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**After the traces of our neighbors:  
Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the  
Holocaust**

Sarajevo, 2015

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Special thanks goes to project director Dr. Heidemarie Uhl and the other colleagues at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, for the continuous support and faith in the successful implementation throughout the entire work on this book as part of the project “After the traces of our neighbors: Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Holocaust”.

# *Notes on Cultural Memory...*

The Holocaust marks, in a way, the deepest wound of the history of modernity, a kind of “rupture in civilization” (Ger. “Zivilisationsbruch”) - as explained by Dan Diner - in the development of the modern society. Since the beginning of the 21st century the January 27, unfortunately reminds us every year of the most radical antithesis to the values of democracy and human rights, which also represent the fundamentals of the European Union.

This new culture of remembrance of the Holocaust victims is a transnational phenomenon: a new generation - the historian Jay Winter speaks about the “generation of memory” - started to pose new questions to the “institution of history”, being a challenge for the political - national myths that after 1945 have defined the remembrance of World War II and of the Holocaust. In focus of these historical narratives was, as the victim of the War and National Socialism, the nation. However, towards the end of the 20th century a new perspective came to the light - the question “How was it possible that in European societies millions of people had been persecuted, dispelled, and killed?”

However, the European memory is not constructed only by the declaration and political speeches, but by and through its resonance in the societies’ remembrance practices. And not only the Holocausts’ victims monuments, built lately in many urban European centers, are referring to this resonance; the memory of the Holocaust is still the prick in the self-conception in today’s world. It touches, irritates, makes insecure, precisely because this crime had been planned, prepared and implemented out of the very center of the own societies. Exactly in such kind of historical awareness is the present European identity to be looked for.

In the 21st century the Holocaust has become a transnational European “place of memory” (Ger. “Gedächtnisort”). A new “generation of memory” is doing a great deal in the field of scientific and social “memory work” with the aim to integrate the often forgotten victims of the National Socialism persecution apparatus into the societal memory and remembrance practice, building at the same time new forms of societal cultural memory.

The book “After the traces of our neighbors: Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Holocaust”, written by Anisa Hasanhodžić and Rifet Rustemović, represents the valuable work of this new “generation of memory”. On the other hand, revealing the forgotten or unknown history of the Jewish communities in fifteen towns of Bosnia and Herzegovina and presenting its Jewish material and nonmaterial heritage, mostly completely lost in the Holocaust, it follows the previously mentioned European trends, giving the new dimensions for societal cultural memory and remembrance in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Balkan, and the European Union. This book is also connecting the scientific community as well as the societies, since it contains many information and documents that will make easier the future researches in this field, and also tells the stories of Jewish lives, the stories about our lost neighbors, Jews from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Therefore, the project “After the traces of our neighbors: Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Holocaust”, as a cooperation between Austria and Bosnia and Herzegovina stands for the future model of the transnational European cultural memory.

**Dr. Heidemarie Uhl**

Historian at the Austrian Academy of Sciences  
Director of the project “After the traces of our neighbors:  
Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Holocaust”

# *A word about the project*

*After the traces of our neighbors:*

*Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Holocaust*

**T**his project that was running from December 2013 to April 2015 was funded by the “Europe for Citizens Programme” of the European Union and by the Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture of the Republic of Austria (now: The Culture Division of the Federal Chancellery of Austria - Ger. Bundeskanzleramt der Republik Österreich, Kultursektion), with the aims to revive the Jewish history of Bosnia and Herzegovina and preserve its legacy. Material and non-material Jewish heritage in the cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina that was largely, and mostly, irreversibly destroyed during the Holocaust and then almost erased from the history and social cultural memory was researched during this project.

The project was officially added to the list of the best projects in the program “Europe for Citizens” for the period 2007 to 2013 by the Ministry of Education, Art and Culture of the Republic of Austria (BMUKK), with more details about the project announced in their official publication Best of ‘Europa für Bürgerinnen und Bürger 2007 - 2013’.

The results of project are presented in this monograph, as well as in the other project activities. For more information about the project please visit the project website: [www.jewsinbosnia.eu](http://www.jewsinbosnia.eu).



\* \* \* \* \*

Herewith, we express our thanks to the project partners:

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*High School SŠC “Milorad Vlačić”, Vlasenica (BA)*

## Neighbors to wish

*It is not up to you to complete the job,  
But neither are you entitled to give up on it!  
In a place where there are no men, strive to be one!*

*Mishna, Pirkei Avot (Sayings of the fathers)*

**J**ews of Bosnia and Herzegovina, traditionally mostly Sephardim, are a happy, relaxed and optimistic folk whose history is marked by two tragedies of biblical proportions: the Expulsion from Spain in 1492, on one - and the Holocaust, on the other side. In April 1941, there were about 14500 Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Less than 2000 survived the NDH occupation.

Having in mind the fact that Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina were distinctly urban and traditionally well educated population, it is not surprising that their great contribution to the development of Bosnia and Herzegovina is quite disproportionate to their small numbers in the interior of the country. Concerning Sarajevo itself, however, their number was anything but negligible. Just before World War II almost every sixth resident of this city was a Jew. During the NDH occupation, the criminal Ustaša regime changed forever the character of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its cities. The vast majority of Jews were brutally killed, some of those who survived moved away in 1948 to Israel, while those Jews who remained in Bosnia and Herzegovina already did not have the critical mass which would enable them to continue living as linguistically separated ethnic group in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, Ladino definitely died on the streets of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the urbicide and genocide brought about the languagecide. Only older members of our Jewish communities still remember the general omnipresence of the Jews in the visual culture of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Younger people who were exposed to the non-coherent 'attacks of memories' of the elders, but who, also, subconsciously, strived to protect themselves from the same, never received a coherent information that could possibly merge into unique combination of image and oral tradition (tone) in their minds. The book 'After the traces of our neighbors: Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Holocaust', written by Anisa Hasanhodžić and Rifet Rustemović is a touching, innovative and informative attempt to keep fragments of Bosnian and Herzegovinian Jewish memories and memories on

*Jews from Bosnia and Herzegovina alive, to take them from the oblivion away. Commitment of these two young and promising scientific workers to their extensive, undetectable - and, ultimately unenforceable task of recuperation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Jewish memories is evident on every page of their well - documented and highly 'experienced' (using existing literature with regard to) work as it is written in accordance with the dictum of the ancient sages of the people from Israel, who used to say 'It is not up to you to complete the job, but neither you are entitled to give up on it!' Anisa Hasanhodžić and Rifet Rustemović certainly have not finished the job, nor will anyone ever, but in the spirit of another rabbinic dictum: 'In a place where there are no men, strive to be one!', these two young persons have shown that they not owned to give it up, thus demonstrating the simple fact that the spirit of the neighborhood still has not died down in Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

*They say that one poor Sarajevo Jew was once asked by another Jew about 'udžerica' (an old house) that he had to sell for 2200 dinars in order to get rid of the debts. '2200 dinars for what?' asked him a potential buyer, 'this little house hardly worth of 200 dinars'. 'The house itself cost 200, but each neighbor costs 1000 dinars'- Muson answered.*

*In their commitment to the values of the former neighborhood Anisa Hasanhodžić and Rifet Rustemović are the neighbors that Jews from Bosnia and Herzegovina could only wish.*

**Prof. Dr. Eliezer Papo**

*Director of the Moshe David Gaon Centre for Sephardic Culture*

*Ben - Gurion University - Negev, Israel*

*Nonresident Rabbi of the Jewish Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina*

## *Following our traces to the traces of our neighbors*

**P**rior to World War II, almost every fifth citizen of Sarajevo was Jew....

Prior to World War I, almost every eighth citizen of Travnik and almost every twentieth citizen of Banja Luka was Jew.

As a 'hot embers' of the genuine words of the inexorable statistics, these figures torch and stop us in our motion. Could we, as a children of the mother Bosnia and Herzegovina, could we remember the scent of our childhoods and our grandfathers' childhoods, and the gurgle of the words of the father and the 'nacre' of songs of their honorable grandmothers. Could we, even with the closed eyes and anxiety reflect to our traces, and for the moment of time on the scale of our sorrows stop in front of the shadows of our former neighbors. And in front of the house walls, where the melancholic silvery ladino laments tremble intertwined with the 'djidio' words of Castilian-Spanish-Jewish, Turkish and mother tongue, look at their door jambs where once the welcoming mezuzah (doorposts) were nailed, and look into ourselves through the eye windows of our consciences.

And could we ask ourselves, as neighbors, why are they not in their homes, in their streets and city quarters (Bos. 'mahala'), anymore? Why...

Where are the Sephardim, the Ashkenazim, where are the Jewish neighbors who were not only living with us, but rather to tell the truth, 450 years have been growing with us. And we with them and all together have made the purest and the most miraculous 'serdžada' (Bos. the prayer mat) of our livings that made our country Bosnia and Herzegovina proud and recognized in the whole world....

I am standing proud because of the fact that Anisa Hasanhodžić and Rifet Rustemović, 'raised' in the blue plum tree orchards of Bosnia, have made a great effort and put on the paper the entire mosaic of facts from all available 'sehara' (the traditional boxes in Bosnian) of knowledge and history, the facts that we all should know. And accept. And also remember it. As well as with great pride pass it on to upcoming generations. So that it never happens to any of us ever again.

Wondering in the world with their stories, poems and sayings, carrying the 'swallowed' keys of their previous homes and houses, is for sure the most terrible destiny of the human beings. With this valuable book, Anisa and Rifet are warning us all and reminding us on the values of the good neighborhood.

Rusmir Agačević, writer

# *Notes about the Jewish past in Bosnia and Herzegovina*

*The book 'After the traces of our neighbors: Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Holocaust' written by Anisa Hasanhodžić and Rifet Rustemović represents a valuable publishing effort and extreme authors' achievement that gives its reader an interesting, professional and direct way to understand and gain an insight into the life and history of Jews in the cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

*Presented results of the research in this book are based on numerous literature as well as on the records, sources, documents, photographs and postcards from museums and archives of Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region, of which some archive sources are used for the first time. Through fifteen Bosnian cities (Banja Luka, Bihać, Bijeljina, Derventa, Gračanica, Kladanj, Mostar, Rogatica, Sarajevo, Travnik, Tuzla, Vlasenica, Zavidovići, Zenica and Zvornik) the authors give a general presentation of Jewish history for each of the city, as well as descriptive portraits of families - their prominent members - that left their mark on Bosnia and Herzegovina and thus shaped the contribution of Jews to socio-cultural organization of these cities from the period of their arrival until 1945.*

*The Jews, ever since they arrived to Bosnia and Herzegovina, immensely contributed to economic and cultural development of Bosnian society as a whole, thus developing healthy neighborly coexistence with other confessions. Great contribution to all spheres of life was given by many people, individuals of Jewish background in the fields of culture, economy, health and education, etc. Information in this book and the way it is interpreted by its authors not only offer precious information but they are a strong message not concerning only the Jews and their heritage, but the entire population of Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

*For all the reasons mentioned and for the other values it was hard to summarize this book in a short review. With my genuine pleasure I suggest this book for publishing, with firm conviction it will present an important contribution*

*to the revival and preservation of the Jewish history and Jewish material and non-material heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina that was mostly destroyed during the Holocaust, and thus removed from collective history and remembrance, and for it will also be very useful to future generations of researchers. Therefore, I wholeheartedly recommend this book not only to the readers from the scientific community but also to the broader audience.*

**Prof. Hist. Alma Leka**, *museum advisor*  
*Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina*

*To those whose souls may have left their bodies,  
but who may never leave us...*

# Foreword

In the historical experience of Bosnia and Herzegovina there is relatively insignificant number of events, phenomena and processes that kept its continuous existence for half a millennium. Therefore, the ongoing year 2015 is the year when 450th anniversary of Jewish arrival in Sarajevo, i.e. in Bosnia and Herzegovina, will be marked. The monograph "After the traces of our neighbors: Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Holocaust", is one of the important phases of the project, titled with the same name, which enables the authors to give its humble contribution in marking this important jubilee.

Within this context, the anniversaries in 1966 and 1992 have provided the crucial titles related to the arrival, living and, especially, to the Jewish suffering in World War II. However, even through these anthologies, as well as through the subsequent works of the most distinguished authors, the life of Jewish communities outside of Sarajevo, have been insufficiently presented to the experts and readers. With the exception of few cities where the Jews lived and grew with their neighbors, a great deal of information and details from the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian and interwar periods, have remained unknown and unresolved. The authors, therefore, within these pages, wishes to revive the historical treasure on life of Jewish communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, cities and places where the neighborhood spirit of Bosnia have been cherished.

Given the one year period envisaged for the research, writing, translating and publishing a monograph, and following the visits to the archives of Vienna, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Belgrade and elsewhere, the authors, with the sincere determination, started with writing and working on this very demanding task, which primarily focused on the selection of fifteen cities as planned by the project.

In accordance with the coloring domicile of Jews, who aside from domicile Sephardim, have migrated after 1878 from different parts of Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and Europe, the system of their acclimatization in different equally colorful cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is still largely unknown in the historiography and publishing, in general. In that context, in cities where the spirit of multi-ethnicity has been present, the life with others and different have been lovely arranged in the system of neighborhood as in the proud cities of



Kladanj, Rogatica, Vlasenica, Gračanica and Zvornik, a places where the Jews, together with the Muslims, Christians and Orthodox neighbors, contributed to development of their communities. The city of Zavidovići is similar in its constituency and the range, but is specific for the fact that the presence of certain Jewish industrialists has influenced the emergence of the city. In relation to their geographic position, cities like Bijeljina, Bihać and Derventa influenced the existence of numerically strong and wealthy Jewish communities. Also, the cities like Tuzla and Zenica, which by the continuity of existence and the oldest historiography sources are priority subject of ancient and medieval studies, have experienced the greatest development during the industrialization and Austro-Hungarian governance at the time when the Ashkenazim settled in this area. The cities which represented the most important governing and political - administration centers during the history, such as Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Travnik and Mostar, despite the overall economic development and cultural activities, would be unrecognizable without the contribution of Jews. The exception in the composition of the monograph, in relation to other chapters about the cities, is certainly the city of Sarajevo. Writing about the history of the Jewish community in Sarajevo and their contribution to development of the city must be the subject of the separate category.

On this occasion, the authors have prepared the elements for which they believe will serve as a helpful tool to other researchers, based on the collection of facts and photographs. Aside from that within the overall setting of the monograph, future researchers and new generations will benefit from the original documents which, mostly, served as a basis for making the lists with the names. We would like to notice that, precisely that diversity has influenced the style of writing of this monograph, since the information had mostly been used as written in the original sources and documents.

It is evident that the absence of the historical consciousness and remembrance culture can easily lead to the disappearance of any kind of mention. Therefore, the authors sincerely hope that this monograph will serve to enrich our common cultural memory, while not leaving the remembrance to fall into the dust of oblivion.

**Anisa Hasanhodžić**

**Rifet Rustemović**

*Vienna, January 2015*

# *Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Holocaust*

## *How the year of 1942 turned into the year of 1492*

*Ken se espanta?  
Ke vengan veremos!  
Jo vo azer lo mio.  
Debaldes no nasi jo en Bosna.<sup>1</sup>*

The emergence and the existence of the Jewish community in Bosnia and Herzegovina is linked, at the same time, with the issue of their survival in their early, centuries old, homeland in Iberian Peninsula.<sup>2</sup> Their previous living in the economically and culturally developed area of *Al-Andalus* is part of the most prominent world and Jewish history. Together with the Arab culture and civilization, the cultural and spiritual life of Jews has developed, and they have been recognized as the distinguished doctors, philosophers, theologians, philologists, poets, astronomers, encyclopedists, etc.<sup>3</sup> However, with the disappearance of the Arab state and domination of Castile and Aragon<sup>4</sup> in the area of Iberian Peninsula, the further existence of Jewish community was put into question. Spanish rulers Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile have imposed the edict on March 31, 1492, where they have ordered for all Jews “living in our kingdoms” to move out.<sup>5</sup>

As non-Christians,<sup>6</sup> Jews have been forced to leave Spain and then Portugal,

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<sup>1</sup> “Who is afraid? Let them come and we will see! I was not born in Bosnia in vain.” - from the short story *Morena*. Laura Papo - Bohoreta, “*Morena*”, *Jevrejski život*, no. 23 (Sarajevo, 1924), 2, as cited in Muhamed Nezirović, “Mjesto bosanske sefardske zajednice u sefardskim zajednicama Evrope” [hereafter: Nezirović, “Mjesto bosanske sefardske zajednice”], in *Sefarad* 92 (Sarajevo, 1995), 27.

<sup>2</sup> Krinka Vidaković Petrov, *Kultura španskih Jevreja na jugoslavenskom tlu* (Sarajevo, 1990), 7.

<sup>3</sup> Avram Pinto, *Jevreji Sarajeva i Bosne i Hercegovine* [hereafter: A. Pinto, *Jevreji Sarajeva i Bosne i Hercegovine*] (Sarajevo, 1987), 10.

<sup>4</sup> In 1469 Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile have married unifying their countries into the Spanish Kingdom.

<sup>5</sup> Nezirović, “Mjesto bosanske sefardske zajednice”, 14.

<sup>6</sup> During the *Reconquista* process, both the Muslims and the Jews, as non-Christians, were treated in the same way. Jews and Muslims who converted into the christianity, were pejoratively called Marranos and

and seek for new homes from Morocco, Holland, France, Italian countries and all the way to the Ottoman Empire. Although the Jews from *Al-Andalus*, the Sephardim,<sup>7</sup> have found their new home in many European countries, they were welcomed in a warmest and most cordial way by the Ottoman Empire.<sup>8</sup> The Ottoman sultan, Bayezid II, had sent an order to the governors of his provinces to accept and welcome the Jewish refugees and not return them from their borders.<sup>9</sup> In that way, thousands of Jews have settled in the area governed by the Ottoman Empire.<sup>10</sup> Most of the arriving Jews have tried to reach the most developed trade centers such as Istanbul, Thessaloniki, Edirne, Nikopol and other cities where, in beginning of 16th century, they have organized their own municipalities.<sup>11</sup>

The first information about Jews in Bosnia, as an integral part of the Ottoman Empire, is dated from mid-16th century, when the two merchants from Sarajevo required coverage for their charges.<sup>12</sup> From that time, with the increased number of Jews in Sarajevo, the need for organized municipal organization of Jewish community emerged. In 1565, Jews in Sarajevo have organized their first municipality which became a central institution for gathering and representing Jews before the city authorities.<sup>13</sup> With the increased number of Jews, the governor Sijavush pasha, have financed the construction of the separate building from his own resources in 1580-1581. The building "Velika avlija" (Big courtyard), "Sijavuš pašine daire" (Sijavush pasha's tambourine), or "Il Kortižo",<sup>14</sup> became the place with the largest concentration of Jews in Sarajevo but it never had the characteristics of "the classic ghetto" as it was the case with other places in Western world.<sup>15</sup>

Legal and socio-economic position of Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina has not differed from the situation and position of Jews in other provinces of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire, as the theocratic state with the legal foundation in Islamic Shari'a regulations recognized the religious freedoms of

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Moriscos.

<sup>7</sup> S'farad (hebr. Spain). In accordance with that, all the Jews from Spain were called Sephardim. Moritz Levy, *Sefardi u Bosni* [hereafter: Levy, *Sefardi u Bosni*] (Sarajevo, 1996 - reprint edition, original from 1911), 10.

<sup>8</sup> Levy, *Sefardi u Bosni*, 9.

<sup>9</sup> Nezirović, "Mjesto bosanske sefardske zajednice", 18.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>11</sup> Levy, *Sefardi u Bosni*, 10.

<sup>12</sup> Boris Nilević, "Osvrt na historiju Jevreja u Bosni i Hercegovini za vrijeme osmansko-turske uprave" [hereafter: Nilević, "Osvrt na historiju Jevreja"], in *Sefarad* 92 (Sarajevo, 1995), 47.

<sup>13</sup> A. Pinto, *Jevreji Sarajeva i Bosne i Hercegovine*, 12.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>15</sup> Nezirović, "Mjesto bosanske sefardske zajednice", 21.

Christians and Moses followers and their right to resolve the issues in accordance with the rules and regulations of their own religious communities (canon or customary laws).<sup>16</sup> As non-Muslims, the Jews were obliged to pay different levies such as *glavarina* (poll tax), *džizja*, *ispendža*, for non-participation in army and for the safety of their properties.<sup>17</sup> During the period of Ottoman governance, social and cultural life of Jews was based on the tradition inherited from their time spent in Spain including the Sephardic romances in their original form, as part of the folklore and cultural heritage.<sup>18</sup>

Unlike the last years in *Al-Andalus*, Jews have carelessly faced the end of the Ottoman Empire. However, Austro-Hungarian occupation was the time of major historical turnover, the change that reflected not only on political but also on socio-economic situation, culture and civilization of Bosnia and Herzegovina society as general. Jewish community, during his historical existence of over three centuries, have completely acclimatized in Bosnia and Herzegovina but have gradually experienced the changes that, at some point, have revised their relations with the community.<sup>19</sup> The most significant change in lives of the Sephardic Jews living in Bosnia at that time was the arrival of Ashkenazim,<sup>20</sup> the industrials, administrative employees, experts and intellectuals of different professions who filled the vacant positions of doctors, pharmacists, lawyers and administrative officials, etc.<sup>21</sup>

Major characteristic of the Jewish population is loyalty for the government, both during the Ottoman and the Austro-Hungarian rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their contribution in politics was, therefore, minimal comparing to the contribution in economy and culture.<sup>22</sup> However, during the constitutional

<sup>16</sup> Avdo Sućeska, "Položaj Jevreja u Bosni i Hercegovini za vrijeme Osmanlija-Turaka", in *Sefarad 92* (Sarajevo, 1995), 34.

<sup>17</sup> Nilević, "Osvrt na historiju Jevreja", 61.

<sup>18</sup> Behija Zlatar, "Dolazak Jevreja u Sarajevo", in *Sefarad 92* (Sarajevo, 1995), 57 - 65. For more information on cultural heritage of Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina, see Muhamed Nezirović, *Jevrejsko-španjolska književnost u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo, 1992).

<sup>19</sup> A. Pinto, *Jevreji Sarajeva i Bosne i Hercegovine*, 156.

<sup>20</sup> Ashkenazi is an adjective derived from the geographic form Ashkenazi, what was the name for Germany in the Hebrew medieval literature. Ashkenazim are part of Jewish people who use Yiddish as language. They differ from Sephardim, who use Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) language, in liturgical context and pronunciation of certain sounds of Hebrew language. Eugen Verber, *Židovi na tlu Jugoslavije-katalog izložbe*, as cited in Aleksandar Gaon, ed., *Mi smo preživeli: Jevreji o holokaustu*, book IV [hereafter: Gaon, ed., *Mi smo preživeli*, book IV] (Beograd, 2007), 383. For more information about the Ashkenazim in Bosnia and Herzegovina, see Julije Hahamović, "Aškenazi u Bosni i Hercegovini", in *Spomenica 400 godina od dolaska Jevreja u Bosnu i Hercegovinu* (Sarajevo, 1966), 141-155.

<sup>21</sup> Moni Finci, "Jevreji Bosne i Hercegovine", in *Vjerske zajednice i politička zbivanja u Bosni i Hercegovini od austro-ugarske okupacije 1878. do 1945. godine* (Sarajevo, 1978), 1051-1052.

<sup>22</sup> Dževad Juzbašić, "Nekoliko napomena o Jevrejima u Bosni i Hercegovini za vrijeme austro-ugarske up-

changes in Ottoman Empire, Jews had their representatives<sup>23</sup> in Municipal and City Councils and from 1910 in the Bosnian parliament.<sup>24</sup>

During the 19th and 20th century Jews have continuously started to settle in other, less developed but existentially favorable centers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. After the formation of their administrative units in Travnik and Banja Luka, during the Austro-Hungarian time and following World War I, Jewish communities have been established in many other places. Out of the total of 66 municipal units, Jews have not been present only in Gornji Vakuf, Glam-oč, Čapljina and Kreševo.<sup>25</sup> Sephardim and Ashkenazim settling in other places were conditioned with their harmonic and mutual initiatives and actions. If they fail to establish joint municipalities,<sup>26</sup> they would organize joint cultural, sport, humanitarian and charity associations.<sup>27</sup> Favorable conditions and positive standard have influenced the enormous growth of Jewish population. Either through the migrations or the natural increment, number of Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Austro-Hungarian time has increased for 246%.<sup>28</sup>

Prior to World War II there were 20 Jewish municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>29</sup> with around 14 500 Jews.<sup>30</sup> Aside from that, significant number of Jews has arrived in Bosnia and Herzegovina fleeing from the Nazi authorities trying to find refuge in the neighboring countries. During the period from 1933 to 1940 around 55 000 of Jews from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia tried to find the refuge in Yugoslavia. After the short stay, only 4 000 of Austrian, German and Czechoslovakia Jews witnessed the collapse of Kingdom of Yugoslavia and formation of the NDH.<sup>31</sup>

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rave" [hereafter: Juzbašić, "Nekoliko napomena"], in *Politika i privreda u Bosni i Hercegovini tokom austro-ugarske uprave* (Sarajevo, 2002), 373.

<sup>23</sup> More information about the political participation of Jews will be covered in the following chapters.

<sup>24</sup> Juzbašić, "Nekoliko napomena", 376.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 372.

<sup>26</sup> In Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Tuzla had existed two officially organized Jewish municipalities, the Sephardic and the Ashkenazi.

<sup>27</sup> A. Pinto, *Jevreji Sarajeva i Bosne i Hercegovine*, 14. For more information on Jewish societies, see Samija Sarić, *Jevrejska kulturna i druga društva u Bosni i Hercegovini 1885-1945 (regesta)* [hereafter: Sarić, *Jevrejska kulturna i druga društva*] (Sarajevo, 1995).

<sup>28</sup> Juzbašić, "Nekoliko napomena", 376.

<sup>29</sup> A. Pinto, *Jevreji Sarajeva i Bosne i Hercegovine*, 18.

<sup>30</sup> Jaša Romano, *Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941-1945: Žrtve genocida i učesnici NOR-a* [hereafter: Romano, *Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941-1945*] (Beograd, 1980), 14.

<sup>31</sup> Jakov Danon, Verica M. Stošić, *Memoari na holokaust Jevreja Bosanske krajine* [hereafter: Danon, M. Stošić, *Memoari*] (Banja Luka, 2010), 61.

Despite the frequent changes in governance, and relatively non-democratic political systems, during the time of Kingdom of Yugoslavia the Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina have kept their rights inherited from the earlier periods. However, the process of fascism has affected the Kingdom of Yugoslavia when in early thirties some anti-Jewish laws have been adopted. With the disappearance of Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and with the formation of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) on April 10, 1941<sup>32</sup> the darkest time of Jewish existence have begun. Establishment of NDH marked the new era of Ustaša politics toward Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has taken special place ever since the Starčević and the national program. On the other hand, Ustaša, following the example of Nazis, were frenetic anti-Semites loyal to the genocidal idea of the Third Reich.<sup>33</sup> Because of that, their politics toward the Jews<sup>34</sup> in Bosnia and Herzegovina was merciless and not limited only on their biological destruction.<sup>35</sup> The beginnings were formalized in end of April 1941<sup>36</sup> when the Official Gazette published "Legal regulation on protection of Aryan blood and honor of the Croatian people". With this Law, followed with the everyday mongering propaganda in the newspaper, brochures, posters and movies, Ustaša have made an introduction into the "final solution of the Jewish issue" obliging all those older than six years had to be marked with the sign "J" or "Ž" in public. Aside from that, Jews were restricted from using the public transportation, purchase of food, going to movies or theatres. Their mobility was restricted, work in public administration was forbidden, and their own stores were occupied by the "commissioners".<sup>37</sup> In August 1941 first crimes were committed on Jews in Sarajevo when ten distinguished Jews have been killed in city part Vrace.<sup>38</sup> Jewish women were taken to the brothel where they were forced to clean the floors, toilets and bath the prostitutes while the men, of all ages,

<sup>32</sup> See Fikreta Jelić-Butić, *Ustaše i Nezavisna Država Hrvatska* (Zagreb, 1977) and Hrvoje Matković, *Povijest Nezavisne Države Hrvatske* (Zagreb, 2002).

<sup>33</sup> See Muhamed Kreso, *Nacističko 'konačno rješenje' jevrejskog pitanja u okupiranim zemljama Zapadnog Balkana od 1941. do 1945. godine* (Sarajevo, 2007).

<sup>34</sup> Members of the Orthodox and Roma communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina were treated in a similar manner by the Ustaša authorities.

<sup>35</sup> Seka Brkljača, Muhidin Pelesić, Husnija Kamberović, "Bosna i Hercegovina u toku Drugog svjetskog rata" [hereafter: Brkljača, Pelesić, and Kamberović, "Bosna i Hercegovina u toku Drugog svjetskog rata"], in *Bosna i Hercegovina od najstarijih vremena do kraja Drugog svjetskog rata* (Sarajevo, 1998), 348.

<sup>36</sup> Holm Sundhaussen, "Jugoslawien", in *Dimension des Völkermords – Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des nationalsozialismus* (Munich, 1996), 321.

<sup>37</sup> The issue of the appointment of the "commissioners", who were often prosecuted as war criminals after the war, often had the "dichotomy" epilogue, since many commissioners, due to the good and friendly relations with their Jewish neighbors, have tried to save their properties. Some of the examples include Ana Bjelaš from Tuzla, Roza Šober-Dragoje and Zekira Beširević from Sarajevo and so on. See Eli Tauber, *When neighbors were real human beings* [hereafter: Tauber, *When neighbors*] (Sarajevo, 2010), 72-73.

<sup>38</sup> A. Pinto, *Jevreji Sarajeva i Bosne i Hercegovine*, 189-190.

were forced to perform physically demanding works and street cleaning.<sup>39</sup> Their temples and synagogues, unless they were destroyed or torched, have been used as the brothels and stalls, while the Jewish cemeteries and tombstones were damaged and destroyed. After that, frequent deportation from all Bosnian and Herzegovinian cities with Jewish population took place. The cruel fate of the Jewish neighbors, which is still in mind of many witnesses from 1941 and 1942, is clear picture of the dark nights and deportation in “G wagons” labeled “rotten fruits and vegetables” toward the fields with barbed wire, armories and inhuman conditions of the camps<sup>40</sup> in Gospić, Jadovno, Jasenovac, Stara Gradiška, Đakovo, Loborgrad and others.

Concentration camps have become the last “resting place” for almost 80% of Jews from Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>41</sup>

After the war, majority of Jews settled in big cities. In many cities which had the Jewish communities before the war, there were no more Jews at all. But centuries of living with Jews, “shaped” the remembrance of many citizens from different parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina who accept the others as their own. Bosnia and Herzegovina is, therefore, the only country, aside from Spain, where the Jewish, especially Sephardic, culture, material and non-material heritage is considered as part of the national heritage.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> This work was mostly done by the distinguished members of the Jewish and the local communities. One of the most prominent citizens of Tuzla, professor in Tuzla high school, Mr. Danilo Salom, has been forced not only to wear the label-the yellow star but also to “clean the streets and the garbage”. Vera Mujbegović, *Tuzla moje mladosti* [hereafter: Mujbegović, *Tuzla moje mladosti*] (Beograd, 2008), 206.

<sup>40</sup> On the establishment of the concentration camps in the Independent State of Croatia, see Alexander Korb, “Nation-building and mass violence: The Independent State of Croatia, 1941-45”, in *The Routledge History of The Holocaust* (New York, 2012), 291-303.

<sup>41</sup> Romano, *Jevreji Jugoslavije 1941-1945*, 14.

<sup>42</sup> Stephen Schwartz, *Sarajevska ruža* (Sarajevo, 2006), 51.