

Auschwitz Was Evil but so Was Jasenovac, Yet Few Dare to Talk About It

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The 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz is a somber event marked by deep reflection across Europe about the evils of its genocidal past, which makes it an appropriate time to remind everyone about Jasenovac, the Croatian-operated death camp that few are aware of and even fewer dare to talk about.

Europe is reflecting on the evils of its genocidal past as the world marks the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, a somber event that's forever etched into the West's collective memory.

The Allies swore that they'd never let anyone forget about the crimes against humanity that were committed in that Nazi death camp, which is why they continue to mark its liberation every year with high-profile visits, keynote speeches, and heavy media coverage. Everyone in the world is therefore aware of the Nazis' racist policies and the campaign of killing that accompanied them, yet Hitler's forces weren't the only ones in World War II who did such a thing.

Few outside of the Balkans have ever heard of Jasenovac, the Croatian-operated death camp where around one million people — [at least 800,000 of them Serbs](#) — were brutally murdered by the Ustashe regime of the Nazi-allied so-called "Independent State of Croatia" (known by its abbreviation as the NDH), and even fewer people dare to talk about it.

All lives are equal and there shouldn't be any hierarchy of victimhood, but the suffering of the Serbs has regrettably been forgotten by almost all but the Serbs themselves (and even some among them don't seem to care all that much anymore). The Nazis' genocidal campaign of conquest across Europe affected the entire continent whereas the Croats' equally evil genocidal campaign was "only" waged in part of the Balkans, so there's less interest in what they did. That's a shame too because everyone's understanding of World War II would be enriched by learning about what happened there at that time. The Croats declared "independence" right after the Nazi-led fascist invasion of Yugoslavia, literally stabbing their South Slavic brethren in the back out of solidarity with their German allies. The NDH was so rabidly racist that it established Jasenovac in order to contribute to Hitler's so-called "Final Solution", not just against Jews but also against the Slavs, a fact that's often omitted from history nowadays as well.

Although the Croats are Slavs themselves, the Ustashe regime claimed that they're actually somehow connected to the self-professed "master race", unlike their fellow Serbs who they insisted were inferior and thus "deserving" only of the most painful death possible. The Nazis obviously supported the actions of their regional allies but didn't have to assist them

since this fascist, separatist, terrorist organization was more than willing to do all the killing on its own. This makes Jasenovac different from Auschwitz, which was built and operated by a foreign occupying army, since it was an entirely grassroots killing center that embodied everything that the Ustashe stood for. Therefore, it is solely the Croats that are to be blamed for all of the atrocities that took place there, and any efforts to shift their collective guilt onto the Nazis are insincere deflections aimed at eschewing their full responsibility. Jasenovac was a unique evil even by World War II standards, but it's mostly taboo to talk about outside of the Balkans (and even within it for the most part).

Shockingly, [the Ustashe were also Vatican allies](#), and Croatia is nowadays a proud member of both the EU and NATO after having previously received their support during the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s. It's held up as a "shining example" of "Euro-Atlantic integration" and the model that the West wants Serbia to follow. Criticizing the country is akin to criticizing the "Euro-Atlantic integration" project as a whole and exposing one of the many skeletons still hidden in the Vatican's closet. It's also fashionable nowadays to conveniently pin the blame for all of World War II's horrors on the Nazis just as it's fashionable to do the same with the Serbs in more recent times for everything that happened after the dissolution of Yugoslavia. This attitude is tacitly revisionist since it strongly implies that the Serbs are genocidal when in reality they've been the victims of several genocides in their history which can collectively be described as the Serbocide, with the most recent one being attempted in the 1990s and partially carried out by the Croats (once again). These are historical facts but are often smeared as "conspiracy theories" — or even worse, "genocide-inciting lies" — whenever they're brought up.

The Europeans owe it to the Serbian people to properly commemorate the Serbocide just like they do the Holocaust, but one shouldn't realistically get their hopes up that this will soon happen for the reasons that were explained. As such, the best that the Serbs can do is remind everyone about Jasenovac every year when the world remembers the liberation of Auschwitz, resorting to social media campaigns to raise awareness about the crimes against humanity that the Croatian Ustashe committed against them out of their own will without the Nazis ever having to order them to do so. The evils of World War II are many, but all of its victims are equal, so historic justice cannot be served in the Balkans until everyone the world over thinks of Jasenovac whenever they hear the words World War II, Auschwitz, concentration camps, and genocide. It's admittedly an ambitious goal, but one that should always remain on Serbs' minds and pursued with the utmost passion because everyone can literally make a positive difference in their own way by informing as many people as possible.

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