pure entertainment, and brutal punishments for mostly fabricated offenses, hangings, slaughters, massacres, and mass executions carried out with sadistic fervor and a sense of omnipotence over the helpless prisoners. Alongside arduous labor, poor nutrition, and abuse, the prisoners were particularly tormented by the extremely cold winter of 1941/1942 when the snow was deep and persistent, and temperatures were exceptionally low, with prolonged periods of sub-zero conditions. Mass executions were initially carried out on the Limani plain, alongside the road to the village of Košutarica. Initially, shootings were performed, but then firearms were replaced by knives, rocks, various types of blades, and weapons such as hammers, axes, etc. From February/March 1942, the site of mass executions shifted to the other bank of the Sava River - to Donja Gradina, a destroyed Serbian village. The camp and the execution site were connected by a ferry, which departed from a place called Granik, where executions were also carried out. It is

³⁰⁹ Davor Kovačić, „Zapovjednici i dužnosnici jasenovačke skupine logora 1941.–1945.“, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, Nr. 1/2000, p. 97–112.

³¹⁰ N. Mataušić, *Jasenovac 1941.–1945.*, p. 34–43.



Vjekoslav Maks Luburić, responsible for the entire camp system in the Independent State of Croatia (Archive of the Genocide Victims' Museum)

difficult to determine how many people were killed daily at these locations.³¹¹

The horrifying crimes from the first months of the camp's existence continued throughout 1942. Jasenovac received entire transports of Serbs and Roma, who were ruthlessly exterminated - some immediately upon arrival at the camp, while others later, during exhausting

³¹¹ *Zločini u logoru Jasenovac*, p. 7–12; N. Mataušić, *Jasenovac 1941.–1945.*, p. 54–59, 129; M. Кољанин, „Концентрациони логор и логор смрти Јасеновац“, p. 38.

labor or after they had ‘served their purpose.’ The second year of the camp’s existence in Jasenovac was “marked” by the extermination of the majority of the Roma population from the territory of the Independent State of Croatia, as well as the annihilation of entire villages from the Potkozarje region, populated by Serbian residents. The destruction of free territories in Kordun and Banija in April and May, the arrests of Roma throughout the Independent State of Croatia from May to July, and the German-Croatian military operation in the Kozara region in July and August 1942 made that year memorable for the most massive influx of prisoners into Jasenovac and their even more massive extermination.³¹²

The killings did not cease at any moment during the existence of the camp in Jasenovac, but during 1943, there were no mass transports, so the killings were carried out individually or in smaller groups. This particular change in regime was influenced by German interventions and the change in the management of the camp and the camp system in the Independent State of Croatia. When the Ustasha Supervisory Service was abolished on January 21st 1943, its former Office III, which had overseen the camp system, was transferred to the Directorate for Public Order and Security. This change also led to a change in leadership, with Stanko Šarac, previously the deputy, replacing Maks Luburić at the head of the Office, who was infamous among the Serbs of Mostar. Furthermore, there was a change in the leadership of the Command of Concentration and Labor Camps, with Ivica Brkljačić being appointed instead of Ivica Matković.³¹³

The slightly less monstrous regime of the Jasenovac camp lasted briefly, as the management of that “factory of death” was once again taken over by Vjekoslav Luburić in 1944. The new regime appointed Dinko Šakić as the commander of Camp III Brickyard. With them, new mass liquidations of prisoners began, which were particularly intensive in the autumn of that year. Namely, as winter approached, there was

³¹² М. Кољанин, „Концентрациони логор и логор смрти Јасеновац“, р. 40.

³¹³ *Zločini u logoru Jasenovac*, р. 55–56; N. Mataušić, *Jasenovac 1941.–1945.*, р. 59–77; М. Кољанин, „Концентрациони логор и логор смрти Јасеновац“, р. 41.

no “need” for labor force, so they had to “get rid of excesses.” Moreover, the situation on the fronts, which was not favorable to the Axis forces, made the treatment of prisoners harsher. This became particularly noticeable in early 1945 when the transports of prisoners arriving at Jasenovac were mostly immediately sent to the Granik on the banks of the Sava or to Gradina, where they were killed in mass executions. Starting from November 1944 until the end of March 1945, the camp was targeted several times by Allied and partisan aviation, during which a significant part of the facilities was destroyed and several prisoners were killed. However, for the remaining prisoners, these attacks were a sure sign of impending freedom, which only a few of them truly experienced.³¹⁴

Considering that the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) was losing territory piece by piece, and its ally Germany was losing the war, it was clear by the spring of 1945 that the end was nearing for the Ustaša state. Because of this, in April, Maks Luburić ordered the remaining prisoners to be killed, all camp facilities to be demolished, and traces of the committed crimes to be removed. From the remaining prisoners, work groups were formed to excavate the corpses of those killed, who were then burned in Gradina or in front of the camp hospital. Understanding that certain death awaited the remaining prisoners, who numbered just over 1,200, a group of inmates arranged an escape attempt. In the early morning of April 22nd 1945, around 600 inmates of Camp III simultaneously rushed toward the exit. They were mowed down by Ustaša gunfire from, as they were trying to reach freedom. 106 inmates survived the breakout, while all others were killed, including hundreds who did not participate in the escape attempt. Thus, on the last day of the existence of the Jasenovac camp, about 1,100 people were killed. On the same day, in the evening hours, prisoners from Kožara also attempted a breakout. There were 147 people in Kožara. About forty of them planned the escape, and eleven survived. In the following days, the remaining traces of the camp and the crimes were

³¹⁴ N. Mataušić, *Jasenovac 1941.–1945.*, p. 81–88.

destroyed. The last Ustasha left the camp and the Jasenovac area on May 1st 1945, and withdrew toward Zagreb. Partisan units entered the abandoned Jasenovac and the nearby camp on May 2nd 1945.³¹⁵

The war victim census of 1964 and the revision of that census being conducted have determined that between 122,300 and 130,100 individuals perished in the Jasenovac group of camps. Among them were 62.60% Serbs (77,000-81,000), 15.06% Roma (18,000-20,000), 14.66% Jews (18,000-19,000), 4.91% Croats (6,000-6,400), 1.10% Muslims (1,300-1,500), and 1.66% others and unknowns (2,000-2,200).³¹⁶ According to the research of Antun Miletić, 283 citizens of Mostar perished in the Jasenovac camp, along with 49 residents of surrounding villages. Among the deceased Mostar residents were 170 Serbs, 62 Muslims, 31 Jews, 19 Croats, and one Romani individual. Among the 49 victims of Jasenovac from the villages surrounding Mostar, there were 39 Serbs, seven Croats, two Muslims, and one Jew. From Baćeveći, both victims were Serbs; from Blagaj, the only victim was Muslim; from Bogodol, all six were Serbs; from Buna, one was Croat; from Dračevica, one was Serb; from Gnojnice, two were Serbs; from Goranci, one Serb and one Croat; from Hodbina, two were Serbs; from Kosor, one was Jewish; from Krivodol, two were Serbs; from Kutilivač, two were Serbs; from Malo Polje, two were Serbs; from Potoci, one Serb and one Croat; from Raška Gora, one Serb; from Raštani, two Serbs and one Muslim; from the village of Ravni, one Serb; from Sovići, two were Croats; from Vrapčići, three were Serbs; from the village of Zijemlje, all six were Serbs; and from Žitomislići, five were Serbs and two were Croats.³¹⁷ According to our research, 135 Serbs certainly perished in Jasenovac, making this camp system the second-largest grave-site for Mostar Serbs.

³¹⁵ N. Mataušić, *Jasenovac 1941.-1945.*, p. 88-98.

³¹⁶ D. Cvetković, „Stradanje stanovništva NDH u logorima“, p. 53.

³¹⁷ Antun Miletić, *Ubijeni u koncentracionom logoru Jasenovac 1941-1945.*, Jagodina 2011, p. 747-751.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN HERZEGOVINA AND THE MASSACRES OF SERBS IN THE SUMMER OF 1941

Representatives of the Roman Catholic Church in Herzegovina joyously welcomed the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH). Mostar Bishop Alojzije Mišić³¹⁸ greeted the establishment of the NDH on May 9th 1941, in a circular to all parish offices and faithful of his diocese: "God, who guides the destiny and welfare of nations, after so much suffering, persecution, and toil, has granted to the Croatian people - the dawn of freedom. On April 10, 1941, they became free, independent of others. Freedom is the greatest blessing, which our Lord has mercifully bestowed upon the people. Thanks be to God, we now have national freedom. Croatia is independent. For this great grace, we

³¹⁸ Alojzije Mišić (1859–1942), born in Bosanska Gradiška as Stjepan Mišić. He attended primary school in his hometown (1866–1870) and the lower gymnasium in Ivanjska (1870–1874). He continued his education at the Franciscan monastery in Fojnica in 1874, when he received the religious habit and took the name Alojzije. He studied philosophy at the monastery in Guča Gora (1875–1878) and theology in Esztergom (1878–1882). He was ordained as a priest in 1883 in Esztergom. He worked as a religious teacher in Sarajevo (1883–1884), bishop's secretary in Banja Luka (1884–1891), guardian of the Petrićevac monastery near Banja Luka (1891–1894 and 1904–1907), parish priest in Bihać (1894–1903), president of the residence in Visoko (1907–1909), and provincial of "Bosna Srebrena" (1909–1912). He was appointed Bishop of Mostar-Duvno and Trebinje-Mrkan on April 29th 1912. For a full 30 years, he served as bishop in Mostar. During this time, 14 new parishes were established, and the first steps were taken towards constructing the cathedral church in Mostar. He died in Mostar on March 26th 1942, and was buried in the church of the Franciscan monastery in Petrićevac. (Ivo Bagarić, „Pastoralne poslanice biskupa fra Alojzija Mišića“, *Nova et Vetera*, Nr. 2/1980, p. 97–124; Marko Perić, „Život i rad mostarsko-duvanjskih i trebinjsko-mrkanskih biskupa u zadnjih 100 godina“, in: *Katolička crkva u Bosni i Hercegovini u XIX i XX stoljeću*, Ed. Petar Babić i Mato Zovkić, Sarajevo 1986, p. 275–290; *Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 80–81).

are thankful to God, and grateful to our compatriots, to the people who have sacrificed everything, even their most precious, for the good of the Croatian people, among them, the leader, the exemplary Christian Catholic, Dr. Ante Pavelić, the Leader.” In other circulars, Bishop Mišić encouraged the cult of the Leader, referring to him as the “exemplary Christian.”³¹⁹ However, the policy of this “exemplary Christian” led to terrible massacres of Orthodox Serbs in Mostar and Herzegovina.

Information about the Ustasha massacres spread surreptitiously. Mostar Bishop Alojzije Mišić testified that parish priests Don Jozo Zovko and Don Andrija Majić came to his office “weeping and recounting the horrors perpetrated by the Ustasha.” Mišić recorded about his meeting with these two parish priests: “The parish priests, with fear, recount the horrors perpetrated by the Ustasha. They plead not to be betrayed because they report to the ecclesiastical authorities, saying, if the Ustasha hear, woe unto us.” The bishop sent Don Majić to Zagreb to inform the highest authorities about everything that was happening in Herzegovina during those fervent days of 1941.³²⁰ At the same time, a meeting with the Leader awaited him in Zagreb. When Don Majić complained to Gutić about “how Togonal ravages and kills peaceful Serbs” and informed him that he came to Pavelić because of it, Gutić told him “that is nothing, they should be killed as much as possible” and pulled out a picture of slain Serbs from his pocket, which the dead Ustasha guard keeps, and Gutić himself passes by them casually. He then realized that he had nothing to seek from the Leader and returned to Herzegovina without accomplishing his mission. Fra Leo Petrović also stayed in Zagreb and requested

³¹⁹ С. Симић, *Херцеговачки бискупи за време окупаиције Југославије*, p. 5, 15–18; Вељко Ђ. Ђурић, *Усташи и православије. Хрватска православна црква*, Београд 1989, p. 52–53; I. Šarac, *Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja*, p. 255–257, 295–296. How the Bishop Mišić the relationship between Croats and Serbs before the war is best illustrated in his letter to Dr. Lazar Marković from April 2nd 1925: “Since my youth, I have been imbued and raised with brotherly feelings towards my brothers, the Serbs, so much so that I have never made, nor do I make, any distinction between a Serbian and a Croatian brother. Both are equally dear to me!” Beyond that, the bishop added: “Today, everyone knows, even the birds on the rooftops, that Bishop Mišić has always been an advocate of brotherhood and unity between the Serbian and Croatian brothers.” (AJ, Zbirka Lazara Markovića (85), f. 2, *Alojzije Mišić, Lazaru Markoviću*, Mostar, 2. aprila 1925).

³²⁰ T. Vukšić, „Mostarski biskup Alojzije Mišić“, p. 229–230.

protection for the Serbian population in Herzegovina from the Leader. He received a firm promise that Deputy-Marshal Vladimir Laxa would be sent to Herzegovina to restore order, and until then, he was to instruct Ivo Herenčić “to stop persecuting Serbs and to cease lawlessness and atrocities.” Upon his return from Zagreb, Fra Petrović indeed went to Herenčić in Mostar, but he was literally thrown out of the office, with Herenčić telling him never to come back.³²¹

Bishop Alojzije Mišić sent a circular to the Catholic clergy on June 30th 1941, which was supposed to be read during the divine service in all Catholic churches of the Mostar-Duvno-Trebinje diocese. The circular ended with these words: “The Holy Church declares that those who kill against God’s laws, who transgress human life, criminally steal others’ property, cannot and will not be absolved in confession, nor released from sin.” However, it is evident from other lines in the same circular that this was not an obligatory directive. Mišić wrote: “Punishing and even taking the life of a person for rebelling, disturbing the order in the state, becoming unworthy members of human society, is within the states prerogatives, as it has higher authority and so has the right to and can, as we have said, not only punish but also take a life for the purpose of self-defense and maintaining order and peace in the state and maintaining order among people.” From the text of Bishop Mišić’s circular, we see that he emphasizes “the wonderful orders of our Leader, which are in accordance with God’s and holy church commandments and laws” and adds: “God says do not kill! The Leader of the state says do not kill. This is a wonderful harmony of divine and earthly authority.”³²² Hence, it is not surprising that Bishop Mišić showed no compassion for the murdered Orthodox priests but found justification. The bishop apparently readily accepted rumors, almost clichés, when justifying the killing of some minority group or individuals and recorded: “The priests of Mostar, four of them, Žitomislíci six,

³²¹ Leo Petrović was killed by Partisans shortly after the liberation of Mostar, while Andrija Majić was handed over to the new Yugoslav authorities and soon executed by firing squad. (Tugomir Soldo, „Držanje katoličkog svećenstva“, p. 392).

³²² Сима Симић, *Херцеговачки бискупи за време окупаиције Југославије*, Београд 1990, p. 69–71.

Zavala three, were punished because they had well-positioned radio stations in the church for informing circles outside the Croatian state about the situations and developments in the country.”³²³

Bishop Mišić sent two letters to Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac mentioning the crimes against Serbs in Herzegovina. One letter was sent on August 18th and the other on November 7th 1941. Bishop Mišić did oppose the killing of the Serbian population but had nothing against their conversion to Catholicism. In fact, he ardently advocated for it. In the first letter to Stepinac, he emphasized that the circumstances were such that the “transition is very convenient and easy” because Orthodox and Catholics live together and know each other. He believed that the opportunity should be seized for Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina to become the majority. However, his plan and the interests of the Roman Catholic faith, as he envisaged it, were threatened by those who killed, not only those who did not convert but also those who did: “All sorts have intervened: the young, unprepared, inexperienced; instead of intelligence and discretion – fire, force – it is no wonder that from that, there were inconvenient consequences for the Croatian and Catholic cause.” In the second letter to Stepinac, he spoke even more openly about the crimes against Serbs in the previous months: “People were caught like animals. Slaughtered, killed, thrown into pits while alive. Women, mothers with children, grown girls, children, both male and female, were thrown into deep pits. Everything was steep and killed. In the parish of Klepci, from surrounding villages N. N. 3,700 schismatics were killed. The poor souls, they remained peaceful. I won’t list anymore. I would go too far. In the city of Mostar alone, hundreds of them were tied up, taken out of the city and killed like livestock. Finally, the mass resettlement to Serbia has started. They must leave everything, only take 50 kg with them, and leave forcibly. Wailing, crying, sadness, - fleeing in all directions, even a delegation went to Mussolini in Rome.” However, Bishop Mišić regrets the missed opportunity to convert many more Orthodox to Catholicism: “The blood-

³²³ T. Vukšić, „Mostarski biskup Alojzije Mišić“, p. 230.

thirstiness of the chiefs, camp guards, the savageness of some of them, the misunderstanding of higher authorities, has done great damage not only to religious but also to national good. If God had given insight, wisdom to those called, if the issue of conversion to Catholicism had been handled more skillfully, more smoothly, the number of Catholics would have multiplied by at least five to six hundred thousand. Bosnia and Herzegovina need that much to jump from 700,000 to one million three hundred thousand, thus becoming a relative majority.”³²⁴ Compassion is one thing, and self-interest in troubled times quite another, even when it comes to a bishop.

What Bishop Mišić advocated for was fervently carried out by several priests who staunchly supported the Ustasha state and used its protection to implement the policy of Catholicization. This was diligently pursued in Mostar and its surroundings. In Baćevići, Fra Marinko Stipičić from Drinovci worked on conversion, in Cim Fra Drago Stojičić, and in Blagaj Fra Vlatko Vlašić. Particularly active in conversion in the Mostar region was Fra Tomo Zubac from Blizanci near Čitluk, who conducted censuses of the Serbian population in Pijesci and Žitomislići, striving to convert them all to the Catholic faith. To achieve their goal of converting as many Serbs as possible from the Neretva Valley to Catholicism, they repeated that this was their only salvation, that they would only be believed then and that only in this way would they become friends of the new Croatia.³²⁵

³²⁴ M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 673; Dragoljub Živojinović, Dejan Lučić, *Varvarstvo u ime Hristovo. Prilozi za Magnum Crimen*, Beograd 1988, p. 742–743; D. K. Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, p. 119–120; Savo Skoko, „Протест мостарског надбискупа надбискупу Алојзију Степинцу“, *Политика*, 11. IV 1991, p. 27; Ђоко Слијепчевић, *Историја Српске православне цркве*, II, *Од почетка XIX века до краја Друге светске рата*, Београд 1991, p. 618–619; Ђоко Слијепчевић, *Историја Српске православне цркве*, III, *За време Друге светске рата и после њега*, Београд 1991, p. 81–82; S. Skoko, *Рокотји херцеговачких Срба*, p. 270–271; Гојо Ристе Дакина, *Геноцид над Србима у Независној Држави Хрватској. Буду католик или умри*, Београд 1994, p. 251; Б. Маџар, М. Папић, *Политика и српска православна црква*, p. 205; Вељко Ђурић Мишина, *Српска православна црква у Независној Држави Хрватској 1941–1945. године*, Ветерник 2002, p. 29–30; Томо Вукшић, „Mostarski biskup Alojzije Mišić (1912.–1942.) za vrijeme Drugoga svjetskog rata. Prilog proučavanju međucrkvениh i međunacionalnih odnosa (II.)“, *Crkva u svijetu*, Nr. 3/2006, p. 326–342.

³²⁵ *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупираној у Херцеговини*, I, doc. Nr. 83, p. 395–396.

MOSTAR UNDER ITALIAN RULE (SEPTEMBER 1941–JUNE 1943)

The increasing number of massacres and deportations of the Serbian population in Mostar and throughout Herzegovina ignited an uprising against the Ustasha authorities in which the insurgents, although inferior in terms of arms and organization, exerted strong pressure on the NDH. Besides the fact that the repression of Croatian authorities fueled the armed uprising of the Serbian population in several regions of the NDH, Italian intervention was also prompted by Italy's dissatisfaction with the 'spoils' in Yugoslavia. The order for the preparation of the Italian Second Army to occupy the area of the Second Zone was given by the Chief of the General Staff of the Army General Mario Roata on August 15th. On August 16th Benito Mussolini clearly stated his intention for the Italian Second Army to occupy the entire demilitarized zone, and requested that the NDH relinquish power to the Italian army. The demand was justified by the danger of an "enemy attack from the sea" and the possibility of "the insurgents descending towards the sea, which could serve the enemy." Pavelić announced on August 19th that he had welcomed the entry of Italian forces into the demilitarized zone. Based on the conclusions of a meeting between representatives of the NDH and the Kingdom of Italy in Zagreb on August 26th 1941, it was definitively agreed to "enhance operational security in the border area of the Croatian coast, Dalmatia, and Herzegovina" by returning Italian forces to the Second Zone. The command of the Italian

Second Army assumed not only military but also civilian authority, while Croatian authorities were entrusted with jurisdiction over matters in which the Italian side was not interested, such as schools, food, tobacco, various monopolistic articles, fees, etc. Croatian judicial authorities were only responsible for ordinary criminal offenses. Croatian armed forces assisted in maintaining public order and peace, but exclusively according to the orders of Italian authorities and were not allowed to take independent actions against the insurgents. Without the approval of the Command of the Second Army, NDH troops stationed in the demilitarized zone could only be decreased, not increased.³²⁶

Two days after reaching an agreement with the Italians, Pavelić decided to form the “General Administrative Trusteeship with the Command of the Second Army of the Italian armed forces.” (Obće upravno povjereništvo kod Zapovjedništva Druge Armate italijanske vojske). He appointed Andrija Karčić, a diplomat in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a pre-war lawyer in Ruma, as the “general administrative trustee.” (obći upravni povjerenik) His main task was to “coordinate state administration in that area in terms of maintaining public security and in comparison with military defense activities of the second army of the Italian army” as long as ‘such a need persists.’ On the same day, Slavko Kvaternik issued an Order on the temporary occupation of the territory of the Independent State of Croatia by Italy (Zone II), thereby formally suspending its authority in that vast territory.³²⁷

³²⁶ *Зборник докумената и погашања о НОР-у, IV-1, doc. Nr. 302, p. 668–671; Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o NOR-u, XIII-1, Doc. Nr. 118, p. 312–313; M. Colić, Takozvana Nezavisna Država Hrvatska, p. 142–145; Mišo Leković, „Reagovanje Italijana na ustanak u Bosni i Hercegovini (reokupacija demilitarizovane zone)“, in: 1941. u istoriji naroda Bosne i Hercegovine (Ed. Enver Redžić), Sarajevo 1973, p. 466–484; D. S. Nenezić, Jugoslovenske oblasti pod Italijom, p. 98–101; Коста Николић, Италијанска војска и четници у Друмом светском рају у Југославији 1941–1943, Београд 2009, p. 60–66; I. Šarac, Kultura selektivnoga sjećanja, p. 242–243, 351; A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, Ustaška vojnica, I, p. 75–79; B. B. Dimitrijević, Ustaška vojska, p. 90–92, 95–96.*

³²⁷ HDA, ZJDI, b. 1, V.T.V. 2135; HDA, ZJDI, b. 1, V.T.V. 2237; VA, NDH, b. 189, f. 2, doc. Nr. 27; R. Brčić, „Okupacioni sistemi u Bosni i Hercegovini“, p. 57–58; D. K. Miletić, „Италијанска реокупација Мостара“, p. 120; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеговачко*, I, p. 245–251; Петар Опачић, „Италијанска реокупација демилитаризоване зоне у западном делу Независне Државе Хрватске 1941. године. Узроци, ток и последице“, in: *Српска њроза данас. Јунски устанак у Херцеговини 1941.*, Ed. Радослав Братић, Билећа/Гацко/Београд 2002, p. 556–587.

Starting from September 1st all units of the Croatian Home Guard and Armed Forces came under the command of the Italian Second Army. From that day on, regular and irregular Ustasha formations were no longer allowed in the reoccupied area. This meant that Mostar and Herzegovina were abandoned by the infamous Herenčić Mostar Battalion, which had grown over time to the point where six companies were formed within it with a total of about 1,200 people. Lieutenant Mirko Pokrajac led the 44th company, Lieutenant Ivan Pavičić the 45th, Lieutenant Đuro Brajković the 46th, Lieutenant Ivan Andrović the 47th, Lieutenant Ante Deželin the 48th, and Lieutenant Špiro Dončić the 49th machine gun company. When they left the Second Zone, at the end of August and the beginning of September, the Mostar Battalion Group was formed from the Mostar Battalion, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Herenčić, by incorporating the First Mostar Battalion consisting of the 44th, 45th, and 46th companies, and the Second Mostar Battalion consisting of the 47th, 48th, and 49th companies. The Mostar Battalion Group entered the composition of the command of Ustasha operational units in Western Bosnia, which was formed on September 15th, 1941, and included all Ustasha units in the area from Banja Luka to Glamoč. In addition to the Mostar Battalion Group, it also included the Francetić Battalion Group (Black Legion) under the command of Major Jure Francetić, consisting of four battalions commanded by Captains Rafael Boban, Franjo Sudar, Mladen Sertić, and Eduard Kršulj.³²⁸

During the last days of Ustasha rule in Mostar local Serbs acted “withdrawn and scared, dissatisfied with the current order,” as reported by the District Office in Mostar at the beginning of September 1941.³²⁹ As clear confirmation of the imminent arrival of Italian forces, on September 4th the commander of the Italian army corps, General Renzo Dalmazzo, visited Mostar accompanied by General Giuseppe Amico, the commander of the Marche Division (56th Regiment Marche). The command of the Italian Second Army took over control of

³²⁸ A. Obhodaš, M. Werhas, B. Dimitrijević, Z. Despot, *Ustaška vojnica*, I, p. 192, 198, 203; B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 55.

³²⁹ VA, NDH, b. 156, f. 6, doc. Nr. 12.

the Second Zone on September 7th. The Second Army, headquartered in Sušak, was commanded by General Vittorio Ambrosio,³³⁰ with General Ettore de Blasio as Chief of Staff. General Ambrosio immediately issued a “proclamation to the population,” informing the population that, in accordance with the agreement with the NDH government, as of that day, he “assumes military and civil authority” in the area. He prohibited the possession of firearms, movement between 10 pm and 5 am, motorcycle and car traffic without special permission, as well as leaving one’s place of residence. In addition, all those “who have left their country for whatever reason” were invited to return home. Italian forces, as stated in the proclamation, will guarantee security, freedom, and property rights.³³¹

A month later (October 7th), Italian forces went further, occupying the part of the NDH territory located between the demilitarized zone and the demarcation line with German troops.³³² Thus, large parts of the territory of the newly formed NDH found themselves in a specific position. Although Mostar, like other parts of the Second Zone, was formally part of the NDH, its authority was limited to the Grand County of Hum, which had no particular powers, the Home Guard and the Armed Forces, which were under Italian command, and the police. Italian military authorities sought to present themselves in line with a sentence from one of the propaganda leaflets they scattered throughout Herzegovina: “The Italian Army has brought peace, order, and security to these regions to everyone, regardless of who obeys the laws and its regulations.” General Ambrosio was horrified by Ustasha crimes and unequivocally emphasized that the victims simply sought Italian

³³⁰ Vittorio Ambrosio (1879–1958) commanded the Second Army during the April War and beyond that, until January 1942. From January 1942 to February 1943, he served as Chief of the General Staff of the Army, and then until November 1943, he was Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Italy. He participated in the overthrow of Benito Mussolini’s regime. Until July 1944, he was the Army’s Chief Inspector, after which he was retired. The Yugoslav authorities requested his extradition to stand trial for war crimes, but their request was never granted. (*Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 7–8).

³³¹ *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o NOR-u*, XIII-1, Doc. Nr. 139, p. 374–379; *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 266, p. 657–658.

³³² *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o NOR-u*, XIII-1, Doc. Nr. 154, 159, 162–163, p. 421–422, 435–437, 443–448.

protection, “because we are fair and humane.” In a memorandum of a Croatian general, it was stated that General Ambrosio makes no distinction between Jews, Serbs, and Catholic Croats.³³³ Such a manner of “regulating” by Italian authorities, as written by the district prefect Andrija Čidić on September 9th 1941, led to Serbs disparaging Croatian sanctities” and “not recognizing the Independent State of Croatia and the Leader.” Čidić added that “these same Serbs are opponents of the Kingdom of Italy, which they will reveal themselves as at a favorable moment, just as they are against Croatia now.”³³⁴

By decision of the Italian military authorities, shops owned by Serbs (“Greek-Easterners”) who returned to Mostar when the Italians took over, were handed back to their owners. On September 9th, Italian carabinieri arrested Viktor Radanović, who had managed the glass shop of the Milutinović brothers. When asked why he hadn’t returned the shop keys, he replied that he first needed to ask “our authorities,” to which an Italian officer slapped him, saying that they were the authority. The Italians then took the shop keys from him and gave them to Jovanka Tomić, the sister of the Milutinović brothers. On the same day, the keys were also demanded from Marko Mikulić, who managed Manojlo Njunjić’s shop.³³⁵

According to the District Office in Mostar, as of September 23rd, 1941, the following shops owned by Serbs were still closed: the general store of Mihajlo Miha Miljević, who was killed in Jadovno (managed by Tadija Primorac); Ljubo Dožić’s hardware store, who was killed in Jasenovac (managed by Muhamed Ribica); Marko Ivanišević’s lumber yard (managed by Mirko Nibler); Todor Toša Njunić’s textile shop (managed by Ante Dujmović); Milan Čereković’s general store (managed by Ivo Smoljan); Spasoje Milošević’s general store (managed by Avdija Kajtaz); Milan Milićević’s lumber yard (managed by Sulejman Balić);

³³³ HDA, OUP, b. 14, 3014/42; D. K. Miletić, „Italijanska reokupacija Mostara“, p. 121–122; H. Džejms Bergvin, *Imperija na Jadranu. Musolinijevo osvajanje Jugoslavije 1941–1943*, Beograd 2007, p. 72–74.

³³⁴ VA, NDH, b. 189, f. 3, doc. Nr. 9. After Čidić, Niko Kvezić and Ivan Bukovac were appointed as district prefects.

³³⁵ HDA, OUP, b. 7, 3897/41; VA, NDH, b. 189, f. 3, doc. Nr. 9.

Savo Škipina's shoe shop (managed by Omer Korjenić); Dušan Hamović's general store (managed by Mustafa Muštović); Jovo Gredić's hardware store (managed by Joško Derenda); Risto Sjeran's general store (managed by Esad Pašić); Petar Dožić's hardware store, who was killed in Jasenovac (managed by Muhamed Tikvina); Risto Čolović's hardware store, who was killed in Šurmanci (managed by Teodor Gaiger); Simo Mrava's leather shop (managed by Mustafa Balić); Rajko Golubović's general store, who was killed in Jadovno (managed by Ahmet Duvnjak); Mr. Petar Šotrić's pharmacy (managed by Šerif Tičić); Anika Nogulić's textile shop (managed by Ahmet Krpe); and Bogdan Karišik's general store (managed by Husein Lakišić).³³⁶ The attitude of the Italian authorities towards these trustees is illustrated by an incident at the end of October when two Italian carabinieri took the keys to David Fromer's tin and locksmith shop from the Ustasha trustee Tomislav Vladić and returned them to the owner personally.³³⁷

However, the Croatian civil authorities determined that these owners had to pay taxes for the period when the shops were not in their possession or not operational. Since the owners were in poor financial state, the Croatian authorities seized their belongings and sold them at public auctions.³³⁸ On November 1st General Ambrosio informed the governors in Mostar and Dubrovnik that the decision of the State Directorate for Reconstruction regarding the seizure and sale of properties belonging to "Greek-Eastern" owners was not to be enforced in the demilitarized zone, the areas where the Italian armed forces had entered two months earlier.³³⁹ The Croatian authorities agreed to abolish trustees in "Greek-Eastern enterprises," except in cases where the owners had emigrated from the state and thus lost Croatian citizenship. In such cases, the property belonged to the state. However, the Croatian authorities protested against the return of property to 'some families whose members had previously emigrated to Serbia and re-

³³⁶ VA, NDH, b. 189, f. 4, doc. Nr. 9; HDA-1450, roll D-200, p. 656–659.

³³⁷ HDA, MUP NDH, b. 108, II–A, 48907; HDA, MUP NDH, b. 108, II–A 48931.

³³⁸ HDA, MUP NDH, b. 111, II–A, 4640.

³³⁹ HDA, MUP NDH, b. 35, I. A. 3280.

turned without the permission of the State Directorate for Reconstruction,” ignoring the will of the Croatian authorities.³⁴⁰

The entire activity of the Ustasha in Mostar was reduced to the work of the Ustasha Youth. The Ustasha Youth was the main carrier of Ustasha propaganda in Mostar. Through loudspeakers mounted on telegraph and telephone poles, they spread Ustasha propaganda, and they also put up billboards, proclamations, organized academies, reviews, and attended receptions, funerals, and commemorations. Ante Zličarić was appointed as the commissioner for organizing the Ustasha Youth after he was relieved of his duty as the commander of the Ustasha Headquarters in Mostar on September 9th. On October 21st, 1941, Vladimir Fleger was appointed as the commander of the Ustasha Youth in Mostar, Jure Nikolić as the camp leader for the District of Mostar, and Iso Omeragić as the battalion leader of the Ustasha Youth. For the female Ustasha Youth, Mila Puharić, Marica Škobić, and Zlata Meštrović were appointed to the same positions. The leaders of the Ustasha Youth were mostly students in the final grades of high school. In 1941, there were 177 members of the Ustasha Youth in Mostar, born between 1921 and 1931, including 121 boys and 56 girls. The female Ustasha Youth were not very successful in Mostar and soon disbanded. The male Ustasha Youth organized armed attacks on individuals suspected of being close to the communist resistance movement, and on April 10, 1942, the anniversary of the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), they organized the burning of books with “anti-state content.”³⁴¹

However, in the Mostar region, as in other parts of the Grand County of Hum, there were still so-called “wild Ustasha.” Acting independently and outside any system, they created significant problems for the Croatian authorities. Their activities in the area of the Grand County of Hum were strictly prohibited by the county authorities in the fall of 1941, as stated in a circular sent to all district offices (except Konjic): “The so-called wild Ustasha, with their unauthorized and illegal actions, commit a double crime: they violate the law and the ex-

³⁴⁰ HDA, OUP, b. 12, 1782/42.

³⁴¹ VA, NDH, b. 189, f. 6, doc. Nr. 10; D. K. Miletić, „Italijanska reokupacija Mostara“, p. 124–125.

isting order in the NDH, and they tarnish the reputation of Croatian authorities before the allied military authorities, thus disrupting the necessary harmony between us and our great Italian allies.” The circular signed by the deputy prefect stated: “It is in the interest of the NDH that complete peace, order, and security prevail in it, both for people and property, so when implementing the circular, special attention is drawn to this vital interest of the country.”³⁴²

On October 17th 1941, General Ambrosio, the commander of the Italian Second Army, visited Mostar again. From the Grand County of Hum, all state and local government officials were ordered to participate in the reception for General Ambrosio at Liberty Square. Representatives of church authorities, as well as cultural and humanitarian institutions, were also invited to the reception, and the Croatian Home Guard participated. The governor in Mostar points out in a report to the Ministry of the Interior: “The reception was beautiful because the citizens of Mostar also gathered at the Square.” The governor emphasized the fact that about 200 people of the Greek-Eastern faith welcomed the general in front of the Neretva Hotel, and one of them gave a speech expressing the Serbs’ satisfaction with the arrival of the Italian armed forces, which enabled them to live unimpeded and guaranteed their survival, freedom, and property. According to police reports, this group of Serbs was led by Veljko Šola and Jovo Njunjić. About 100 Serbs visited General Ambrosio once more during his stay in Mostar and requested “that he enable the return of their family members who were taken to concentration camps in Gospić, Caprag, etc.” In the evening, the governor Troyer had a conversation with the general lasting about 40 minutes. The general dedicated most of the conversation to local conditions, “especially regarding the permission and facilitation of the return of Greek-Easterners from camps and other places where they had taken refuge, whether they could continue their professions and trades, whether their property was being returned to them, and whether they were allowed to reopen their shops and businesses

³⁴² VA, NDH, b. 189, f. 4, doc. Nr. 52.

and freely manage their property.” He inquired about the population’s food supply, the appearance of “wild Ustasha,” and the current national composition of Mostar’s population. Finally, he emphasized “that he considers it very important to enable the Greek-Eastern population to return and stay unimpeded and to freely manage their property.”³⁴³

The Italian reoccupation of Mostar allowed at least some of the expelled Serbs to return to their city. By the beginning of October, 60 refugees who had been forced to leave Mostar a few months earlier returned from Serbia. The head of the police requested that the Reconstruction Office in Mostar “assist the returnees with accommodation, as the said Office has the apartments and property of the refugees at its disposal.”³⁴⁴ A letter from the District of Dvor na Uni to the Head of the City Police in Mostar dated November 6th 1941, reports the return of 33 people of Serbian nationality who had received Italian passes. Most of these were women. These passes also allowed their family members to return to Mostar, enabling a total of 140 people to return at that time.³⁴⁵

However, not all Mostar residents who were sent to the fields of Banija managed to get approval to return to their homeland. The day before the group of 33 people received confirmation that they could return to Mostar, the District of Dvor na Uni informed the Directorate of Public Order and Security that it had sent 31 Mostar residents to the Jasenovac camp. On November 5th Aleksa Borožan, Anđelko Borožan, Branko Rašević, Vukan Gordić, Radovan Gutić, Dimitrije Ajvaz, Jovo Belović, Danilo Borožan, Mirko Gutić, Vidak Jegdić, Risto Grahovac, Nikola Grahovac, Lazar Gambelić, Radoslav Daničić, Vaso Ivelja, Janko Ivelja, Branko Gurović, Veljko Borožan, Slavko Gurović, and Anđelko Gambelić were sent to Jasenovac. Due to illness, Todor Jegdić, Luka Ivković, Dušan Janjalija, Vidak Ivelja, and the visually impaired invalid Jovan Ilić remained temporarily in the Dvor na Uni area.³⁴⁶ What hap-

³⁴³ VA, NDH, b. 189, f. 5, doc. Nr. 11; VA, NDH, b. 189, f. 5, doc. Nr. 36.

³⁴⁴ HDA, OUP, b. 5, 3036/41.

³⁴⁵ *Zločini na jugoslovenskim prostorima*, I, Doc. Nr. 330, p. 822–824.

³⁴⁶ A. Miletić, *Koncentracioni logor Jasenovac*, I, Doc. Nr. 28, p. 90–91.

pened to them in Jasenovac is evidenced by the later attempt of Stana Gutić, the mother of Radovan and Mirko Gutić, to find out what happened to her sons. The response from GLAVSIGUR arrived on July 29, 1943. In the response, sent through the County Police Department in Mostar, it was stated that Radovan Gutić “died in the camp” on December 11th 1941, while Mirko Gutić “was never in the camp and his fate is unknown.”³⁴⁷ However, the fate of the entire group of Mostar residents was the same. All were killed in Jasenovac.

The possibility of return, the security of property and life as much as possible in wartime, the return of confiscated property, and other similar actions by the Italian authorities made the Serbs “more satisfied lately because the Italian authorities are accommodating them,” as reported by the District in Mostar.³⁴⁸ At the beginning of December 1941, the bells of the Orthodox church in Mostar rang. Although the practice of the Orthodox faith in the NDH was viewed with suspicion, the presence of the Italian authorities freed the Serbian population. However, it was noticed that the bells of the Orthodox church in Mostar rang on December 1st: ‘since that day was not a religious holiday this year, and in the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia that same day was a national holiday, there is suspicion that the ringing had a propaganda character.’ Therefore, the Head of the City Police was ordered to determine whether “any religious service was held that day” and to question the priest Vukan Ružić in this regard. The police report arrived on December 5th stating that there was indeed no religious service, but that the bells were rung to mark the death of Savka Obradović. It was evident that the Croatian authorities were acting paranoid and suspicious towards the Serbs.³⁴⁹

During December 1941, there were two significant administrative changes in Mostar. In mid-December, Mostar lost its mayor, as the then-mayor Muhamed Butum, who had only led the city for a few months as the second mayor of Mostar during the NDH period, died of

³⁴⁷ A. Miletić, *Koncentracioni logor Jasenovac*, II, Doc. Nr. 271, p. 632.

³⁴⁸ VA, NDH, b. 156, f. 6, doc. Nr. 57.

³⁴⁹ VA, NDH, b. 189, f. 7, doc. Nr. 46; VA, NDH, b. 189, f. 8, doc. Nr. 16.

“severe lung disease”.³⁵⁰ He was replaced by Salih Efica, who remained in that position until early 1944. Shortly after, by a decision of the NDH Ministry of the Interior on December 20th, 1941, the Head of the City Police (Predstojništvo gradskog redarstva) was elevated to the County Police Department in Mostar (Župska redarstvena oblast), and the then head, Mate Roko, was appointed acting head. As the successor to the infamous Krešimir Krtalić, Roko remained one of the most important representatives of the NDH authorities in Mostar until his departure from Mostar at the end of 1943.³⁵¹

The arrival of the first winter of war showed how difficult conditions were throughout the former Yugoslav territory. This was also felt in the Mostar region, where famine had taken hold by the end of 1941. A group of mostly Muslim women demonstrated in front of the City Council on December 3rd, demanding bread, flour, and potatoes. Although food shortages were evident (under the jurisdiction of Croatian authorities), it is undeniable that these demonstrations concealed the activity of the communist resistance movement. Finding the mayor, Muhamed Butum, absent from his workplace due to health problems, they went to his house. They found Butum in pajamas in the bedroom, and, as one of the participants later testified, “he was pale and trembling with fear.” “The conversation proceeded in a fairly peaceful tone,” Mayor Butum promised to do everything in his power and directed them to contact the district chief. Despite this conversation, Paulina Miletić (who died at Sutjeska in June 1943), Sabira Dizdarević, Muruveta Ćemalović, and Zehra Vejzović were arrested for incitement and participation in the riots. The lack of food is also evidenced by the plea of the governor Troyer, who on January 3rd 1942, begged the Ministry of Internal Affairs to instruct the State Directorate for Food Supply to ‘send food to the city of Mostar and Ljubuški because there is a great scarcity and fear of unrest.’³⁵²

³⁵⁰ HDA, MUP NDH, b. 153, MUP 54861.

³⁵¹ VA, NDH, b. 190, f. 2, doc. Nr. 15; D. K. Miletić, „Italijanska reokupacija Mostara“, p. 126.

³⁵² HDA, MUP NDH, b. 38, I. A. 101; HDA, MUP NDH, b. 42, I. A. 2204; HDA, OUP, b. 9, 197/42; Sabira Bira Dizdarević, „Demonstracije Viktorija“, in: *Zbornik sjećanja o ilegalnom NOP-u Mostara*

As stated in the unsent report of the Great Hum County from the second half of February 1942: “For all the troubles, even for the scarcity of food and resources, our people blame the Italian army, which has not justified its presence in our regions in any way. That the mood cannot be different is completely understandable, because the people know that our hands are tied, which is evident almost every day.” The plans of the Croatian authorities regarding changes in circumstances are best seen in the same document signed by Deputy-Marshal Laxa: “Remove the Jews, transport undesirable elements to concentration camps, establish the activity of the mobile summary court, bring back the Ustasha battalion, restore the old scope of work to our army and police force; when all this is done, there will be no occasion to lament over someone who lacks understanding or willingness for our Croatian cause.”³⁵³

As stated in the almost all reports from representatives of Croatian authorities in Mostar, Serbs (“the Greek-Eastern population”) were generally hostile towards Croatian authorities or the “current order.” In a letter from the District of Mostar in mid-February 1942, the “behavior of the Muslims” is highlighted, stating that “they have fairly good relations with the Serbs, especially influential Muslims, who strive, just in case, to maintain good relations with the Serbs, even if they do so covertly.” It is mentioned that among the Serbs, besides priest Vukan Ružić, Risto Kandić, Đorđo Zurovac, Milan Lojpur, and Jovo Mitrić stand out, who were particularly active in the Potoci municipality (Bijelo Polje, note).³⁵⁴ They “assured their like-minded people” of the rapid downfall of the NDH. Later that same year, Risto Kandić was killed.

The presence of Italian authorities and their relationship in the first months after returning to Mostar allowed families of those who disappeared during the summer of 1941 to inquire with Croatian authorities about the fate of their loved ones. The responses were

1941–1945, I, Mostar, s. a.

³⁵³ VA, NDH, b. 62, f. 2, doc. Nr. 16.

³⁵⁴ VA, NDH, b. 190, f. 3, doc. Nr. 43; VA, NDH, b. 190, f. 7, doc. Nr. 14.

similar and mostly related to the lack of information, as the authority of the NDH was not fully formed in the first months. However, some Serbs went further, assuming that their family members were no longer alive, and sought pensions and return to service. During February and March 1942, Marko Trifković from Raštani and Stanko Vuković from Mostar requested to return to service on the railway, from where they were dismissed less than a year earlier – Vuković by order of the Minister of Internal Affairs, and Trifković by decision of the director of the state railways in Sarajevo. Although supported by the governor Josip Troyer and the general administrative commissioner Dr. Vjekoslav Vrančić, Trifković's request was denied, with the explanation that there was “no need or vacant position.” Around the same time, six women, whose husbands worked on the railway and disappeared during the previous year, applied for family pensions – Persa Palavestra from Mostar (widow of Dušan Palavestra who was killed in Jadovno), Milka Zurovac from Mostar (widow of Ljubo Zurovac), and four women from Raštani: Sara Krzman (widow of Sava Krzman who was killed in their village), Sava Savić (widow of Uroš Savić who was killed in Jadovno), Jelka Savić (widow of Janko Savić who was killed in Jadovno), and Zorka Savić (widow of Šćepan Savić who was killed in Jadovno). Their husbands worked in the Mostar sawmill. In addition to widows, Mara Savić from Raštani, whose son Milan, a railway worker, also disappeared (killed in Jadovno), requested a family pension. The response from the Ministry of Internal Affairs stated that the husbands of the aforementioned ladies were arrested, and their fate is being investigated in the camps.³⁵⁵ Sara Krzman suffered the fate of her husband and was killed by the Ustaša in Raštani in 1944.

The wife of Rade Milutinović, a municipal official, who “as a Greek-Easterner, was taken in an unknown direction last June, so he can be considered missing”, requested a “family pension” in April 1942. Deputy governor in Mostar and former mayor Dr. Šefkija Balić

³⁵⁵ HDA, OUP, b. 23, 7768/42.

recommended a positive response to her request. The General Administrative Commissioner in Sušak, Dr. Vrančić, agreed with the proposal of the Great Hum County, recommending to the authorities in Zagreb “to urgently resolve favorably” the request. At the same time, a request was also submitted by Zorka Kovačević, whose husband, a locksmith in the army, was “taken in an unknown direction in August of last year and can be considered missing”. In that case, Dr. Vrančić concurred with the sub-deputy’s positive opinion, revealing the motives for the “cordiality” of the Croatian authorities: ‘since the granting of pensions to families of missing Greek-Easterners in those areas will have a considerable political effect and contribute to the politics of appeasement, it is recommended by this Commission to most warmly meet the request mentioned.’³⁵⁶

The reason for such forethought, or rather pragmatism, of Dr. Vrančić might be found in the pages of his memoirs where he describes one of his visits to Mostar. After discussions with representatives of the parish and district authorities, visits to the District Court, and talks with representatives of the Italian army, Dr. Vrančić visited Risto Šain, the president of the Orthodox church community, and received a delegation of Serbian women. He wrote about it: “When it was known that I had come to Mostar and that every morning I went to the Grand County, one morning a large group of Orthodox women from neighboring villages visited me. There is no doubt that they agreed to come together, to complain to me, being a local son, and to submit their requests. There were touching scenes. The rural female Orthodox milieu tends to express its sorrow through public lamentation. There were cases where some older women tried to kiss my hand and lifted the hem of my long coat, from which I barely defended myself with flushed cheeks. When they voiced their complaints, one of them said to me: Mr. Vjeko, if any of our husbands have suffered, tell us, so we can light a candle for him and pray to God for him. If anyone is guilty, punish him according to the law; but one thing you must not do - do

³⁵⁶ HDA, OUP, b. 16, 4351/42; HDA, OUP, b. 16, 4352/42.

not enroll us in the alphabet.” By “alphabet”, she meant the forced expulsion of the Serbian population from Mostar, which was carried out in August 1941.³⁵⁷

In early spring of 1942, there was also a change on the bishop's throne, as Bishop Alojzije Mišić passed away on March 26. On the day of Bishop Mišić's funeral, Archbishop Ivan Šarić of Vrhbosna appointed Dr. Petar Čule as the capitular vicar in Mostar. The Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith confirmed his election as the capitular vicar on April 10, and five days later (April 15), Pope Pius XII issued a bull appointing Dr. Petar Čule, originally from Kruševo near Mostar, as the bishop of Mostar-Trebinje-Duvno. The decision of his appointment was not warmly welcomed in Zagreb. The Croatian authorities at the time considered it unacceptable for someone to be appointed to the bishopric position without any consultations with the NDH. Therefore, a protest regarding the appointment of Dr. Čule as the bishop of Mostar was sent from the Ministry of Worship and Education on June 3rd 1942, “without the knowledge and hearing, even without the knowledge of the Croatian State Government.”³⁵⁸ The consecration ceremony was held on October 9th 1942, and it was attended by the papal envoy to the NDH, Abbot Giuseppe Marcone, Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac of Zagreb, and Archbishop Ivan Šarić of Sarajevo. They were welcomed at the Mostar airport by the new governor Petar Zlatar, Ustasha commander Pacek, gendarmerie officer Jakovljević, and others. On the Italian side, the consecration was attended by the commander of the Italian armed forces in Mostar, General Paride Negri, and Italian consul Dr. Roberto Gardini. In his speech during the consecration, Bishop Čule, among other things, thanked the Italian army, Croatian civilian and military authorities, and especially praised the Ustasha Youth, saying that it was “our pride and future,” and then added: “My task is to be as responsive as possible to the state authorities and I will loyally cooperate in the work of the Independent State of Croatia, created by

³⁵⁷ Vjekoslav Vrančić, *Branili smo državu. Uspomene, osvrti, doživljaji*, II, Washington D. C. 2006, p. 270–271.

³⁵⁸ M. Perić, „Život i rad mostarsko-duvanjskih i trebinjsko-mrkanskih biskupa“, p. 287.

the Leader.”³⁵⁹ The special mention of the Ustasha Youth was not at all surprising, considering that it was the only remnant of the Ustasha organization in the Mostar area.³⁶⁰

That Mostar was still, at least formally, part of the NDH could be seen through ministerial visits every few months. On July 11th 1942, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Dr. Andrija Artuković, visited Mostar. He was accompanied by General Mihajlo Lukić, commander of the Third Corps Area. At the Mostar airport, Minister Artuković was greeted by the governor Petar Zlatar, Ustasha leader Ivan Musa, former Ustasha leader Ivan Zovko, a representative of the Home Guard, the commander of the guard battalion, and others. During his stay in Mostar, Minister Artuković visited the Ustasha headquarters, received a delegation of local Muslim residents, and also spoke with the representative of the Italian army in Mostar, General Paride Negri, the commander of the 154th Infantry Division “Murge”.³⁶¹

In the villages around Mostar with a majority Serbian population, fires were lit in honor of the birthday of King Peter II Karadorđević

³⁵⁹ Petar Čule (1898–1985), originally from Kruševo in Brotnjo. He attended primary school in Ljuti Dolac and continued his education at the seminary in Travnik. He completed his theological studies in Sarajevo and was ordained as a priest in 1920. He earned his doctorate in Innsbruck in 1923 and then became a prefect at the Napredak boarding school in Mostar. He was involved in writing and translation. From 1931, he served as a catechist at the Mostar gymnasium, where he was when the war began. He was appointed Bishop of Mostar on April 15, 1942. His appointment, shortly after the death of his predecessor, was quite unusual, especially given the wartime circumstances. The appointment was opposed by the state authorities as well as by the Franciscans, who were accustomed to having the bishopric in Mostar held by a member of their order. At the celebration of the third anniversary of the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), Poglavnik Pavelić awarded Bishop Čule the Order of Merit with a Grand Cross and Star, "for decisively defending the rights of the Croatian people against external and internal enemies in the area of his diocese." After the war, he was accused of harboring fugitives and was arrested on April 22, 1948, and sentenced to 11.5 years in prison. He served his sentence in Zenica prison and was released in October 1955 due to poor health. He stayed on parole at the Tolisa monastery near Orašje, then in Sarajevo, and on January 5th 1957, he returned to Mostar. At the end of October that same year, he resumed his duties as head of the diocese. He participated in the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). During his tenure as bishop, 17 new parishes were established, and the cathedral church in Mostar was built. He remained the Bishop of Mostar until September 14th 1980, when he retired. He passed away in Mostar on July 29th 1985. (M. Perić, „Život i rad mostarsko-duvanjskih i trebinjsko-mrkanskih biskupa“, p. 285–290).

³⁶⁰ С. Симић, *Херцеговачки бискупи за време окупације Југославије*, p. 19–24, 29–30, 40–51, 65–67; Д. Страњаковић, *Највећи злочини садашњице*, p. 341.

³⁶¹ М. Булајић, *Усташки злочини генocide*, I, p. 650–651.

on the evening of September 5th. In this way, the king's birthday was celebrated in Prigradani and the surrounding Serbian villages. Fires were also lit on the hills above Blagaj and Dračevica. According to the commander of the guard station in Sjenčine, the fires were lit so they could be seen in villages with a majority Croatian population. After the fires went out, shots from rifles were heard. As reported by the governor Zlatar: "The next day, i.e., on September 6th, 1942, the Orthodox did nothing on the fields, they were unusually cheerful, singing various songs to the king and the homeland." In the morning of September 6th, on some buildings in the center of Mostar, such as the Courthouse building, inscriptions "Ž. K. P. II" ("Živeo kralj Petar II" – "Long Live King Peter II") and "P. II" ("Petar II" – "Peter II") were written in charcoal.³⁶²

Fifteen days later - on September 20th, 1942, a meeting of the Ustaša headquarters (Headquarters of the Croatian Liberation Movement Ustasha) was held in Široki Brijeg. About 3,000 people from Široki Brijeg and the surrounding areas attended the meeting. The town was adorned with Croatian flags that day, and an arch was placed on the bridge over the Lištica River. Around 11 o'clock, the governor Petar Zlatar, Ustaša leader Dr. Ivan Musa, and camp commander Stanko Mance arrived in Široki Brijeg from Mostar, and they were greeted by municipal chief Jozo Čuljak. After the mass in the Catholic church in Brijeg, with the tribune adorned with Croatian, German, and Italian flags and set up in front of the Franciscan Gymnasium building, a camper from Široki Brijeg, Jozo Penavić, addressed the audience, followed by local camp commander and headquarters representative. The speakers were interrupted several times by loud chants of "Leader", "Führer", and "Duce".³⁶³ However, we have no further information on the outcomes of that meeting.

In the winter of 1942, the Communist resistance movement had increased activity in parts of the Bosnian and Cazin Krajina, liberating certain significant settlements for short periods, such as Bihać, where

³⁶² HDA, OUP, b. 26, 10609/42; VA, NDH, b. 156, f. 7, doc. Nr. 19; VA, NDH, b. 156, f. 7, doc. Nr. 28; VA, NDH, b. 191, f. 9, doc. Nr. 36; VA, NDH, b. 191, f. 9, doc. Nr. 39; VA, NDH, b. 228, f. 3, doc. Nr. 41.

³⁶³ VA, NDH, b. 191, f. 10, doc. Nr. 4.

the first session of the Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ) was held. In early 1943, partisan activity shifted southward and southeastward, bringing their significant forces to parts of Herzegovina. In order to fight against the partisans, German forces were increasingly present in Herzegovina. The noticeable presence of German forces in Herzegovina was linked to extensive operations aimed at destroying the main body of partisan forces in January and February 1943. Operations of the occupying forces in the Neretva valley drew a significant portion of troops away from Mostar itself. Regarding the situation in Mostar in the second half of February, a report from the Command of the Sixth Infantry Division dated February 18th stated: “Due to the general state, the evacuation of Germans and partially Italians, Mostar is completely engulfed in panic and confusion, which is exacerbated by the lack of information both military and civilian areas about the general situation or the status of the alleged action supposedly ongoing from the north.”³⁶⁴ Although the Italian garrison was in the city, rumors circulated among the Croats and representatives of the NDH authorities, causing increased fear that the Italians would hand over the city to the Chetniks, that they had agreed to participate in operations against the partisans precisely because they were promised Mostar, “and that they would have the same rights as in eastern Herzegovina, and even take over the government.” As stated in the report from February 19th: “Among the populace, this provokes a fear of general massacre under the rule “Guilty for the guilty”, but also “Righteous for the righteous.”³⁶⁵ At the end of February, as an aid in unblocking the city, the German 718th Division was sent from Sarajevo.³⁶⁶

The year 1943 marked a significant turning point in the context of the Second World War. Developments on the major battlefields were reflected in the Yugoslav territory, both in terms of the deployment of occupying forces and the resistance movements - communist and

³⁶⁴ *Зборник докумената и података о Народнослободилачком рату југословенских народа*, том IV, књига 10, *Борбе у Босни и Херцеговини 1943 год.*, Београд 1954, док. Nr. 343, p. 691–695.

³⁶⁵ *Зборник докумената и података о НОР-у*, IV-10, док. Nr. 348, p. 701–704.

³⁶⁶ *Зборник докумената и података о НОР-у*, IV-10, док. Nr. 250, p. 487–488.

royalist. Significant changes were also observed in the Mostar region. Thus, in the spring of 1943, the forces of three states - Italy, Croatia, and Germany - were present in the Mostar region. Of course, the most significant was the Italian garrison of the 56th Infantry Division Marce. At the beginning of 1943, the headquarters of the Sixth Infantry Division of the NDH was stationed in Mostar, commanded by Colonel Ivan Šarnbek, with the support of the 13th Infantry Battalion with the Campaign Company, Garrison Company, Auxiliary Company, Sixth Transport Company, Third Company of the Third Self-Propelled Battalion, and the Supply Assembly of the First Home Guard Brigade with the Campaign Company. Therefore, the main representative of the military authorities of the NDH in Mostar during the period 1942-1944 was Colonel Ivan Šarnbek.³⁶⁷ The German troops were represented by the SS volunteer mountain division Prinz Eugen, which had a clear task to occupy the mining area west of Mostar starting from March 16th 1943. This unequivocally expressed what was most important in the Mostar region for the German war effort and why steps were taken in early spring to avoid the possibility of the important bauxite site being threatened in any way.³⁶⁸

The situation in the Mostar region was further complicated by the significant presence of members of the Yugoslav Army in the Homeland (Jugoslovenska vojska u otadžbini - JVuO), who, under the command of Dobrosav Jevđević and under the protection of Italian forces, operated in the Herzegovina area. At the same time, Chetnik units provided protection for the Serbian population, opposed communist activity, collabo-

³⁶⁷ *Зборник докумената и података о Народноослободилачком рату југословенских народа*, том IV, књига 11, *Борбе у Босни и Херцеговини 1943 год.*, Београд 1955, doc. Nr. 323, p. 639–641; *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda*, том IV, књига 13, *Borbe u Bosni i Hercegovini 1943 god.*, Београд 1955, Doc. Nr. 281, 302, p. 688–701, 750–758. Ivan Šarnbek (1896–1970), originally from Vinkovci, was an officer in the Austro-Hungarian army and later in the Yugoslav army. After the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), he joined its armed forces. From July to December 1941, he commanded a battalion of the Croatian Legion, and then he led the 5th Infantry Regiment. From November 1942 to April 1944, he commanded the 6th Infantry Division in Mostar. After that, he commanded the 2nd Replacement Brigade until December 1944, when he was retired. He passed away in Zagreb on January 19th 1970. (*Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 376–377).

³⁶⁸ *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu naroda Jugoslavije*, том XII, књига 3, *Dokumenti Nemačkog rajha 1943*, Београд 1978, Doc. Nr. 39, p. 178–183.

rated with Italian forces, and posed a threat to Croatian authorities and the Croatian population. Armed confrontations between Serbs and Croats in the Mostar region were a common occurrence. Hence, Serbo-Croat interethnic conflicts in Herzegovina were at the center of attention of the governor Petar Zlatar, who wrote in April 1943 about what needed to be done “to stop mutual killing and looting between the Catholic and Orthodox populations, because mutual struggles can, if continued, have fatal consequences for both sides.” Based on his reports, we can conclude that the Ustasha were out of control and represented the main problem: “All Ustasha units must be ordered not to exercise any administrative authority and refrain from statements that they cannot be controlled by civilian authorities. Until strict discipline is imposed on the Ustasha soldiers, there will always be fear among the populace, and they will obstruct efforts to maintain peace”.³⁶⁹

It can be said that during the occupation, Mostar belonged to everybody and nobody in particular. Although civilian authority was in Croatian hands, the military was primarily in Italian, and then in German hands. Nevertheless, the atmosphere of insecurity persisted. Human life was worth little. This is evidenced by an incident on May 19th 1943, when a friend and former Chetnik lieutenant, Hamdija Čengiđ, was killed in the apartment of Colonel Stjepan Jakovljević, who was in Zagreb at the time. He was killed by two men, one wearing the uniform of a Home Guard flag bearer, and the other in an Ustasha uniform. As stated in the report of the governor Zlatar: “There is a general belief in the city that the Ustasha committed the crime.” Čengiđ’s funeral on May 23rd was attended by representatives of the Muslim religious community, prominent Muslims from Mostar, and about 1,000 citizens. The funeral procession passed through the central streets of the city.³⁷⁰

During those sunny days of May 1943, rumors spread throughout Mostar that the Germans would take over the administration of the city from the Italians. In this regard, the governor Zlatar reported: “With the arrival of the German army in Mostar and the spread of news that

³⁶⁹ HDA, MUP NDH, b. 1, UM. T. Nr. 2517.

³⁷⁰ HDA, MUP NDH, b. 1, UM. T. Nr. 2418.

the Germans will take over command from the Italians in our area alone, panic has arisen among the Orthodox, especially the wealthier ones, who are preparing to leave Mostar with the Italians. This can be interpreted as fear among the Orthodox that reprisals may be carried out against them. The authorities are making every effort to calm and maintain order and peace.”³⁷¹ The governor Zlatar accused the Italians of intentionally spreading such news among the Serbs in order to conclude that only they “are capable of successfully managing this area.” He believed that the Italians had unjustifiably “caused panic among the Orthodox by presenting the situation as very critical.” Forgetting that the fear among the Serbs was very real, given their previous experiences (especially from the summer of 1941), he reported: “Frightened by such news and claims that the Germans will allow the Ustasha to take full revenge on the Orthodox population, the Orthodox were preparing to leave their homes and leave with the Italians.” It is justifiable to question the extent to which these stories could have had real impact. Nevertheless, he concluded: “With a swift and decisive action, our authorities managed to calm the Orthodox and thwart the intentions of the Italians.”³⁷²

The strategic importance of the Balkans, and hence the occupied Yugoslav territory, during the war operations of 1943, led to a change in circumstances. In anticipation of Allied landings in the Adriatic, the Germans sought to consolidate Yugoslav territories they had not previously controlled. They insisted that their allies, the Italians, cease cooperation with the royalist resistance movement, fearing that they might turn their weapons against the Germans and Italians at a decisive moment. Since the Italians did not agree to this, German forces passed through Mostar on May 14th/15th 1943. In that action, they arrested all members of the royalist resistance movement they encountered, thereby forcing concessions from the Italians. General Sandro Piazzoni, commander of the Second Army, ordered on June 1st 1943, that all anti-communist units be disbanded and their rations of food

³⁷¹ VA, NDH, b. 231, f. 9, doc. Nr. 52.

³⁷² HDA, MUP NDH, b. 1, UM, T. Nr. 2528.

and money be stopped. All their members were required to report to the Italian Command and surrender their weapons. The Italian military authorities pledged to continue “protecting Orthodox families as well as families of other faiths unless they have members among the partisan units or if they are hostile towards us.”³⁷³ However, according to reports from the Croatian “General Administrative Commissioner at the Command of the Second Army of the Italian Army” and his “General Administrative Commissioner” David Sinčić, the effectiveness of the Italian proclamation on the disarmament of anti-communist forces was “none, since the Chetniks fled into the woods immediately after the action taken by the German armed forces.” Croatian reports speak of 5,000 armed Chetniks in Zupci near Trebinje: “Their intentions are unknown, and they have not undertaken any actions so far.”³⁷⁴

General Piazzoni’s decision was just the beginning of a complete change in the situation in the Mostar region. Starting from June 4th Mostar found itself “in the operational area of German armed forces.” The formal handover of power took place on June 4th at 11:45 in the presence of Croatian civilian, Ustasha, and military authorities. In front of the building where the Marke division had been stationed, German, Italian, and Croatian units were assembled. After the troops were reviewed and the anthems of Germany and Italy were played, the Italian flag was lowered from the mast and replaced with the flag of the Third Reich. General Amico left for Dubrovnik the same day. By the end of June, an army corps was formed from German and Croatian troops under the command of General Arthur Phelps, who controlled the area of Herzegovina and central parts of Bosnia, including Bileća, Gacko, Nevesinje, Mostar, Čapljina, Ljubuški, Imotski, Livno, Glamoč, Jajce, Travnik, Kladanj, and Drinjača. Two reinforced German battalions were stationed in Mostar.³⁷⁵

³⁷³ D. K. Miletić, „Italijanska reokupacija Mostara“, p. 144–146.

³⁷⁴ HDA, MUP NDH, b. 2, UM. T. Nr. 2944.

³⁷⁵ VA, NDH, b. 192, f. 8, doc. Nr. 22; *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda*, tom IV, knjiga 14, *Borbe u Bosni i Hercegovini 1943 god.*, Beograd 1956, Doc. Nr. 124, 200, p. 282–283, 430; *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda*, tom IV, knjiga 15, *Borbe u Bosni i Hercegovini 1943 god.*, Beograd 1956, Doc. Nr. 182, p. 385.

Just ten days after the disappearance of Italian authority in Mostar, and with the weakening of Chetnik activity, a massacre of the Serbian population occurred in the village of Pijesci, reminiscent of the massacres of the summer of 1941. The tragedy is even greater considering that this village suffered heavily in the first months of the NDH's existence. When the Ustasha raided Pijesci on June 15th 1943, the following were killed: Radojka Kuzman, Anđelko Ćorluka, Gojan Ćorluka, Boško Ćorluka, and Gospava Ćorluka. Among the five killed were three children – Anđelko was 15 years old, Gojan was six, and Gospava was three. This crime was a brutal harbinger of a new period of insecurity and fear for the Serbian people in the Mostar region.³⁷⁶

³⁷⁶ Ђ. Екмечић, *Пребиловци*, р. 209.

MOSTAR UNDER GERMAN-CROATIAN RULE (JUNE 1943–FEBRUARY 1945)

The period of Italian rule in occupied Mostar ended in June 1943, and the shadow of the horrors of 1941 loomed over the city once again. This change was influenced by the catastrophic situation Italy found itself in during the summer of 1943. Exhausted by years of war, torn by internal conflicts, bombarded, and threatened by a potential Allied landing, Italy's defeats in North Africa and the Mediterranean, coupled with the exhausting battles on Yugoslav soil, left its army increasingly unable to control the situation in those parts of the Mediterranean where it had tried to extend its authority. The decisive blow to its imperial policy was delivered on July 10th 1943, when Allied forces landed in Sicily, directly threatening the heart of the fascist state—the Apennine Peninsula. Two weeks later (July 24th), Benito Mussolini's government was overthrown, he was arrested, and Marshal Pietro Badoglio was chosen as the new Prime Minister. Outrage at the political structures that had led the country into the largest war in human history resulted in the ban of the National Fascist Party (Partito Nazionale Fascista) on August 27th and soon after, the decision for Italy to withdraw from the war. Finally, on September 3rd in Cassibile near Syracuse, Sicily, General Giuseppe Castellano signed the Protocol of Armistice and Surrender of the Italian Armed Forces. A few days later (September 8th), General Dwight Eisenhow-

er announced that Italy was no longer on Germany's side nor at war with the Allied forces.³⁷⁷

As soon as the news of Italy's capitulation was announced, the Germans disarmed the small Italian garrison in Mostar, which consisted mainly of airmen. The captured Italian soldiers were placed in a German camp. At the same time, an assault was carried out on the Italian consulate building in Mostar, and the consul and staff was interned in one of the houses in Mostar. Italian citizens who found themselves in Mostar were also interned. Moreover, the status of the Albanians was changed, their travel documents were confiscated, and they were ordered to report to the police daily and forbidden from leaving the city.³⁷⁸ Clearly, Italy's withdrawal from the war made it an enemy country in German eyes. Besides this, after Italy's capitulation, German forces began to amass in Herzegovina.³⁷⁹

How the Croatian authorities and people welcomed the establishment of German rule in Mostar was best seen when, upon the arrival of German units involved in battles in Montenegro, the governor (veliki župan) Petar Zlatar expressed "his personal and the entire people's satisfaction with the arrival of the German army, which has freed us from the fear we have been living in recently." He pointed out that the Germans could see "with what satisfaction and enthusiasm the Croatian people of this region have welcomed them" and added, "It is evident that where ever the Germans arrive, Croatian sovereignty comes to show." Thanks to the arrival of German troops, Zlatar said, he no longer felt like a consul but as "the governor in his own country." The mayor, Salih Efendić, also wished the German troops a "pleasant and happy stay" in Mostar.³⁸⁰

Shortly after the change of occupation authorities, there was a change in the position of the governor in Mostar. Petar Zlatar was as-

³⁷⁷ D. S. Nenezić, *Jugoslovenske oblasti pod Italijom*, p. 197–198.

³⁷⁸ VA, NDH, b. 192, f. 13, doc. Nr. 16.

³⁷⁹ *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodno-oslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda*, tom IV, knjiga 16, *Borbe u Bosni i Hercegovini 1943 god.*, Beograd 1956, Doc. Nr. 193, p. 492–494.

³⁸⁰ HDA, MUP NDH, b. 3, UM. T. Nr. 3023; VA, NDH, b. 192, f. 8, doc. Nr. 56; VA, NDH, b. 192, f. 9, doc. Nr. 3.

signed to work at the Ministry of Justice and Worship and was appointed as a councillor of the Ban's Table in Sarajevo.³⁸¹ The new governor in Mostar was named Lieutenant Colonel of the Leader's Bodyguard Battalion, Tomislav Tomiša Grgić.³⁸² Mayor Efendić mentioned that Tomiša Grgić's arrival in Mostar marked a new impetus for the repressive policy of the Croatian authorities, i.e., "increased Ustasha terror." Grgić arrived in Mostar on December 1st 1943.³⁸³ Several Mostar residents testified that with Grgić's arrival as governor, there was a "heightened Ustasha course because Grgić closely collaborated with the German Gestapo and the Ustasha headquarters." Mayor Efendić testified: "After Grgić's arrival in Mostar, he came to me, who was then the president of the municipality in Mostar, to introduce himself. As soon as he entered my office, he behaved arrogantly and let me know that the Leader had sent him to Mostar to manage the freedom-loving elements, which he called communists. On that occasion, he told me: Everyone here must behave like an Ustasha and think like an Ustasha because if they do not, I will liquidate them." Grgić took decisive steps to strengthen all segments of the administration with reliable Ustasha personnel, or as Salih Efendić said, he appointed people "who were absolutely loyal to the Ustasha movement, which in other words means he brought in people known as bandits." For the new head of the Governor's Police Area instead of Mate Roko, he appointed Dr. Bogašin Šoić-Mirilović, a law-

³⁸¹ VA, NDH, b. 192, f. 1, doc. Nr. 17. Бански стол је представљао некадашњи Апелациони суд.

³⁸² Tomislav Grgić (1906–1994), originally from Hrašljani near Ljubuški, completed high school in Zagreb and enrolled in the Faculty of Law. While studying, he worked as a clerk in the city administration. He emigrated in 1933. He witnessed the preparations for the assassination of King Alexander and then stayed in Ustasha camps in Oliveto and on the Lipari Islands, where he was one of the administrators. After the collapse of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in April 1941, he returned to the country as a colonel in the Ustasha military. He served as a commissioner in the Main Ustasha Headquarters from June 1941 and later became a deputy in the Croatian State Parliament (1942). On October 23rd 1943, he was appointed governor of the Grand County of Hum in Mostar, and on August 23rd 1944, he was transferred to the position of Grand Prefect of the Grand County of Pokupje in Karlovac. In the final days of the NDH's collapse in May 1945, he moved to the Fermo camp and then emigrated to Argentina. He spent the remainder of his life mostly in Buenos Aires, with a brief stay in Córdoba. He lived to an old age and died in the capital of Argentina on July 24th 1994. (*Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 139).

³⁸³ VA, NDH, b. 192, f. 18, doc. Nr. 41.

yer from Imotski and the previous deputy district chief in Mostar.³⁸⁴ Additionally, he replaced Mayor Salih Efendić and appointed Hamdija Hasanefendić in his place.³⁸⁵

The attitude of governor Grgić towards Serbs is evident in the case of two officials of the Grand County of Hum in Mostar, who were of the Orthodox faith—Jovan Hamović and Stevo Ninković. At the beginning of 1944, they requested leave to celebrate Orthodox Christmas on January 7th. However, governor Grgić responded negatively, stating that the use of the Julian calendar had been strictly forbidden since December 5th 1941, and that the law on “holidays” clearly prescribed what and when to celebrate. Since both of them were absent from work on January 7th and 8th, claiming illness, the Grand County of Hum sought advice from the Ministry of the Interior. The Ministry responded that the officials must be held accountable.³⁸⁶

The Croatian authorities’ view of the Serbian population in the Mostar region (and this applies to the entire NDH) and how the Serbs themselves perceived this unwanted state entity is best illustrated by the following lines from a report by the Command of the Sixth Gendarmerie Regiment dated May 25th 1944: “The Orthodox part of the population is still unfavorably disposed towards our state and its organization, harboring great hatred towards our people. They would prefer to be commanded by anyone but Croats. They do not recognize our authorities, do not respond to summons, nor join our army. They are influenced by Greater Serbianism and are convinced of the victory of their nationalism, expecting liberation from the Anglo-Saxons or Russians.”³⁸⁷

In 1944, on July 14, Mostar celebrated the birthday of the Leader Pavelić for the last time with great ceremony and mass participation. At four in the morning, the staff officer Tomislav Mesić traveled to Pavelić’s

³⁸⁴ AJ, 110–477, *Zapisnik sastavljen dana 29 maja 1946 god. u Sekretarijatu okružnog narodnog odbora u Mostaru radi utvrđivanja zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača*; VA, NDH, b. 193, f. 7, doc. Nr. 48.

³⁸⁵ AJ, 110–477, *Zapisnik sastavljen dana 31 maja 1946 god. u Sekretarijatu Okružnog Narodnog odbora u Mostaru radi utvrđivanja zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača*.

³⁸⁶ VA, NDH, b. 218, f. 3, doc. Nr. 2; N. Živković, P. Kačavenda, *Srbi u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj*, Doc. Nr. 29, p. 101.

³⁸⁷ HDA, OUP NDH, b. 5, 1643/44.

birthplace Bradina near Konjic. By six o'clock, the Croatian Music Band was playing a "wake-up call" while passing through the streets of Mostar. Half an hour later, the Croatian state flag was ceremoniously raised in front of the Command Post, accompanied by the national anthem and the presence of one Home Guard company. The celebration continued at seven o'clock in the Roman Catholic parish church, where a solemn mass was held, attended by General Franjo Šimić, governor Tomislav Grgić, head of civil administration Dr. Đuro Spužević, Mayor Hamdija Hasanefendić, Ustasha Colonel Dr. Ridanović, Gendarmerie Colonels Mašek and Aganović, Home Guard Colonel Ukmar, officials, and many citizens. Then at eight o'clock, a solemn prayer was held in the Karadoz Bey Mosque. In the evening at 8 PM, a solemn academy was held in Hrvoje's premises. In front of a large audience of Mostar citizens, governor Grgić gave a lecture on "the work and greatness of the struggle of the Leader Dr. Ante Pavelić for the achievement of independence and sovereignty of the Independent State of Croatia." Shortly before the end of the solemn academy, a special train arrived in Mostar from Bradina with members of the Ustasha Youth.³⁸⁸

On August 9th, 1944, news shook Mostar that around 23:10, in Hitler Street, in front of the house of Nikola Smoljan, shots were fired at Home Guard General Franjo Šimić, commander of the Hum-Dubrava Armed Forces Group.³⁸⁹ Ten minutes later, Šimić died from his wounds. According to eyewitness accounts, the severely wounded general, in his death throes, said: "The Serbs killed me, damn them, but let it be, Croatia will remain." Because of this, among other things, it was suspected

³⁸⁸ VA, NDH, b. 194, f. 4, doc. Nr. 3.

³⁸⁹ Franjo Šimić (1900–1944), originally from Gospić, graduated from the Higher School of the Military Academy in Belgrade and was a colonel in the Yugoslav army. After the proclamation of the Independent State of Croatia, he joined the Croatian Home Guard. As the commander of the 9th Infantry Regiment and the 2nd Mountain Brigade, he participated in battles in Herzegovina (1941–1942). In June 1942, he was appointed as the Leader's special commissioner for leading military operations in the areas of the Grand Counties of Pliva and Rama and Lašva and Glaž. From November 1942 to June 1944, he was the commander of the 1st Home Guard Volunteer Regiment. In February 1944, he was promoted to the rank of general. In June 1944, he was appointed commander of the Croatian armed forces in the areas of the Grand Counties of Hum and Dubrava. He was killed in Mostar on August 9th 1944, under unclear circumstances. (*Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 381).

“that the murder of General Šimić was organized by Chetnik circles in Mostar and Bijelo Polje,” with Tošo Perović as the alleged organizer of the assassination and Ljubo Zurovac and Ljubo Pribićević as the direct perpetrators. After the murder of General Šimić, General Božidar Zorn was appointed as the new commander of the Hum-Dubrava Armed Force Group.³⁹⁰ Although it was not definitively established who killed General Šimić, this incident was used as a pretext for a new wave of repression against the Serbs in Mostar. The German army blocked the city, and the Ustasha and police conducted thorough searches. 150 people were arrested, among whom Serbs were in a significant percentage, but most were soon released. Bishop Petar Čule also intervened for the release of the arrested, requesting the authorities “not to kill innocent prisoners because of someone else’s fault” and advising them to “find the murderers and bring them to justice, but release innocent citizens.”³⁹¹

A part of the detainees was mistreated for days, and a group of 15 prisoners was then crammed into a truck and taken in the direction of the Maltese Zahum. However, the truck was stopped by a German patrol, which prevented the planned execution. After a brief detention at the German Feldkommandantur, the detainees were returned to the jail of the County Police Department. A few days later, a group of members of the Ustasha Youth burst into the cell where they were held and beat them with rifle butts, hands, and feet. Among those beaten were Manojlo Čabak, Jovo Vujinović, Lazo Pičeta, Vaso Pavić, Mile Pavić, Savo Vučetić, and Jovo Danilović. All of them survived, except for Lazo Pičeta, for whom this summer wave of repression in 1944 proved fatal.³⁹² The arrest of a large number of Mostar residents was one of the last actions of governor Grgić, as he was transferred to Karlovac on August 23rd to the position of governor of the Grand County of Pokuplje.

³⁹⁰ VA, NDH, b. 194, f. 6, doc. Nr. 14; VA, NDH, b. 265, f. 2, doc. Nr. 42.

³⁹¹ С. Симић, *Херцејовачки бискупи за време окупаиције Југославије*, p. 76.

³⁹² AJ, 110–477, *Zapisnik sastavljen dne 5 augusta 1946 godine u Mostaru po delegatu Zemaljske komisije za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača*; AJ, 110–477, *Zapisnik, Gradska komisija za utvrđivanje zločina*, Nr. 236, Mostar, 5. 6. 1945. god; *Zločini Nezavisne Države Hrvatske i nemačkog okupatora u Hercegovini*, I, doc. Nr. 86, p. 405–407.

The new and, as it turned out, last governor of the Grand County Hum was appointed to be Đuro Spužević, an official in the Ministry of the Interior in Zagreb.³⁹³

The second half of 1944 brought the Mostar Serbs the last fierce wave of Ustasha massacres, which closely resembled those of the summer of 1941. Attacks on Serbian villages south of Mostar at the end of September and north of Mostar at the end of December claimed more than a hundred Serbian civilian lives. The first villages to be attacked were Lakševine and Ortiješ. The Ustasha massacre in these two neighboring villages took place in the early morning of September 30th, 1944. The operation was led by the Ustasha commander in Mostar, Hamo Hadžić, who rode into the village on horseback, Ivan Martinić from Ilići, and policeman Vlado Mandić from Široki Brijeg. They were followed by mostly local Ustasha: Pero Zlomislić from Buna, Drago Blažević from Buna, Ustasha commander in Gnojnice Ivan Krtalić, Franjo Zlomislić from Kosor, Ilija Blažević from Buna, Stanko Blažević from Buna, Maše Mandarić from Buna, Stijepo Mandarić from Buna, Ivan Džeba from Buna, Jure Popović, a policeman from Mostar, and Ivan Topić from Mostar. The village was surrounded, and the Ustasha went from house to house arresting people. Thirty-nine men were arrested on charges of collaborating with the communist resistance movement. The detainees from Lakševine and Ortiješ were gathered in front of the house of Đorđe Ivanišević, where they were informed that they would be used for the purpose of forced labor. However, they did not get further than the banks of the Neretva, as they were all killed. They were executed at locations called Luka and Šuplje Pećine, which

³⁹³ Đuro Spužević (1900–1984), originally from Vivodina near Ozalj, attended high school in Mostar and Široki Brijeg and studied at the Faculty of Law in Zagreb. He worked in courts in Travnik, Gacko, Čapljina, and Stolac. The April War found him serving as a judge at the District Court in Mostar. In June 1941, he was appointed Deputy Prefect of the Grand County of Vrhbosna in Sarajevo. He remained in that position until December 1943, when he was transferred to the position of Deputy Prefect of the Grand County of Posavje in Slavonski Brod. In February 1944, he was appointed President of the Court in Banja Luka. For his work in Sarajevo, he was awarded a medal by the Leader in April 1944. By the Leader's decision on August 23rd 1944, he was appointed governor of the Grand County of Hum in Mostar. He remained in that position until the collapse of the NDH, after which he went into exile. He passed away in Johannesburg, South Africa. (AJ, 110, Dosije Spužević Đure; „Mostarac – novi sarajevski podžupan“, *Sarajevski novi list*, 24. VI 1941, p. 3; *Tko je tko u NDH*, p. 364).

are separated by the Orthodox cemetery. Some were thrown into the Neretva, while others were left on the riverbank. Thirty-six villagers were killed: Ljubo Berberović, Novica Berberović, Risto J. Šupljeglav, Risto Đ. Šupljeglav, Manojlo Šupljeglav, Nikola Šupljeglav, Jovo Šupljeglav, Božidar Šupljeglav, Đordo Šupljeglav, Lazar Šupljeglav, Vlado Šupljeglav, Branko Šupljeglav, Đordo Ivanišević, Danilo Ivanišević, Gojko Ivanišević, Risto Ivanišević, Čedomir Ivanišević, Strajko Medan, Jefto Medan, Danilo Medan, Šćepan Medan, Đorde Medan, Marko Karadeglija, Ilija Đurić, Todor Đurić, Bogdan Đurić, Maksim Čabrić, Grujo Berberović, Milan Berberović, Risto Vuković, Ljubo Medan, Đordo Crnogorac, Jovo Džonlaga, Nikola Džonlaga, Špiro Džonlaga, and Simo Mihić.³⁹⁴ Three survived: Aleksa Šupljeglav, Milan Šupljeglav, and Dušan Šupljeglav, who pretended to be dead despite their injuries and thus saved their lives. All three were taken to the German hospital in Mostar, located in barracks near Peškina's houses.³⁹⁵

One of the few survivors, Aleksa Šupljeglav from Lakševine, testified about the massacre of Serbs in Lakševine and Ortiješ on the last day of September 1944: "On September 30th, 1944, the Ustasha surrounded the villages of Ortiješ, Opine, and Lakševine. I was at home in Lakševine. They took us out of the house and gathered us in front of Đoko Ivanišević's house, then informed us that we were being taken to prison for questioning. We started towards Mostar, and then we saw the young man Špiro Džonlaga from Ortiješ running away from the Ustasha. Ivan Krtalić, the Ustasha who had arrested us, ran after him and killed him. After that, they led us further to a meadow, and then I heard behind me, where Ustasha Krtalić and Stanko Blažević were, the sound of a machine gun and a rifle being cocked. Suddenly, they started shooting at us from behind. Milan and Dušan Šupljeglav survived. Risto Šupljeglav, who had been wounded in the shoulder, started running, but the Ustasha caught up with him in the cemetery and massacred him. The Ustasha returned three times, loudly asking if anyone was still alive. At that time, they finished off Đoko, who was only

³⁹⁴ AJ, 110, *Dosije Hadžić Nata (Анта)*; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 235–236.

³⁹⁵ Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 215–217.

wounded. I kept quiet, and after that, although injured, I managed to pull through as a young and strong sixteen-year-old and reach home, where I received first aid.³⁹⁶

That same day, the Ustasha Marko Filipović from Gnojnice, Mato Lovrić, Stijepo Lovrić, Jure Dragoje from Gnojnice, Pero Lovrić, Stijepo Pažin from Trebinje, Stanko Krtalić from Gnojnice, Franjo Slišković, Miho Dragoje, Franjo Zlomislčić from Kosor, and the Ustasha commander Hamo Hadžić raided Serbian houses in Gnojnice and Dračevica. Since some of these Ustasha were from Gnojnice, they knew well whose house was whose and where people were in this mixed village. Some of the detainees were killed and thrown into the Neretva, while others were imprisoned in the basement of Mijo Barišić's inn. There they were subjected to abuse, led by Ivan Martinović from Ilići and policeman Vlado Mandić. Afterwards, they were transferred to Jasenovac, from where no one returned. Those who perished included Marko Bulić, Mirko Ivanišević, Ljubo Matrak, Milan Matrak, Jovo Semiz, Milan Semiz, Miho Semiz, Vaso Šindik, and Simo Šindik (from Gnojnice), Đorđe Bulić, Luka Bulić, and Nikola Bulić (from Dračevica).³⁹⁷

On the evening of December 24th around 9 PM, a group of Ustasha from Gnojnice broke into the hamlet of Raštani, where the Đurasović family lived. Milica Đurasović was killed, along with two children of the same surname – siblings Danica, aged 17, and Anđelko, aged 11. When the Ustasha tried to enter Đorđe Đurasović's house, he fired a rifle and killed the Ustasha Mile Čarapin. A shootout ensued, after which the Ustasha fled the village, and the armed Serbs hid in the forest. When they regrouped, the Ustasha attacked the hamlet where the Krzman family lived and killed 19 Serbs with that surname, including 11 children and eight women, i.e., all who failed to escape the

³⁹⁶ M. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 651–652.

³⁹⁷ The criminals from Gnojnice met different fates. Mato Lovrić and Stanko Krtalić were executed by the new Yugoslav authorities, Stijepo Lovrić was sentenced to 10 years in prison, Jozo Dragoje to four years, and Pero Lovrić to three years, while the fate of the others is unknown. (AJ, 110, *Dosije Hadžić Nata (Анта)*; *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајтора у Херцеговини*, I, doc. Nr. 92, p. 422–423; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 198–199; Н. Телебак, „Страдања мостарских Срба“, p. 413).

Ustasha onslaught. In the afflicted hamlet, among the horrific events, the fate of Jovo Krzman's family stands out. He was in the forest when the Ustasha raided his family home. His wife Mara witnessed the murder of all six of her children, the youngest among them, Risto, barely a few weeks old, was impaled on a bayonet. In the end, she was also slaughtered. Among those killed were ten-year-old Petar, eight-year-old Smilja, seven-year-old Cvijeta, six-year-old Anđelko, five-year-old Borika, four-year-old Uroš, three-year-old Ljubica, and one-year-old Momčilo. Thus, Christmas Eve became a dark day for Raštani during World War II.³⁹⁸

Just a few hours later, in that same dark night between Catholic Christmas Eve and Christmas, the Ustasha surrounded the hamlets of Kruševica, Vežovići, Sirge, and Veliki Dolac and started a bloody rampage in the village of Raška Gora. Although the village of Raška Gora had been targeted by the Ustasha multiple times, its main suffering came in the second half of 1944. The black day for Raška Gora dawned on December 25th. The fury over the resistance they encountered a few hours earlier in neighboring Raštani was fully unleashed. They showed no mercy to anyone. Entire families were wiped out, and people were killed on the roads, in yards, and in houses. As many as 27 villagers were burned alive in one of the barns in the village: "Terrible screams were heard from the burning barn. The Ustasha stood around it until the burning roof collapsed, then they left the village." Fifty-seven houses were burned, and 76 villagers were killed – all from the Janjić family. Among them were ten men, 34 women, and 32 children, seven of whom were under three years old. Clearly, everything alive found that night in Raška Gora was killed, from babies a few weeks old, like Anda Perina Janjić, Ljuba Jankov Janjić, and Mitar Janjić, to elderly people like Lazar Šćepanov Janjić, who was 74 years old, Rista Ilijin Janjić, 71 years old, and Tripe Mićin Janjić, 70 years old.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁸ Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 245–247; Н. Телебак, „Страдања мостарских Срба“, p. 414.

³⁹⁹ *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске и немачкој окупајтора у Херцеговини*, I, doc. Nr. 91, p. 419–421; Б. Н. Чучковић, *Злочини у Херцеговини*, II, p. 243–244; Н. Телебак, „Страдања мостарских Срба“, p. 413–414.

Allied Air Strikes on Mostar

The capitulation of Italy brought the Allies closer to the Balkan front. The fall of the country, which was Hitler's main ally, made it feasible for the Allies to conduct military operations against the NDH. The Balkans were now close enough that, if strategic reasons required, targets on Yugoslav soil could be attacked by Allied aircraft. Thus, starting from the summer of 1943, Allied planes targeted locations across the NDH. Among other things, Allied planes were seen in the skies above Mostar in July 1943, when the first night blackouts were ordered. By October, propaganda leaflets were being dropped, mostly written in Cyrillic. The leaflets dropped on the evening of October 9th featured pictures of Lancaster and Liberator planes with descriptions of their capabilities and a large headline: "These are the two types of planes that Hitler fears." The first attack on Mostar was carried out on November 12th 1943, when Allied aviation targeted the airport near Mostar, destroying three planes. When Mostar was bombarded on December 1st the first human casualties were recorded. The Jasenica airfield and the railway were targeted by a group of 40 to 50 Allied aircraft in mid-December 1943.⁴⁰⁰

At the beginning of 1944, Allied air strikes on the Mostar area continued. A group of 43 Allied planes flying over Mostar on January 8 was repelled by German anti-aircraft defenses. However, just a few days later, a real barrage hit Mostar. Between 10:30 and 11:00 AM on January 14th 1944, several dozen, mostly American bombers, dropped around 500 bombs, each weighing 250 kilograms, on the city on the Neretva. As stated in the report of the governor Grgić: "The bombs fell almost exclusively on residential areas, leaving devastation in their wake." The most affected areas were around the Catholic church, the then King Tomislav Street, the western military camp, and the residential area between the railway and the then Ustaška and Kvaternik streets. As a result of the bombing, the Grand County of Hum had to relocate its offices from the building on Church Street (Crkvena ulica) to the Franciscan monastery, as one bomb fell into the building's yard,

⁴⁰⁰ VA, NDH, b. 157, f. 10, doc. Nr. 25; VA, NDH, 192, f. 9, doc. Nr. 27; VA, NDH, b. 192, f. 14, doc. Nr. 60; VA, NDH, b. 192, f. 15, doc. Nr. 14.

causing massive damage. It is estimated that the bombs destroyed around 200 and damaged about 1,000 buildings, meaning that about 20% of the city was destroyed and about 60% damaged. A significant problem for the reconstruction was the lack of glass and bricks. Initial estimates indicated that around 140 bodies were found in the rubble and about 300 people were injured. On the same day, just half an hour later (around 11:30), American bombers struck the airport in Rodoč near Mostar. Witnesses reported that the “airfield was practically plowed by bombs,” with around 1,000 dropped. Eight planes were destroyed, and dozens of German and Croatian soldiers were killed or wounded. The airport became unusable, forcing German planes to take off from the airfield in Blagaj. In the third attack that day (around 12:15), several thousand smaller bombs (each weighing 10 kilograms) were dropped on Humac Hill, the hamlet of Donja Jasenica, and the surrounding area. Twenty-eight houses were destroyed, and 11 villagers were killed. The total number of casualties in Mostar and its surroundings that day rose to around 200. This severe wartime destruction turned Mostar into a war zone in the full sense of the word, and the atmosphere in the city is best described by these lines: “This attack had a profound moral impact on the residents of Mostar, people were fleeing to the villages - some would leave for the outskirts of the city during the day and return home in the evening.”⁴⁰¹

Because of the airfield, Jasenica suffered several times. January 1944 brought them another dark day. During that time, 50 houses were destroyed, around 100 were damaged, and 110 villagers were killed. Strikes on Mostar and its surroundings were particularly intense in April 1944. First, on April 2, the airfield in Jasenica was targeted again, and on April 18, the city itself was attacked. During this raid, anti-air-

⁴⁰¹ VA, NDH, b. 193, f. 2, doc. Nr. 4; VA, NDH, b. 193, f. 2, doc. Nr. 13; VA, NDH, b. 193, f. 2, doc. Nr. 14; VA, NDH, b. 193, f. 14, doc. Nr. 22; *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda*, tom IV, knjiga 19, *Borbe u Bosni i Hercegovini 1943 god.*, Beograd 1959, Doc. Nr. 167, p. 525–539; *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda*, tom IV, knjiga 21, *Borbe u Bosni i Hercegovini 1944 god.*, Beograd 1960, Doc. Nr. 221, p. 768–773; Marica Karakaš Obradov, *Angloamerička bombardiranja Hrvatske u Drugom svjetskom ratu. Saveznički napadi na Nezavisnu Državu Hrvatsku 1943.–1945.*, Zagreb 2008, p. 294–295.

craft defenses shot down an Allied plane that crashed directly into a shelter, killing 10 people. There were casualties again on September 27th when the barracks, hospital, and railway station were hit. Four people were killed on that occasion. A new strike was recorded on October 4th when seven Allied planes descended on the city and dropped around 50 bombs. Several residential buildings, the locomotive shed, the Roman Catholic cemetery, military barracks, and the ammunition depot of the German organization Todt were hit, causing sea mines to explode, which led to additional damage to the city's buildings. According to some estimates, about 50% of all buildings in the city suffered minor or major material damage. Six civilians and four Home Guards were killed.⁴⁰² There were also casualties on October 21st, when nine Allied planes dropped 23 bombs that hit several residential buildings, a military warehouse, and the northern camp. Six people were killed.⁴⁰³ Mostar was last targeted by Allied aviation a few days before liberation. On February 8th and 9th, 1945, planes repeatedly attacked the railway station, damaging several wagons and tracks, and causing the deaths of three soldiers. Overall, from 1943 to 1945, Mostar was targeted by Allied bombers 19 times. In these attacks, 347 civilians and 35 soldiers were killed, while 510 civilians and 79 soldiers were lightly or severely wounded.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰² VA, NDH, b. 194, f. 9, doc. Nr. 45; VA, NDH, b. 194, f. 9, doc. Nr. 52.

⁴⁰³ VA, NDH, b. 194, f. 11, doc. Nr. 43.

⁴⁰⁴ M. Karakaš Obradov, *Angloamerička bombardiranja*, p. 295–297.

LIBERATION OF MOSTAR

Overall, the city of Mostar and its immediate surroundings were not the site of significant military operations during the entire period of occupation. However, both resistance movements (the Communist and Royalist) conducted certain activities in the area. This was particularly true for the Royalist resistance movement, i.e., the units of the Yugoslav Army in the Homeland, which, with the support of Italian occupation forces, clashed with the authorities of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH). By the end of 1944 and the beginning of 1945, Mostar and its surroundings had great significance for German forces on the Balkan Peninsula. Mostar retained an important strategic position, even though in the second half of November 1944, it was decided that the German 21st Mountain Army Corps would not withdraw from Albania via the Skadar-Podgorica-Nikšić line towards Mostar and then further north. Despite this change in the withdrawal plan, by holding Mostar, the Germans indirectly protected the broader Sarajevo region, thereby securing the southern flank of Army Group E, which was retreating from Greece through Yugoslavia via the Sarajevo-Brod route and further north and northwest. Additionally, the Germans wanted to hold Mostar as long as possible to exploit the nearby airfield and bauxite ore deposits. The NDH also appealed for the maintenance of German forces in Herzegovina because that part of the disintegrating state was a stronghold of the Ustasha regime of Ante Pavelić. Due to all these rea-

sons, the Germans held significant forces in the areas of Mostar, Široki Brijeg, and Nevesinje, with about 25,000 troops. The defense of Mostar was organized in two rings: the first, inner ring was 5-8 kilometers from the city (Jasenak-Hum-Mikuljača-Jastrebinika-Goranci line), and the second, outer ring was about 25 kilometers from the city (Zijemlje-Nevesinje-Blagaj-Buna-Varda-Široki Brijeg line). The successful defense of Mostar also depended on maintaining well-fortified positions in Široki Brijeg and Nevesinje.⁴⁰⁵

The liberation of Gacko in early September, Bileća in late September, Trebinje on October 5, Dubrovnik on October 18th Metković, Stolac, and Čapljina on October 26th and Ljubuški on October 29th 1944, gradually weakened the occupiers' control in Herzegovina. The expanding liberated territory in that part of occupied Yugoslavia allowed the main Partisan forces to focus on the area around Mostar.⁴⁰⁶ Following orders from the Supreme Headquarters of the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia (NOVJ), issued in the second half of December 1944, the 29th Division, commanded by Major General Vlado Šegrt, and the units of the Eighth Corps, commanded by Major General Petar Drapšin, were tasked with completing the liberation of Herzegovina.⁴⁰⁷ To accomplish this, by the end of January 1945, the 11th Brigade was deployed to the area of Umoljani-Bjelimići-Glavatičevo, tasked with operations towards Konjic, the 14th Brigade to the sector of Pridvorci-Kljuni, to operate towards Nevesinje, and the 10th and 12th Brigades were also oriented towards Nevesinje, while the 13th Brigade focused on Buna and Blagaj.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁵ Drago Dukanović, „Završne operacije za oslobođenje Hercegovine“, in: *Hercegovina u NOB*, Ed. Milinko Đurović, Slobodan Šakota, Radimir Petković, Beograd 1961, p. 815–834; Осман Ђикић, *Дванаестна херцеговачка НОУ бригада*, Београд 1990, p. 162–163.

⁴⁰⁶ *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda*, tom IV, knjiga 31, *Borbe u Bosni i Hercegovini 1944. godine*, Beograd 1968, Doc. Nr. 12, p. 58–63.

⁴⁰⁷ Vlado Šegrt, „Usklađivanje dejstva 29. divizije sa snagama 8. korpusa“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 295–298.

⁴⁰⁸ *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu jugoslovenskih naroda*, tom IV, knjiga 32, *Borbe u Bosni i Hercegovini 1945. godine*, Beograd 1968, Doc. Nr. 84, p. 390–394; Svetozar Oro, „Fragmenti iz dejstava 11. brigade u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 339–344; Rajko Šarenac, „Dvanaesta hercegovačka udarna brigada u borbama za oslobođenje Mostara“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 345–350; Mensur Seferović, „Trinaesta hercegovačka NOU brigada u mostarskoj operaciji“, in:

As a result, the entire 29th Division could concentrate on the liberation of Mostar.⁴⁰⁹ They were supported by the Ninth Division, which directed part of its forces towards Široki Brijeg and part towards Mostar from the direction of Čitluk.⁴¹⁰

To ease the pressure increasingly tightening the defense of Mostar and its surroundings, the occupying forces unexpectedly launched an attack from Široki Brijeg towards Ljubuški and Čitluk on January 27th, 1945, and from Mostar down the Neretva Valley towards Čapljina and Metković. The attack plan for Operation Bura was devised by the headquarters of the 369th Legionnaire Division, led by General Georg Reinicke. This attack surprised the Partisan forces, resulting in some of their units being defeated, and the occupiers re-entering Ljubuški (on the night of January 27th/28th), Čapljina (January 28), and Metković (on the night of January 29/30). The success of the occupying forces' offensive (strength of 7-8,000 fighters) was also aided by the good knowledge of the terrain by Ustasha fighters, as well as the support of the local Croatian population. In response, the Supreme Headquarters of the NOVJ ordered the Eighth Corps to regroup and launch a decisive battle for the liberation of Mostar. To achieve this, between January 31st and February 3rd some forces were transferred from Northern Dalmatia to Western Herzegovina. Thus, the 26th Division, Tank Brigade, and Artillery Brigade were moved to the area of Imotski, aiming to operate towards Široki Brijeg, while the 19th Division was moved to the area of Vrgorac, aiming to operate towards Ljubuški and Čapljina.⁴¹¹

In this way, the conditions were created for the commencement of the Mostar Operation, which included the battles for the liberation

Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 351–358; Milosav Kundačina, „Učešće 14. omladinske hercegovačke brigade u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 359–365.

⁴⁰⁹ Danilo Komnenović, Muharem Kreso, „Dvadeset deveta divizija u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 299–330.

⁴¹⁰ D. Đukanović, „Završne operacije za oslobođenje Hercegovine“, p. 827.

⁴¹¹ D. Đukanović, „Završne operacije za oslobođenje Hercegovine“, p. 827–828; Ante Biočić, „Mostarska operacija“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 101–126; O. Ђикић, *Дванаесіта херцеіовачка НОУ бриіада*, p. 165–166.

of Široki Brijeg, Nevesinje, and Mostar from January 30th to February 15th 1945, as well as the pursuit of occupying forces to Ivan-Sedlo from February 15th to March 4th leading to the final liberation of the entire Herzegovina. The Mostar Operation preceded the final battles for the liberation of Yugoslavia and represented the most significant operation of NOVJ forces during the winter of 1945. To execute the Mostar Operation, the Yugoslav side engaged the Eighth Dalmatian Corps with the Ninth, 19th, and 26th Divisions, the 29th Herzegovinian Division, the Artillery Brigade, the First Tank Brigade, and the Third Brigade of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Division of the Corps of National Defense of Yugoslavia (KNOJ).⁴¹² A total of 18 NOVJ brigades were engaged (First and Second Dalmatian Proletarian, 3rd, 4th, 6th, 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th Dalmatian, 3rd Overseas, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th Herzegovinian, First Tank, Artillery Brigade of the Eighth Corps, and the Third Brigade of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Division of KNOJ) with about 40,000 fighters.⁴¹³ The First and Second Air Squadrons of NOVJ, whose planes took off from the Vis airfield, participated in the air preparation and support. The NOVJ Navy also took part in the transfer of Eighth Corps units, various materials, and ammunition for its needs.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹² Gojko Vujičić, „Artiljerijska brigada 8. korpusa u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 369–376; Periša Grujić, „Tenkovi u mostarskoj operaciji, januar i februar 1945.“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 377–384.

⁴¹³ Branko Forlić, „Brigada u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 144–158; Mate Šalov, „Četvrta brigada u borbama za Mostar“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 162–191; Ivo Ferenca, „Na kraju puta“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 192–196; Ilija Repac, Živojin Bulat, „Četrnaesta brigada u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 213–217; Vaso Đapić, „Prva dalmatinska proleterska brigada u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 236–244; Milan Rako, „Jedanaesta dalmatinska u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 249–264; Nikola Anić, „Dvanaesta dalmatinska brigada u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 265–281; Radule Buturović, „Borbe za oslobođenje Mostara“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 282–291.

⁴¹⁴ „Osnovni podaci o mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 20–23; „Uloga vazduhoplovstva u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 400–401; Predrag Pejčić, „Dejstvo avijacije u mo-

On the other side were the German, Ustasha-Home Guard, and Italian Fascist forces. According to estimates by the 29th Division Headquarters, the total strength of German forces and their local collaborators in the Mostar area amounted to about 15,000 soldiers (about 20 battalions, two artillery regiments, and several tanks). In the Nevesinje area, there were two battalions of the 369th Legionnaire Division, about 500 members of the Ustasha militia, and two batteries of the 369th Artillery Regiment. Their task was to defend Nevesinje and prevent access to Mostar from the east and southeast. Around Blagaj and Buna were the First Battalion of the Ninth Regiment of the Ninth Mountain Ustasha-Home Guard Division and two howitzer batteries of the German 649th Coastal Artillery Regiment. Their task was to prevent access to Mostar from the south, along the left bank of the Neretva River. South of Mostar, from Jasenica to Mostarsko Blato, were deployed the First Battalion of the 369th Artillery Regiment, one artillery division, and air units at the airfield near Rodoč, as well as the Fourth Battalion of the Ninth Regiment of the Ninth Ustasha-Home Guard Division on the front line of Kosmaj-Čitluk. Their task was to defend access to Mostar from the south and southwest. On positions between Široki Brijeg and Ljubuški were the 370th Legionnaire Regiment, the Second Mountain Regiment of the Ninth Ustasha-Home Guard Division, the Second Battalion of the Ninth Regiment of the same division, one division of the 369th Artillery Regiment, the Ustasha Black Legion, police, and gendarmerie. In Mostar itself were the 49th Fascist Blackshirt Battalion San Marco, a tank platoon, and parts of the German 369th Artillery and 649th Coastal Artillery Regiment, and in Bijelo Polje the Reconnaissance, Supplementary, and Pioneer Battalions and the Anti-Tank Division of the 369th Legionnaire Division. Between Široki Brijeg and Mostar were the Third and Fifth Battalions of the Ninth Regiment of the Ninth Ustasha-Home Guard Division and several smaller, independent units.⁴¹⁵

starskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 402–411; Kažimir Pribilović, „Mornarica NOVJ u prevoženju jedinica 8. korpusa za mostarsku operaciju“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 412–422.

⁴¹⁵ D. Đukanović, „Završne operacije za oslobođenje Hercegovine“, p. 828–829; „Osnovni podaci o mostarskoj operaciji“, p. 21; Drago Đukanović, „Vojno-politička situacija pred izvođenje mostarske op-

Based on the directive of the Supreme Headquarters of NOVJ, the Eighth Corps carried out the necessary regrouping and developed a plan for the directions of action. The main forces, consisting of the Ninth and 26th Divisions, the Tank and Artillery Brigades, were tasked with launching concentric attacks on Široki Brijeg. The 26th Division (commanded by Colonel Božo Božović) was to advance from the west in the direction of Posušje-Široki Brijeg,⁴¹⁶ while the Ninth Division (commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Ljubo Truta) was to advance from the south in the direction of Vitina-Buhovo-Široki Brijeg.⁴¹⁷ The objective was to prevent the occupying forces from sending reinforcements from Mostar, capture Široki Brijeg, and then encircle Mostar from the north and west. The 19th Division (commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Stanko Parmač) was to advance in the direction of Ljubuški-Čitluk-Varda-Mostar, seize the area between Mostarsko Blato and the Neretva River, and encircle Mostar from the south. Simultaneously, the 29th Division was tasked with capturing Nevesinje and then advancing along the routes Nevesinje-Blagaj-Mostar and Kljuni-Donje Zijeplje-Bijelo Polje to seize key strongholds along the Nevesinje-Mostar road and encircle Mostar from the east. After the re-liberation of Čapljina (February 3rd), Ljubuški, and Čitluk (February 4th), a favorable position was established for an attack on the significant German-Ustasha stronghold of Široki Brijeg.⁴¹⁸

The winter period and heavy snow made the movement of partisan forces difficult. However, after fierce fighting on February 6 and the night of February 6th/7th partisan forces liberated Široki Brijeg on

eracije i dejstva 29. hercegovačke udarne divizije“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 86–100.

⁴¹⁶ Fabijan Trgo, „Uloga Dvadeset šeste dalmatinske divizije u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 221–226; Nikola Anić, „Dvadeset šesta dalmatinska divizija u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 227–235.

⁴¹⁷ Ljubo Truta, „O dejstvima 9. divizije u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 131–133; Rade Guberina, „Deveta divizija NOVJ u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 134–143.

⁴¹⁸ *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o Narodnooslobodilačkom ratu naroda Jugoslavije*, tom IV, knjiga 33, *Borbe u Bosni i Hercegovini 1945. godine*, Beograd 1970, Doc. Nr. 25, 29, 31, 33, p. 119–125, 145–149, 152–154, 156–159; D. Đukanović, „Završne operacije za oslobođenje Hercegovine“, p. 829; „Osnovni podaci o mostarskoj operaciji“, p. 21–22; O. Бицић, *Дванаестна херцеговачка НОУ бригада*, p. 167–171.

February 7th. By capturing Široki Brijeg and advancing towards Miljkovići and Konjic, the conditions were set for an assault on Mostar itself. After a short break, it was necessary to launch concentric attacks on the surrounded Mostar, preventing the occupying forces from escaping towards Sarajevo. According to the Eighth Corps Headquarters' plan, Mostar was to be attacked from several directions on February 12th. The 26th Division was to attack along the route Donji Polog–Mostar, the 19th Division along the route Varda–Mostar, and the Ninth Division was to cut off the connection between Mostar and Sarajevo.⁴¹⁹

The final attack on Mostar began on the morning of February 13th. After a prolonged artillery preparation, the 26th Division captured Jastrebnika, Podbile, and Žovnica. By taking Žovnica, an open passage to Mikuljača and Keveljača, which were the main occupier positions for the defense of Mostar, was obtained. With the support of tanks, Mikuljača soon fell. Meanwhile, the Ninth Division secured positions along the Domazeti–Crna Stijena line and reached the Mostar–Konjic railway, threatening the main retreat route of the occupiers. The encirclement of Mostar tightened further as the 19th Division, through fierce fighting, made a breakthrough between Varda and Mostarsko Blato, reaching Orlovac and Gornja Jasenica.⁴²⁰ On the same day, the 29th Division launched a decisive attack on Nevesinje, which the occupiers fiercely defended, aware that it was the last defense of Mostar itself. By evening, partisan forces had entered the town, and in the cold night, amidst the snow, street fighting began. Nevesinje was liberated the next day, February 14th. During the night of February 13th/14th, the last part of the NDH administrative apparatus withdrew from Mostar,

⁴¹⁹ *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o NOR-u, IV–33, Doc. Nr. 69, 71, 74, p. 296–304, 307–310, 319–321; D. Đukanović, „Završne operacije za oslobođenje Hercegovine“, p. 830–831; Drago Gizdić, „Borbe za Široki Brijeg i Mostar“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 485–488; Sibe Kvesić, „Borbe na Širokom Brijegu i Mostaru“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 489–490.*

⁴²⁰ Petar Babić, „Učešće devetnaeste divizije u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 199–201; Dragutin Grgurević, „Devetnaesta divizija u mostarskoj operaciji“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 202–207; Danilo Damjanović, „Borbe 6. brigade oko Varde i prodor u Mostar“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 208–212.

symbolically breaking Ustasha control in Mostar and its surroundings, although the Grand County of Hum continued “temporary operations” in Sarajevo.⁴²¹

The attack on Mostar continued on the morning of February 14th. By around 1 PM, the 26th Division, with the support of the Tank and Artillery Brigades, entered the western part of the city and reached the right bank of the Neretva River. Since the occupiers had not managed to destroy the bridges over the Neretva, tanks were able to penetrate the eastern part of the city by about 6 PM. Immediately after them, the 26th Division crossed the Neretva and, together with the 19th Division, began clearing the city of occupying forces. By the end of the day, the entire city of Mostar was liberated and cleared of occupying forces, and the Mostar operation continued with pursuit until the beginning of March. A significant portion of Croatian forces retreated north towards Jablanica, Konjic, and Ivan-Sedlo.⁴²² Overall, in the Mostar operation, 536 Yugoslav fighters were killed, while 1,544 were wounded. On the German-Croatian side, according to partisan data, 5,778 fighters were killed, and 1,314 were captured. This discrepancy in the number of casualties, however, seems exaggerated.⁴²³ Regardless, a symbolic confirmation that Mostar was liberated and that a new era with new authorities and a significantly changed socio-political framework was beginning for the city and the rest of the country, was represented by the parade of NOVJ troops on February 20th 1945.⁴²⁴

⁴²¹ VA, NDH, b. 218, f. 11, doc. Nr. 21.

⁴²² B. B. Dimitrijević, *Ustaška vojska*, p. 448–449.

⁴²³ „Izveštaj štaba 8. korpusa NOVJ od 25. februara 1945. Vrhovnom štabu NOV i POJ o oslobođenju zapadne Hercegovine i Mostara“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 29–57; D. Đukanović, „Završne operacije za oslobođenje Hercegovine“, p. 833; Mensur Seferović, *Istočno i zapadno od Neretve. Deseta hercegovačka narodnooslobodilačka udarna proleterska brigada*, Beograd 1981, p. 256–259; „Osnovni podaci o mostarskoj operaciji“, p. 23; Fadil Numić, „Preko Bune u Mostar“, in: *Zbornik sjećanja o Mostarskom bataljonu*, Ed. Refik Hamzić, Mostar 1989, p. 893–894.

⁴²⁴ „Mostar slavi svoje oslobođenje“, in: *Mostarska operacija. Učesnici govore*, Ed. Ivo Matović, Beograd 1986, p. 73–76.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE NUMBERS

When the census of war victims was conducted in 1964, it was determined that 597,323 people perished in Yugoslavia. However, it is estimated on solid grounds that this figure represents only about 60% of the actual losses of the Yugoslav population, which suffered in various ways and on different sides. But if we take the established figure as a starting point, we will see that the most casualties were in the territory of Croatia – 194,749 (32.60%), followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina with 177,045 (29.64%), then Serbia with 147,025 casualties (24.61%), Slovenia with 40,781 (6.82%), Macedonia with 19,076 (3.19%), and Montenegro with 16,903 (2.82%), while the nationality of 1,744 people from the Yugoslav republics has not been determined. Looking nationally, among them, there were mostly Serbs, 346,740 (58.05%), followed by Croats, 83,257 (13.93%), Jews, 45,000 (7.53%), Slovenes, 42,027 (7.04%), Muslims, 32,300 (5.41%), Montenegrins, 18,276 (3.06%), Macedonians, 6,724 (1.12%), while the nationality of 22,999 casualties (3.85%) was not determined. Of the total number of victims in BiH, the vast majority are Serbs – 128,040 (72.32%), followed by Muslims 29,545 (16.69%), Jews 10,550 (5.96%), and Croats 7,328 (4.14%). The nationality of 1,582 victims has not been determined.⁴²⁵

⁴²⁵ Драган Цветковић, „Попис Жртве рати 1941–1945 из 1964. године као основа за изучавање страдања становништва Југославије. Неки показатељи страдања српског становништва“, in: *Геноцид у 20. веку на просторима југословенских земаља* (Ed. Јован Мирковић), Београд 2005, p.

In the Herzegovina region (Bileća, Gacko, Grude, Duvno, Jablanica, Konjic, Široki Brijeg, Ljubinje, Ljubuški, Mostar, Nevesinje, Posušje, Prozor, Stolac, Trebinje, Čapljina, and Čitluk), which covered 18.78% of the territory of BiH and 9.75% of the territory of the Independent State of Croatia, 17,638 deaths were recorded, which is 8.35% of the total number of victims in BiH, 3.87% of the victims in the NDH, and 4.59% of the total population of Herzegovina according to the 1941 estimate. Of that number, the most casualties were in the Mostar area with 2,719 (15.42% of the total number of casualties in Herzegovina), followed by Trebinje and Ravno with 2,211 (12.54%), Čapljina and Neum with 2,189 (12.41%), Gacko with 2,069 (11.73%), Stolac and Berkovići with 1,686 (9.56%), Bileća with 1,574 (8.92%), Nevesinje with 1,424 (8.07%), and Konjic with 1,000 (5.67%). Less than a thousand victims were recorded in Prozor (844), Ljubinje (574), Ljubuški (427), Jablanica (355), Široki Brijeg (226), Posušje (134), Grude (117), and Čitluk (89). Of the total number of casualties in Herzegovina, the majority were Serbs 11,691 (66.28%), followed by Muslims 3,332 (18.89%) and Croats 2,369 (13.44%), with Jews 85, Roma 21, while 140 casualties were classified as other.⁴²⁶ Consequently, Serbs represented 2/3 of the victims in Herzegovina, while barely a third of the population. Serbs are the majority of victims in the areas of Bileća, Čapljina, Gacko, Ljubinje, Mostar, Nevesinje, Stolac, and Trebinje, while in Konjic, they have almost an equal number of victims as Muslims 404:399. Croats make up the majority of victims in the Čitluk, Grude, Široki Brijeg, Ljubuški, Posušje, and Prozor areas. However, it should be noted that these are municipalities with the smallest number of casualties according to the census from 1964. Muslims represent the majority of victims only in the Jablanica area.

In the Mostar area, both the city and the district, among the 2,719 casualties, 1,709 were Serbs, 574 Muslims, 344 Croats, 71 Jews, and

77–84.

⁴²⁶ Јован Мирковић, „Жртве рата 1941–1945. рођене на подручју Херцеговине према до сада извршеној ревизији пописа из 1964. године, с посебним освртом на страдање деце и старијих лица“, in: *Злочини Независне Државе Хрватске над Србима, Јеврејима и Ромима 1941–45 године на њојсторију Херцеговина*, Зборник (Ed. Владимир Лукић), Бања Лука 2014, p. 27–73.

21 were classified as other. Serbs, therefore, represent almost 2/3 of all casualties in the Mostar area. Mostar residents, in terms of age, mostly suffered in 1941. The first war years saw 1,051 residents of Mostar and its surroundings suffering, 334 suffered in 1942, 422 in 1943, 517 in 1944, and 395 in the last war year of 1945. Most Mostar residents suffered from direct terror – murders at home and mass killings (1,071). In camps, prisons, and during deportations, 763 residents of Mostar and its surroundings suffered, 540 suffered in the People's Liberation Struggle, 185 as civilians during combat and bombardments, 100 in other ways, 32 as members of the Yugoslav army, and the method of suffering is unknown for 28 individuals. For the majority of the victims from Mostar, it has not been "established" who was responsible for their deaths (1,701), for 815 it is undoubtedly known that they perished from various armed formations of the NDH, 89 were victims of German forces, 41 are in the group of others, 39 were killed by Italians, and 34 fell victim of members of the royalist resistance movement. There is no data in the mentioned census of war victims about the victims of the communist resistance movement. It is quite clear that the majority of those for whom it has not been "established" by whose hand they died were killed by various armed groups of the NDH or in camps formed by that quisling creation. Among the 2,719 victims in Mostar and its surroundings, there were 197 children (7.25%). Mostly Serbian children (107), followed by Muslim (47) and Croatian (35) children.⁴²⁷

According to the calculations of Vladimir Žerjavić, during the Second World War, 2,384 people were killed in the area of Mostar, of which 1,722 were civilians, and 622 were fighters.⁴²⁸ According to the data most commonly cited in literature, from 1941 to 1945, there were a total of 1,517 victims of fascist terror in Mostar, of which 1,284 were killed by the Ustasha, and 89 by Ustasha together with Germans.⁴²⁹

⁴²⁷ J. Мирковић, „Жртве рата 1941–1945. рођене на подручју Херцеговине“, p. 39, 42, 45, 49–50, 57–59.

⁴²⁸ Vladimir Žerjavić, *Gubici stanovništva Jugoslavije u drugom svjetskom ratu*, Zagreb 1989, p. 172–173.

⁴²⁹ M. Seferović, *Mostarski kolopleti*, p. 81; D. K. Miletić, „Stradanja u Mostaru“, p. 119, 121–122; S. Skoko, *Pokolji hercegovačkih Srba*, p. 247–248; Саво Скоко, „Запрепастили и врховнике НДХ“,

According to the data from Milan Bulajić, the Ustasha killed 937 Serbs from Mostar during 1941, and later in 1944 and 1945, another 201, which totals 1,138.⁴³⁰ Based on all the published research, available census data of victims, archival documents, and cross-referencing existing data, we have counted 1,424 victims of Ustasha terror in the Mostar district. Half of this number is from the city of Mostar itself (764), and the rest are from the 10 municipalities of the district. Looking at the villages, the Ustasha killed the most Serbs in Raška Gora (89), Raštani (49), Zijemlje (47), Ortiješ (45), Žitomislići (43), and Baćevići (42). Looking at the years of suffering, the absolute majority of Serbs were killed in 1941 (1,093). During the Italian rule in 1942 and 1943, the Ustasha killed significantly fewer Serbs. In 1942, 69 Mostar Serbs were killed, and in 1943, 36. Most of them suffered in camps far from Mostar during that time. The return of Ustasha authorities in 1944 led to more massive slaughters of the Serbian population of the Mostar region, resulting in the deaths of 193 Serbs that year. In the final year of Ustasha rule in Mostar (1945), specifically during January and the first half of February, 33 Mostar Serbs died. Although we have adjusted the number of Mostar Serbs who perished in the complex of camps Gospić-Jadovno-Pag as stated by Đuro Zatezalo, that camp complex remains the largest grave of Mostar Serbs. According to our data, 361 Mostar Serbs of Serbian nationality were killed there. Also, although we have adjusted the number of Mostar Serbs who were killed in the Jasenovac camp as stated by Antun Miletić, that camp represented the second-largest grave of Mostar Serbs, as according to our data, 135 Serbs were killed there. However, the number of Mostar Serbs who perished in the camps should be considered very questionable, as we lack data on the place of death for most of the victims.

Политика, 8. IV 1991, p. 17; С. Скоко, „Страдање Срба града и среза Мостара“, p. 309, 312; С. Скоко, *Крваво коло херцеџовачко*, I, p. 218; Ђ. Затецало, *Јадовно*, I, p. 290.

⁴³⁰ М. Bulajić, *Ustaški zločini genocida*, I, p. 406–407.

Table of Mostar Serbs from individual villages who perished

Village	Victims Total	1941.	1942.	1943.	1944.	1945.	Jadovno	Jasenovac
Banjdol	4	/	2	1	1	/	/	/
Bačevići	42	35	3	/	2	2	1	1
Blagaj	7	6	1	/	/	/	2	/
Bogodol	40	38	/	/	2	/	2	6
Vihovići	25	23	1	/	1	/	3	/
Vojno	6	5	/	/	/	1	1	/
Vranjevići	1	1	/	/	/	/	/	/
Vrapčići	18	12	3	/	3	/	1	3
Gnojnice	24	11	4	/	9	/	1	3
Goranci	14	13	/	/	1	/	3	/
Gornji Jasenjani	2	/	/	2	/	/	/	/
Dobrič	1	1	/	/	/	/	/	/
Donja Drežnica	1	/	/	1	/	/	/	/
Donji Gradac	1	/	1	/	/	/	/	/
Dračevice	9	5	/	1	3	/	1	/
Željuša	7	6	1	/	/	/	/	/
Žitomisljići	43	43	/	/	/	/	3	3
Zijemlje	47	46	1	/	/	/	4	/
Ilići	8	8	/	/	/	/	1	4
Jasenica	2	1	/	1	/	/	/	/
Kokorina	1	1	/	/	/	/	/	/
Krivodol	2	/	/	/	/	2	/	2
Kutilivač	5	4	/	1	/	/	1	2
Malo Polje	33	31	1	/	1	/	4	2
Miljkovići	1	1	/	/	/	/	/	/
Mostar	764	676	22	13	26	27	314	99
Ortiješ	45	5	/	4	36	/	/	/
Pijesci	35	30	1	3	1	/	2	/
Podgorani	21	19	1	1	/	/	1	/
Potoci	4	4	/	/	/	/	1	1
Prigradani	6	5	1	/	/	/	/	/
Ravni	14	11	2	1	/	/	/	1
Raška Gora	89	7	/	1	81	/	3	2
Raštani	49	17	7	2	23	/	4	1
Rodoč	1	1	/	/	/	/	1	/
Slipčići	7	6	/	/	/	1	2	1
Hodbina	21	12	3	3	3	/	1	2
Humilišani	11	8	3	/	/	/	4	/
Černi	1	/	1	/	/	/	/	/
Čitluk	12	1	10	1	/	/	/	2
Total	1.424	1.093	69	36	193	33	361	135

BOOK OF THOSE DECEASED¹

DIRECTORY OF SERBS FROM THE MOSTAR DISTRICT/
KOTAR WHO PERISHED AT THE HANDS OF THE USTASHA

Banjdol (Blagaj)

1. Bojanić (Risto) Bosa (1938–1943), Bogodol
2. Bojanić (Jovo) Mara (1930–1942), Bogodol
3. Bojanić (Risto) Rista (1884–1944), Bogodol
4. Bojanić (Đuro) Uroš (1882–1942), Bogodol

Baćevići (Mostar-Sela)

1. Golo (Jovo) Veljko (1925–1941), Buna
2. Golo (Milinko) Danilo (1899–1941), Baćevići
3. Golo (Jovo) Dušan (1921–1941), Buna
4. Golo (Risto) Dušan (1907–1941), Buna
5. Golo (Pero) Jevto (1884–1941), Buna
6. Golo (Jovan) Jefto (1891–1941), Zagreb
7. Golo (Pero) Jovo (1895–1941), Buna
8. Golo (Pero) Risto (1878–1941), Baćevići

¹ In the Book of the Killed in the Mostar District, all residents of Mostar and the surrounding areas of Serbian nationality that were killed by the authorities of the Independent State of Croatia are listed. The entries include the surname, father's name, given name, year of birth, year of death, and place of death. The victims are categorized by village, with each village indicating the municipality to which it belonged.

9. Golo (Milisav) Sava (1920–1944), Buna
10. Golo (Veljko) Slavko (1907–1941), Baćevići
11. Golo (Risto) Trifko (1927–1941), Baćevići
12. Popović (Marko) Lazar (1938–1941), Mostar
13. Popović (Marko) Zora (1936–1941), Mostar
14. Savić (Danilo) Vaso (1907–1941), Jadovno
15. Savić (Đoko) Janko (1899–1941), Baćevići
16. Savić (Dušan) Jovo (1917–1941), Baćevići
17. Savić (Milan) Jovo (1921–1941), Baćevići
18. Savić (Simo) Svetko (1908–1941), Baćevići
19. Savić (Milan) Spasenija (1929–1941), Baćevići
20. Savić (Savo) Stevan (1915–1942), Baćevići
21. Savić (Savo) Strahinja (1915–1941), Baćevići
22. Savić (Lazo) Šćepo (1884–1941), Buna
23. Sudar (Trifko) Vaso (1903–1941), Buna
24. Sudar (Pero) Vidoje (1915–1941), Baćevići
25. Sudar (Milosav) Danilo (1911–1944), Jasenovac
26. Sudar (Rade) Danica (1897–1945), Baćevići
27. Sudar (Nikola) Dušan (1922–1941), Baćevići
28. Sudar (Trifko) Lazar (1898–1941), Buna
29. Sudar (Tomo) Lazar (1872–1945), Baćevići
30. Sudar (Lazar) Ljubo (1922–1941), Baćevići
31. Sudar (Lazo) Milan (1920–1942), Buna
32. Sudar (Trifko) Nikola (1905–1941), Buna
33. Sudar (Trifko) Pero (1898–1941), Buna
34. Sudar (Miloš) Risto (1907–1941), Baćevići
35. Sudar (Todor) Risto (1909–1941), Baćevići
36. Ćorić (Petar) Vladimir (1910–1941), Čapljina
37. Škoro (Jovo) Vojislav (1899–1941), Baćevići

38. Škoro (Spasoje) Đoko (1911–1941), Baćevići
39. Škoro (Jovo) Đorđo (1890–1941), Baćevići
40. Škoro (Simo) Ilija (1872–1941), Buna
41. Škoro (Vojislav) Jovo (1935–1942), Baćevići
42. Škoro (Jovan) Stevan (1888–1941), Baćevići

Blagaj (Blagaj)

1. Grahovac (Pero) Vidak (1888–1941), Jadovno
2. Kuzman (Simo) Danilo (1899–1941), Blagaj
3. Milišić (Tarsa) Vida (1912–1942), Blagaj
4. Skočajić (Spasoje) Đorđe (1875–1941), Mostar
5. Skočajić (Spasoje) Lazar (1901–1941), Mostar
6. Skočajić (Lazo) Nedeljko (1923–1941), Jadovno
7. Skočajić (Milan) Risto (1910–1941), Buna

Bogodol (Mostar-Sela)

1. Bojanić (Jovo) Dragomir (1915–1941)
2. Bojanić (Đuro) Jovo (1882–1941), Grabova Draga
3. Bojanić (Mitar) Luka (1923–1941), Goranci
4. Bojanić (Jovo) Marko (1918–1941), Jasenovac
5. Bojanić (Đuro) Savo (1923–1941), Jasenovac
6. Ivanišević (Panto) Vasilija (1900–1941), Gradac, Neum
7. Ivanišević (Vaso) Vasilinka (1901–1941), Mostar
8. Ivanišević (Đorđe) Đuro (1926–1941)
9. Ivanišević (Risto) Jovo (1890–1941)
10. Ivanišević (Đuro) Luka (1923–1941), Jasenovac
11. Ivanišević (Jovo) Marko (1886–1941), Mostar
12. Ivanišević (Jovo) Marko (1913–1941)
13. Ivanišević (Jovo) Mirko (1909–1944), Gnojnice

14. Ivanišević (Risto) Nikola (1882–1941), Široki Brijeg
15. Ivanišević (Kojo) Pero (1923–1941), Jasenovac
16. Ivanišević (Pero) Rista (1910–1941), Gradac, Neum
17. Ivanišević (Jefto) Spaso (1908–1941)
18. Ivanišević (Mitar) Spaso (1906–1941), Široki Brijeg
19. Ivanišević (Lazar) Stana (1908–1941), Široki Brijeg
20. Ivanišević (Đuro) Stevo (1890–1941), Široki Brijeg
21. Ivanišević (Todor) Stevo (1923–1941), Goranci
22. Ivanišević (Jovo) Todor (1891–1941), Goranci
23. Janjić (Todo) Luka (1923–1941), Široki Brijeg
24. Janjić (Ilija) Mijo (1896–1941)
25. Matković (Lazo) Boško (1918–1941), Široki Brijeg
26. Matković (Marko) Branko (1906–1941), Gradac, Posušje
27. Matković (Todor) Đorđe (1890–1941), Široki Brijeg
28. Matković (Šćepo) Ilija (1904–1941), Jasenovac
29. Matković (Trifko) Lazo (1902–1941)
30. Matković (Mijo) Ljubo (1923–1941), Široki Brijeg
31. Matković (Marko) Manojlo (1898–1941), Široki Brijeg
32. Matković (Savo) Milan (1923–1941), Mostar
33. Matković (Mijo) Mitar (1912–1941), Jasenovac
34. Matković (Simo) Petar (1907–1941), Široki Brijeg
35. Matković (Marko) Petar (1934–1944), Bogodol
36. Matković (Todor) Savo (1896–1941), Široki Brijeg
37. Matković (Jovo) Spaso (1902–1941), Jadovno
38. Matković (Trifko) Spaso (1880–1941), Mostar
39. Matković (Lazo) Stojan (1922–1941), Jadovno
40. Matković (Milan) Todor (1911–1941)

Vihovići (Mostar-Sela)

1. Borozan (Risto) Dušan (1902–1941), Jadovno
2. Borozan (Milan) Žarko (1925–1941), Mostar
3. Borozan (Risto) Ilija (1906–1941), Mostar
4. Borozan (Simo) Jovo (1881–1941), Jadovno
5. Borozan (Risto) Milan (1900–1941)
6. Kulidžan (Uroš) Bogdan (1922–1944), Mostar
7. Kulidžan (Spaso) Vaso (1905–1941)
8. Kulidžan (Nikola) Vojislav (1891–1941), Jadovno
9. Kulidžan (Todor) Jovo (1922–1941)
10. Kulidžan (Simo) Marko (1911–1941)
11. Kulidžan (Dušan) Miloš (1924–1942), Vihovići
12. Kulidžan (Simo) Miloš (1899–1941)
13. Kulidžan (Risto) Panteleimon (1902–1941)
14. Kulidžan (Jovo) Petar (1861–1941)
15. Kulidžan (Todor) Stevo (1925–1941)
16. Kulidžan (Simo) Todor (1889–1941)
17. Kulidžan (Todor) Šćepo (1923–1941)
18. Čvoro (Risto) Danilo (1941–1941), Vihovići
19. Čvoro (Marko) Dušan (1921–1941)
20. Čvoro (Nikola) Lazo (1921–1941)
21. Čvoro (Jovo) Mara (1901–1941)
22. Čvoro (Risto) Obren (1891–1941), Vihovići
23. Čvoro (Savo) Sofija (1903–1941)
24. Čvoro (Jovo) Stana (1907–1941)
25. Čvoro (Jovo) Todor (1925–1941)

Vojno (Bijelo Polje)

1. Andić (Lazar) Nedjeljko (1912–1945)
2. Trkulja (Ilija) Dragan (1906–1941), Vrnograč, Velika Kladuša
3. Čvoro (Risto) Vukašin (1916–1941), Šurmanci, Čapljina
4. Čvoro (Šćepan) Mitar (1916–1941), Jadovno
5. Čvoro (Risto) Petar (1911–1941), Šurmanci, Čapljina
6. Čvoro (Luka) Risto (1918–1941)

Vranjevići (Blagaj)

1. Kulušić (Marko) Milan (1903–1941), Vlahovići, Ljubinje

Vrapčiči (Mostar-Sela)

1. Antelj (Đuro) Anda (1926–1944), Mostar
2. Antelj (Ilija) Boško (1896–1941)
3. Antelj (Risto) Boško (1900–1941), Mostar
4. Antelj (Simo) Darinka (1925–1944), Mostar
5. Antelj (Marko) Dušan (1893–1941), Čapljina
6. Antelj (Jovo) Đuro (1898–1942), Mostar
7. Antelj (Mitar) Marko (1886–1941)
8. Antelj (Mitar) Milan (1898–1941)
9. Antelj (Savo) Nedjeljko (1921–1941), Jasenovac
10. Vučić (Todor) Đordo (1887–1942), Vrapčiči
11. Vučić (Luka) Risto (1901–1941), Jasenovac
12. Greda (Risto) Nikola (1895–1944), Mostar
13. Došlo (Nikola) Veljko (1914–1941)
14. Došlo (Tomo) Danilo (1898–1941), Jadovno
15. Došlo (Vasilije) Nikola (1914–1941), Jablanica
16. Kuzman (Jovo) Manojlo (1914–1941), Čitluk
17. Lozo (Vaso) Lazo (1899–1941), Jasenovac
18. Telebak (Risto) Soka (1906–1942), Podgorani

Gnojnice (Blagaj)

1. Bulić (Lazar) Đorđe (1916–1941), Jasenovac
2. Bulić (Lazar) Marko (1894–1944), Gnojnice
3. Ivanišević (Jovo) Mirko (1904–1944), Mostar
4. Kovačina (Nikola) Vasilije (1912–1941), Zavala, Ravno
5. Kovačina (Stevan) Marko (1904–1941), Čitluk
6. Kurilić (Risto) Ljubica (1890–1941), Mostar
7. Kurilić (Špiro) Makrena (1912–1941), Mostar
8. Kurilić (Špiro) Mirko (1928–1941), Mostar
9. Kurilić (Špiro) Nikola (1914–1941), Mostar
10. Kurilić (Špiro) Slavka (1924–1941), Mostar
11. Matrak (Jovo) Ljubo (1914–1944), Gnojnice
12. Matrak (Lazo) Milan (1887–1944), Gnojnice
13. Mićević (Đuro) Danilo (1899–1941), Mostar
14. Mićević (Đuro) Marko (1897–1941), Mostar
15. Palavestra (Savo) Jovo (1922–1942), Mostar
16. Semiz (Vasilije) Jovo (1898–1944), Mostar
17. Semiz (Miho) Milan (1921–1944), Podgorani
18. Semiz (Vaso) Mihajlo (1907–1942), Jasenovac
19. Semiz (Dušan) Miho (1895–1944), Mostar
20. Semiz (Vasilije) Savo (1893–1941), Jadovno
21. Šakota Jovanka (1918–1942), Jasenovac
22. Šindik (Jovo) Vaso (1886–1944), Mostar
23. Šindik (Simo) Jovo (1914–1942), Ljubuški
24. Šindik Simo (?–1944)

Goranci (Mostar-Sela)

1. Vukašinović (Tomo) Lazar (1919–1941), Ljubinje
2. Vučijak (Petar) Dušan (1890–1944), Goranci

3. Vučijak (Petar) Marko (1897–1941)
4. Vučijak Savo (1897–1941)
5. Ivanišević (Jovan) Marko (1894–1941), Mostar
6. Ivanišević (Lazo) Spaso (1917–1941), Mostar
7. Ivanišević (Lazar) Todor (1915–1941), Široki Brijeg
8. Janjić (Pero) Đorđe (1922–1941), Jadovno
9. Janjić (Luka) Jovo (1880–1941), Goranci
10. Janjić (Jeremija) Pero (1887–1941), Jadovno
11. Janjić (Jovo) Pero (1922–1941), Mostar
12. Janjić (Luka) Pero (1924–1941), Široki Brijeg
13. Janjić (Šćepo) Stojan (1905–1941), Jadovno
14. Janjić (Luka) Todor (1920–1941), Goranci

Gornji Jasenjani (Drežnica)

1. Rajković (Šćepan) Vlatko (1921–1943), Gornji Jasenjani
2. Rajković (Simo) Mitar (1876–1943), Gornji Jasenjani

Dobrič (Mostar-Sela)

1. Savić (Šćepo) Mirko (1908–1941), Jablanica

Donja Drežnica (Drežnica)

1. Ivković (Savo) Lazar (1883–1943), Drežanj, Nevesinje

Donji Gradac (Široki Brijeg)

1. Savić (Jovan) Đuro (1872–1942), Donji Gradac

Dračevice (Blagaj)

1. Bulić (Risto) Đorđe (1888–1944), Mostar
2. Bulić (Nikola) Luka (1894–1944), Dračevice

3. Bulić (Đorđo) Nikola (1914–1944), Mostar
4. Kraljević (Todor) Branko (1906–1943), Dračevice
5. Kraljević (Savo) Đuro (1922–1941), Gnojnice
6. Kraljević (Todor) Jovo (1897–1941), Jadovno
7. Kraljević (Todor) Marko (1902–1941), Gnojnice
8. Kraljević (Todor) Milan (1911–1941), Mostar
9. Kraljević (Todor) Savo (1896–1941), Mostar

Željuša (Bijelo Polje)

1. Dabić (Risto) Lazar (1906–1941), Željuša
2. Radović (Spasoje) Risto (1908–1941), Jablanica
3. Radović (Spasoje) Savo (1910–1941), Prigradani
4. Tilimbat (Jefto) Anđelko (1909–1941), Jablanica
5. Tilimbat (Jefto) Đorđe (1907–1941), Ljubinj
6. Tilimbat (Jefto) Jovo (1916–1941), Pale
7. Šagovno (Šćepan) Dušan (1920–1942), Zijemlje

Žitomislići (Žitomislić)

1. Bilanović (Lazar) Branko (1920–1941), Vidonja, Čitluk
2. Vučurević (Panto) Konstantin (1908–1941), Vidonja, Čitluk
3. Gačić (Vidoje) Branko (1921–1941), Jasenovac
4. Gačić (Mitar) Vidoje (1884–1941), Jasenovac
5. Gačić (Stanko) Vidoje (1886–1941)
6. Gačić (Pero) Vladimir (1899–1941), Jadovno
7. Gačić (Pavle) Đoko (1876–1941), Žitomislići
8. Gačić (Vidoje) Ilija (1919–1941), Jasenovac
9. Gačić (Simo) Jovo (1908–1941), Žitomislići
10. Gačić (Jovo) Lazar (1904–1941), Žitomislići
11. Gačić (Ilija) Milan (1900–1941), Mostar

12. Gačić (Šćepo) Mirko (1900–1941), Žitomislići
13. Gačić (Ilija) Mihajlo (1891–1941), Mostar
14. Gačić (Ilija) Savo (1878–1941), Žitomislići
15. Gačić (Pero) Savo (1911–1941), Jadovno
16. Gačić (Simo) Stanko (1912–1941), Žitomislići
17. Gačić (Jovo) Trifko (1900–1941), Mostar
18. Gačić (Jovo) Ćetko (1904–1941), Žitomislići
19. Ljoljić (Pero) Lazar (1888–1941), Žitomislići
20. Ljoljić (Lazar) Rajko (1917–1941), Žitomislići
21. Ljoljić (Nikola) Risto (1878–1941), Mostar
22. Mićević (Đoko) Borivoje (1914–1941), Žitomislići
23. Okiljević Obren (1923–1941), Vidonja, Čitluk
24. Puhalo (Mitar) Branko (1919–1941), Žitomislići
25. Puhalo (Mitar) Nikola (1916–1941), Žitomislići
26. Puhalo (Mitar) Savo (1922–1941), Žitomislići
27. Svrđlin (Jovo) Branko (1907–1941), Žitomislići
28. Svrđlin (Jovo) Rajko (1916–1941), Žitomislići
29. Simić (Dragutin) Anđelko (1921–1941), Žitomislići
30. Simić (Bogdan) Božo (1896–1941), Žitomislići
31. Simić (Nikola) Vaso (1906–1941)
32. Simić (Nikola) Veselin (1911–1941), Žitomislići
33. Simić (Spasoje) Gojko (1899–1941)
34. Simić (Panto) Dušan (1922–1941), Žitomislići
35. Simić (Ljubo) Đuro (1908–1941), Žitomislići
36. Simić (Pero) Joksīm (1897–1941), Žitomislići
37. Simić (Simo) Maksim (1885–1941), Jadovno
38. Simić (Mirko) Nikola (1876–1941)
39. Simić (Jovo) Risto (1904–1941), Žitomislići
40. Simić (Spasoje) Savo (1885–1941), Žitomislići

41. Sjeran (Nenad) Dušan (1907–1941), Žitomislići
42. Čejović (Zarija) Vladimir (1907–1941), Vidonja, Čitluk
43. Šaran (Risto) Mladen (1920–1941), Mostar

Zijemlje (Bijelo Polje)

1. Antelj (Lazar) Anđelko (1908–1941), Zijemlje
2. Antelj (Pero) Gojko (1922–1941), Zijemlje
3. Antelj (Šćepan) Lazar (1892–1941), Zijemlje
4. Antelj (Lazar) Milan (1901–1941), Zijemlje
5. Antelj (Jovo) Pero (1909–1941), Jadovno
6. Antelj (Jovo) Risto (1907–1941), Jadovno
7. Antelj (Šćepan) Risto (1886–1941), Mostar
8. Antelj (Marko) Tomo (1914–1941)
9. Vučić (Stojan) Vučić (1920–1941), Zijemlje
10. Vučić (Simo) Risto (1912–1941), Zijemlje
11. Vučić (Simo) Tomo (1917–1941), Zijemlje
12. Gatalo (Maksim) Zorka (1924–1941), Zijemlje
13. Gatalo (Đuro) Maksim (1882–1941), Zijemlje
14. Gatalo (Đuro) Uroš (1884–1942), Zijemlje
15. Dabić (Jovo) Nikola (1898–1941), Zijemlje
16. Jamina (Mitar) Stojan (1896–1941), Nevesinje
17. Karišik (Lazar) Jovo (1895–1941), Zijemlje
18. Karišik (Nikola) Pero (1892–1941), Zijemlje
19. Lečić Lazar (?–1941), Mostar
20. Lečić (Stevan) Risto (1895–1941), Zijemlje
21. Mavrak (Mile) Danilo (1892–1941), Pag
22. Mavrak (Marko) Dušan (1901–1941), Zijemlje
23. Mavrak (Todor) Lazar (1895–1941), Zijemlje
24. Mavrak (Ilija) Risto (1901–1941), Zijemlje

25. Mavrak (Pero) Todor (1901–1941), Zijemlje
26. Matković (Mitar) Damjan (1899–1941), Zijemlje
27. Matković (Đuro) Marko (1897–1941), Zijemlje
28. Matković (Milan) Miloš (1905–1941), Zijemlje
29. Matković (Mitar) Mirko (1906–1941), Zijemlje
30. Matković (Todor) Radoje (1898–1941), Zijemlje
31. Pejdo (Jovo) Jefto (1908–1941), Zijemlje
32. Račić (Mitar) Anđelko (1908–1941), Zijemlje
33. Račić (Risto) Draško (1897–1941), Zijemlje
34. Račić (Savo) Dušan (1910–1941), Zijemlje
35. Račić (Miško) Đuro (1908–1941), Jadovno
36. Račić (Stevan) Jeremija (1895–1941), Zijemlje
37. Račić (Lazar) Krsto (1896–1941), Zijemlje
38. Račić (Stevan) Milan (1901–1941), Zijemlje
39. Račić (Lazar) Miloš (1903–1941), Zijemlje
40. Sjeran (Stojan) Milan (1894–1941), Zijemlje
41. Trišić (Stojan) Lazar (1901–1941), Zijemlje
42. Trišić (Stojan) Trifko (1915–1941), Zijemlje
43. Čalija (Stojan) Janko (1897–1941), Zijemlje
44. Čalija (Panto) Jovo (1887–1941), Zijemlje
45. Čalija (Jovo) Panto (1913–1941), Zijemlje
46. Čalija (Lazar) Risto (1906–1941), Zijemlje
47. Šakota (Mitar) Vojin (1918–1941), Zijemlje

Ilići (Mostar-Sela)

1. Borozan (Uroš) Aleksa (1922–1941), Jasenovac
2. Borozan (Đuro) Anđelko (1919–1941), Jasenovac
3. Borozan (Đuro) Danilo (1917–1941), Jasenovac
4. Borozan (Đuro) Drago (1927–1941), Ilići

5. Borozan (Todor) Đuro (1888–1941), Ilići
6. Borozan (Đuro) Lazar (1925–1941), Jadovno
7. Borozan (Danilo) Todor (1906–1941), Čitluk
8. Borozan (Todor) Uroš (1895–1941), Jasenovac

Jasenica (Mostar-Sela)

1. Kuzman (Aćim) Vlado (1921–1941), Mostar
2. Maričić (Petar) Marko (1936–1943)

Kokorina (Blagaj)

1. Brstina (Jovo) Milan (1917–1941), Nevesinje

Krivodol (Mostar-Sela)

1. Vukolja (Mirko) Ana (1908–1945), Jasenovac
2. Garojević (Marko) Jovo (1906–1945), Jasenovac

Kutilivač (Bijelo Polje)

1. Vukosav (Vukan) Svetozar (1893–1941), Jadovno
2. Kurteš (Risto) Lazar (1903–1941), Jasenovac
3. Lozo (Simo) Danilo (1891–1941), Jasenovac
4. Lozo (Miho) Simo (1921–1943), Sarajevo
5. Pejdo (Šćepo) Pero (1899–1941)

Malo Polje (Blagaj)

1. Vanović (Jovo) Branko (1913–1941)
2. Vanović (Jovo) Danilo (1922–1941)
3. Vanović (Mitar) Marko (1884–1941), Jadovno
4. Vanović (Jovo) Mitar (1907–1941), Jadovno
5. Vanović (Mitar) Risto (1888–1941)

6. Jokanović (Šćepo) Vaso (1903–1941), Jadovno
7. Jokanović (Mitar) Vojin (1914–1941)
8. Jokanović (Vaso) Rade (1895–1941)
9. Jokanović (Vaso) Risto (1897–1941), Mostar
10. Jokanović (Mitar) Savo (1916–1941)
11. Kajgo (Jovo) Lazo (1918–1941)
12. Kapor (Pero) Vaso (1904–1941), Jadovno
13. Kapor (Pero) Gojko (1912–1941)
14. Kapor (Trifko) Gojko (1921–1941)
15. Kapor (Luka) Lazar (1912–1941), Jasenovac
16. Kilibarda Cvijeta (1862–1942), Seljani
17. Kuzman (Miho) Lazar (1892–1941), Mostar
18. Marić (Trifko) Žarko (1921–1941)
19. Marić (Trifko) Luka (1914–1941)
20. Marić (Trifko) Milan (1918–1941)
21. Marić (Todor) Nikola (1907–1941)
22. Marić (Trifko) Risto (1919–1941), Mostar
23. Marić (Todor) Spasoje (1915–1941)
24. Marić (Miho) Trifko (1886–1941), Mostar
25. Pantić (Jakov) Mitar (1880–1941), Jasenovac
26. Papić (Dušan) Branko (1907–1941)
27. Papić (Mitar) Jovo (1907–1941)
28. Hadžović (Ilija) Đorđo (1904–1941)
29. Hadžović (Risto) Luka (1909–1941)
30. Hadžović (Miho) Simo (1900–1944), Malo Polje
31. Čolović (Pero) Vlajko (1922–1941)
32. Čolović (Pero) Đorđo (1913–1941)
33. Čolović (Risto) Luka (1886–1941), Mostar

Miljkovići (Mostar-Sela)

1. Šakota (Savo) Lazar (1896–1941), Kozice, Stolac

Mostar (Grad Mostar)

1. Abramović (Mirko) Nikola (1905–1941), Jadovno
2. Ajvaz (Đorđe) Božo (1922–1941), Jadovno
3. Ajvaz (Đorđe) Dimitrije (1920–1941), Jasenovac
4. Ajvaz (Jovo) Đorđe (1894–1941), Mostar
5. Ajvaz (Marko) Ljuban (1907–1941), Jadovno
6. Ajvaz (Marko) Milan (1913–1941), Jadovno
7. Ajvaz (Stojan) Milan (1911–1941), Jadovno
8. Alagić (Stevan) Ljubica (1904–1943), Otočac
9. Alagić (Đuro) Marko (1900–1941), Jadovno
10. Anđelopolj (Nikola) Atanasije (1890–1941), Jadovno
11. Anđelopolj (Atanasije) Mirko (1917–1941), Jadovno
12. Antelj (Stojan) Dragica (1924–1945), Mostar
13. Antelj Jelka (1895–1941), Jadovno
14. Antelj Jovo (1898–1941), Jadovno
15. Antelj (Todor) Milan (1888–1941), Jadovno
16. Antelj (Jovo) Nikola (1914–1941), Jadovno
17. Antelj (Jovan) Savo (1883–1941), Jasenovac
18. Arsen (Spasoje) Danilo (1911–1941), Jadovno
19. Aćimović (Vaso) Dušan (1888–1941), Jasenovac
20. Aškračić (Savo) Dušan (1908–1941), Mostar
21. Babić (Ilija) Marko (?–1941)
22. Bajat (Đorđe) Dušan (1911–1941), Zagreb
23. Bajević (Mirko) Dušan (1927–1944)
24. Bajević (Mirko) Milan (1924–1941), Jadovno
25. Bajević (Boško) Mirko (1902–1941), Mostar

26. Bajić (Ilija) Žarko (1922–1941), Jadovno
27. Bajić (Ilija) Zdravko (1925–1941), Jadovno
28. Bakarić (Slavko) Sofija (1924–1944), Stara Gradiška
29. Balać (Nikola) Slavko (1914–1941), Jadovno
30. Barbarez (Dušan) Dobroslav (1922–1941), Jadovno
31. Barbarez (Lazar) Dušan (1890–1941), Jadovno
32. Barbarez (Jovan) Mara (1875–1941), Caprag
33. Barbarez (Lazar) Milan (1900–1941), Jadovno
34. Barzeta (Simo) Risto (1896–1941), Jadovno
35. Batinić (Pero) Jovo (1880–1941), Jadovno
36. Batinić (Risto) Jovo (1885–1941)
37. Bačić (Jovo) Luka (1880–1941)
38. Bačić (Šćepo) Ilija (1907–1941), Jadovno
39. Bačić (Ilija) Šćepo (1887–1941), Jadovno
40. Beatović (Vaso) Milan (1907–1941), Mostar
41. Belović (Anđelko) Angelina (1930–1941), Jadovno
42. Belović (Stojan) Anđelko (1896–1941), Jadovno
43. Belović (Đuro) Branko (1907–1941), Mostar
44. Belović (Obren) Gospava (1911–1941), Jadovno
45. Belović (Pavle) Jovo (1923–1941), Dvor na Uni
46. Belović (Anđelko) Ljubica (1935–1941), Jadovno
47. Belović (Anđelko) Milena (1933–1941), Jadovno
48. Belović (Anđelko) Natalija (1932–1941), Jadovno
49. Belović (Stojan) Pavle (1900–1941), Jadovno
50. Biberdžić (Ćetko) Goša (1905–1941)
51. Bilanović (Lazar) Dragoljub (1923–1941), Avtovac
52. Bilanović (Risto) Lazar (1881–1941), Nevesinje
53. Bilanović (Jovo) Milivoje (1923–1945), Sarajevo
54. Bilač Veljko (1902–1941)

55. Bilić (Mićo) Borivoje (1899–1941), Jadovno
56. Bilić (Mihajlo) Dimitrije (1906–1942), Jasenovac
57. Bilić (Jovo) Milan (1889–1944), Mostar
58. Bilić (Savo) Milan (1872–1941), Mostar
59. Bilić (Risto) Mihajlo (1911–1941), Mostar
60. Bitanga (Andrija) Radoslav (1891–1941), Vinica, Varaždin
61. Bjeletić (Jovan) Mara (1902–1942), Mostar
62. Bjeletić (Obren) Mihajlo (1887–1941), Jasenovac
63. Bjelica (Miho) Vojin (1887–1941), Jadovno
64. Bjelica (Blagoje) Jovan (1892–1941), Jadovno
65. Bjelica (Ćetko) Nikola (1890–1941)
66. Bjelica (Ćetko) Petar (1911–1941), Jadovno
67. Blanić (Jovo) Mile (1915–1941), Mostar
68. Bovan (Jovo) Branko (1898–1944), Sisak
69. Bogdanović (Božo) Slobodan (1919–1941), Jadovno
70. Bogdanović Cvijeta (1884–1941), Jadovno
71. Božić Milan (?–1941), Jadovno
72. Božović (Jovan) Dušan (1921–1941), Jadovno
73. Božović (Ilija) Simo (1908–1945), Jasenovac
74. Bojanić (Jovan) Marko (1919–1941), Jasenovac
75. Bojanić (Savo) Milan (1906–1945), Lepoglava
76. Bojović (Mirko) Dušan (1926–1941)
77. Bojović (Mirko) Milan (1924–1943), Mostar
78. Bojović (Boško) Mirko (1901–1941), Mostar
79. Bokić (Jovan) Dušan (1936–1941)
80. Bokić Marko (?–1941)
81. Bokić (Jovan) Uroš (1939–1941)
82. Borozan (Stojan) Gojko (1925–1941), Jasenovac
83. Borozan (Risto) Miho (1890–1941), Čitluk

84. Borozan (Mihajlo) Natalija (1926–1941), Caprag
85. Borozan (Simat) Rade (1895–1941), Jadovno
86. Borozan (Šćepan) Risto (1900–1941)
87. Borozan (Simat) Simo (1891–1941), Jasenovac
88. Borozan (Šćepan) Simo (1896–1941), Jadovno
89. Borozan (Todor) Stojan (1893–1941), Jadovno
90. Bošković (Boško) Risto (1868–1941)
91. Bošković (Tripo) Stana (1919–1942)
92. Bošković (Risto) Šćepo (1897–1941), Jadovno
93. Bošnjak (Savo) Vlado (1890–1941), Jadovno
94. Bošnjak (Nikola) Krsto (1913–1941), Jadovno
95. Bratić (Jovan) Novica (1907–1941), Jadovno
96. Brstina (Mijo) Lazar (1872–1941), Jadovno
97. Buzuk (Jovo) Nikola (1894–1941)
98. Bukvić (Trifko) Danilo (1919–1943), Mostar
99. Bukvić (Luka) Dušan (1913–1941), Jadovno
100. Bukvić (Đorđo) Đorđo (1908–1941), Jasenovac
101. Bukvić (Luka) Mirko (1920–1941), Jadovno
102. Bukvić (Risto) Mladen (1921–1941)
103. Bukvić (Trifko) Nedeljko (1921–1941), Jadovno
104. Bukvić (Jovan) Petar (1876–1941), Jadovno
105. Bukvić (Risto) Simo (1905–1941), Jadovno
106. Bukvić Trifko (?–1941), Jadovno
107. Burlica (Mijo) Dušan (1913–1941), Jasenovac
108. Buha (Drago) Vasilije (1870–1941), Jadovno
109. Buha (Risto) Simo (1915–1941)
110. Buha (Vule) Stojan (1911–1941), Jadovno
111. Vasiljević (Todor) Vaso (1904–1941), Jadovno
112. Vasiljević (Risto) Danilo (1883–1941), Jadovno

113. Vasiljević (Danilo) Đuro (1906–1941), Jadovno
114. Vasiljević (Pero) Milivoj (1890–1941), Jadovno
115. Vasiljević (Todor) Pero (1917–1941)
116. Vasić (Jovan) Predrag (1913–1941), Konjic
117. Vitković (Risto) Bogdan (1888–1942), Jasenovac
118. Vitković (Risto) Radoslav (1878–1941), Pag
119. Vitor (Lazo) Nikola (1888–1941)
120. Vlahbegović (Ljubo) Žarko (1922–1941)
121. Vlahbegović (Jovo) Ljubo (1900–1941), Jadovno
122. Vlahbegović (Ljubo) Milan (1924–1941), Jadovno
123. Vlahbegović (Dušan) Slavko (1919–1941), Jadovno
124. Vojčić (Vaso) Pero (1900–1941)
125. Vreća (Rade) Mile (1904–1941)
126. Vreća Rade (1920–1941)
127. Vujadinović (Simo) Milan (1897–1941), Ortiješ
128. Vujadinović (Vidak) Ratimir (1917–1941), Zenica
129. Vujičić (Pero) Risto (1880–1941), Mostar
130. Vujičić (Đuro) Stana (1886–1942), Kifino Selo, Nevesinje
131. Vujović (Mihajlo) Jefto (1893–1941), Služanj, Čitluk
132. Vujović (Risto) Ljubomir (1912–1941), Mostar
133. Vukašinović (Tomo) Boriša (1926–1941), Ržani Do, Ljubinje
134. Vukašinović (Tomo) Lazar (1916–1941), Ržani Do, Ljubinje
135. Vukašinović (Jakov) Tomo (1895–1941), Ržani Do, Ljubinje
136. Vukićević (Josif) Branko (1915–1941), Mostar
137. Vukićević (Savo) Josif (1880–1941), Mostar
138. Vukićević (Jovo) Pero (1878–1941), Mostar
139. Vuković (Nikola) Žarko (1898–1941), Jadovno
140. Vuković (Jovo) Zlatka (1891–1941), Mostar
141. Vuković (Miloš) Ljubo (1903–1941), Mostar

142. Vuković (Nikola) Milan (1911–1945), Jasenovac
143. Vuković (Gojko) Radojka (1924–1944), Jasenovac
144. Vuković (Tomo) Savo (1890–1941), Jadovno
145. Vuković (Gojko) Slobodan (1919–1941), Mostar
146. Vuković (Miloš) Stevo (1891–1941)
147. Vuković (Tomo) Tomo (1886–1941), Jadovno
148. Vukoje (Miro) Gojko (1911–1941), Mostar
149. Vukojević (Milutin) Bosiljka (1902–1941), Mostar
150. Vukojević (Jovo) Tomo (1878–1943)
151. Vukosav (Đorđe) Strahinja (1906–1941), Jadovno
152. Vulić (Milenko) Gavriilo (1878–1941), Jadovno
153. Vulić (Gavriilo) Dušan (1901–1941), Jasenovac
154. Vulić (Dušan) Miodrag (1927–1941), Jadovno
155. Vučetić (Vukan) Nedeljko (1909–1941), Jadovno
156. Vučinić (Tomo) Milica (1903–1943), Jasenovac
157. Vučić (Risto) Bogdan (1894–1941), Pag
158. Vučković (Petar) Đorđe (1908–1941), Jadovno
159. Vučković (Petar) Ljubomir (1915–1941), Jadovno
160. Vučković (Gajo) Pero (1888–1941), Jadovno
161. Gambelić (Ilija) Anđelko (1911–1941), Jasenovac
162. Gambelić (Ilija) Vidak (1900–1941), Jadovno
163. Gambelić (Ilija) Lazar (1908–1941), Jasenovac
164. Gambelić (Risto) Milan (1906–1941), Mostar
165. Gambelić (Milan) Risto (1904–1941), Mostar
166. Gačić (Mitar) Gojko (1904–1941)
167. Gačić (Milan) Desimir (1911–1941), Mostar
168. Gačić (Milan) Ljubomir (1913–1941), Mostar
169. Gačić (Ilija) Milan (1884–1941), Jadovno
170. Gvozdrenović (Vaso) Vladimir (1866–1941), Mostar

171. Gligorević (Nikola) Jovo (1877–1941)
172. Glogovac (Pero) Vaso (1890–1941), Buna
173. Glogovac (Pero) Lazo (1892–1941)
174. Glogovac (Novo) Pero (1875–1941)
175. Glogovac (Jovan) Spasoje (1906–1941), Jadovno
176. Gnjata Ljubica (1898–1941), Ljubuški
177. Govedarica (Stevan) Milan (1908–1941), Mostar
178. Golo (Šćepo) Aleksandar (1921–1941), Jadovno
179. Golo (Jovan) Šćepan (1911–1941), Jadovno
180. Golubović (Pavo) Branko (1912–1941), Jadovno
181. Golubović (Vidak) Vladimir (1920–1941)
182. Golubović (Pavle) Dejan (1915–1941), Jadovno
183. Golubović (Lazar) Dušan (1902–1941)
184. Golubović Rajko (?–1941), Jadovno
185. Gordić (Nikola) Vukan (1915–1941), Jasenovac
186. Gordić (Trifko) Jovo (1902–1941), Stolac
187. Grahovac (Risto) Nikola (1926–1941), Jadovno
188. Grahovac (Andrija) Petar (1902–1941), Jasenovac
189. Grahovac (Andrija) Risto (1890–1941), Jadovno
190. Grković Branko (?–1941), Jadovno
191. Grković (Stevan) Danilo (1883–1941), Jasenovac
192. Grčić Gojko (1915–1941)
193. Guzina (Rado) Radoslav (1884–1941), Mostar
194. Gurović (Uroš) Branko (1924–1941), Dvor na Uni
195. Gurović (Uroš) Slavko (1922–1941), Dvor na Uni
196. Gurović (Todor) Uroš (1892–1941), Jadovno
197. Gutić (Vukan) Branislav (1938–1942), Dvor na Uni
198. Gutić (Spasoje) Đoko (1919–1941), Jadovno
199. Gutić (Spasoje) Mirko (1915–1941), Jasenovac

200. Gutić (Vukan) Pero (1932–1941), Dvor na Uni
201. Gutić (Spasoje) Radovan (1909–1941), Jasenovac
202. Gušić Todor (1885–1941), Mostar
203. Dabović (Đuro) Nikola (1889–1941), Jadovno
204. Dakić (Đorđe) Anđelko (1919–1941), Jadovno
205. Dakić Joka (1918–1941), Mostar
206. Damjanac (Stojan) Kosta (1900–1941), Mostar
207. Damjanac (Jovo) Tomo (1908–1941)
208. Damjanac (Nikola) Radoslav (1910–1941), Vidovo Polje, Stolac
209. Dangubić (Mićo) Vaso (1879–1941), Jasenovac
210. Danilović (Nikola) Rade (1913–1941), Mostar
211. Daničić (Čedomir) Radoslav (1924–1941), Jadovno
212. Daničić (Radisav) Čedomir (1901–1941), Jadovno
213. Delić (Spasoje) Danilo (1901–1941)
214. Delić (Janko) Risto (1907–1941), Jadovno
215. Diviš (Mate) Milan (1905–1943), Mostar
216. Dimitrijević (Ilija) Vaso (1877–1941), Jadovno
217. Dimitrijević (Vaso) Jovo (1924–1941), Jadovno
218. Dobarčić (Jovan) Ikonija (1924–1944), Jasenovac
219. Dobarčić (Jovan) Krsto (1910–1942), Kifino Selo, Nevesinje
220. Dobarčić (Jovan) Jevrosima (1923–1942), Jasenovac
221. Dobrić (Lune) Stanislav (1906–1941), Mostar
222. Doder (Miloš) Dimitrije (1898–1941)
223. Doder (Miloš) Dinko (1906–1942)
224. Dožić (Pero) Bogoljub (1923–1941), Jadovno
225. Dožić (Petar) Ljubo (1922–1941), Jasenovac
226. Dožić (Aleksa) Petar (1883–1944), Jasenovac
227. Dragišić (Ostoja) Ilija (1865–1941)
228. Dragović (Andrija) Vidak (1903–1941), Jadovno

229. Drašković (Novak) Blagoje (1906–1941), Jadovno
230. Drašković (Novak) Nikola (1910–1941), Jadovno
231. Dugandžić Jakša (1905–1942), Jasenovac
232. Dursum (Todor) Risto (1881–1941), Jadovno
233. Đedović (Đorđe) Blagoje (1887–1941), Sisak
234. Đedović (Blagoje) Velimir (1912–1941), Jadovno
235. Đedović (Blagoje) Petar (1914–1941), Jasenovac
236. Đerić (Spasoje) Veljko (1882–1941)
237. Đerić (Spasoje) Damjan (1901–1941), Jasenovac
238. Elaković (Simo) Danilo (1913–1941), Jablanica
239. Elezović (Vaso) Todor (1905–1944), Jasenovac
240. Žuža (Petar) Đorđo (1900–1941), Jadovno
241. Žuljević (Jovan) Ikonija (1923–1945), Jasenovac
242. Zelen (Jovo) Lazar (1890–1941), Jadovno
243. Zelen (Savo) Milan (1886–1941), Jadovno
244. Zelenović Marko (?–1941), Jadovno
245. Zelenović Persa (?–1941), Jadovno
246. Zelenović Predrag (?–1941), Jadovno
247. Zelenović Saveta (?–1941), Jadovno
248. Zorić (Simo) Miloš (1909–1941), Jasenovac
249. Zurovac (Risto) Danilo (1916–1941), Jadovno
250. Zurovac (Jovo) Drago (1882–1941), Jadovno
251. Zurovac (Drago) Dušan (1907–1941), Jadovno
252. Zurovac (Miho) Ilija (1882–1941), Mostar
253. Zurovac (Miho) Jovica (1900–1941), Mostar
254. Zurovac (Jovan) Ljubo (1903–1941), Jadovno
255. Zurovac (Lazar) Marko (1885–1941), Jadovno
256. Zurovac Risto (1905–1942), Jasenovac
257. Ivanišević (Pero) Panto (1900–1941), Široki Brijeg

258. Ivanović (Andrija) Nikola (1880–1941)
259. Ivelja (Vidak) Vaso (1915–1941), Jasenovac
260. Ivelja (Ćetko) Živko (1915–1941), Jadovno
261. Ivelja (Vidak) Janko (1911–1941), Glina
262. Ivković (Jovica) Boško (1886–1941)
263. Ivković (Đoko) Dušan (1904–1941), Jadovno
264. Ivković (Pero) Mirko (1898–1941), Jasenovac
265. Ivković (Luka) Petar (1907–1941)
266. Ivković (Luka) Rade (1896–1941), Jasenovac
267. Ilić (Obrad) Aleksa (1890–1941), Jadovno
268. Ilić (Lazar) Vaso (1886–1941), Jadovno
269. Ilić (Šćepan) Vaso (1890–1941)
270. Ilić (Nikola) Krsto (1881–1941)
271. Ilić (Vaso) Milenko (1920–1941), Mostar
272. Ilić (Jovan) Mitra (1923–1944)
273. Jagličić (Savo) Borislav (?–1941)
274. Janjić (Marko) Vasilije (1918–1941), Jadovno
275. Janjić (Luka) Dušan (1884–1941), Jadovno
276. Janjić (Uroš) Jovo (1911–1941), Jadovno
277. Janjić (Boško) Krsto (1884–1941), Kapavica, Ljubinje
278. Janjić (Maksim) Ljubomir (1904–1941)
279. Janjić (Marko) Ljubomir (1915–1941), Jadovno
280. Janjić (Risto) Milan (1904–1942), Mostar
281. Janjić (Risto) Miroslav (1914–1941), Mostar
282. Janjić (Đorđo) Trifko (1913–1941), Ljubinje
283. Janjić (Jovo) Uroš (1886–1941), Jadovno
284. Janjoš (Petar) Veljko (?–1942), Jasenovac
285. Janjoš (Vaso) Vlajko (1920–1941), Jasenovac
286. Jegdić (Todori) Boško (1917–1941), Jadovno

287. Jegdić (Todor) Vidak (1917–1941), Jasenovac
288. Jelačić (Risto) Veljko (1893–1941), Mostar
289. Jelačić (Lazar) Lazo (1905–1941), Zenica
290. Jelačić (Lazar) Ratomir (1914–1941)
291. Jergović (Vojislav) Malina (1908–1945), Jasenovac
292. Jeftić (Mihailo) Danilo (1913–1941), Jadovno
293. Jeftić (Jefto) Dobroslav (1914–1941), Jadovno
294. Jeftić (Ilija) Mihailo (1882–1941), Opličići, Čapljina
295. Jovanović Anđelko (?–1941), Jadovno
296. Jovanović (Trifko) Glišo (1911–1941), Jadovno
297. Jovanović (Božidar) Đorđo (1883–1941), Jadovno
298. Jovanović (Trifko) Milorad (1890–1941), Jadovno
299. Jović (Jovo) Simo (1901–1941), Jasenovac
300. Jukić (Petar) Marko (1913–1945), Jasenovac
301. Kablar (Manojlo) Savo (1883–1941), Mostar
302. Kadijević (Risto) Milan (1911–1941), Jadovno
303. Kadijević (Risto) Uroš (1906–1941), Jadovno
304. Kajgo (Jovo) Dušan (1900–1941)
305. Kaličin (Vaso) Konstantin (1908–1941), Jadovno
306. Kandić (Mihajlo) Vasilije (1903–1941)
307. Kandić (Blagoje) Jovan (1885–1941), Jasenovac
308. Kantar (Todor) Branko (1898–1941), Šurmanci, Čapljina
309. Kapor (Jovan) Milan (1897–1941), Jadovno
310. Karan (Marko) Bogdan (1920–1941), Jadovno
311. Karan (Petar) Božidar (1889–1941), Jadovno
312. Karan (Todor) Božidar (1910–1941), Jadovno
313. Karan (Božidar) Branko (1923–1941), Jadovno
314. Karišik (Luka) Milan (1895–1941), Jadovno
315. Kisić (Đorđe) Mihajlo (1896–1941), Jadovno

316. Knežević (Luka) Jefto (1888–1941), Jadovno
317. Kovač (Đuro) Gavriilo (1896–1941), Jasenovac
318. Kovačević (Risto) Borivoje (1925–1941), Jadovno
319. Kovačević (Petar) Velimir (1919–1941), Jadovno
320. Kovačević (Blagoje) Gojko (1926–1943), Mostar
321. Kovačević (Špiro) Gojko (1914–1941)
322. Kovačević (Đorđe) Damjan (1907–1941), Jadovno
323. Kovačević (Đorđe) Drago (1892–1941), Jadovno
324. Kovačević (Đuro) Drago (1896–1941), Jasenovac
325. Kovačević (Đorđe) Jefto (1901–1941), Ortiješ
326. Kovačević (Vaso) Jovo (?–1941), Jadovno
327. Kovačević (Đorđe) Ljubo (1900–1941)
328. Kovačević Mara (1888–1941), Jasenovac
329. Kovačević (Filip) Mato (1892–1941), Jadovno
330. Kovačević (Milan) Mirko (1913–1941), Jadovno
331. Kovačević (Nikola) Nedeljko (1902–1941), Jadovno
332. Kovačević (Luka) Nikola (1907–1941), Jadovno
333. Kovačević (Lazar) Obren (1912–1941), Jadovno
334. Kovačević (Nikola) Petar (1878–1941), Jadovno
335. Kovačević (Risto) Ranko (1922–1941)
336. Kovačević (Todor) Risto (1889–1941), Jadovno
337. Kovačević (Šćepan) Risto (1886–1941), Mostar
338. Kovačević (Ilija) Simo (1894–1941)
339. Kovačević (Filip) Simo (1889–1941), Jadovno
340. Kovačević (Nikola) Stevan (1907–1941), Jasenovac
341. Kozomara (Todor) Pavle (1885–1941), Jadovno
342. Kozomora (Pavle) Ratko (1919–1941), Jadovno
343. Kojo Veljko (1900–1941)
344. Kojo (Nikola) Vladislav (1889–1941), Jadovno

345. Kojo (Nikola) Đorđe (1906–1941), Jadovno
346. Kojo (Nikola) Ljubomir (1909–1941), Široki Brijeg
347. Kojo (Mihajlo) Risto (1886–1941), Jadovno
348. Kokotović Ilija (1915–1941), Jadovno
349. Kokotović (Đuro) Nedeljko (1915–1941), Zenica
350. Komad (Marko) Dušan (1886–1941), Čitluk
351. Komnenović (Jovo) Veselin (1894–1941), Mostar
352. Kostić (Kosta) Radiša (1902–1941), Jasenovac
353. Kostić (Milutin) Cvjetko (1907–1941), Jadovno
354. Kraljević (Mijo) Dušan (1885–1941)
355. Kraljević (Đuro) Milan (1924–1941)
356. Krasulja (Stanko) Branko (1920–1941), Mostar
357. Krnjević (Luka) Dušan (1882–1941), Jadovno
358. Krstović (Luka) Radoslav (1889–1941), Mostar
359. Krulj (Đorđe) Vladimir (1893–1941), Jasenovac
360. Krulj (Lazo) Gojko (1923–1941), Jadovno
361. Krulj (Risto) Ljubomir (1898–1941), Čitluk
362. Krulj (Milan) Momir (1912–1941), Jadovno
363. Krulj (Milan) Sreten (1921–1941), Stara Gradiška
364. Kuduz (Aleksa) Danilo (?–1941), Jadovno
365. Kuduz (Aleksa) Mirko (1905–1941), Jadovno
366. Kuić (Atanasije) Vladimir (1903–1941), Jadovno
367. Kuić (Atanasije) Svetozar (1898–1941), Jadovno
368. Kujundžić (Risto) Ljubomir (1905–1941), Jadovno
369. Kukavica (Trifun) Bogdan (1920–1941), Jasenovac
370. Kukavica (Đuro) Trifun (1871–1941), Jasenovac
371. Kukavčić (Luka) Boško (1915–1941), Mostar
372. Kulaš (Marko) Luka (1890–1941), Ortiješ
373. Kulaš (Luka) Ljubomir (1913–1941), Jasenovac

374. Kulaš (Luka) Milan (1920–1941), Jasenovac
375. Kulidžan (Mitar) Jovo (1914–1941), Jadovno
376. Kulidžan (Nikola) Lazar (1887–1941), Jadovno
377. Kulidžan (Nikola) Milan (1879–1941), Jadovno
378. Kuljić (Mitar) Pero (1861–1941)
379. Kuljić (Spasoje) Todor (1881–1941), Pijesci
380. Kurilić (Šćepan) Milan (1890–1941), Jasenovac
381. Kurteš (Risto) Đorđe (1898–1941), Jasenovac
382. Kusalo (Todor) Dušan (1891–1941), Jasenovac
383. Kusalo (Todor) Luka (1888–1941), Jasenovac
384. Labalo (Mile) Đorđe (1876–1941)
385. Lažetić (Đoko) Božidar (1908–1945)
386. Lažetić (Vlado) Branko (1923–1941), Jasenovac
387. Lažetić (Risto) Đorđe (1905–1941), Jadovno
388. Lažetić Živko (1911–1941)
389. Lazović Jovan (1887–1941)
390. Laketa (Mitar) Đorđe (1923–1943), Mostar
391. Lalić (Simo) Draginja (1939–1941), Loborgrad
392. Lalić Mile (?–1941)
393. Lalić (Dragutin) Simo (1903–1941), Jadovno
394. Lasica (Tomo) Špiro (1907–1941)
395. Levnaić (Rade) Miloš (1903–1941)
396. Ležaja (Todor) Nenad (1921–1941), Jadovno
397. Lemić (Jovo) Savo (1919–1941), Krnjeuša, Bosanski Petrovac
398. Leovac (Novak) Branko (1907–1941), Jadovno
399. Lojpur (Pero) Đuro (1902–1941), Potoci
400. Lojpur (Risto) Rajko (1912–1941)
401. Lojpur (Milutin) Savo (1900–1941), Mostar
402. Lukač (Lazar) Rajko (1921–1941), Mostar

403. Lukić (Borivoj) Svetozar (1909–1941), Jadovno
404. Ljepava (Šćepan) Risto (1886–1941), Jadovno
405. Ljoljić (Risto) Desimir (1905–1941), Jadovno
406. Ljoljić (Risto) Ljubo (1861–1941)
407. Ljoljić (Risto) Ljubomir (1916–1941), Jadovno
408. Ljoljić (Risto) Marko (1897–1941), Pag
409. Ljubenko (Savo) Trifko (1872–1941), Mostar
410. Mavrak (Mile) Danilo (1892–1941), Pag
411. Majstorović (Milan) Radoslav (1912–1941), Jadovno
412. Maksimović (Milenko) Miroslav (1906–1943)
413. Malić Anđelka (?–1941), Jadovno
414. Malić Draginja (–?–1941), Jadovno
415. Malić Drago (?–1941), Jadovno
416. Malić Zagorka (?–1941), Jadovno
417. Malić Mila (?–1941), Jadovno
418. Maltez (Dušan) Risto (1913–1941), Mostar
419. Manastirlić (Dimitrije) Stanko (1914–1941), Mostar
420. Mandić (Risto) Vukan (1883–1941), Jadovno
421. Mandić (Đuro) Dušan (1901–1941), Blagaj
422. Mandrapa (Petar) Branko (1896–1941), Jadovno
423. Marinović (Marko) Uroš (1900–1945), Jasenovac
424. Marić (Jovo) Branko (1893–1941), Jadovno
425. Marić (Lazo) Đorđe (1891–1941), Jasenovac
426. Marić (Pero) Jovo (1901–1941), Ljubinja
427. Marković (Obrad) Branka (1926–1944), Jasenovac
428. Marković (Jovo) Đorđe (1896–1941)
429. Marković (Obrad) Žarko (1920–1941), Jadovno
430. Maslo (Lazar) Pero (1911–1941), Mostar
431. Mastilović (Spasoje) Stevan (1890–1941), Jadovno

- 432. Matković (Lazo) Đurđa (1901–1941), Gradac, Posušje
- 433. Medan (Luka) Veljko (1907–1941), Jadovno
- 434. Medan (Spasoje) Vidoje (1912–1941), Mostar
- 435. Medan (Ignjat) Vojo (1917–1941), Berkovići
- 436. Medan (Savo) Milan (1901–1941), Derventa
- 437. Medan (Luka) Momir (1909–1941), Jadovno
- 438. Mesarović Milan (?–1941), Baške Oštarije, Gospić
- 439. Mikić (Simo) Milan (1904–1941), Jadovno
- 440. Mikičić Darinka (?–1941), Jadovno
- 441. Miletić (Mićo) Marija (1898–1945), Jasenovac
- 442. Miletić (Jovo) Rade (1903–1941), Jadovno
- 443. Milivojević Vljako (1913–1941), Jadovno
- 444. Milivojević (Bogdan) Savo (1905–1941), Jadovno
- 445. Milivojević (Ćetko) Tomo (1906–1941), Mostar
- 446. Milinić (Janko) Đoko (1906–1941), Mostar
- 447. Milić (Spasoje) Danilo (1912–1941), Jasenovac
- 448. Milić (Mihajlo) Dušan (1909–1941), Jadovno
- 449. Milić Persa (1895–1945), Jasenovac
- 450. Milićević (Jevto) Nikola (1904–1941), Livno
- 451. Milićević (Boško) Risto (1888–1941), Jadovno
- 452. Milićević (Todor) Risto (1889–1941)
- 453. Milićević (Manojlo) Stevo (?–1941)
- 454. Milović (Janko) Gojko (1890–1941), Nevesinje
- 455. Milojević (Jovo) Golub (1897–1941)
- 456. Milojević (Luka) Drago (1927–1941), Mostar
- 457. Milošević (Mihajlo) Veljko (1919–1941), Nevesinje
- 458. Milutinović (Lazar) Mladen (1895–1941), Mostar
- 459. Milušić (Risto) Milan (1883–1941), Jasenovac
- 460. Milušić (Milan) Ubavka (1925–1945), Jasenovac

461. Miljak (Trifko) Vlajko (1917–1941)
462. Miljak (Trifko) Milan (1905–1941), Jadovno
463. Miljanić (Obren) Dušan (1924–1941), Jadovno
464. Miljević (Pero) Jovo (1878–1941), Jadovno
465. Miljević (Jovo) Mihajlo (1906–1941), Čitluk
466. Misita (Risto) Gojko (1902–1941), Jadovno
467. Miskin (Mićo) Milan (1892–1941), Jadovno
468. Mitrinović (Đorđe) Branko (1907–1941), Čitluk
469. Mitrinović (Luka) Jovanka (1890–1944), Slavonski Brod
470. Mitrinović (Mihajlo) Tihomir (1912–1941), Jadovno
471. Mićević (Ilija) Dušan (1898–1941), Jadovno
472. Mićević (Mitar) Milan (1899–1941), Opine
473. Mićević (Mitar) Nikola (1909–1941), Jadovno
474. Mićević (Mitar) Petar (1911–1941)
475. Mićijević (Jovo) Đorđe (1895–1941), Jadovno
476. Mićijević (Đorđe) Jovo (1919–1941)
477. Mićijević (Milan) Sofija (1915–1945), Konjic
478. Mičić (Milan) Nikola (1896–1941), Jadovno
479. Mičić (Marko) Savo (1907–1941), Mostar
480. Mićković (Mijat) Vidak (1882–1941)
481. Mihailović (Ilija) Božidar (1921–1941), Mostar
482. Mihailović (Risto) Branko (1886–1941), Jadovno
483. Mihailović (Anđelko) Veljko (1894–1941), Mostar
484. Mihailović (Veljko) Momčilo (1919–1941), Mostar
485. Mihovilčević (Risto) Zora (1907–1945), Jasenovac
486. Mišanović (Nikola) Dejan (1897–1941), Jadovno
487. Mišević (Božo) Kosa (1928–1945), Mostar
488. Mišković (Petar) Velimir (1876–1941), Jadovno
489. Mrkić (Todor) Branko (1920–1941), Jadovno

490. Mrkić (Ilija) Mihajlo (1900–1941), Jadovno
491. Muratović (Maksim) Darinka (1937–1942), Loborgrad
492. Muratović (Blagoje) Maksim (1910–1941), Jadovno
493. Musa (Božo) Gojko (1939–1945), Jasenovac
494. Mučibabić (Jovo) Dušan (1907–1941), Mostar
495. Mučibabić (Jovo) Žarko (1912–1944), Mostar
496. Mučibabić (Vidak) Jovo (1889–1941)
497. Mučibabić (Jovo) Milan (1920–1941), Jadovno
498. Narandžić Rade (?–1941)
499. Nestorović (Jovo) Milorad (1906–1941), Mostar
500. Nikolić (Tomo) Stevan (1913–1941), Mostar
501. Ninković (Risto) Branko (1901–1941)
502. Ninković (Milutin) Olga (1903–1941), Jadovno
503. Nožica (Savo) Mihajlo (1907–1941), Baške Oštarije, Gospić
504. Njunjić (Jovo) Veljko (1899–1941)
505. Njunjić (Jovo) Todor (1890–1941), Široki Brijeg
506. Oborina (Velimir) Jovo (1905–1941), Čitluk
507. Obradović (Pavle) Miodrag (1909–1941)
508. Orlović (Risto) Čedomir (1914–1941), Jadovno
509. Pavić (Risto) Draško (1900–1941), Jadovno
510. Palavestra (Đuro) Dušan (1888–1941), Jadovno
511. Palavestra (Luka) Tatomir (1895–1941), Nevesinje
512. Palikuća (Miho) Gavro (1885–1941)
513. Palikuća (Gavro) Ljubo (1903–1941)
514. Papić (Mitar) Đorđo (1911–1941), Jasenovac
515. Papić Pantelija (1914–1941), Mostar
516. Paranos (Šćepo) Staka (1880–1945), Stara Gradiška
517. Pašajlić (Nikola) Luka (1887–1941), Jadovno
518. Pašić (Mahmut) Mujo (1895–1944), Stara Gradiška

519. Pejanović (Lazo) Drago (1902–1941), Mostar
520. Pejanović (Lazo) Đorđe (1884–1941), Mostar
521. Pejanović (Jefto) Ilija (1892–1944), Mostar
522. Pejanović (Ilija) Mićo (1890–1941) Ortiješ
523. Pejanović (Jovan) Petar (1911–1941), Mostar
524. Pejović (Lazar) Petar (1885–1941), Jasenovac
525. Perin (Risto) Aleksa (1898–1941), Mostar
526. Perišić (Lazar) Tomo (1890–1942), Jasenovac
527. Perović (Vukašin) Vjera (1940–1944), Jasenovac
528. Perović (Pavle) Milena (1912–1944), Jasenovac
529. Petković (Jovo) Vukašin (1904–1941), Mostar
530. Petković (Luka) Marko (1888–1941), Jadovno
531. Petković (Jovo) Rajko (1909–1941), Jadovno
532. Petrić (Jovo) Dragutin (1903–1941), Jadovno
533. Petrić (Đorđe) Jovo (1888–1941), Jadovno
534. Petrić (Pero) Čedomir (1908–1941), Jadovno
535. Petrović (Ilija) Risto (1924–1941), Čapljina
536. Peš (Risto) Jovan (1908–1941), Jadovno
537. Peško (Miho) Đorđe (1887–1941), Čitluk
538. Pivac (Petar) Ljubomir (1901–1941), Mostar
539. Pičeta (Ilija) Vaso (1890–1941), Jadovno
540. Pičeta (Risto) Đuro (1895–1941), Gnojnice
541. Pičeta (Đuro) Janja (1897–1944), Jasenovac
542. Pičeta (Nikola) Lazo (1879–1944), Mostar
543. Pičeta (Milan) Radovan (1912–1944), Stara Gradiška
544. Pješčić (Đuro) Milan (1900–1941), Jadovno
545. Pojužina (Jovo) Vaso (1900–1941), Jadovno
546. Pojužina (Jovo) Danilo (1908–1941), Mostar
547. Pokrajčić (Božidar) Dušan (1903–1941), Jadovno

- 548. Popović (Manojlo) Vera (1903–1941), Mostar
- 549. Popović (Manojlo) Dejan (1911–1941), Mostar
- 550. Popović (Vukašin) Ilija (1908–1941), Jadovno
- 551. Popović (Manojlo) Mihajlo (1920–1941), Mostar
- 552. Prljeta (Luka) Đorđe (1887–1941), Jadovno
- 553. Prljeta (Đorđe) Lazo (1914–1941), Jadovno
- 554. Prljeta Rade (?–1941), Jadovno
- 555. Prnjatović (Vukašin) Lazar (1896–1941), Jasenovac
- 556. Prodanović (Špiro) Marko (1920–1941), Žitomislići
- 557. Prodanović (Jovo) Špiro (1884–1941), Mostar
- 558. Prorok (Spasoje) Đorđe (1909–1941), Mostar
- 559. Prpić (Borislav) Milivoje (1906–1945), Jasenovac
- 560. Pudar (Đorđe) Vitomir (1922–1941), Mostar
- 561. Pudar (Pero) Đorđe (1892–1941), Mostar
- 562. Pudar (Danilo) Ilija (1925–1941), Stolac
- 563. Puzić (Simo) Savo (1877–1941), Ružići, Grude
- 564. Pujić (Simat) Jovo (1901–1941)
- 565. Pujić (Simo) Savo (1887–1941), Jadovno
- 566. Pujić (Simo) Spasoje (1906–1941), Jasenovac
- 567. Puljić (Simo) Janko (1906–1941)
- 568. Puljić Stevo (1907–1941), Jadovno
- 569. Pucarić (Đorđe) Dušan (1904–1941), Jadovno
- 570. Pucarić (Đorđe) Stevo (1904–1941), Jadovno
- 571. Radan (Jovo) Ljubo (1911–1945)
- 572. Radić (Nikola) Ljubo (1900–1941), Jadovno
- 573. Radić (Đuro) Ognjen (1907–1941), Mostar
- 574. Radić (Stojan) Risto (1901–1941), Jadovno
- 575. Radić (Pero) Špiro (1885–1941)
- 576. Radišić (Tripko) Lazo (1897–1944), Stara Gradiška

577. Radović (Todor) Danilo (1896–1941), Mostar
578. Radulović (Todor) Blagoje (1916–1941), Jadovno
579. Radulović (Simo) Borivoj (1908–1941), Sarajevo
580. Radulović (Lazar) Branko (1901–1941), Jasenovac
581. Radulović (Risto) Danilo (1903–1941), Jadovno
582. Radulović (Stojan) Milan (?–1941), Jadovno
583. Radulović (Todor) Pero (1894–1941), Široki Brijeg
584. Rajković (Stojan) Milan (1903–1941), Jadovno
585. Raco (Stojan) Mirko (1900–1942), Sisak
586. Račić (Jovo) Luka (1880–1941), Jadovno
587. Račić Panto (?–1941)
588. Rašević (Antonije) Branko (1923–1941), Dvor na Uni
589. Rašević (Šćepo) Pero (1914–1942), Viduša, Trebinje
590. Reljin (Aleksa) Jovo (1886–1941), Jasenovac
591. Reljić (Aleksa) Mihajlo (1890–1941), Jadovno
592. Repović (Vidak) Jovo (1897–1941), Jadovno
593. Resanović Anka (?–1941), Jadovno
594. Resanović Đorđe (?–1941), Jadovno
595. Resanović Lazo (?–1941), Jadovno
596. Resanović Srboljub (?–1941), Jadovno
597. Rundo (Đorđe) Slobodan (1914–1941), Jasenovac
598. Savić (Nikola) Božo (1907–1941), Jadovno
599. Savić (Dragoljub) Vasilije (1925–1941), Mostar
600. Savić (Jovo) Dragoljub (1894–1941), Mostar
601. Savić (Blažo) Duško (?–1941), Jadovno
602. Savić (Maksim) Zora (1922–1943), Nevesinje
603. Savić (Milutin) Stana (1908–1944), Stara Gradiška
604. Salatić (Nikola) Vasilije (1893–1941), Mostar
605. Salatić (Spasoje) Đorđe (1899–1941), Mostar

606. Salatić (Vidak) Nikola (1925–1942), Mostar
607. Samardžić (Savo) Aleksa (1883–1941), Mostar
608. Samardžić (Risto) Boško (1891–1941), Jadovno
609. Samardžić (Lazo) Vlajko (1908–1941)
610. Samardžić (Risto) Đorđe (1894–1941), Jadovno
611. Samardžić (Ilija) Đorđe (1903–1941), Jasenovac
612. Samardžić (Vladimir) Ivanka (1925–1945), Sarajevo
613. Samardžić Lazo (1906–1941)
614. Samardžić (Spasoje) Lukan (1914–1941)
615. Samardžić (Aleksa) Savo (1922–1941), Jadovno
616. Svorcan (Jovo) Spasoje (1873–1941)
617. Svorcan (Savo) Spasoje (1893–1941), Baške Oštarije, Gospić
618. Svorcan (Spasoje) Tomo (1919–1941), Baške Oštarije, Gospić
619. Semiz (Jovo) Ranko (1900–1941), Mostar
620. Silić Milan (1910–1941), Jadovno
621. Sjeran (Risto) Vuko (1904–1944), Mostar
622. Skorupović (Blagoje) Gojko (1911–1941), Jablanica
623. Skulić (Jovo) Pero (1906–1941)
624. Slijepčević (Rade) Gligor (1907–1941), Mostar
625. Slijepčević (Lazar) Ranko (1902–1941), Jadovno
626. Smiljanić Đoko (1890–1941)
627. Soknić (Vidoje) Boško (1896–1941), Jadovno
628. Soknić (Risto) Kosta (1900–1941), Jadovno
629. Sorajić (Veljko) Vasilije (1921–1941), Jadovno
630. Sorajić (Špiro) Veljko (1897–1941), Jadovno
631. Sorajić (Dimitrije) Stanimir (1907–1941), Jadovno
632. Spremo Vasilija (1901–1941)
633. Spremo (Nikola) Jovo (1923–1941), Jasenovac
634. Spremo (Nikola) Nedeljko (1915–1941), Jasenovac

635. Spremo Tomo (1900–1941)
636. Srbić (Jovo) Milan (1905–1941), Jadovno
637. Srbić (Pero) Rista (1881–1941), Jadovno
638. Srbić (Jovo) Risto (?–1941)
639. Srbić (Milan) Slavko (1934–1941), Jadovno
640. Sredanović (Tomo) Radosav (1920–1941), Mostar
641. Srna (Risto) Milan (1923–1941), Jadovno
642. Srna (Jovo) Risto (1894–1941), Jadovno
643. Stajić (Gligor) Vlado (1900–1941), Mostar
644. Stajić (Jovan) Dušan (1906–1941)
645. Stajić Janko (?–1941), Jadovno
646. Stajić (Risto) Nikola (1884–1941)
647. Stajić (Nikola) Risto (1882–1941), Mostar
648. Stanić (Đuro) Danilo (1913–1941), Jadovno
649. Stanojević (Gojko) Stevan (1878–1941), Mostar
650. Stojković (Vaso) Ilija (1891–1941), Dvor na Uni
651. Sudar (Luka) Bogdan (1904–1941), Čapljina
652. Sudar (Luka) Gojko (1898–1941), Pag
653. Sudar (Luka) Danilo (1910–1941), Jadovno
654. Sudar (Nikola) Marko (1887–1941), Pag
655. Sudar (Mirko) Pero (1920–1941), Jadovno
656. Sudar (Spasoje) Slobodan (1924–1941)
657. Supić (Aćim) Dušan (1903–1941), Mostar
658. Sušić (Rade) Radovan (1911–1941), Jadovno
659. Taušan (Marko) Đorđe (1896–1941)
660. Terzić (Simo) Dragutin (1919–1941), Jadovno
661. Terzić (Đuro) Ilija (1910–1941), Nevesinje
662. Terzić (Simo) Simo (1898–1941), Jadovno
663. Tica (Simo) Angelina (1911–1941)

664. Tomanović (Krst) Branko (1894–1941), Jasenovac
665. Tomanović (Spasoje) Gavriilo (1912–1941), Jasenovac
666. Tomašević Ana (?–1945)
667. Tomašević (Risto) Milan (1902–1945)
668. Tomašević (Risto) Ratomir (1914–1945)
669. Tomić (Todor) Lazar (1869–1941), Jablanica
670. Tomić Marko (?–1941)
671. Toholj (Mitar) Veljko (1896–1941), Jasenovac
672. Toholj (Boško) Ilija (1885–1941), Mostar
673. Toholj (Boško) Svetozar (1896–1941), Mostar
674. Tošić (Pero) Vasilije (1905–1941), Jadovno
675. Tošić (Pero) Nedeljko (1902–1941)
676. Tošić (Pero) Špiro (1903–1941), Caprag
677. Trampa (Jovo) Vaso (1902–1941)
678. Trklja (Obren) Trifko (1889–1941), Čitluk
679. Trkulja (Risto) Vlado (1917–1942), Mostar
680. Trkulja (Risto) Petar (1904–1941), Jasenovac
681. Tuponja (Đorđe) Branko (1903–1941), Jadovno
682. Tuponja (Đorđe) Risto (1910–1941), Mostar
683. Turanjanin (Risto) Savo (1900–1941), Jadovno
684. Tuco (Kosta) Jovan (1917–1941), Jasenovac
685. Čabak (Jefto) Strahinja (1904–1941), Čitluk
686. Čećez (Marko) Miladin (1919–1941), Jadovno
687. Čirić (Jovo) Branko (1903–1941), Jadovno
688. Čirić (Risto) Šćepan (1892–1941), Mostar
689. Čorić (Simo) Miloš (1902–1941), Jablanica
690. Čorlija (Kosta) Blagoje (1900–1941), Pag
691. Čorlija (Vojin) Simo (1893–1941), Jasenovac
692. Čorlija (Đoko) Simo (1880–1942), Jasenovac

693. Ćuković (Pero) Jovanka (1888–1943), Jasenovac
694. Ćupina (Đorđe) Rajko (1900–1941), Šurmanci, Čapljina
695. Unković (Simo) Lazar (1896–1941), Jadovno
696. Filatov (Ilija) Jelena (1900–1945), Jasenovac
697. Filipović (Pero) Milan (1907–1941), Stara Gradiška
698. Hamović (Nikola) Dušan (1891–1941), Mostar
699. Hamović (Nikola) Mitar (1888–1941), Čitluk
700. Hamović (Jovo) Risto (1901–1941), Jadovno
701. Hadživuković (Ljubo) Slobodan (1918–1943), Jasenovac
702. Hristić (Dimitrije) Dimitrije (1914–1941)
703. Hubana (Risto) Đorđe (1890–1941), Slavonski Brod
704. Hubana (Risto) Milan (1894–1941), Jablanica
705. Crnogorac (Uroš) Danilo (1922–1941), Jadovno
706. Crnogorac (Uroš) Đorđe (1919–1941), Jadovno
707. Crnogorac (Risto) Pero (1904–1941), Jadovno
708. Crnogorac (Uroš) Slobodan (1923–1941), Caprag
709. Crnogorac (Mićan) Uroš (1891–1941), Jadovno
710. Čavlović (Milan) Savo (1915–1941), Mostar
711. Čakrlija (Đuro) Uroš (1890–1941), Jadovno
712. Čalija (Stojan) Boro (1905–1941), Jadovno
713. Čalija (Simo) Risto (1887–1941)
714. Čvoro (Obren) Risto (1908–1941)
715. Čereković (Stevan) Branko (1904–1941), Čitluk
716. Čereković (Stevan) Milan (1898–1941), Čitluk
717. Češljarić (Svetislav) Ljubomir (1914–1941), Jadovno
718. Čović (Simo) Miloš (1903–1941), Jadovno
719. Čokorilo (Petar) Vaso (1924–1944), Mostar
720. Čokorilo (Luka) Dušan (1913–1941), Jadovno
721. Čokorilo (Mitar) Petar (1904–1944), Mostar

- 722. Čokorilo (Petar) Risto (1907–1941), Pag
- 723. Čolović (Simo) Đorđe (1909–1941), Mostar
- 724. Čolović (Simo) Risto (1887–1941), Šurmanci, Čapljina
- 725. Čulajević (Savo) Dušan (1905–1944), Stara Gradiška
- 726. Čupković (Ilija) Milan (1904–1941), Jadovno
- 727. Šain (Risto) Anđelko (1924–1941), Baške Oštarije, Gospić
- 728. Šain (Đorđe) Branko (1920–1941), Čapljina
- 729. Šain (Luka) Jovanka (1894–1941), Loborgrad
- 730. Šain (Đorđe) Ljubica (1910–1941), Gabela
- 731. Šain (Ilija) Ljubomir (1887–1941), Čitluk
- 732. Šain Milan (?–1941), Jadovno
- 733. Šain Milanka (?–1941), Jadovno
- 734. Šain (Pero) Risto (1883–1941), Jadovno
- 735. Šain (Đorđe) Svetozar (1909–1943), Metković
- 736. Šakota (Kosta) Ilija (1895–1941), Mostar
- 737. Šantić (Đorđe) Jakov (1910–1941), Čitluk
- 738. Šantić (Pero) Nedeljko (1893–1942)
- 739. Šarenac (Vaso) Mitar (1885–1941), Jasenovac
- 740. Šašo (Spasoje) Danilo (1911–1941)
- 741. Šebešćan (Tomo) Sofija (1921–1945), Jasenovac
- 742. Šiljegović (Rade) Mile (1910–1945)
- 743. Šiljegović (Rade) Obrad (1900–1941), Jadovno
- 744. Šipovac Borivoje (1917–1942), Jasenovac
- 745. Šipovac (Risto) Dušan (1902–1941), Sarajevo
- 746. Šipovac (Risto) Ljubo (1909–1941), Sarajevo
- 747. Šipovac (Risto) Slavko (1908–1941), Jadovno
- 748. Šipovac (Risto) Spasoje (1900–1941), Jasenovac
- 749. Šipovac (Risto) Tomo (1913–1941), Jadovno
- 750. Škoro (Ilija) Vlado (1895–1941), Mostar

751. Škoro (Risto) Žarko (1894–1941), Jadovno
752. Škoro (Simo) Živko (1920–1941), Mostar
753. Škoro (Nikola) Marko (1912–1941), Jadovno
754. Šotra (Đoko) Dragomir (1923–1941), Bivolje Brdo, Čapljina
755. Šotra (Todor) Miloš (1898–1941), Jadovno
756. Šotra (Trifko) Miloš (1891–1941), Jadovno
757. Šotrić (Savo) Milan (1901–1941), Mostar
758. Šparavalo (Žarko) Vasilije (1925–1944), Mostar
759. Šparavalo (Ilija) Danilo (1868–1941), Mostar
760. Šparavalo (Jovan) Žarko (1896–1941), Mostar
761. Šupljeglav (Risto) Branko (1911–1941), Lakiševine
762. Šupljeglav (Lazo) Milorad (1919–1941), Mostar
763. Šupljeglav (Đorđe) Rajko (1916–1941), Mostar
764. Šupljeglav (Lazo) Svetozar (1921–1941), Jadovno

Ortiješ (Blagaj)

1. Berberović (Mitar) Grujo (1894–1944), Ortiješ
2. Berberović (Mirko) Ljubo (1927–1944), Ortiješ
3. Berberović (Mitar) Milan (1892–1944), Ortiješ
4. Berberović (Miško) Mitar (1863–1941), Ortiješ
5. Berberović (Milan) Novica (1920–1944), Ortiješ
6. Berberović (Jevto) Slavko (1926–1943), Podvelež
7. Vuković (Aleksa) Risto (1870–1944), Ortiješ
8. Đurić (Uglješa) Bogdan (1921–1944), Ortiješ
9. Đurić (Pero) Ilija (1896–1944), Ortiješ
10. Đurić (Risto) Todor (1902–1944), Ortiješ
11. Ivanišević (Trifko) Gojko (1911–1944), Ortiješ
12. Ivanišević (Marko) Danilo (1892–1944), Ortiješ
13. Ivanišević (Marko) Đorđo (1885–1944), Ortiješ

14. Ivanišević (Đorđe) Mile (1911–1943), Podvelež
15. Ivanišević (Jovo) Risto (1915–1944), Ortiješ
16. Ivanišević (Đorđe) Čedo (1919–1944), Ortiješ
17. Karadeglija (Spasoje) Marko (1892–1944), Ortiješ
18. Medan (Đorđe) Anda (1919–1941), Ortiješ
19. Medan (Spasoje) Vidoje (1912–1941), Ortiješ
20. Medan (Vidoje) Danilo (1899–1944), Ortiješ
21. Medan (Đuro) Đorđe (1910–1944), Ortiješ
22. Medan (Maksim) Jefto (1910–1944), Ortiješ
23. Medan (Vidoje) Jovo (1902–1941), Ortiješ
24. Medan (Drago) Ljubo (1921–1944), Ortiješ
25. Medan (Spasoje) Risto (1915–1941), Ortiješ
26. Medan (Maksim) Strajko (1913–1944), Ortiješ
27. Medan (Nikola) Šćepo (1899–1944), Ortiješ
28. Mihić (Jovo) Simo (1887–1944), Ortiješ
29. Crnogorac (Nikola) Đorđe (1928–1944), Ortiješ
30. Čabrilo (Vidoje) Maksim (1882–1944), Ortiješ
31. Džonlaga (Savo) Jovo (1913–1944), Ortiješ
32. Džonlaga (Savo) Nikola (1906–1944), Ortiješ
33. Džonlaga (Nikola) Špiro (1928–1944), Ortiješ
34. Šupljeglav (Branko) Božidar (1924–1944), Ortiješ
35. Šupljeglav (Božo) Branko (1924–1944), Ortiješ
36. Šupljeglav (Simo) Vojin (1888–1943), Ortiješ
37. Šupljeglav (Đorđe) Vlado (1920–1944), Ortiješ
38. Šupljeglav (Đorđe) Đorđe (1899–1944), Ortiješ
39. Šupljeglav (Branko) Jovo (1917–1944), Ortiješ
40. Šupljeglav (Đorđe) Lazar (1911–1944), Ortiješ
41. Šupljeglav (Đorđe) Manojlo (1898–1944), Ortiješ
42. Šupljeglav (Pero) Mile (1915–1943), Podvelež

43. Šupljeglav (Ilija) Nikola (1913–1944), Ortiješ
44. Šupljeglav (Đorđe) Risto (1900–1944), Ortiješ
45. Šupljeglav (Jovo) Risto (1900–1944), Ortiješ

Pijesci (Žitomislić)

1. Andrić (Ljubo) Andrija (1913–1941), Buna
2. Andrić (Ilija) Vlado (1912–1941), Mostar
3. Andrić (Savo) Danilo (1899–1941), Pijesci
4. Andrić (Ilija) Dušan (1917–1941), Buna
5. Andrić (Risto) Đorđe (1911–1941), Buna
6. Andrić (Nikola) Maksim (1911–1941), Jadovno
7. Andrić (Kojo) Mihajlo (1893–1941)
8. Andrić (Kojo) Risto (1891–1941), Domanovići, Čapljina
9. Andrić (Ilija) Spaso (1920–1941), Buna
10. Kuzman (Risto) Vaso (1867–1941), Buna
11. Kuzman (Vaso) Danilo (1905–1941), Buna
12. Kuzman (Jovo) Danilo (1901–1941), Buna
13. Kuzman (Vaso) Đoko (1908–1941), Buna
14. Kuzman (Risto) Ilija (1883–1941), Buna
15. Kuzman (Savo) Milan (1885–1941), Buna
16. Kuzman (Savo) Mitar (1896–1941), Buna
17. Kuzman (Panto) Radojka (1908–1943), Žitomislići
18. Kuzman (Ilija) Risto (1912–1941), Čapljina
19. Kuzman (Panto) Risto (1913–1941)
20. Kuzman (Risto) Todor (1887–1944), Mostar
21. Pavić (Gojko) Đorđo (1924–1941)
22. Pavić (Gojko) Melanija (1925–1941)
23. Pudar (Miloš) Branko (1896–1941), Domanovići, Čapljina
24. Pudar (Marko) Danilo (1900–1941), Buna

25. Pudar (Miloš) Đorđe (1901–1941), Buna
26. Pudar (Risto) Maksim (1907–1941), Mostar
27. Pudar (Mitar) Milan (1923–1941), Aladinići, Stolac
28. Pudar (Marko) Mitar (1881–1941), Aladinići, Stolac
29. Pudar (Mitar) Novica (1918–1941), Aladinići, Stolac
30. Pudar (Marko) Panto (1879–1941), Domanovići, Čapljina
31. Pudar (Andrija) Risto (1878–1941), Domanovići, Čapljina
32. Ćorluka Gojan (1937–1943), Pijesci
33. Ćorluka Gospava (1940–1943), Pijesci
34. Ćorluka (Nikola) Lazar (1880–1942), Cerovo, Neum
35. Ćorluka (Drago) Mirko (1912–1941), Jadovno

Podgorani (Bijelo Polje)

1. Ivanišević (Risto) Đoko (1891–1941)
2. Ivanišević (Stevan) Lazo (1901–1941), Mostar
3. Ivanišević (Đoko) Nikola (1915–1941)
4. Ivanišević (Stevan) Simo (1906–1941)
5. Ivanišević (Stevan) Tripo (1906–1941)
6. Ravnjak (Timotije) Dušan (1918–1941), Rašića Gaj, Vlasenica
7. Telebak (Gojko) Branko (1925–1941)
8. Telebak (Jovo) Gojko (1893–1941)
9. Telebak (Marko) Goša (1870–1941)
10. Telebak (Risto) Danilo (1901–1941)
11. Telebak (Pero) Đorđo (1901–1941)
12. Telebak (Gojko) Jovo (1921–1941)
13. Telebak (Lazar) Milan (1894–1941), Jadovno
14. Telebak (Danilo) Nikola (1928–1941)
15. Telebak (Todor) Novica (1931–1943), Podgorani
16. Telebak (Tripo) Obren (1922–1941)

17. Telebak (Pero) Sava (1901–1941)
18. Telebak (Jovo) Soka (1910–1942)
19. Telebak (Jovo) Todor (1906–1941)
20. Telebak (Lazar) Tripo (1891–1941)
21. Škoro (Stojan) Spaso (1890–1941), Podgorani

Potoci (Bijelo Polje)

1. Aćimović (Jovo) Obren (1898–1941), Jadovno
2. Aćimović (Todor) Cvija (1888–1941), Zijemlje
3. Bulajić (Vlado) Đorđe (1909–1941), Jasenovac
4. Bulajić (Nikola) Đorđe (1905–1941), Šurmanci, Čapljina

Prigrađani (Bijelo Polje)

1. Kandić (Spasoje) Risto (1903–1942), Mostar
2. Pantić (Đorđe) Ignjat (1906–1941), Prigrađani
3. Pantić (Đorđe) Panto (1906–1941), Prigrađani
4. Pantić (Đorđe) Stojan (1901–1941), Šurmanci, Čapljina
5. Pištalo (Đorđe) Dušan (1895–1941), Prigrađani
6. Pištalo (Maksim) Milan (1900–1941)

Ravni (Bijelo Polje)

1. Antić (Đuro) Mara (1925–1942), Ravni
2. Vuković (Jovan) Stana (1890–1941), Jasenovac
3. Golubović (Marko) Đorđe (1871–1941), Šurmanci, Čapljina
4. Golubović (Đorđe) Milan (1904–1941)
5. Golubović (Đorđe) Risto (1911–1941), Vinkovci
6. Golubović (Marko) Simo (1891–1941)
7. Golubović (Lazar) Šćepan (1910–1941)
8. Golubović (Marko) Šćepan (1889–1941)

9. Kandić (Pero) Anđelko (1911–1941), Šurmanci, Čapljina
10. Kandić (Uroš) Jefto (1893–1941), Ravni
11. Lugonja (Simo) Pero (1940–1943), Ravni
12. Lugonja (Risto) Simo (1890–1942), Ravni
13. Telebak (Stevan) Milan (1900–1941)
14. Telebak Stana (1875–1941)

Raška Gora (Mostar-Sela)

1. Berak (Ilija) Đorđe (1905–1941), Jadovno
2. Berak (Dušan) Jovo (1918–1944), Goranci
3. Berak (Ilija) Jovo (1913–1943), Raška Gora
4. Berak (Šćepan) Nikola (1913–1944), Goranci
5. Janjić (Ilija) Anđo (1900–1944), Raška Gora
6. Janjić (Pero) Anđo (1944–1944), Raška Gora
7. Janjić (Risto) Anđo (1929–1944), Raška Gora
8. Janjić (Spaso) Anđo (1889–1944), Raška Gora
9. Janjić (Simo) Anđo (1894–1944), Raška Gora
10. Janjić (Todor) Anđo (1879–1944), Raška Gora
11. Janjić (Šćepo) Anđo (1884–1944), Raška Gora
12. Janjić (Milan) Boro (1931–1944), Raška Gora
13. Janjić (Savo) Bosiljka (1924–1944), Raška Gora
14. Janjić (Risto) Vasilija (1938–1944), Raška Gora
15. Janjić (Šćepan) Vidosava (1915–1944), Raška Gora
16. Janjić (Šćepo) Gospava (1907–1944), Raška Gora
17. Janjić (Lazo) Gospava (1907–1944), Raška Gora
18. Janjić (Miloš) Danica (1926–1944), Raška Gora
19. Janjić (Savo) Đoko (1936–1944), Raška Gora
20. Janjić (Savo) Đurđa (1893–1944), Raška Gora
21. Janjić (Lazar) Đuro (1910–1944), Raška Gora

22. Janjić (Lazo) Đuro (1940–1944), Raška Gora
23. Janjić (Janko) Žarko (1934–1944), Raška Gora
24. Janjić (Đuro) Zora (1934–1944), Raška Gora
25. Janjić (Šćepan) Ilija (1913–1944), Raška Gora
26. Janjić (Lazar) Ilinka (1912–1944), Raška Gora
27. Janjić (Jovo) Janko (1908–1941), Mostar
28. Janjić (Savo) Jovan (1896–1944), Raška Gora
29. Janjić (Janko) Jovanka (1909–1944), Raška Gora
30. Janjić (Jovan) Jovanka (1884–1944), Raška Gora
31. Janjić (Risto) Jovanka (1921–1944), Raška Gora
32. Janjić (Savo) Jovanka (1896–1944), Raška Gora
33. Janjić (Spaso) Jovo (1940–1944), Raška Gora
34. Janjić (Pero) Kojo (1937–1944), Raška Gora
35. Janjić (Tripo) Kosta (1895–1941)
36. Janjić (Šćepan) Lazar (1870–1944), Raška Gora
37. Janjić (Mićo) Ljubica (1908–1944), Raška Gora
38. Janjić (Savo) Ljubica (1933–1944), Raška Gora
39. Janjić (Todor) Ljubica (1933–1944), Raška Gora
40. Janjić (Janko) Ljubo (1944–1944), Raška Gora
41. Janjić (Jovo) Mara (1942–1944), Raška Gora
42. Janjić (Milan) Mara (1903–1944), Raška Gora
43. Janjić (Mićo) Marica (1939–1944), Raška Gora
44. Janjić (Lazar) Marko (1904–1941), Jadovno
45. Janjić (Jovo) Mila (1913–1944), Raška Gora
46. Janjić (Mijo) Milica (1901–1944), Raška Gora
47. Janjić (Lazar) Mileva (1903–1944), Raška Gora
48. Janjić (Đuro) Milka (1909–1944), Raška Gora
49. Janjić (Simo) Milka (1924–1944), Raška Gora
50. Janjić (Vaso) Milan (1920–1944), Raška Gora

51. Janjić (Savo) Milorad (1938–1944), Raška Gora
52. Janjić (Risto) Miloš (1884–1944), Raška Gora
53. Janjić (Stojan) Miloš (1897–1941), Jadovno
54. Janjić (Lazo) Mirjana (1943–1944), Raška Gora
55. Janjić (Lazo) Mirko (1934–1944), Raška Gora
56. Janjić Mitar (1944–1944), Raška Gora
57. Janjić (Mićo) Mihajlo (1936–1944), Raška Gora
58. Janjić (Drago) Mladen (1941–1944), Raška Gora
59. Janjić (Milan) Nedo (1934–1944), Raška Gora
60. Janjić (Tripo) Nikola (1920–1944), Jasenovac
61. Janjić (Jovo) Pero (1941–1944), Raška Gora
62. Janjić (Tripo) Pero (1924–1944), Raška Gora
63. Janjić (Stojan) Radovan (1940–1944), Raška Gora
64. Janjić (Pero) Rista (1939–1944), Raška Gora
65. Janjić (Stojan) Rista (1921–1944), Raška Gora
66. Janjić (Dušan) Risto (1921–1944), Raška Gora
67. Janjić (Ilija) Risto (1873–1944), Raška Gora
68. Janjić (Mijo) Risto (1913–1941), Goranci
69. Janjić (Vaso) Rosa (1882–1944), Raška Gora
70. Janjić (Pero) Rosa (1882–1944), Raška Gora
71. Janjić (Šćepan) Rosa (1887–1944), Raška Gora
72. Janjić (Jovo) Sava (1921–1944), Raška Gora
73. Janjić (Savo) Sava (1900–1944), Raška Gora
74. Janjić (Milan) Sekul (1937–1944), Raška Gora
75. Janjić (Simo) Simića (1925–1944), Raška Gora
76. Janjić (Pero) Simo (1882–1944), Raška Gora
77. Janjić (Šćepo) Simo (1921–1944), Željuša
78. Janjić (Đuro) Soka (1919–1944), Raška Gora
79. Janjić (Savo) Sofija (1939–1944), Raška Gora

80. Janjić (Janko) Spasoje (1930–1944), Raška Gora
81. Janjić (Risto) Stoja (1903–1944), Raška Gora
82. Janjić (Janko) Stojan (1937–1944), Raška Gora
83. Janjić (Lazar) Stojan (1900–1941), Jasenovac
84. Janjić (Mitar) Todora (1885–1944), Raška Gora
85. Janjić (Mićo) Tripo (1874–1944), Raška Gora
86. Janjić (Mićo) Četko (1931–1944), Raška Gora
87. Janjić (Nikola) Cvijeta (1886–1944), Raška Gora
88. Janjić (Lazo) Šćepo (1931–1944), Raška Gora
89. Janjić (Simo) Šćepo (1930–1944), Raška Gora

Raštani (Mostar-Sela)

1. Vujinović (Đuro) Anđelko (1907–1941), Mostar
2. Vujinović (Đuro) Špiro (1901–1941), Mostar
3. Đurasović (Milan) Anđelko (1933–1944), Raštani
4. Đurasović (Panto) Vladoje (1904–1941), Mostar
5. Đurasović (Milan) Danica (1927–1944), Raštani
6. Đurasović (Milutin) Danica (1910–1942), Nevesinje
7. Đurasović (Nikola) Danica (1902–1942), Kifino Selo, Nevesinje
8. Đurasović (Jovo) Darinka (1903–1942), Kifino Selo, Nevesinje
9. Đurasović (Lazar) Darinka (1898–1942), Nevesinje
10. Đurasović (Janjoš) Jelka (1919–1942), Donja Drežnica
11. Đurasović (Lazar) Milica (1889–1944), Raštani
12. Đurasović (Janjoš) Obren (1923–1942), Jablanica
13. Đurasović (Todor) Sava (1907–1941), Mostar
14. Zurovac (Jovan) Ljubo (1908–1941), Jadovno
15. Krzman (Vaso) Anđelko (1938–1944), Raštani
16. Krzman (Jovo) Borika (1939–1944), Raštani
17. Krzman (Mijat) Vidosava (1912–1944), Raštani

18. Krzman (Milan) Darinka (1908–1944), Raštani
19. Krzman (Jovo) Jovanka (1930–1944), Raštani
20. Krzman (Simo) Lazo (1901–1941), Jasenovac
21. Krzman (Jovo) Ljubica (1941–1944), Raštani
22. Krzman (Šćepan) Ljubica (1928–1944), Raštani
23. Krzman (Mišo) Mara (1878–1944), Raštani
24. Krzman (Šćepan) Mara (1906–1944), Raštani
25. Krzman (Miloš) Momčilo (1943–1944), Raštani
26. Krzman (Simo) Nikola (1914–1941), Jadovno
27. Krzman (Jovo) Petar (1934–1944), Raštani
28. Krzman (Jovo) Risto (1944–1944), Raštani
29. Krzman (Todor) Sava (1907–1944), Raštani
30. Krzman (Janko) Sara (1910–1944), Raštani
31. Krzman (Miloš) Smilja (1936–1944), Raštani
32. Krzman (Todor) Spasoje (1898–1941), Mostar
33. Krzman (Tošo) Staka (1903–1944), Raštani
34. Krzman (Vaso) Stoja (1942–1944), Raštani
35. Krzman (Milan) Uroš (1940–1944), Raštani
36. Krzman (Jovo) Cvijeta (1937–1944), Raštani
37. Kunovac (Jefto) Jovanka (1902–1943), Raštani
38. Kunovac (Todor) Jovo (1917–1941), Doboj
39. Savić (Savo) Janko (1907–1941), Mostar
40. Savić (Risto) Milan (1912–1941), Mostar
41. Savić (Savo) Mitar (1903–1941), Mostar
42. Savić (Jovo) Nikola (1914–1942), Mostar
43. Savić (Nikola) Risto (1876–1943), Raštani
44. Savić (Ilija) Spaso (1872–1944), Mostar
45. Savić (Savo) Uroš (1894–1941), Mostar
46. Savić (Simo) Čedo (1923–1941), Mostar

47. Savić (Spasoje) Šćepo (1906–1941), Mostar
48. Trifković (Lazar) Branko (1914–1941), Jadovno
49. Trifković (Mićo) Dušan (1895–1941), Jadovno

Rodoč (Mostar-Sela)

1. Glogovac (Pero) Lazo (1892–1941), Jadovno

Slipčiči (Mostar-Sela)

1. Janjić Rista (?–1945), Slipčiči
2. Janjić (Šćepo) Spaso (1896–1941)
3. Škoro (Dušan) Vlatko (1893–1941), Jadovno
4. Škoro (Janko) Lazo (1895–1941), Slipčiči
5. Škoro (Šćepo) Marko (1908–1941), Jasenovac
6. Škoro (Uroš) Milan (1909–1941), Sarajevo
7. Škoro (Kojo) Simo (1891–1941), Jadovno

Hodbina (Blagaj)

1. Bovan (Trifko) Nikola (1890–1944), Hodbina
2. Bovan (Trifko) Savo (1899–1943), Buna
3. Bošković (Simo) Bogoljub (1905–1942), Buna
4. Bošković (Pavle) Miho (1890–1942), Buna
5. Vuković (Spasoje) Boško (1898–1941), Hodbina
6. Vuković (Savo) Lazo (1902–1941), Mostar
7. Vuković (Boško) Slavko (1923–1941), Hodbina
8. Vuković (Spasoje) Trifko (1903–1941), Hodbina
9. Glavaš (Simo) Jovo (1856–1944), Hodbina
10. Glavaš (Vukan) Savo (1893–1941)
11. Glavaš (Miško) Savo (1884–1941), Hodbina
12. Đonlez (Spasoje) Jovo (1886–1944), Mostar

13. Marić (Risto) Jovo (1905–1941), Mostar
14. Matković (Luka) Svetko (1911–1941), Šurmanci, Čapljina
15. Medan Milka (1890–1943), Jasenovac
16. Palavestra (Simo) Đuro (1914–1941), Hodbina
17. Palavestra (Risto) Savo (1908–1941), Hodbina
18. Palavestra (Mitar) Spasoje (1888–1941), Jasenovac
19. Spajić (Jovan) Dušan (1906–1941), Jadovno
20. Stević (Đuro) Janko (1920–1943), Podvelež
21. Crnogorac (Savo) Rade (1916–1942), Potoci

Humilišani (Bijelo Polje)

1. Golubović (Luka) Lazo (1896–1941), Jadovno
2. Golubović (Lazo) Marko (1921–1941), Potoci
3. Dabić (Jovo) Đorđo (1891–1941), Jadovno
4. Dabić (Đorđe) Milenko (1916–1941), Jadovno
5. Dabić (Marko) Simo (1887–1941), Jadovno
6. Kalem (Lazo) Mihajlo (1882–1941)
7. Pejak (Pero) Vojin (1922–1942), Humilišani
8. Pejak (Pero) Gojko (1916–1942), Humilišani
9. Pejak (Tripo) Pero (1877–1942), Humilišani
10. Pejak (Luka) Rajko (1921–1941), Vidonja, Čitluk
11. Tovarišić (Tomo) Janko (1914–1941)

Čerin (Gornje Brotnjo)

1. Ognjenović (Mile) Mirko (1931–1942)

Čitluk (Donje Brotnjo)

1. Blanuša (Pero) Anda (?–1943), Jasenovac
2. Grbić (Teodor) Mikan (1926–1942), Bosanska Kostajnica

3. Grbić (Mićo) Milan (1899–1942), Bosanska Kostajnica
4. Grbić (Teodor) Miloš (1933–1942), Bosanska Kostajnica
5. Grbić (Teodor) Mićo (1924–1942), Bosanska Kostajnica
6. Grbić Stevanija (1903–1942), Bosanska Kostajnica
7. Grbić (Mićo) Teodor (1894–1942), Čitluk
8. Grbić (Mihailo) Trivun (1897–1942), Bosanska Kostajnica
9. Đenadija (Trivun) Jovo (1922–1942), Jasenovac
10. Đenadija (Petar) Pero (1924–1942), Kozara
11. Keća (Đuro) Milica (1908–1942), Kozara
12. Rikalo (Simo) Ilija (1905–1941), Mostar

DOCUMENTS

1.

Kotarska oblast u Mostaru

Broj: 413/41

Mostar, 27. svibnja 1941

PREDMET: Hrvatske vojske dolazak u Mostar

OKRUŽNICA

Po naredenju Ustaškog stožera u Mostaru, a povodom dolaska Hrvatske vojske u Mostar na dan 28. ovog mjeseca u 3/4 na 16 časova izvolite sa svim podređenim osobljem prisustvovati toj svečanosti.

Za starješine sviju nadleštava odnosno njihove zakonite zamjenike određeno je mjesto na lijevoj strani od tribine na Rondo-u.

U koliko je koji činovnik Vašega nadleštva član kojeg uzvanog društva prisustvovati će svečanosti sa svojim društvom, dok svi ostali državni i samoupravni službenici imadu se smjestiti na pločniku (trotoaru) od Realne Gimnazije do Rondo-a sa objiju strana.

Svaki treba da bude na svome mjestu do tačno na 3/4 na 16 časova, iza kojega vremena biti će pristup proslavi zatvoren.

Svi državni i samoupravni službenici ovoj proslavi moraju prisustvovati, osim redovitih dežurstava.

Za starješine nadleštava prigodom proslave obvezno je tamno odijelo, a za uzvane starješine i činovnike banketu u večer svečano.

Izvolite potvrditi na dostavnom arku primitak ove okružnice.

KOTARSKI PREDSTOJNIK
(potpis nečitak)

District Area in Mostar

No: 413/41

Mostar, May 27th 1941

SUBJECT: Arrival of the Croatian Army in Mostar

CIRCULAR

By order of the Ustasha headquarters in Mostar, and on the occasion of the arrival of the Croatian Army in Mostar on the 28th of this month at 3/4 past 4 PM, you are kindly requested to attend this ceremony with all subordinate staff.

For the heads of all offices or their lawful deputies, the designated place is on the left side of the tribune at the Rondo.

If any officer of your office is a member of any of the societies invited, they will attend the ceremony with that society, while all other state and municipal officials are to stand on the sidewalk from the Real Gymnasium to Rondo on both sides.

Everyone should be in their place exactly at 3/4 past 4 PM, after which time entry to the celebration will be closed.

All state and municipal officials must attend this celebration, except for those on regular duty.

For the heads of offices, dark suits are mandatory for the celebration, and formal attire is required for the heads and officers invited to the evening banquet.

Please confirm that you have received this circular on the delivery note.

DISTRICT CHIEF
(signature illegible)

2.

Su: 619/41

GG. Govedarica Sergije,
Ivanišević Dr Ljubomir,
Petrić Boro
Šain Dr Ilija

Prema naknadnom naređenju Ustaškog povjerenstva kod dočeka vojske nemaju sudjelovati činovnici Srbi.

Mostar, 28. svibnja 1941.

Predsjednik sudbenog stola
(potpis nečitak)

Ref: 619/41

Mr. Govedarica Sergije,
Dr. Ivanisevic Ljubomir,
Mr. Petric Boro,
Dr. Sain Ilija

According to the subsequent order of the Ustasha Commission, Serbian officials are not to participate in the reception for the army.

Mostar, May 28th 1941.

President of the Judicial Table
(signature illegible)

3.

KOTARSKA OBLAST U MOSTARU.

Br. 837/41

Mostar, 11. lipnja 1941

PREDMET: Proslava Imendana Poglavnika Dr. Ante Pavelića

Svim državnim i saoupravnim uredima,
društvima i ustanovama
u gradu Mostaru

Dana 13. lipnja 1941 godine cijeli Hrvatski narod prvi put u oslobođenoj zemlji proslaviti će Imendan Poglavnika Nezavisne Države Hrvatske Dr. Ante Pavelića.

Proslava u gradu Mostaru održat će se ovim redom:

- 1) Budnica Hrvatske glazbe u 6 sati ujutro,
- 2) U 8 sati Dova u Karadžozbegovoj džamiji,
- 3) U 9 sati svečana Misa u ovdašnjoj Nadžupskoj crkvi,
- 4) U 10 sati svečana akademija u prostorijama H. P. D. „Hrvoja”
- 5) U 11 sati mimohod Hrvatske i Italijanske vojske na trgu ‘slobode”
- 6) Na večer u 7 sati na trgu „Slobode” koncert Hrvatske glazbe.

Pomenutog dana od 8 do 10 sati prije podne imaju biti zatvorene sve radnje, a gostione cijelo prije podne do 12 sati.

Dostavljajući Vam prednje na znanje, molim, da svi uredi, društva i ustanove grada Mostara izvole uzeti učešća u proslavi Imendana Poglavnika Dr. Ante Pavelića, te da svim svečanostima izvole prisustvovati službenici hrvatske narodnosti.

KOTARSKI PREDSTOJNIK
(potpis nečitak)

DISTRICT AREA IN MOSTAR
No. 837/41 Mostar, June 11th 1941

SUBJECT: Celebration of the Name Day of Leader Dr. Ante Pavelić

To all state and self-governing offices,
Associations, and institutions
in the city of Mostar

On June 13th 1941, the entire Croatian nation will celebrate for the first time in the liberated country the Name Day of the Leader of the Independent State of Croatia, Dr. Ante Pavelić.

The celebration in the city of Mostar will take place according to the following schedule:

- 1) Croatian Music Reveille at 6 a.m.
- 2) At 8 a.m., Dova at the Karadoz Bey Mosque
- 3) At 9 a.m., Solemn Mass at the local Parish Church
- 4) At 10 a.m., Solemn Academy in the premises of H.P.D. "Hrvoje"
- 5) At 11 a.m., Parade of Croatian and Italian armies at "Freedom" Square
- 6) In the evening at 7 p.m., Concert of Croatian Music at "Freedom" Square

On the mentioned day, from 8 to 10 a.m., all shops must be closed, and taverns for the entire morning until 12 noon.

Informing you of the above, I request that all offices, associations, and institutions in the city of Mostar participate in the celebration of the Name Day of Leader Dr. Ante Pavelić and that all Croatian nationality officials attend all ceremonies.

DISTRICT PREFECT
(illegible signature)

4.

NEZAVISNA DRŽAVA HRVATSKA
PREDSTOJNIŠTVO GRADSKOG REDARSTVA U MOSTARU

Broj: 5332/41.

Mostar, 27. lipnja 1941.

Predmet: Lješ nepoznatog, identifikovanje.

Državnom tužioštvu
Mostar

Jutros oko 7 sati izvučen je iz rijeke Neretve jedan muški lješ na mjestu više mosta Dmitra Zvonimira o čemu se naslov izvješćuje radi izaslanja sudske liječničke komisije.

Predstojnik redarstva:
(potpis nečitak)

INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA
HEADQUARTERS OF THE CITY POLICE IN MOSTAR

No. 5332/41

Mostar, June 27th 1941

Subject: Body of unknown person, identification

To the State Prosecutor Mostar

This morning around 7 o'clock, the body of an unidentified male was retrieved from the Neretva River at a location upstream from the Dmtar Zvonimir Bridge. The office is notified to send a forensic medical commission.

Head of Police:
(Illegible signature)

5.

NEZAVISNA DRŽAVA HRVATSKA
PREDSTOJNIŠTVO GRADSKOG REDARSTVA U MOSTARU

Broj: 5502/41.

Mostar, 3. srpnja 1941.

Predmet: Lješ nepoznatog, identifikovanje

DRŽAVNOM TUŽIOŠTVU

Mostar

Danas oko 16 sati nađen je na obali rijeke Neretve na mjestu zvana 'skakala" jedan leš nepoznatog lica zatrpan u pržinu tako da mu se vide ramena i bedra.

Dotični leš nalazi se još na istom mjestu, pa molim da se izašalje sudsko liječnička komisija na lice mjesta.

Sa ovim izvještajem upućuje se redar Perić Adam koji znade mjesto gdje se dotični leš nalazi.

Predstojnik redarstva:
(potpis nečitak)

HEADQUARTERS OF THE CITY POLICE IN MOSTAR

Number: 5502/41.

Mostar, July 3rd 1941.

Subject: Body of an unidentified person, identification

TO THE STATE PROSECUTOR

Mostar

Today around 4 PM, a body of an unidentified person was found on the bank of the Neretva River at a place known as 'skakala", buried in the sand with only the shoulders and thighs visible.

The body remains at the same location, so I request that a judicial medical commission be sent to the scene.

With this report, Officer Perić Adam is being sent, as he knows the location where the body is found.

Chief of Police: (illegible signature)

6.

POSEBNI OPUNOMOĆENIK POGLAVNIKA

V. T. Br. 40

5. lipnja 1941 godine

Mostar

ZAPOVJEDNIKU KOPNE NE VOJSKE NA RUKE
PUKOVNIKU GOSPODINU LULIĆU

Savezno mojim dosadašnjim usmenim i pismenim izvještajima javljam slijedeće:

Malo dana poslije preuzimanja povjerene mi vojne uprave od Poglavnika u područjima velikih župa Hum i Dubrava bio sam u mogućnosti da pri hladnom rasmatranju i daleko od svakog stranog uticaja dobijem o prošlim događajima slijedeću sliku.

Nemiri u Hercegovini, nezadovoljstvo i utučenost pučanstva bili su, prema izjavama svih slojeva pučanstva, najvećim dijelom izazvani divljačkim i nečovječnim postupcima „TAKO ZVANIH Ustaša”.

Prilikom organiziranja ustaških postrojbi uzimalo se je ljudstvo bez ikakvog izbora. Komunisti, notorni alkoholičari i t.d. napravljeni su preko noći Ustašama, i ne treba se tako čuditi, što je došlo do tako ne ugodnih ispada.

Ja sam zbog toga već u prvim danima zapovjedio, da se ovi ljudi / Ustaše/ kaserniraju i da predaju oružje, koje da im se izdaje samo onda kada vrše službu.

Ove „TAKO ZVANE Ustaše” pogazile su nogama uzvišene ideale ustaškog pokreta, podkopale njegov ugled i navukle mržnju pučanstvu.

Za vrijeme „ustaškog režima” nije bio ni jedan činovnik ni jedan časnik, niti građanin, ni jedna žena pa ni dijete danju ni noću sigurno za svoj život. Ove Ustaše pustošili su svuda gdje bi upali. Mnogi od ovih ljudi-Ustaše-hvalili su se koliko su ljudi pobili, koliko su ljudi tukli i zlostavljali do smrti. Muškarci i žene bili su bez izbora odvlačeni u zatvore, a da im se nije mogao dokazati ni najmanji prestup. Tako „ZVANE Ustaše” drsko tvrde, da su oni „očistili prostor”: Gacko-Avtovac-Bileće-Nevesinje i da su time učinili velike usluge Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj. Oni vjerovahu, da su svoju zadaću izvršili krvoprolićem, a ne misle, da su uklonili samo jedan dio ljudi, a naprotiv najveći dio srpskog pučanstva iz straha pobjegao je sa oružjem u krševе, planine i šume, riješen da radije umre smrću dostojnom čovjeka, nego da bude kod kuće zlostavljan i tučen bez svijesti.

Najvećim dijelom Ustaše snose krivicu za sadašnje nemire, koji nemiri moraju biti u klici ugušivani od mlade Hrvatske vojske, što je do sada zahtjevalo više žrtava, a zahtjevaće ih i dalje.

Predstavnici državnih i ostalih vlasti, organi oružništva i tako dalje bili su postupcima Ustaša potisnuti u stranu, uplašeni i pokolebani, da se nijesu osuđivali oduprijeti divljanju ovih ljudi.

Ustaše su tvrdile, da rade po zapovjedi organizacije iz Zagreba i da im se mora pokoravati. Predstavnici vlasti i drugi bijahu toliko moralno utučeni, da iz straha pred Ustašama o događajima nisu slali nikakove izvještaje. Na jedan prikladan, ali oštar način ja sam ovim predstavnicima predočio njihovo ne dostojno i ne muško držanje u ulozi šefova, glavara i teškom mukom uspjelo mi je uvjeriti ih, da je u mjesto režima sile i bez zakonja sada došao režim zakona i pravednosti i ako oni u budućе ne budu poduzimali sve potrebne mjere i korake, da samovolja i bez zakonja spriječe, to ću i protiv njih postupiti u smislu moga proglašenja i po ratnim zakonima. /prilog broj 1/

Ugledni građani, svećenstvo, činovnici, pa čak i ozbiljni Ustaša tužili su se na postupke i držanje ovih „NAZOVI Ustaša”, koji su potpuno ne disciplinirani. Prave Ustaše sami kažu, da i među njima nema

suglasnosti i da će ove na brzu ruku prikupljene ljude razoružati i od-pustiti.

Smatram, da ne smijem propustiti, a da ne naglasim, da su postupci Ustaša učinili također težak i mučan utisak na našu mladu vojsku. U Nevesinju bili su od strane Ustaša /nadporučnik Franjo Sudar/ u podrumu jedne zgrade ljudi do bezsvjesti tučeni i u zatvoru strojnom puškom poubijani. Nije bila laka stvar uticati na naše mlade vojnike, da oni sami ne upotrijebe silu protiv ovih krvožednih ljudi.

Sa proglašenjem opsadnog stanja i prijekog suda prilike su se poboljšale, i samo u noći od 30/VI na 1/VII u Ljubuškom dogodio se nemio slučaj /kao što se vidi iz prepisa pisma prilog 2/, da je veći broj ljudi opet poubijan. Mesar Osmić iz Ljubuškog uhićen je i slučaj je pre-dan sudcu istražitelju.

Suglasno svemu iznijeto neka mi je dopušteno da kažem slijedeće:

1) Ja sam duboko osvjedočen, a i sa sviju strana to se potvrđuje, da nije bilo u smislu zapovjedi Poglavnikove već noću 27. lipnja tek. godine proglašeno opsadno stanje i prijeki sud, došlo bi na Vidovdan 28/VI do jednog općeg krvoprolića, koje bi moglo za sobom povući naj neugodnije posledice.

2) Potrebno je i dalje pojačati Jadransko divizijsko područje sa: 2 bojnice pješaštva, nekoliko baterija topništva, teškim strojopuščanim satnijama, bacačima mina. Baterije i bacači svojom dobro uparenom vatrom mogu lako čistiti gnjezda ustanka i otpora od pobunjenika i nezadovoljnika.

3) Sve vojne akcije protiv pobunjenika moraju se izvoditi polako i metodično, da bi se gubitci sveli na namjanju mjeru.

Naši domobrani koji dolaze iz ravnice, nakon kratke izobrazbe ne poznavajući ovdašnje zemljišne teškoće niti gerilski način ratovanja sa vojnički organizovanim bandama, mogu kod najmanjih iznenadenja podleći panici.

4) U državnom je interesu, da vojnička uprava ostane duže vremena na jadranskom divizijskom području zbog uzroka koje sam izložio, kao i zbog toga što vojska uživa povjerenje pučanstva.

5) Da bi se u ovim krajevima uspostavio potpuni mir trebalo bi

raspustiti sadanju ad hoc organizaciju Ustaša i organizirat je iznova, i to od ljudi koji su dostojni ideala ustaškog pokreta u svakom pogledu.

POSEBNI OPUNOMOĆENIK POGLAVNIKA
PODMARŠAL:
Laxa, s. r.

SPECIAL COMMISSIONER OF THE LEADER
V.T. No. 40
June 5th 1941
Mostar

TO THE COMMANDER OF THE GROUND FORCES,
ATTENTION COLONEL MR. LULIĆ

In accordance with my previous oral and written reports, I submit the following:

A few days after taking over the entrusted military administration from the Leader in the areas of the large counties of Hum and Dubrava, I was able to get the following picture of past events through calm consideration and far from any foreign influence.

The unrest in Herzegovina, the dissatisfaction, and the depression of the population were, according to statements from all sections of the population, largely caused by the savage and inhuman actions of the 'SO-CALLED Ustasha'.

When organizing the Ustasha units, people were taken without any selection. Communists, notorious alcoholics, etc., were overnight made into Ustasha, so it is not surprising that such unpleasant incidents occurred.

Therefore, I ordered in the first days that these people (Ustasha) be quartered and that they hand over their weapons, which would only be issued to them when they are on duty.

These ‘SO-CALLED Ustasha’ trampled on the lofty ideals of the Ustasha movement, undermined its reputation, and aroused the hatred of the population.

During the “Ustasha regime,” there was not a single official, officer, citizen, woman, or child whose life was safe, day or night. These Ustasha ravaged everywhere they went. Many of these people-Ustasha-boasted about how many people they had killed, how many they had beaten and mistreated to death. Men and women were indiscriminately dragged into prisons without the slightest offense being proven. These ‘SO-CALLED Ustasha’ brazenly claimed that they had “cleared the area”: Gacko-Avtovac-Bileće-Nevesinje and that they had rendered great services to the Independent State of Croatia. They believed that they had fulfilled their task through bloodshed, not considering that they had removed only a part of the people, while the majority of the Serbian population fled with weapons to the karst, mountains, and forests, resolved to die a death worthy of a human rather than being beaten and mistreated at home.

The Ustasha are largely to blame for the current unrest, which must be nipped in the bud by the young Croatian army, which has so far required more sacrifices and will require more in the future.

Representatives of state and other authorities, law enforcement officials, and others were sidelined by the actions of the Ustasha, frightened and shaken, unable to resist the rampage of these people.

The Ustasha claimed they were acting on orders from the organization in Zagreb and had to be obeyed. Representatives of the authorities and others were so morally crushed that they sent no reports about

the events out of fear of the Ustasha. In a suitable but sharp manner, I pointed out to these representatives their unworthy and unmanly behavior in their roles as chiefs and leaders, and with great difficulty, I managed to convince them that instead of the regime of force and lawlessness, there was now a regime of law and justice, and if in the future they did not take all necessary measures and steps to prevent arbitrariness and lawlessness, I would act against them in the sense of my proclamation and according to the laws of war. (attachment number 1)

Prominent citizens, clergy, officials, and even serious Ustasha complained about the actions and behavior of these ‘SO-CALLED Ustasha’, who were completely undisciplined. The true Ustasha themselves say that there is no unity among them and that these hastily gathered people should be disarmed and dismissed.

I believe I must emphasize that the actions of the Ustasha have also made a severe and painful impression on our young army. In Nevesinje, Ustasha (Lieutenant Franjo Sudar) beat people to unconsciousness in the basement of a building and shot them in prison with a machine gun. It was not easy to convince our young soldiers to not use force against these bloodthirsty people.

With the declaration of martial law and the court-martial, the situation has improved, and only on the night of June 30th to July 1st in Ljubuški did an unpleasant incident occur (as seen from the copy of the letter, attachment 2), where a larger number of people were killed again. The butcher Osmić from Ljubuški was arrested, and the case was handed over to the investigative judge.

According to all the above, I am allowed to state the following:

1. I am deeply convinced, and it is confirmed from all sides, that if martial law and court-martial had not been declared on the night of June 27th this year by the order of the Leader, a general blood-

shed would have occurred on Vidovdan, June 28th which could have had the most unpleasant consequences.

2 It is necessary to further reinforce the Adriatic divisional area with: 2 infantry battalions, several artillery batteries, heavy machine gun companies, and mortar launchers. Batteries and mortars, with their well-coordinated fire, can easily clear rebel strongholds from resistances, insurgents and malcontents.

3. All military actions against the rebels must be carried out slowly and methodically to minimize losses. Our soldiers, who come from the plains, after short training, unfamiliar with the local terrain difficulties and guerrilla warfare tactics with militarily organized bands, can succumb to panic at the slightest surprise.

4. It is in the state's interest for the military administration to remain in the Adriatic divisional area for an extended period due to the reasons I have outlined, as well as because the army enjoys the trust of the population.

5. To establish complete peace in these areas, the current ad hoc organization of the Ustasha should be dissolved and reorganized with people worthy of the ideals of the Ustasha movement in every respect.

SPECIAL COMMISSIONER OF THE POGHLAVNIK
DEPUTY-MARSHAL:

Laxa, s. r.

7.

PREDSTOJNIŠTVO GRADSKOG REDARSTVA U MOSTARU

Broj: 584/1941 god.

14. srpnja 1941 god.

DRŽAVNOM TUŽIOŠTVU
u MOSTARU

Danas 14 srpnja 1941 god. u 9.40 sati, telefonom je izvješteno ovo Predstojništvo od strane Kuzele Dragutina, poručnika, nadzornika vojarnje „Južnog logora“, da je voda iz Neretve izbacila jedan ljudski leš.

Na osnovu prednje dojave poslat je na lice mjesta jedan redarstveni stražar, a Vas se izvještava radi znanja i dalje nadležnosti.

ZA DOM SPREMNI!

Predstojnik grad. redarstva
Povjerenik,
(potpis nečitak)

HEADQUARTERS OF THE CITY POLICE IN MOSTAR

Number: 584/1941

July 14, 1941

TO THE STATE PROSECUTOR
IN MOSTAR

Today, July 14th 1941, at 9:40 AM, this Headquarters was informed by telephone by Dragutin Kuzela, lieutenant, overseer of the ‘southern Camp’ barracks, that the river Neretva had washed up a human corpse.

Based on the aforementioned report, a police guard was sent to the scene, and you are being informed for your knowledge and further jurisdiction.

FOR THE HOMELAND READY!

Chief of City Police
Commissioner,
(illegible signature)

8.

SUDBENOM STOLU U MOSTARU

Moj muž Pantelija Papić bivši zrakoplovni narednik nestao je po prilici 21 dan a prije dva dana njegovu lješinu izbacila je Neretva u Mostaru kod malte Luka.

Sudska komisija izvršila je očevid na licu mjesta pa je preko svjedoka u lješini prepoznala osobu moga muža Panteliju Papića.

Molim sud da mi o tome izda uvjerenje kako bi mogla od vojnih vlasti podići šestomjesečnu otpremninu.

U Mostaru 16. VII 1941

Krista Papić, s. r.

TO THE COURT IN MOSTAR

My husband, Pantelija Papić, a former aviation sergeant, has been missing for approximately 21 days, and two days ago, his corpse was washed up by the Neretva in Mostar near the Luka mill.

A judicial commission conducted an inspection at the scene and, through witnesses, identified the body as that of my husband, Pantelija Papić.

I request that the court issue me a certificate of this so that I can claim a six-month severance payment from the military authorities.

Mostar, July 16th 1941

Krista Papić, s. r.

9.

SUDBENOM STOLU
MOSTAR

Otprilike prije jedan do dva mjeseca izbacila je rijeka Neretva jedan muški lješ na obalu, pa je taj sud obavio očevid na licu mjesta kao i obdukciju nadenog leša. Sud je poveo kaznene izvide protiv nepoznatom Kzp: 235/41.

Saznao sam da je sud utvrdio indentitet izbačenog lješa i da je to bio lješ Milana Šotrića špeditera iz Mostara.

Molim sud da mi na osnovu podataka u spisu Kzp: 235/41. izda potvrdu o smrti Milana Šotrića špeditera iz Mostara, kako bi na osnovu ove potvrde mogao kod Kotarskog suda u Mostaru zatražiti da se iza istog povede ostavinska rasprava i službeno utvrdi ko su njegovi nasljednici, jer mi je ova stvar vrlo potrebna.

Dr. Ivan Kordić, odvjetnik

TO THE COURT
MOSTAR

Approximately one to two months ago, the Neretva River washed up a the corpse of a male on the river bank, and this court conducted an on-site investigation as well as an autopsy of the body found. The court initiated a criminal investigation against an unknown individual under case number Kzp: 235/41.

I have learned that the court has identified the washed-up body as that of Milan Šotrić, a freight forwarder from Mostar.

I request that the court issue me a death certificate for Milan Šotrić, a freight forwarder from Mostar, based on the information in case file Kzp: 235/41, so that I can request the District Court in Mostar to initiate probate proceedings and officially determine his heirs, as this matter is very important to me.

Dr. Ivan Kordić, attorney

10.

Predstojništvo gradskog redarstva u Mostaru

POZIV SRBIMA

Pozivaju se svi SRBI sa članovima svojih porodica čija prezimena po redarstvenom popisu počimlju sa slovima A i B, da se danas 14. o. m. u 10 sati navečer sakupe na željezničkoj postaji radi iseljenja u SRBIJU. Vlak iseljenika krenuti će točno u 11 sati navečer.

Iseljenici imaju pravo sobom ponijeti 50. kg. prtljage po osobi te sav svoj novac i sve svoje dragocjenosti.

Svi gore navedeni, koji su dužni odputovati današnjim iseljeničkim vlakom, moraju prije odlaska na kolodvor svoje stanove zaključati i ključeve uz naznaku prezimena, ulice i kućnoga broja predati predstojništvu ovoga redarstva soba br. 5.

Svi koji se ovome pozivu ne odazovu te pokušaju odbjeći ili sakriti se, po pronalasku biti će uhapšeni i najstrožije kažnjeni.

Zabranjuje se svima i svakome pod najstrožijom kaznom primati bilo što od Srba na poklon, pohranu, ili obračun u naravi kao i za iste, koji se moraju iseliti, bilo intervenirati ili ih prikrivati.

Naročito strogom kaznom biti će kažnjeni oni SRBI, koji pokušaju svoju pokretnu ili nepokretnu imovinu na bilo koji način oštetiti.

Iseljenje se imade obaviti u najvećem miru i redu.

ZA DOM SPREMNI!

Dano u Mostaru 14. kolovoza 1941.

Predstojnik redarstva
Krtalić, v. r.

Headquarters of the City Police in Mostar

NOTICE TO ALL SERBS

All SERBS, along with their family members, whose surnames begin with the letters A and B according to the police list, are hereby summoned to gather today, the 14th of this month, at 10 PM at the railway station for relocation to SERBIA. The emigrant train will depart precisely at 11 PM.

Emigrants are entitled to bring 50 kg of luggage per person, as well as all their money and valuables.

All the aforementioned individuals, who are required to depart on today's emigrant train, must lock their apartments and hand over the keys, with a note of their surname, street, and house number, to room no. 5 at the headquarters of this police station before going to the station.

Anyone who does not comply with this summons and attempts to flee or hide will be arrested and severely punished upon discovery.

It is strictly forbidden for anyone to receive any gifts, deposits, or barter from Serbs, or to intervene or conceal those who must relocate, under the most severe penalties.

Those SERBS who attempt to damage their movable or immovable property in any way will be particularly severely punished.

The relocation must be carried out in the utmost peace and order.

FOR THE HOMELAND READY!

Given in Mostar, August 14th 1941.

Chief of Police

Krtalić, v. r.

11.

NEZAVISNA DRŽAVA HRVATSKA
MINISTARSTVO PRAVOSUĐA I BOGOŠTOVLJA

Broj 53.839–1941

Zagreb, 16. kolovoza 1941.

SVIM SUDOVIIMA I PRAVOSUDNIM USTANOVAMA.

Povodom upuita jednog Kotarskog suda, kako se ima postupati sa zahtjevima izseljenika Srba povodom njihova izseljavanja za izručenje pupilnog novca i dragocjenosti položenih u depozitnim mjestima, određuje se:

Priedlozi, molbe ili traženja izseljenika Srba povodom njihova izseljavanja, da im se izruči sav pupilni novac i dragocjenosti, imadu se odbiti.

Prema okružnici Državnog ravnateljstva za ponovu od 29. srpnja 1941. broj P. tk. 18/2641–1941. izseljenici Srbi mogu ponieti sobom sav svoj gotov novac, dragocjenosti, vrijednostne papire, uložnice, knjižice i to koje se nalaze kod njih, – i to samo do sabirnih logora, – gdje će te sve vrijednosti – izuzevši stanovitu svotu gotovog novca – biti oduzete u svrhu pohrane i daljnje odredbe, kako će se s njima postupati.

Ova okružnica ne obuhvaća pupilni i drugi novac i dragocjenosti, koje se nalaze u depozitnim mjestima, – pa se stoga takav novac i dragocjenosti ne smiju izdavati na traženje izseljenicima Srbima.

Po odredbi ministra
pravosuđa i bogoštolja
pročelnik odjela:

u z.

(potpis nečitak)

INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

Number 53.839–1941

Zagreb, August 16th 1941

TO ALL COURTS AND JUDICIAL INSTITUTIONS

In response to an inquiry from a District Court on how to handle requests from Serbian emigrants regarding their emigration for the return of custodial money and valuables deposited in depository locations, it is determined:

Proposals, petitions, or requests from Serbian emigrants regarding their emigration for the return of all custodial money and valuables are to be denied.

According to the circular of the State Directorate for Renewal dated July 29th 1941, number P. tk. 18/2641–1941, Serbian emigrants may take with them all their cash, valuables, securities, deposit books, and similar items that are in their possession—up to the assembly camps—where all these valuables, except for a certain amount of cash, will be confiscated for safekeeping and further determination on how they will be handled.

This circular does not include custodial and other money and valuables that are in depository locations, and therefore, such money and valuables are not to be issued to the Serbian emigrants upon their request.

By order of the Minister
of Justice and Religious Affairs
Head of Department:
on behalf
(illegible signature)

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Milan Gulić

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