

MEETING MEMORIES

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON
PHOTOGRAPHY AND MEMORY

April 2021

MeMe

Meeting Memories:
Learning from the Past to
Confront Dehumanization
Today

Co-funded by the
Europe for Citizens Programme
of the European Union



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project **“Meeting Memories: Learning from the Past to Confront Dehumanization Today”** aims to remind European citizens of the politics of dehumanization and scapegoating happening during the 1930s and 1940s and generate a reflection on similar patterns happening today.

Its activities will be the opportunity to raise public awareness, make citizens more resilient and critical towards authoritarianism and populism and less prone to racism and radicalization, as well as to engage in confronting distortions of historical facts about the suffering in concentration camps during World War II through public events, exhibitions and educational work.

The “Meeting Memories” international workshop offers a space for participants from six different countries to meet and discuss the themes of culture of remembrance, commemorative practices, contemporary history, and different totalitarian regimes, through the lenses of photography.

The workshop will consist of theoretical and practical sessions, coordinated by trainers and associates from Documenta and the partner organizations. It will have a hybrid format, connecting online international sessions with national or regional study visits to local places of memory. All the photos developed by the participants during the workshop will be presented in an online exhibition; besides, some of them will be chosen to become part of an exhibition to be displayed in Udine, Italy, in November 2021.

THE PARTNERS

1	Center for Informative decontamination of youth	Bosnia and Herzegovina
2	<i>Documenta</i> – Center for dealing with the past	Croatia
3	Jasenovac Memorial Site	Croatia
4	Max Mannheimer Haus	Germany
5	University of Udine	Italy
6	Centre for Public History	Serbia
7	Socialna Akademija	Slovenia

THE LOCATIONS

Donja Gradina - Bosnia and Herzegovina

The **Donja Gradina camp** was part of the Jasenovac complex. Located on the other bank of the river Sava, it was a wide, marshy area, subject to flooding and almost inaccessible. A ferry connected it to Camp III (Brickworks) in Jasenovac and was used to transport prisoners across the river. From early 1942 onwards, up to the very last day of the existence of Camp III (Brickworks), mass liquidations of prisoners took place in Donja Gradina.



A large number of mass graves, the terrible evidence of Ustasha genocidal policies, stretch in groups or individually across the wide fields next to the River Sava. Almost eleven kilometres of paths lead the visitor through the largest execution site of the Jasenovac camp system, where nine burial fields are marked with signs bearing details of the size, number of mass graves, and surface area of each field.

When the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia broke up in 1991, Jasenovac Memorial Site was divided into two geographic and administrative units; Jasenovac Memorial Site in the Republic of Croatia and Donja Gradina Memorial Site in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška - Croatia



The Jasenovac Memorial Site was built in the immediate vicinity of the former Jasenovac concentration camp, Camp III (Brickworks).

Jasenovac concentration camp was founded and managed by the Ustasha forces, in the Independent State of Croatia and functioned from 1941 to 1945. In the camp were detained Serbs, Roma, Jews, Muslims, and political opponents of different nationalities.

In the Memorial, the original locations of buildings and execution sites are marked by earth mounds while railway sleepers, denoting part of the preserved railway track used to transport prisoners to the camp, pave the path to the Flower Memorial, built in 1966 and designed by Bogdan Bogdanović.

Along with the memorial area, Jasenovac Memorial Site is responsible for the remnants of the **Stara Gradiška concentration camp**. After the end of the First World War, the prison was used to house the first political prisoners of the newly-formed Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. In the Independent State of Croatia, the Ustashes turned the prison into a concentration camp. The first groups of prisoners, influential and rich Serbs and Jews, were brought to Stara Gradiška in May 1941.

Dachau - Germany



On March 22, 1933, a few weeks after Adolf Hitler had been appointed Reich Chancellor, a **concentration camp** for political prisoners was set up in Dachau. This camp served as a model for all later concentration camps and as a “school of violence” for the SS men under whose command it stood. In the twelve years of its existence over 200.000 persons from all over Europe were imprisoned here and in numerous subsidiary camps. 41.500 were murdered. On April 29 1945, American troops liberated the survivors. The Memorial Site on the grounds of the former concentration camp was established in 1965 on the initiative of and in accordance with the plans of the surviving prisoners who had joined together to form the Comité International de Dachau.

Gonars and Visco - Italy

The **Gonars concentration camp**, located in southern Friuli not far from the town of Palmanova, was created by Italian fascist authorities in 1942 and has been in use for over one year until the capitulation of Italy in September 1943. **The camp of Visco**, in the same area, was set up in January 1943 and lasted for less than a year.



After the Italian occupation of parts of Yugoslavia, concentration camps were created as internment structures for Yugoslav civilians. The inmates in Gonars and Visco were mainly Slovenes and Croats, but also other Yugoslav civilians coming from the occupied areas. The Gonars camp could hold 6,500 people and was the largest camp for civilian internees in Italy during World War II. Inmates slept in wooden barracks or tents and were enclosed by a barbed wire fence. Internment conditions were very harsh. Overcrowding, lack of food and terrible sanitary conditions caused the spread of various infectious diseases, with the death of more than 500 internees. The Gonars cemetery nowadays hosts a memorial site, built with the support of Yugoslavia in 1973. Almost nothing remains of the original camp structures.

The Visco camp, not far from Gonars, was smaller, being in some former Austrian military barracks, and was one of the most „human“ Italian concentration camps, with few registered deaths (23). While the buildings used as a concentration camp still stand, they are not freely accessible and no major signs are pointing to them.

Staro Sajmište and Jajinci - Serbia

The **Staro Sajmište concentration camp** was set on the former Belgrade Fairground, its detainees were mostly Jews from the German occupation zone, and Roma. The victims were liquidated in a hermetically sealed vehicle, in which they were killed by carbon monoxide. Starting in March 1942, the vehicle transported its passengers daily from the Staro Sajmište camp to **mass graves in Jajinci**, near Belgrade.

The erection of the first memorial plaque at the site of the former camp in 1974, as well as the monument unveiled ten years after, aimed at glorifying the anti-fascist struggle, while the memory of the Holocaust was marginalized at the time. For years now, serious debates have been taking place in the Republic of Serbia that raise a broad range of issues related to the construction of the memorial center at Staro Sajmište.



Bučka and Maribor - Slovenia



In 1941, when occupying forces from Germany and Italy entered the Yugoslav territories, **the village Bučka** found itself on the border separating the German and Italian areas of interest. All its villagers were expelled and deported to German camps, but some of them were able to come back. Today, these events are remembered through a memorial room holding a collection showing the moments of villagers being forced to leave their homes and, in the end, the happy returning to the home village. The visit will continue with a 3-hour walk along the **former German-Italian occupation border** and then in **Maribor**, at the National Liberation Museum and Synagogue.

Please note:

because of the Covid-19 related restrictions, the participants will visit the locations from the partner country of their referent organization.

If it won't be possible even to meet in smaller groups or visit memorial places in closer towns, the participants will be asked to focus on **memorial sites in their towns** or to work on **photographs from their family albums** and connect their background to the stories of the memorial places and places of suffering of their towns or local communities.

THE TRAINERS

Sandra Vitaljić - Visual artist, educator and curator

Sandra graduated with an MFA in photography from the Academy of Performing Arts, Film and TV (FAMU) in Prague and completed her doctoral studies (PhD) in history and theory of photography. In her work, she focused on social issues and dealing with the topics of domestic violence, collective memory and the construction of national identity. In the theoretical and curatorial work, she is engaged with conflict photography and the ethics of photographic representation.

She published three books: *Infertile Grounds* (Eikon Studio, 2012), *War of Images - Contemporary War Photography* (Algoritam, 2013) and *Up Close and Personal: War in Croatia* (Image of War Museum, 2018). From 2004-2019 she worked as a professor of photography at the Academy of Dramatic Art in Zagreb.

Sandra exhibited in many solo and group exhibitions and curated exhibitions *Lessons from 1991* (DZZ Maribor, *Organ vida*, Zagreb 2016) and *Up Close and Personal: War in Croatia* (Image of War Museum, Zagreb, 2018).

Saša Kralj - community activist and photography educator

Saša is one of the founding members of the art cooperative *Živi Atelje DK* (Living Atelier DK), and presently coordinates preventively protected heritage collection of Vera Dajht-Kralj as well as running workshops on photography, identity and integration within cooperative's *NoBorders* projects.

Since 2006 teaches as permanent guest mentor at *Pannafoto Institute* in Jakarta. During 2019 he was one of the three curators for the exhibition of Indonesian contemporary engaged photography in gallery *Jakopic*, Museums and galleries of Ljubljana – Slovenia. He was teaching photojournalism at *Shantou university* in China and at the *American university of Iraq*. He has extensive photojournalism experience working 6 years for *Associated Press* and later for other international media outlets as a freelance photojournalist based in Balkans, South Africa, Indonesia and Iraq. However, gravity of his efforts always were and are in community building and education.

ON TAKING PHOTOS

You don't need to have a previous knowledge on photography to take part in the program. Complete beginners are welcome!

Also, we don't expect you to have a professional camera: smartphone cameras or other devices are accepted.



COSTS



All the costs related to the workshop (the training, traveling to the locations for the study visit, food and beverages during the study visit, etc.) will be covered by the organizers.

The participants should cover by themselves the traveling expenses to the common meeting point for the study visit.

PROGRAM (April 2021)*

Day 1:	Day 2:	Day 3 / Day 4:	Day 5	Day 6 (around 3/4 days later)
10:00 – 10:45	10:00 – 11:30		Parallel Sessions	10:00 – 12:00
Common Online Session for all the participants // Introduction to the project and getting to know each other	Common Online Session for all the participants // Workshop on memory and photography with the trainers	Study visit in a national memorial place; brief introduction about the place by the partner organizations; free time on locations for taking photos	All the participants divided in 4 international groups (10:00 – 11:30; 12:00 – 13:30) // Presenting and discussing the photos taken on the visit with the trainers and the other participants	Online conference: presentation of the photos to the public, discussion, and opening of the online exhibition
10:45 – 11:00 Break	11:30 – 11:45 Break	Note: If it won't be possible for the participants to take part in the visit, they will focus on memorial sites in their own towns or they will work on photographs from their family albums		12:00 – 12:30 Break
11:00 – 12:00	11:45 – 12:00		14:30 – 16:00	12:30 – 13:00
Common Online Session for all the participants // Workshop on memory and photography with the trainers	Online Session in national groups // Last reminders about the study visit of the following day/s		Online Session in national groups // Presenting the photos and experience in national group; choosing people for the presentation in the conference	Common Online Session for all the participants // Project evaluation and goodbyes

* The program will take place in the second half of the month, the final dates will be communicated to the participants as soon as possible

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

You can take part in the workshop if you are 18+ years old and if you are living in one of the project's partner countries.

If you would like to participate to the workshop please send a **Word or PDF file** indicating (in English or in the language of the partner country) your **NAME, SURNAME, DATE OF BIRTH, ACTUAL PLACE OF RESIDENCE, E-MAIL** and a **SHORT MOTIVATIONAL LETTER** (max. 800 characters) to your country referent.

This call is open until the 4th of April.

Because of different restrictions related to Covid-19, different countries involved in the project have a different participant base, please follow this table:

1 BiH	Participants from the whole country can take part in the program, including the study visit. The meeting points for the study visit will be in Jajce and Banja Luka Referent: Alice Straniero, alice.straniero@documenta.hr
2 Croatia	Participants from the whole country can take part in the program, including the study visit. The meeting points for the study visit will be in Zagreb and Jasenovac . Referent: Alice Straniero, alice.straniero@documenta.hr
3 Germany	Participants from the whole country can take part in the program, but depending on Covid-19 restrictions, it is possible that only people living in Dachau will be able to take part in the study visit. The meeting point for the study visit will be in Dachau . Referent: Magdalena Geier, geier@mmsz-dachau.de
4 Italy	Participants from the whole country can take part in the program, but depending on Covid-19 restrictions, only people living in Friuli Venezia Giulia or in Udine will be able to take part in the study visit. The meeting point for the study visit will be in Udine . Referent: Elisa Copetti, elisa.copetti@uniud.it
5 Serbia	Participants from the whole country can take part in the program, including the study visit. The meeting point for the study visit will be in Belgrade . Referent: Milovan Pisarri, milovan.pisarri@gmail.com
6 Slovenia	Participants from the whole country can take part in the program, including the study visit. The meeting points for the study visit will be in Ljubljana and Bučka . Referent: Sabina Belc, sabina@socialna-akademija.si

If you have other questions on the project in general please contact the project coordinator Alice Straniero at alice.straniero@documenta.hr

THE PARTNERS



Co-funded by the
Europe for Citizens Programme
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International workshop on photography and memory “Meeting Memories”

April 2021 (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Serbia, Slovenia and online)

Documenta – Centar za suočavanje s prošlošću / Documenta – Center for dealing with the past
Selska Cesta 112c, Zagreb, Croatia

Layout, text and photos by Alice Straniero, with the exceptions of:

Page 2

Donja Gradina:

text: [JUSP Jasenovac - DONJA GRADINA \(jusp-jasenovac.hr\)](http://jusp-jasenovac.hr)

photo: [JUSP Jasenovac - Donja Gradina – one of the mass graves \(jusp-jasenovac.hr\)](http://jusp-jasenovac.hr)

Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška:

text: [JUSP Jasenovac - JASENOVAC MEMORIAL](http://jusp-jasenovac.hr) </br> [SITE \(jusp-jasenovac.hr\)](http://jusp-jasenovac.hr); [JUSP Jasenovac - STARA GRADIŠKA \(jusp-jasenovac.hr\)](http://jusp-jasenovac.hr)

Page 3

Dachau:

text: [Homepage | KZ Gedenkstätte Dachau \(kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de\)](http://kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de)

photo: Magdalena Geier

Gonars and Visco:

text and photo: Marco Dorigo

Page 4

Staro Sajmište and Jajinci:

text: [The Staro Sajmište camp - Holokaust \(holocaust.rs\)](http://holocaust.rs) and [Jajinci – Killing Sites](http://holocaust.rs)

photo: [The Staro Sajmište camp - Holokaust \(holocaust.rs\)](http://holocaust.rs)

Ljubljana:

text: Sabina Belc

photo: [KO DIS Bučka \(bucka.info\)](http://bucka.info)

Cover: “Blooming Avenue” by Saldacani (@saldacani) // Original photos from: *Epoca*. Vol. 706. Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1964. 55. and Muench, David. *Desert Springscape*. In *The Desert Realm*. National Geographic Society, 1982. p. 64. Edizione italiana, 1987

Zagreb, February-March 2021