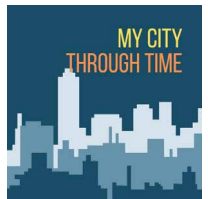


MY CITY THROUGH TIME



 **3 RALLIES**

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union 



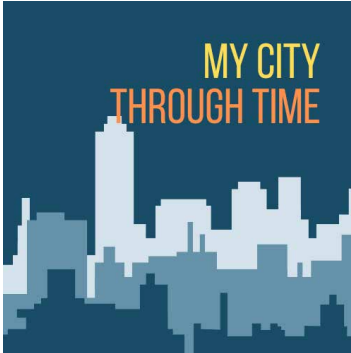
THE PROJECT

My City Through Time

The project “My City Through Time. Exploring our cities through historic and civic education (MCT)” wants to contribute to the recognition and improvement of youth work and its practices and to strengthen the link between youth work and civic and historic education.

The project aims to provide the partner and other organizations working with youth with new skills, competencies, working methods, and materials related to youth work and historic and civic education. At the same time, because of its thematic focus, the project aims to involve young people in a reflection on understanding diversities, the importance of intercultural dialogue, inclusion, and human rights.

The project develops from the idea that the cities we live in are not neutral, but are carriers of values and narratives, and communicate them through elements of its public space, such as monuments, names of streets and squares, and architec-



ture. By critically exploring their cities through the methods of historic and civic education, the project partners will tackle different relevant topics for today's youth, such as the rise of radicalization, nationalism, and populism, issues of equal representation, and the spreading of stereotypes and prejudices among young people. Because of this reason, through the project's activities and results, young people will become more able to critically approach complex topics related to historical and social changes in the 20th century and better understand the origin and the causes of contemporary challenges, including issues such as memory, identity, representation, inclusion, and democracy.

ASSOCIAZIONE 47/04 is an organization focused on history, memory, and territory. It coordinates researchers, historians, and artists to foster dialogue and innovation. The association offers studies and research on history, memory, and active citizenship and organizes cultural activities focused on co-operation and mobility. They specialize in contemporary art exhibitions and festivals, especially in urban spaces. Audience development is a primary objective, with the goal of expanding access to cultural events. The organization produces audiovisual works and promotes participatory experiences. Through its initiatives, Associazione 47/04 aims to promote active citizenship by fostering a better understanding of the past, present, and future.

THE HISTORY OF Gorizia



GORIZIA is the border city par excellence. For centuries, while dominated by the Habsburg Empire and inhabited by italians, slovenians, germans and friulians, it has always been a crucible of exchange and coexistence between cultures, languages and different ethnicities. Those inhabitants remember how, between the tail end of the '800s and the beginning of the '900s, despite the fast and unstoppable ascension of Nationalisms in Europe, Goritian people struggled to define themselves in nationalistic terms. The most common answer to the Historian's spontaneous question: "What was your family's nationality?" Was: "We are Goritians. We aren't Italians, nor Slovenians. We are Goritians". A hybrid community, then, in which many families are and were mixed, and where the coexistence of different languages and cultures is seen, widely, as an asset.

Considered as the Austrian Nice, partly because of the Transalpine railroad that connected the centre of the Austro-Hungarian Empire to the Litoral, passing through the city of Gorizia, the chief town of the Isonzo area has been, for a brief period, a popular tourist destination for Germans. In 1914, however, the beginning of WWI put an end to the Belle Epoque and starting 1915 Gorizia became one of the military objectives that the Italian Army focused on, if not the most sought-after; so much so that it was nicknamed "Saint Gorizia". The city will be the stage for many relevant battles in which tens of thousands

died in order to conquer it or defend it. On the 9th of August, 1916, the Italian Army will enter the city, conquering it as a symbol, but will be forced to abandon it shy than one full year later, when the Austrian Army breached the city of Caporetto (Kobarid), an action the italians define as “defeat” and the Austrian as “miracle”. After the conflict Gorizia, along with Trieste and Istria, will be passed along to the Savoia domain, but the city is reduced to ruins. Memories of the Great War profoundly mar the city, as much as the twenty years of Fascism, that pushed severe measures to italianize the slavic population. Names and Surnames of slavic origin are changed, the use of Slovenian language is prohibited in public offices, in bars, in shops, in schools. Eventually, it will be banned from streets and public spaces. Citizens start to witness arrests, beatings, violence. By the will of the Regime, everything in the city has to appear Italian, other than, obviously, Fascist. This led the different nationalistic identities to turn against each other and see each other as “enemies”, to dream of different outcomes.

During WWII, Gorizia was once again at the centre of international tensions. The city witnesses the passage of Fascists, Nazis, Cossacks, Domobranzi (Slovene Home Guard) and Belogardists (Slovenian collaborationist troops), Chetniks (Serbian collaborationists troops), Italian and Yugoslavian Partisans, communists and anticommunists.

On the 1st of May 1945, after the banishment of Nazis from the city, Gorizia was officially annexed to Yugoslavia for 42 days. They were both days of hope and fear. Weeks of tension and conflict. It was a phase in which the population was substantially divided between who's celebrating the end of the War and "Liberation" after more than twenty years of persecution and repression and who's hiding in their own house, terrified, because they perceive Tito Partisans as a "new foreign occupant". One month, twelve days, in which many Goritians were arrested, deported, killed as "enemies of the people". A brief period, admittedly, but thick with repercussions that will mark the city for years to come, leaving profound scars into the memories of those who lived it along with harsh and bitter feelings that are hard to erase between the national communities of the city.

The political pressure Anglo-Americans put on the Yugoslavian government made the Goritian national identity questioned once again. The new border line between Italy and Yugoslavia will be decided during Peace Treaties discussions, in Paris, trying to find agreement between the war victors. Meanwhile, the contented territory will be divided by a provisional line, called "the Morgan line", that passes close to the city. During the months between August 1945 and September 1947, Gorizia (along with Trieste) was fiercely contested

between Italy and Yugoslavia. Those years taught us about what it means to create and move borders, how complex it is to define what has to stay “on this side” and what can be left “on that side”, as well as the consequences of those actions on the territory and its inhabitants. It taught us about the political and ideological implications, but also about personal and familial consequences. Eventually, the Italian-Yugoslavian border, dividing the occidental and communist block, will pass exactly in the middle of the city of Gorizia.

A white chalk line, some wooden posts and a sign: “Provisional Border Italy-Yugoslavia”.

That’s how the new border appears.

Many Goritians will wake up to find that line passing through their yard, their fields, in front of their front door. The Allied soldiers tasked with drawing the line are kind, but resolute: the map clearly states where the border has to cross, there is no room for variation. Many houses will be separated from their yards, fields, barns.

The inhabitants will be forced to choose which side to pick, what to leave behind, because almost everyone will have to re-

nounce something. The possibility to “opt” for one of the two countries is given, along with the obligation to give up anything that’s on “the other side”. For many Goritians this means deciding whether to leave their house or their job, whether to abandon their parents in order to keep their salary and position, whether to abandon their properties in order to stay loyal to their national sentiment or political ideology.

The line that passes through Gorizia from 1947 has been referred to as “Ethnic Line” by soldiers and French diplomats who suggested it. It was a line that, in theory, would leave the majority of “Italians” on one side and the majority of “Slovenians” on the other. What they didn’t account for was that, in Gorizia, national categories have never been clear cut and that by dividing Gorizia that way, they were separating the city from the countryside.

Starting 1947, several illegal attempts to cross the border net were made. Border crossing points are, after all, contact points and exchange points, both legal and illegal, for people and goods. Often, people try to send small things for family members on “the other side”, necessities and everyday life objects that have since become impossible to find. Some other times, it’s full-on smuggling. It’s only after the Osimo Treaty in 1975 that the border will be partially corrected to reunite some properties.

A handful of metres on the Yugoslavian side of the border, a new city will be born; Nova Gorica will become a symbol of Tito's "new Socialism".

The first post-war years are characterised by complete closure. The border is impenetrable and heavily militarised. The fear of a new invasion leads countries to draft defence plans and deploy a great number of armed forces along that piece of what came to be known as "Iron Curtain".

In the '60s, finally, Gorizia went back to being a crucible of experimentation and opening to the east. After the rupture between Tito and Stalin, the relationship between Italy and Yugoslavia gradually became more prone to dialogue on a political, economical and cultural level. The border returns to being more of a frontier, a crossing point, a hybridation point. It builds up all the way to 1991 when Slovenia becomes independent and, in Nova Gorica, military tanks are seen for the last time. From that moment on, the enlarging process of the European Union towards the East finds in Gorizia a new interesting observation point.

It's the 1st of may, 2004 when Gorizia and Nova Gorica ceremonially tear down a portion of the net that divided the two cities. Slovenia enters the European Union and Transalpina Square, a Square that for sixty years had been cut in half by the border, becomes the symbol of European integration, new perspectives on dialogue, collaboration, and the design of shared objectives. These new perspectives will be the stepping stone that led Gorizia and Nova Gorica to be nominated, together, as European Capital of Culture 2025. This will be an occasion to help the two cities think, develop and present themselves as a unified cross-border community.

Bibliography:

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Authors:

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city RALLY



THEMATIC UNIT 1:
Multiculturality



THEMATIC UNIT 2:
The Great War



THEMATIC UNIT 3:
The border

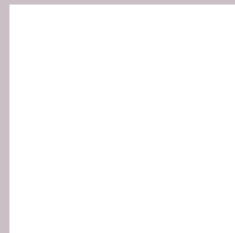


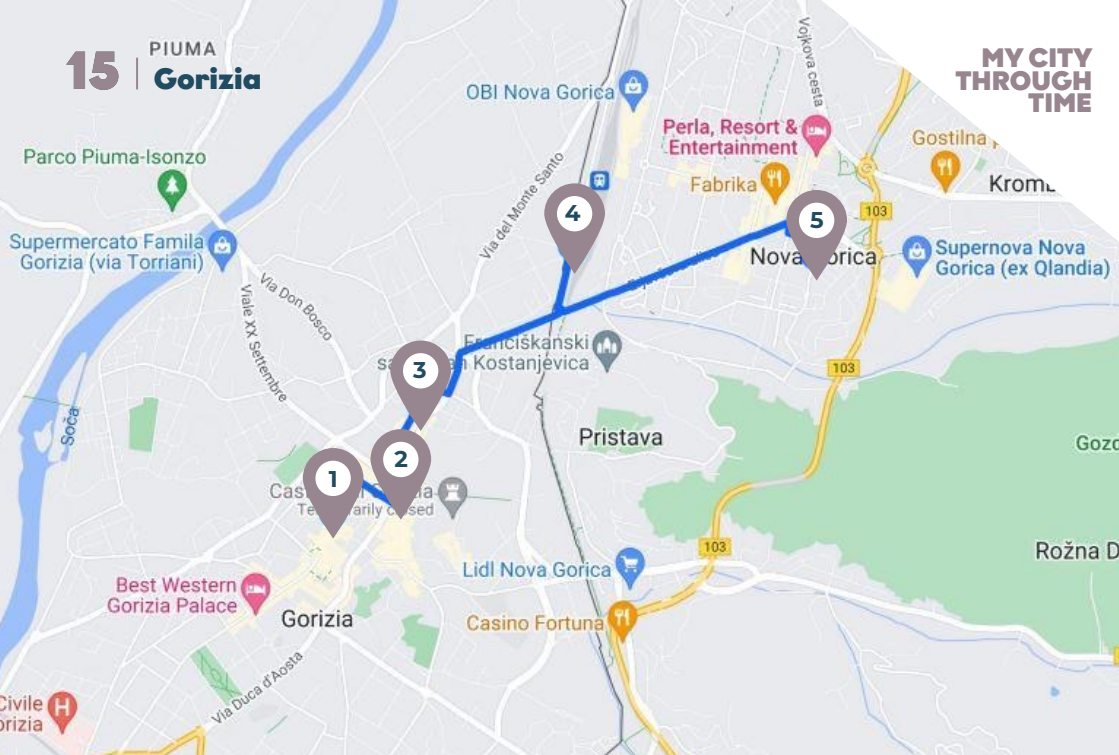
THEMATIC UNIT 1: Multiculturality

KEY WORDS:

Slovenian minority; Jewish minority;
cooperation; city development;
cohabitation; community; representation

DURATION: approximately 30-40 min
on foot or by bike

**LOCATION 1****Trgovski dom****LOCATION 4****Transalpina square****LOCATION 2****Victory square
(Michaelstaedter)****LOCATION 5****Nova Gorica****LOCATION 3****Ascoli street**



THEMATIC UNIT 1:
Multiculturality



LOCATION 1
Trgovski dom



LOCATION 4
Transalpina square



LOCATION 2
**Victory square
(Michaelstaedter)**



LOCATION 5
Nova Gorica



LOCATION 3
Ascoli street

44'



km

Description

The theme of coexisting cultures is important and relevant because we live in a world that is increasingly interconnected, with people from different cultural backgrounds living and working alongside each other. As globalization and migration continue to increase, it becomes more crucial than ever to learn how to coexist and interact respectfully with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

One of the main challenges of coexisting cultures is the potential for misunderstandings and conflict due to differences in language, customs, and beliefs. These differences can create barriers to communication and understanding, leading to stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. This can result in tension and conflict, which can have negative consequences for individuals and communities alike.

Another challenge of coexisting cultures is the potential for cultural appropriation, where aspects of a minority culture are taken without proper understanding or respect for their significance. This can lead to a sense of cultural erasure, where the dominant culture takes over and dilutes or erases the traditions and practices of minority cultures.

Additionally, coexisting cultures can also present challenges related to power dynamics and privilege. In many cases, dominant cultures hold more power and privilege than minority

cultures, which can create imbalances and tensions. This can result in issues related to inequality, such as unequal access to resources and opportunities, as well as discrimination and marginalization.

Overall, the theme of coexisting cultures is important because it highlights the need for mutual respect, understanding, and inclusivity in our increasingly diverse and interconnected world. While there are challenges and problematics associated with this theme, it is essential to address them in order to create a more just and equitable society where everyone's cultural identity is valued and respected.

Coexisting cultures are particularly important in border communities because these communities are often characterized by a high degree of cultural diversity, with people from different countries, ethnicities, and linguistic backgrounds living in close proximity to one another. Borders can be both physical and symbolic, and they can create both opportunities and challenges for cultural exchange and interaction.

In many cases, border communities have a long history of cultural exchange and interaction, as people from different cultures have migrated, traded, and lived together in these areas for centuries. However, these interactions can also be sources of tension and conflict, as people with different cultural backgrounds may have different values, beliefs, and ways of life. This can create challenges in terms of communication, understanding, and acceptance, and it can also lead to social

and political tensions, including discrimination, prejudice, and even violence.

Furthermore, border communities are often caught between different national, cultural, and linguistic identities, which can create complex identity politics and power dynamics. For example, in some border communities, one culture or language may be dominant, while others are marginalized or excluded. This can create feelings of alienation, resentment, and inequality among members of these communities, and it can also lead to social and political tensions.

Therefore, promoting coexistence and understanding among cultures in border communities is crucial for fostering social cohesion, promoting peace and stability, and creating opportunities for economic, social, and cultural development. This requires acknowledging and respecting the diversity of these communities, promoting cross-cultural dialogue and exchange, and fostering inclusive policies and practices that promote equality, justice, and mutual respect.



LOCATION 1
Trgovski dom



Trgovski Dom, located in the city center of Gorizia, Italy, is a historic building with a rich and complex history. The building was designed by the renowned architect Max Fabiani and was constructed between 1903 and 1905. Originally built to serve as a commercial and cultural center for the city, Trgovski Dom quickly became an important gathering place for the local community.

In the early 20th century, Gorizia was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Trgovski Dom played an important role in

promoting the Slovenian language and culture in the region. The building housed a library, reading room, and exhibition space, and was used for a wide range of cultural events, including concerts, lectures, and theater performances.

However, in 1927, with the rise of Fascism in Italy, Trgovski Dom was seized by the government and converted into a headquarters for the Fascist Party. The building was renamed Casa del Fascio and became a symbol of Fascist power and control in the region.

With the end of World War II and the defeat of the Fascist regime in Italy, Trgovski Dom was returned to the people of Gorizia.

Finally, it continued to serve as a center of community life, hosting events and activities for residents of Gorizia. In recent years, the building has undergone extensive renovations to restore it to its original appearance and to make it more accessible and functional for modern use.

Today, Trgovski Dom stands as a testament to the resilience and strength of the people of Gorizia. Despite the challenges and turmoil of the 20th century, the building has endured as a symbol of the community's enduring spirit and commitment to cultural diversity and inclusivity.



LOCATION 2

**Victory square
(Michaelstaedter)**

In the mid-18th century, while the square was being redeveloped, Marco Chierighin, a renowned sculptor, crafted the Fountain of Neptune and the Tritons following the design of the architect Nicolò Pacassi. Besides the Church of Sant'Ignazio, Victory Square also boasts several significant historical buildings, including Casa Torriana, which was once inhabited by the celebrated poet Giacomo Casanova and now serves as the headquarters of the Prefecture. Opposite the Palace of the Prefect, a statue of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, hewn from Aurisi-

na stone and Istrian pink marble and dating back to 1688, can be seen. Palazzo Paternolli, a former aristocratic residence, is also of great significance, having once sheltered the young philosopher Carlo Michelstaedter in its attic. Michelstaedter, who took his own life, is honored with a bronze statue at the entrance of Via Rastello.

Throughout the 19th century, Gorizia was still part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. At that time, it was known as the “New Square” and was a bustling center of commerce and trade. The square was a popular gathering place for residents of the city, who would come to socialize, shop, and attend events.

Victory square was home to a prominent goritian philosopher: Carlo Michelstaedter was born in Gorizia as the youngest of four children in a wealthy Jewish family. His father, Alberto, was a cultured man who wrote literary works and respected Jewish traditions only formally. Although Carlo’s cultural formation was not significantly influenced by Judaism, he was introduced to philosophical speculation at the Staatsgymnasium in Gorizia, where he studied translations from Greek and Latin. His interest in philosophy was further ignited when he read Arthur Schopenhauer’s *The World as Will and Representation*, which had a lasting impact on his own work, *Persuasion and Rhetoric*.

Michelstaedter enrolled in the mathematics department at the University of Vienna but soon realized that he was drawn to something else. He then enrolled in the Letters course at the Higher Institute of Florentine Studies, where he met Gaetano Chiavacci, Vladimiro Arangio-Ruiz, and Augusto Hermet. In 1909, his older brother Gino committed suicide, and two years earlier, a woman he loved, Nadia Baraden, had done the same. Michelstaedter's friend Enrico Mreule left for Argentina in the same year, and Carlo asked him to give him the gun he always carried with him.

Between 1909 and 1910, Michelstaedter returned to Gorizia and wrote his thesis on the concepts of persuasion and rhetoric in Plato and Aristotle. His activity was feverish, and he isolated himself, eating very little and sleeping on the floor like an ascetic. After completing his thesis, he informed his father that he wouldn't become a professor but would instead go to the sea after graduation. However, on October 17, 1910, after an argument with his mother, he took his own life using the gun given to him by Enrico Mreule. His friends and relatives collected his writings, which are now at the Gorizia Civic Library.



LOCATION 3
Ascoli street



Jewish settlement in the County of Gorizia can be traced back to the late 13th century, and by the 16th century, there was a stable community in the city, concentrated in the Cocevia area at the foot of the castle. However, this community faced periods of tolerance alternating with expulsion decrees and the granting of privileges, particularly related to their lending activities. In 1692, Emperor Leopold I ordered the establishment of a ghetto in the Cocevia district, but after four years of

evaluation, the authorities decided to establish it in the more peripheral district of S. Giovanni, known today as Via Ascoli, which was far from the route of processions. The ghetto was isolated by two doors, one near the homonymous church and the other to the north towards the Corno river. In 1698, the Jews of the city were required to enter the ghetto, but unlike in many other cases, they were allowed to acquire ownership of the buildings within the area. In 1699, a first oratory was erected in the same place where the current beautiful synagogue still stands today. The ground floor of the buildings housed shops and laboratories, while textile manufacturing provided employment for both Jews and non-Jews in the city.

Efforts to emancipate the Jewish community in Gorizia began with a local decree in 1790. However, opposition from the ecclesiastical authority delayed the implementation of this decree. The Napoleonic occupations that began in 1797 brought an end to the ghetto, and in 1812, the gates were definitively removed, leading to increased freedom for the Jewish community in Gorizia.

In 1876, the street where the ghetto had once been was named after Graziadio Isaia Ascoli, a Jewish glottologist. However, urban redevelopment projects in the 1950s and 1960s resulted in the demolition of many buildings in the area. Today, only a few remnants of the original ghetto remain.



LOCATION 4

Transalpina square

Gorizia is a city located on the border between Italy and Slovenia, and it has a rich history that reflects its unique position as a meeting point between two cultures. One of the most notable landmarks in Gorizia is Transalpina Square, also known as Trg Evrope in Slovenian. The square is located at the border with Slovenia and is home to the Nova Gorica railway station.

The square was originally named after the Transalpine Railway, which connected Jesenice in Slovenia with Trieste in Italy. The

railway was a major transportation route in the region, and it played an important role in the economic and cultural exchange between Italy and Slovenia.

The naming of the square has been somewhat controversial over the years. Slovenia has suggested renaming the square “Europe Square” to reflect its position as a symbol of unity and cooperation between different countries in Europe. However, Italy has preferred to use the old historical name Piazza della Transalpina, which reflects the square’s connection to the railway and its important role in the history of the region.

Despite the controversy over its name, Transalpina Square remains an important symbol of the unique cultural and historical heritage of Gorizia. The square is a bustling hub of activity, with travellers from all over Europe passing through on their way to destinations in Italy and Slovenia.

In recent years, the city of Gorizia has made efforts to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of Transalpina Square. The square has been the site of many events and cultural festivals, and it has become an important destination for tourists interested in exploring the history and culture of the region. The square is also home to several important landmarks, including the Nova Gorica railway station and the nearby Solkan Bridge, which spans the Soča River and is one of the largest stone arch bridges in the world.

Overall, Transalpina Square is a unique and important landmark in the city of Gorizia, and it serves as a testament to the region’s rich cultural and historical heritage. Whether you are a local res-

ident or a visitor from afar, the square is well worth a visit and offers a glimpse into the fascinating history and culture of this remarkable part of Europe.

During World War II, the area was a hotbed of partisan activity, with Yugoslav partisans crossing the border into Italy to carry out attacks on the German occupation forces.

The creation of the border between Italy and Yugoslavia in Transalpina Square was a result of the Treaty of Peace with Italy, which was signed in Paris on February 10, 1947, after World War II. This treaty formally ended hostilities between the Allied Powers and Italy, and it resulted in the transfer of some territories from Italy to Yugoslavia. As a result, the eastern part of Gorizia, including Transalpina Square, went to Yugoslavia, while the western part remained with Italy. The creation of the new border led to the division of families, friends, and communities, and it had a profound impact on the history and development of the region.

The border was marked by a substantial wire fence. The area around Transalpina Square became a no-man's land, with both sides patrolling their respective borders.

With the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the border became the external border of the European Union, and a new border crossing was built in the area of Transalpina Square. Today, the border between Italy and Slovenia is open, and the area around Transalpina Square is a bustling hub of activity, with people crossing the border for work, leisure, and shopping.



LOCATION 5
Nova Gorica

Located in western Slovenia near the border with Italy, Nova Gorica's history is closely intertwined with that of the nearby Italian city of Gorizia. Following World War II, the area of Gorizia was divided between Italy and Yugoslavia, with the Yugoslav part of the territory left without a natural administrative center. As a solution, a new city, Nova Gorica, was established to provide an administrative center for the region.

Nova Gorica experienced rapid and significant development in the 1950s and 1960s, during which time large public housing neighborhoods were built. The new city quickly became an important economic and cultural center for the region, with significant cultural institutions including a theater, a cinema, and a museum. The city's population grew from around 2,000 people at the time of its founding to over 13,000 by the 1970s.

One of the most significant events in Nova Gorica's history occurred on December 21, 2007, when Slovenia joined the Schengen Area. This led to the removal of border barriers between Slovenia and Italy, effectively uniting the cities of Gorizia and Nova Gorica. Despite their close proximity, the two cities have distinct histories and cultures, with Gorizia being home to many historic buildings and Nova Gorica largely being a product of post-war urban planning.

Recently, the three neighboring municipalities of Nova Gorica, Gorizia, and San Pietro-Vertoiba have come together to form the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (GECT). The goal of the GECT is to promote cross-border cooperation and development in the region, strengthening ties between Slovenia and Italy and promoting economic and cultural exchange between the two countries.

Despite its relatively short history, Nova Gorica has played an important role in the economic and cultural life of the region. The city has a number of important institutions, including a university, a cultural center, and a theater. It also serves as an

important transportation hub, with a train station connecting it to other major cities in Slovenia and Italy. As the city continues to grow and develop, it is likely to continue playing a significant role in the future development of the region.

Questions:

- _____ In what ways can the representation of minorities be improved in the public space?
- _____ Can you recall an instance of minority representation in your city? If so, what is it? If not, what might be the reasons for this absence?
- _____ Why is it significant to have commemorated contributions from minorities in the city?
- _____ How do minorities currently contribute to the development of your town?

Glossary:

- **BORDER COMMUNITIES:** Border communities refer to the regions or areas located near the borders between countries. These communities often experience unique social, economic, and cultural dynamics influenced by their proximity to the border, as well as interactions and exchanges with neighboring countries..
- **GLOTTOLOGIST:** A glottologist is a linguist who specializes in the scientific study of languages and their linguistic systems. Glottologists investigate various aspects of language, such as its structure, history, typology, and relationships between different languages.
- **GHETTO:** A ghetto traditionally refers to a segregated area or neighborhood, often characterized by marginalization and social, economic, and physical hardships. Historically, ghettos were created to confine specific racial, ethnic, or religious groups. However, the term can also be used metaphorically to describe areas with concentrated poverty or social problems.
- **SCHENGEN AREA:** The Schengen Area is a zone comprising 27 European countries that have abolished internal border controls. It allows for the free movement of people

within the area, facilitating travel and trade. The Schengen Agreement, signed in 1985, established the principles of the area, aiming to promote economic cooperation and integration among member states.

Author:

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Photos:

XXX

THEMATIC UNIT 2: The Great War

KEY WORDS:

WWI; patriotism; monuments; representation of history; commemorations

DURATION: approximately 60 min

ACCESSIBILITY: by foot



LOCATION 1

Remembrance park



LOCATION 3

**Infantryman's
monument**



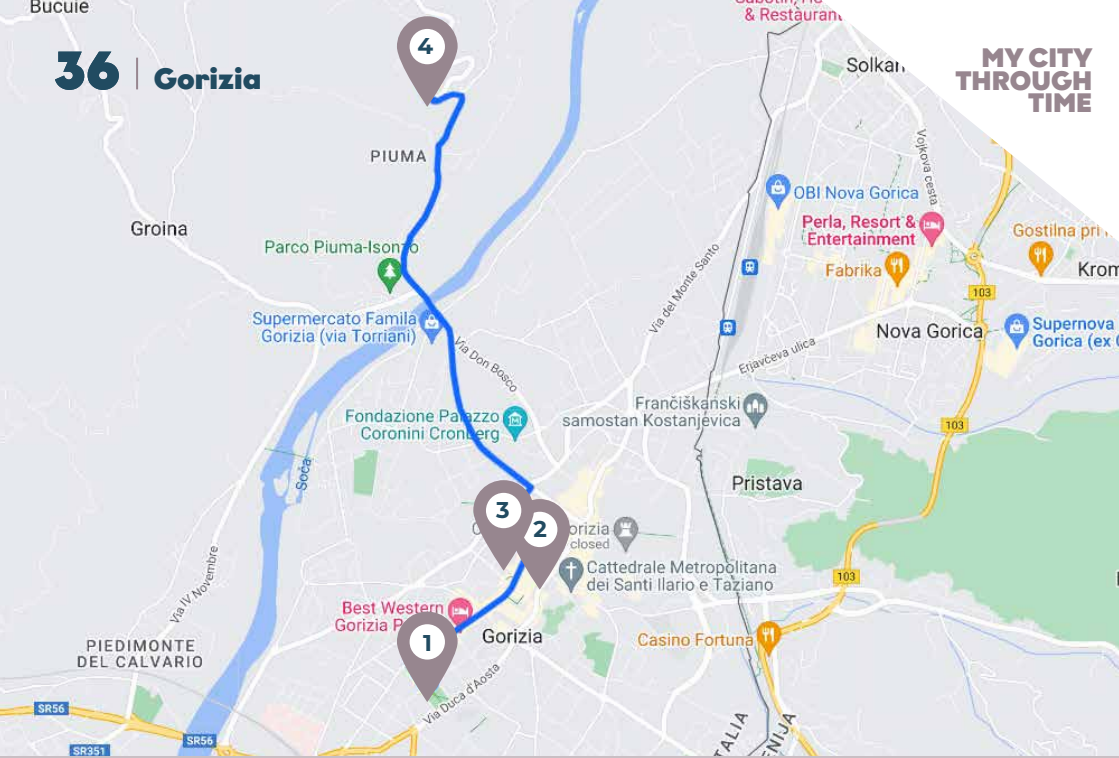
LOCATION 2

**Enrico toti's
monument**



LOCATION 4

Oslavia ossuary



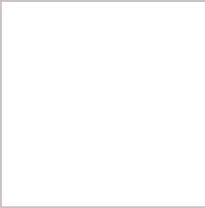
THEMATIC UNIT 2: The Great War



LOCATION 1
Remembrance park



LOCATION 3
Infantryman's monument



LOCATION 2
Enrico Toti's monument



LOCATION 4
Oslavia ossuary

60' km

Description

The Great War, also known as World War I, was a global conflict that lasted from 1914 to 1918. It involved the major world powers of the time, including Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire, against the Allied powers of Britain, France, and Russia. One of the key battlegrounds of this conflict was the Italian front, which extended from the Swiss border to the Adriatic Sea, and included the town of Gorizia.

When war broke out, Gorizia became a strategic target for both sides due to its location on the front line.

The fighting around Gorizia was intense and destructive. The town was bombarded with artillery, and the surrounding hills were the site of fierce battles between Italian and Austro-Hungarian forces. The war had a profound impact on the town and its people. Many buildings were destroyed, and the town's infrastructure was severely damaged. The population was subjected to shortages of food, fuel, and other essential supplies, and many were forced to flee the town to escape the fighting.

The war also had a significant impact on the cultural and intellectual life of the town. Many artists, writers, and intellectuals fled Gorizia, either to escape the fighting or because of political persecution. The town's once-thriving literary and artistic scene was decimated, and it would take years for the cultural life of the town to recover.

The discussion of the Great War in Gorizia is important for several reasons. First, it can help us understand the experiences of the town's people during this tumultuous period. By examining diaries, letters, and other primary sources, we can gain insight into the hardships and struggles that the population endured during the war. We can also learn about the ways in which the war affected different social groups, such as women, children, and soldiers.

Second, the discussion of the Great War in Gorizia can help us understand the broader historical and political context of the war. By examining the political and economic factors that led to the outbreak of the war, we can gain insight into the complex geopolitical situation of Europe in the early 20th century. We can also learn about the ways in which the war reshaped the political and social landscape of Europe, leading to the emergence of new nation-states and the breakdown of traditional empires.

Finally, the discussion of the Great War in Gorizia can help us appreciate the town's rich cultural heritage. Despite the destruction caused by the war, Gorizia remains a center of art, literature, and intellectual life. By studying the cultural history of the town, we can gain insight into the ways in which artists and writers responded to the challenges of war and sought to create new forms of expression in its aftermath.



LOCATION 1

Remembrance park

The Remembrance Park is a public park located near the city center of Gorizia. It has a rectangular layout with a neat appearance and spacious areas, covering approximately 2.5 hectares. This park was established in 1923 to honor the Gorizia volunteers who enlisted in the Italian army and lost their lives during World War I, challenging Austria. The park was de-

signed by Enrico Del Debbio, and it stands on the site where the old city cemetery was located.

On May 24, 1925, the first stone of the circular monument situated in the center of the park was laid. Enrico Del Debbio had designed the monument, drawing inspiration from the Tomb of Lysicrates in Greece. The monument was dedicated to the Gorizia volunteers who perished in the Great War, and despite significant financial difficulties, its inauguration took place on May 24, 1929. The dome of the monument was supported by nine Doric columns and adorned with sculptures by Volterra-no Volterrani that depicted allegories of the cycle of life and civilization. The interior of the monument was decorated with mosaics by the Gorizia artist, Edoardo Del Neri, all inspired by the history of the city.

The monument was hit by an explosion on the night of August 12, 1944. According to newspapers, the Domobranci, who were Slovenian nationalists, blew it up with the tacit consent of the Germans, who provided them with dynamite. After the explosion, only one column remained standing, rising from a pile of rubble, as it stands today. The German police prohibited any protest, but the citizens of Gorizia continued to lay flowers on the rubble for several days. It was decided in the past not to reconstruct the monument as a reminder and warning against the terrorist act and as a lesson for future generations. In modern times, there has been a debate on whether to rebuild the monument as a gesture of political reconciliation.



LOCATION 2

Enrico Toti's monument



Enrico Toti is one of the most inspiring figures in Italian history, a true patriot who fought for his country despite significant

physical limitations. Born in 1882, he was a railway mechanic by trade before the outbreak of World War I. Despite losing one of his legs in an accident on the job, he was determined to serve his country and joined the Bersaglieri as an irregular soldier.

During his time in the military, Toti participated in various military actions, despite his disability. He demonstrated a remarkable level of commitment to his country and fellow soldiers, and his bravery and self-sacrifice during the sixth Battle of the Isonzo is a testament to this. Despite being hit by Austrian bullets, Toti remained in his poorly protected trench near Monfalcone and continued to fight until his death at the age of 33. His act of bravery and selflessness was widely publicized in the press, and he became a symbol of Italian military heroism and self-denial.

The legacy of Enrico Toti lives on in the statue erected in his honor in Cesare Battisti Square in 1958. The statue, sculpted by fellow Bersagliere Mario Montemurro, portrays Toti with his characteristic plumed hat, crutch, and missing left leg. It stands as a testament to his bravery and commitment to his country, and serves as a reminder of the many other Italian soldiers who gave their lives for their country during World War I.

The inscription on the pedestal beneath the statue, "To the Bersagliere Enrico Toti, national hero who fell on August 6, 1916," serves as a reminder of the sacrifice made by Toti and

the many other Italian soldiers who gave their lives during the war. It also speaks to the importance of patriotism and national pride in Italian culture, as well as the value placed on the sacrifice made by those who have fought for their country.

In addition to the statue in Cesare Battisti Square, Toti's memory is also preserved in the press coverage of his act of bravery during the sixth Battle of the Isonzo. The cover of *Domenica del Corriere*, illustrated by Achille Beltrame, became legendary for its portrayal of Toti standing among his troops, throwing his crutch against the Austrian troops before dying. This image, along with the countless other stories of Italian soldiers' bravery and sacrifice during the war, serves as a reminder of the courage and selflessness that define the Italian military tradition.



LOCATION 3

Infantryman's monument



The Statue of the Infantryman, located on Via Cadorna in the city of Gorizia, is a symbol of the sacrifices and bravery of Italian soldiers who fought in various wars for the unification and defense of their country. This monument, inaugurated in 1966, was built to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the conquest of Gorizia during World War I. It is an identical copy of the one erected in Turin five years earlier to commemorate the centenary of the Unification of Italy.

The original monument was created by Angelo Balzardi, a prominent Italian sculptor, at the request of the National Association of Infantrymen. The association wanted to honor the bravery and sacrifice of Italian infantrymen who fought in various wars and conflicts in the name of Italy. The statue is composed of a stone base on which a bronze statue of an infantryman is placed. The infantryman is depicted holding a rifle in his hand, ready to defend his country at any cost. The statue is a powerful symbol of the bravery and dedication of Italian soldiers who fought in various wars, and it continues to inspire and move visitors to this day.

The Statue of the Infantryman is located on Via Cadorna, one of the streets that border the Gardens in Gorizia. The monument is a prominent landmark and a popular destination for tourists visiting the city. The statue's location is significant because it serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by Italian soldiers in defense of their country. The street is named after Luigi Cadorna, an Italian general who led the Italian army during World War I, and the monument's location on this street adds to its historical and cultural significance.

One of the most striking features of the Statue of the Infantryman is the stone base on which it is placed. The base is inscribed with the number of infantrymen who died in all wars in the name of Italy. This inscription serves as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by Italian soldiers and the ultimate price they paid for their country. The base also adds to

the statue's overall aesthetic appeal, giving it a sense of grandeur and significance.

The Statue of the Infantryman is not just a beautiful piece of art; it is also a powerful symbol of the resilience and strength of the Italian people. The statue serves as a reminder that Italy has faced many challenges and obstacles in its long and storied history, but it has always emerged stronger and more united. The statue's location on Via Cadorna, a street named after an Italian general who led the country during a time of great turmoil and strife, adds to its significance and reminds visitors of the sacrifices made by Italian soldiers to defend their country.



LOCATION 4

Oslavia Ossuary

The Ossuary of Oslavia is a somber and poignant reminder of the sacrifices made during the Great War. It stands as a testament to the valor of soldiers who gave their lives in the battles fought in the area of Gorizia and Tolmino. The fascist regime commissioned its construction in 1938, with the intent to collect the remains of these fallen soldiers.

The architect, Ghino Venturi, designed the Ossuary on Quota

153 of Monte Calvario in a triangular shape, comprising four towers and a central tower. Each tower holds the loculi of identified fallen soldiers, arranged along the walls. There are about 20,000 names inscribed on these walls, including 138 Austro-Hungarians. The other 37,000 unnamed bodies, including 539 non-Italians, are buried in three large ossuaries located in the center of the three side towers.

The towers are interconnected via underground tunnels and possess crypts. The central tower is the most important one, holding the tombs of thirteen men decorated with the Gold Medal for Military Valor. These thirteen men, including General Achille Papa, General Ferruccio Trombi, and General Alceo Catalocchino, are remembered for their bravery and their sacrifices for their country. General Achille Papa passed away on October 5, 1917, while General Ferruccio Trombi was fatally wounded in Oslavia on November 28, 1915. General Alceo Catalocchino was killed in the Natisone Valleys on August 27, 1917.

Inside the main tower, a large dark marble cross stands tall, a symbol of sacrifice and remembrance. Outside, near the left vertex of the Ossuary, a bell named “Chiara” has been placed. The bell is a poignant reminder of the lives lost during the Great War and serves as a tribute to the fallen soldiers.

The Ossuary of Oslavia is not just a memorial to the fallen soldiers of the Great War but also a place of contemplation and reflection. It is a symbol of the sacrifices made by these brave soldiers who fought for their country, for their families, and for

their beliefs. It is a reminder of the cost of war and the importance of peace.

Visitors to the Ossuary of Oslavia can pay their respects to the fallen soldiers and reflect on the impact of war on individuals and society. The inscriptions on the walls of the towers provide a glimpse into the lives of these soldiers and serve as a reminder of the human cost of war.

The Ossuary of Oslavia also serves as a reminder of the importance of preserving history and the sacrifices made by previous generations. It is a place that connects the past with the present and reminds us of our responsibility to ensure that the sacrifices made by these soldiers were not in vain.

The Ossuary of Oslavia is a testament to the valor and sacrifice of the soldiers who gave their lives in the battles of the Great War fought in the area of Gorizia and Tolmino. It is a place of contemplation and reflection, where visitors can pay their respects to the fallen soldiers and reflect on the impact of war. It serves as a reminder of the importance of preserving history and the sacrifices made by previous generations. It is a symbol of the human cost of war and the importance of peace.

Questions:

- _____ How did World War I impact the cultural and intellectual landscapes of other towns and cities besides Gorizia?
- _____ In what ways did the Great War reshape the political and social landscape of Europe as a whole?
- _____ How do monuments and memorials play a role in representing and commemorating historical events like the Great War?
- _____ What are some common challenges faced in preserving and maintaining historical sites and monuments related to World War I?

Glossary:

- _____ **OTTOMAN EMPIRE:** The Ottoman Empire was a historical empire that existed from the 14th century to the early 20th century. It was founded by Osman I and based in present-day Turkey. At its peak, the empire spanned three continents and included diverse territories in Southeast Europe, Western Asia, and North Africa. The Ottoman Empire was known for its cultural, political, and military power.

- **AUSTRIAN-HUNGARIAN:** Austrian-Hungarian refers to the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary, which existed from 1867 to 1918. It was a constitutional union between the Austrian Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary. The Austro-Hungarian Empire was characterized by a complex political structure that recognized both Austrian and Hungarian interests and allowed a level of autonomy for various ethnic groups within its borders.
- **NATION-STATES:** Nation-states are political entities in which a nation, which refers to a group of people with a common culture, language, or history, forms a sovereign state within defined borders. In a nation-state, the political boundaries align with the boundaries of the nation. The concept of nation-states became prominent during the process of modern nation-building and the formation of independent nations.
- **OSSUARY:** An ossuary is a place or container where human skeletal remains, typically bones, are gathered and stored. Ossuaries are often used when burial space is limited, or when a large number of remains need to be kept in a compact and organized manner. Ossuaries can be found in various cultural and religious contexts throughout history.
- **GOLD MEDAL FOR MILITARY VALOR:** The Gold Medal for Military Valor is a prestigious military decoration awarded to individuals for acts of exceptional bravery and valor in

the face of the enemy. It is typically awarded in recognition of extraordinary acts of heroism during wartime. The Gold Medal for Military Valor is often considered one of the highest honors bestowed upon military personnel in many countries.

Authors:

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Photos:

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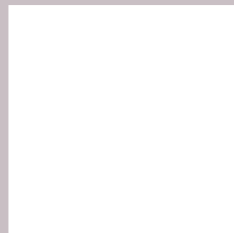
THEMATIC UNIT 3:

The border

KEY WORDS: community; broken ties; connections; illegality; solidarity; memory; choices; border

DURATION: approximately 30 min

ACCESSIBILITY: accessible by foot



LOCATION 1

**Red House
crossing point**



LOCATION 3

**San Gabriele crossing
point**



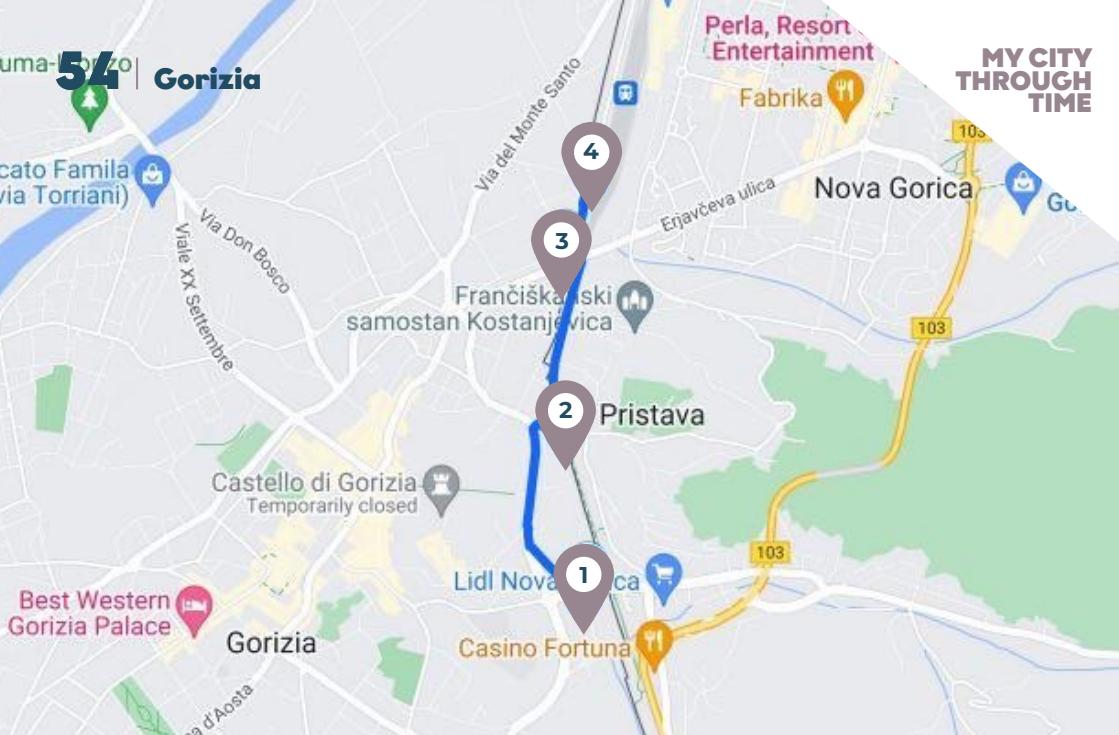
LOCATION 2

Rafut crossing point



LOCATION 4

Transalpina square



THEMATIC UNIT 3:
The border



LOCATION 1
Red House
crossing point



LOCATION 3
San Gabriele
crossing point



LOCATION 2
Rafut
crossing point



LOCATION 4
Transalpina
square

30'



?
km

Description

The city of Gorizia has a unique cultural and historical significance, which is deeply connected to its location on the border between Italy and Slovenia. For centuries, Gorizia has been a meeting point for various cultures and people, and the diverse influences have shaped the town's identity. It has been a part of different empires and states, including the Habsburg Empire, the Kingdom of Italy, and Yugoslavia, and has been home to people from various ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.

The border has played a significant role in shaping Gorizia's culture and identity, with the town's architecture, urban design, and cuisine all reflecting the different cultural influences that have shaped it over time. Additionally, the border has also been a source of tension and conflict, with the town being a site of political disputes and territorial claims throughout its history.

Today, Gorizia remains situated on the border between Italy and Slovenia, and discussions surrounding the border remain relevant to the town's cultural and political life. Gorizia is part of the Friuli Venezia Giulia region of Italy, which has a significant Slovenian-speaking minority, and the border with Slovenia continues to be a source of cooperation and conflict. Additionally, the border has played a significant role in migration and mobility, with people moving between Italy and Slovenia for work, education, and other reasons.

In recent years, Gorizia has become a site for cultural and artistic exchange, with initiatives aimed at promoting cross-border dialogue and cooperation. Cultural festivals, exhibitions, and other events have brought artists and performers from both Italy and Slovenia together. The discussion of the border in Gorizia allows for a deeper understanding of living in a borderland and the ways in which different cultures and identities can shape a shared history and culture.



LOCATION 1

Red House crossing point

The Red House (Casa Rossa) is a historic building located in Gorizia, Italy, near the border with Slovenia. During the Cold War, the building served as a crossing point between the two countries. The Red House crossing point was established in 1947, after World War II, when the border between Italy and Yugoslavia was redrawn. The crossing point was initially used for civilian traffic, but it later became an important point of exchange for goods and people. During the Cold War, the crossing point was an important symbol of communication

and exchange between the two sides, despite the ideological divide between East and West.

Following the shutdown of the Italy-Yugoslavia border in September 1947, the Red House Crossing Point remained one of the international checkpoints available to those with only a passport. Additionally, it served as a “window” between the Western free world and the Eastern world. The building was named after its red facade, which was painted in the traditional Slovenian style. On August 13, 1950, during the Holy Year, after three years of darkness, it was decided that, for one day, the border could reopen. Thousands of people poured into Gorizia, forcing the rather rudimentary crossing point at Casa Rossa. In place of the current border building, there was a well-known trattoria called Casa Rossa, named after its red exterior and famous for its talking parrot attraction. It was a spontaneous and peaceful invasion that forced the initially granted controlled passage. It was a Sunday, but the Italians opened their shops. The city came back to life, people had no money and exchanged eggs and butter for those beautiful sagebrush brooms that were unavailable across the border. At dusk, the carts took the road back home, and families held their brooms high like precious trophies.

In order to pass the border controls, citizens were issued a document called “Prepustinca”.

The Prepustnica passport was an important travel document during the existence of the border between Italy and Yugoslavia. It was issued by authorities and allowed citizens to cross the border without the need for a visa or other travel permits.

During the early years of the Cold War, the border between Italy and Yugoslavia became a tightly-controlled area, with strict controls on travel and movement. However, the Prepustnica passport provided a way for citizens of Yugoslavia to visit Italy and for Italians to visit Yugoslavia.

The significance of the Prepustnica passport was that it allowed for greater communication and interaction between the two countries. Families could visit each other, trade could take place, and cultural exchange could occur. In some cases, the Prepustnica passport even allowed people to access medical care or educational opportunities that were not available in their own country.

The use of the Prepustnica passport also had political significance. At a time when the two countries were on opposite sides of the Iron Curtain, the ability to cross the border and engage in peaceful interactions demonstrated the potential for cooperation and understanding between the two countries.



LOCATION 2

Rafut crossing point



The Rafut Road probably derives its name from a corruption of the German word “raffholz” which means “stacked wood”, since it seems that firewood was dragged from the nearby

Rafut hill towards the city. This narrow “suburban” street suddenly becomes the center of attention on the days between September 15th and 16th, 1947, when Anglo-American soldiers arrive to mark with white chalk the line that marks the new border between Italy and Yugoslavia, defined by the victorious nations of the Second World War with the Paris Peace Treaties on February 10th of the same year. A line that clearly divides the Gorizia community. The house that can still be seen on the left, near the tricolor bar, is separated from the stable, the white line cuts the courtyard in half, and a beautiful photograph taken during those days shows us a cow that, holding two legs on one side and two legs on the other, silently protests against the decisions of European diplomacy. Within a few weeks, the line will become barbed wire, and then a dividing net guarded by border guards.

Today things have definitely changed. No soldiers, no controls. The passage is free, you just need to pay attention to the passing of the train. It has almost become difficult to identify the exact point where the border passes. There are many signs that can be misleading. The classic blue sign, with white writing, the stars of the EU, and the writing Slovenia. Is this the border? Or the metal bar that prevents the passage of cars, with the colors of the Italian flag, faded? Or, again, the metal net with the colors of the Slovenian flag?

This feeling is strange, but also beautiful. This inability to say with certainty in which state we are. It makes us think about the sense of borders, the meaning of the word identity. And

also about the real consequences of the long process of European integration.

Looking carefully, the border is found just over a meter from the cycle path that runs alongside the railway. On a small cement milestone, no more than 40 centimeters high, a black line reminds us how borders are and will always be lines. Perhaps now more imaginary than real.

Looking around, we realize that the milestones proceed both north and south, but they no longer form a straight line, but a broken line that follows the properties, fields, and courtyards without dividing them anymore. A new path, the result of the Osimo Treaties of 1975, which made the border “definitive” and corrected the main distortions implemented 30 years earlier.



LOCATION 3

San Gabriele crossing point



Until September 15, 1947, Via San Gabriele was a long road that extended from the outskirts of Gorizia towards the countryside, the marsh, the old furnace, and the old cemetery. Going in the opposite direction, in 10 minutes, you could reach Victory Square, Travnik, the city center. After September 15, 1947, Via San Gabriele was divided by an imaginary line that the French military defined as the “ethnic line,” separating the “Italian” population from the “Slovenian” population. After the peace treaties of Paris, Via San Gabriele was divided by

the new border. It remained the same street but acquired two names: Via San Gabriele in Italy and Erjavčeva ulica in Yugoslavia. Within a few months, at the end of Erjavčeva ulica, the marsh disappeared, and a new city emerged. A new city called Nova Gorica.

Via San Gabriele/Erjavčeva ulica would be the most direct route to reach Nova Gorica from the center of Gorizia. However, no crossing was established there. The road remained severed by the border barrier. Via San Gabriele/Erjavčeva ulica stands as the most evident symbol of a divided territory, of two worlds that touch each other but with suspicion and a sense of alienation. The young members of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) in Gorizia started to jokingly refer to this road as “the Gorizia path to socialism.” In fact, during those years, the PCI opened a branch precisely on Via San Gabriele, a few meters from the border.

In 1971, there was a symbolic turning point. For the first time, the Giro d'Italia ventured into Slovenia, and the organizers requested the removal of the border barrier on Via San Gabriele to allow the cyclists to reenter Slovenia.

With the Osimo Treaties in 1975, an actual pedestrian border crossing was established. However, it would take more time and many changes to establish the current vehicular crossing. The fall of the Berlin Wall, Slovenia's independence, its entry into the European Union and Schengen played significant roles in this process.



LOCATION 4

Transalpina square

Gorizia is a city located on the border between Italy and Slovenia, and it has a rich history that reflects its unique position as a meeting point between two cultures. One of the most notable landmarks in Gorizia is Transalpina Square, also known as Trg Evrope in Slovenian. The square is located at the border with Slovenia and is home to the Nova Gorica railway station.

The square was originally named after the Transalpine Railway, which connected Jesenice in Slovenia with Trieste in Italy. The

railway was a major transportation route in the region, and it played an important role in the economic and cultural exchange between Italy and Slovenia.

The naming of the square has been somewhat controversial over the years. Slovenia has suggested renaming the square “Europe Square” to reflect its position as a symbol of unity and cooperation between different countries in Europe. However, Italy has preferred to use the old historical name Piazza della Transalpina, which reflects the square’s connection to the railway and its important role in the history of the region.

Despite the controversy over its name, Transalpina Square remains an important symbol of the unique cultural and historical heritage of Gorizia. The square is a bustling hub of activity, with travelers from all over Europe passing through on their way to destinations in Italy and Slovenia.

In recent years, the city of Gorizia has made efforts to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of Transalpina Square. The square has been the site of many events and cultural festivals, and it has become an important destination for tourists interested in exploring the history and culture of the region. The square is also home to several important landmarks, including the Nova Gorica railway station and the nearby Solkan Bridge, which spans the Soča River and is one of the largest stone arch bridges in the world.

Overall, Transalpina Square is a unique and important landmark in the city of Gorizia, and it serves as a testament to the region's rich cultural and historical heritage. Whether you are a local resident or a visitor from afar, the square is well worth a visit and offers a glimpse into the fascinating history and culture of this remarkable part of Europe.

During World War II, the area was a hotbed of partisan activity, with Yugoslav partisans crossing the border into Italy to carry out attacks on the German occupation forces.

The creation of the border between Italy and Yugoslavia in Transalpina Square was a result of the Treaty of Peace with Italy, which was signed in Paris on February 10, 1947, after World War II. This treaty formally ended hostilities between the Allied Powers and Italy, and it resulted in the transfer of some territories from Italy to Yugoslavia. As a result, the eastern part of Gorizia, including Transalpina Square, went to Yugoslavia, while the western part remained with Italy. The creation of the new border led to the division of families, friends, and communities, and it had a profound impact on the history and development of the region.

The border was marked by a substantial wire fence. The area around Transalpina Square became a no-man's land, with both sides patrolling their respective borders.

With the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the border became the external border of the European Union, and a new

border crossing was built in the area of Transalpina Square. Today, the border between Italy and Slovenia is open, and the area around Transalpina Square is a bustling hub of activity, with people crossing the border for work, leisure, and shopping.

Questions:

- _____ How does living in a border community impact the cultural identity and sense of belonging of its residents?
- _____ What are the challenges faced by individuals and families living in broken communities along the border, and how do these challenges differ from those in non-border areas?
- _____ In what ways do border communities demonstrate resilience and create their own unique sense of community despite the challenges they face?
- _____ How does the presence of physical borders impact social, economic, and educational opportunities for individuals living in border communities?
- _____ What are some potential strategies or initiatives that can help bridge the divides and foster unity within broken communities along the border?
- _____ Did you find the border? How imposing is it? Did it turn out as you expected? And if not, how was it?

Glossary:

- **BORDER COMMUNITIES:** Border communities refer to the regions or areas located near the borders between countries. These communities often experience unique social, economic, and cultural dynamics influenced by their proximity to the border, as well as interactions and exchanges with neighboring countries.
- **GHETTO:** A ghetto traditionally refers to a segregated area or neighborhood, often characterized by marginalization and social, economic, and physical hardships. Historically, ghettos were created to confine specific racial, ethnic, or religious groups. However, the term can also be used metaphorically to describe areas with concentrated poverty or social problems
- **PREPUSTNICA:** “Prepustnica” refers to a permit or pass. It is a document or authorization that grants someone permission to enter or pass through a particular area, facility, or controlled zone. The prepustnica is often used in various contexts, such as travel, security, or access control, to regulate and monitor the movement of individuals.
- **SCHENGEN AREA:** The Schengen Area is a zone comprising 27 European countries that have abolished internal border controls. It allows for the free movement of people within the area, facilitating travel and trade. The Schen-

gen Agreement, signed in 1985, established the principles of the area, aiming to promote economic cooperation and integration among member states.

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MY CITY THROUGH TIME



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union