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The Hugo Valentin Centre

Conference Call, 9-11 May 2023, Uppsala, Sweden

Destruction of Jewish Communities in South-Eastern Europe during the Second World War: Roots, Policies, Practices, and Outcomes

Since the 1990s, access to new and unexplored archival data about the Holocaust in Eastern Europe has broadened the scope of research regarding Holocaust studies. As a result, a more nuanced understanding of Jewish life and its destruction following the Nazi occupation and the implementation of the Final Solution in Eastern Europe came about. Unfortunately, the same does not apply to South-Eastern Europe. Therefore, this conference aims to address the question of the Holocaust by looking at various policies and practices that brought about the destruction of Jewish communities in South-Eastern Europe during the Second World War.

The main question addressed here is whether the destruction of Jewish culture and life came as a “forceful” adoption, a copy-paste act, of Nazi German policies or whether the destruction of the Jews had local racial, ideological, and economic roots and policies. This complex question wishes to address not only the question of ideologically driven implementation of the policies that led to the Holocaust. On the contrary, it addresses the institutional and local level actors and their role and responsibility in implementing anti-Jewish legislation and policies that led to the destruction of Jews and Jewish life and culture in South-Eastern Europe.

When discussing this region, broadly defined, the question of Jewish persecution, anti-Jewish legislation, appropriation of Jewish property, violence against Jewish people, gentile responses to these processes, and institutionalized destruction of Jewish communities remain lacunae within general Holocaust studies. Studies examining the Holocaust in this region are too often confined to the margins of national histories and too often subjected to revisionism, distortion, and even denial. On the one side, there is a broad consensus regarding the main perpetrators and centres of incentive, Nazi Germany. In contrast, on the other side, the complex question of local collaboration and local actors and their grass root incentives and policies remains under-researched and marginalized.

To address the above-stated issues, in all of their complexities, we aim to bring together scholars from different academic fields, such as history, law, sociology, political science, and economics, to analyse, from a comparative or entangled perspective, the variety of aspects regarding the destruction of Jewish culture and life in South-Eastern Europe during the Second World War.

We encourage proposals connected to or closely related to the following topics and especially papers that apply comparative, transnational, entangled, or macro-micro-centred dimensions, including local case studies:

- Jewish life and culture before the Second World War
- Antisemitism
- Fascism, nationalism, and the Holocaust
- Anti-Jewish legislation and its implementation
- Anti-Jewish measures and policies
- Institutionalized destruction of the Jewish communities
- Aryanization/nationalization of Jewish property
- Local vs central actors in economic Aryanization

- Institutions, actors, beneficiaries
- Forced labour policies and implementation
- Local actors and the Holocaust
- Jewish resistance
- Everyday Jewish life during the Holocaust
- Gender perspectives on the Holocaust
- Distortion and denial

The keynote lecture is given by Prof. Dr **Christian Gerlach**, Institute of History, University of Bern, Switzerland.

The conference will take place in Uppsala from **9-11 May 2023**. Please send a **300-word** summary of your proposal and **CV** to: holocaustseeurope@uu.se by **January 15 2023** at the latest.

Organizers will cover accommodation for the two nights in Uppsala. We have a limited budget for other travel expenses, but we might be able to assist if you need financial support for travel costs. In this case, please send us an estimate of your cost.

The conference is part of the project *The Unwanted Citizens: The Holocaust and the Aryaniization of Jewish Property in Romania and the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), 1940-1945*, and is organized by the Hugo Valentin Centre, Department of History, Uppsala University with the financial support of

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