

= Glina massacres =

The Glina massacres were killings of Serb peasants in the town of Glina in the Independent State of Croatia ( NDH ) that occurred between May and August 1941 , during World War II . The first wave of massacres in the town began on 11 or 12 May 1941 , when a band of Usta?e led by Mirko Puk murdered a group of Serb men and boys in a Serbian Orthodox church before setting it on fire . The following day , approximately 100 Serb males were murdered by the Usta?e in the nearby village of Prekopi . Estimates of the overall number of Serbs killed from 11 ? 13 May range from 260 to 417 . Further killings in Glina occurred between 30 July and 3 August of that same year , when 700 ? 2 @, @ 000 Serbs were massacred by a group of Usta?e led by Vjekoslav Luburi? . Ljubo Jednak , the only survivor of these killings , went on to testify at the trials of the several prominent figures in the NDH after the war . Puk was captured by British forces in 1945 while attempting to flee to Austria and was extradited to Yugoslavia the following year , where he committed suicide . Luburi? escaped Yugoslavia after the war and moved to fascist Spain , where he was killed by a person generally assumed to be an agent of the Yugoslav State Security Service .

An estimated 2 @, @ 000 ? 2 @, @ 400 people were killed in the Glina massacres . In 1969 , a monument was erected and a memorial museum was built to commemorate the victims of the killings . Following the independence of Croatia from Yugoslavia , the monument was removed by Croatian authorities in the town . After the Croatian War of Independence , the local authorities failed to restore it and dismantled it instead . The memorial museum was converted into a generic cultural institution , to the dismay of the local Serbian population .

= = Background = =

On 6 April 1941 , Axis forces invaded Yugoslavia . Poorly equipped and poorly trained , the Royal Yugoslav Army was quickly defeated . The country was then dismembered and the extreme Croat nationalist and fascist Ante Paveli? , who had been in exile in Benito Mussolini 's Italy , was appointed Poglavnik ( leader ) of an Usta?e @-@ led Croatian state ? the Independent State of Croatia ( often called the NDH , from the Croatian : Nezavisna Dr?ava Hrvatska ) . The NDH combined almost all of modern @-@ day Croatia , all of modern @-@ day Bosnia and Herzegovina and parts of modern @-@ day Serbia into an " Italian @-@ German quasi @-@ protectorate " . NDH authorities , led by the Usta?e militia , subsequently implemented genocidal policies against the Serb , Jewish and Romani population living within the borders of the new state . Ethnic Serbs were persecuted the most because Paveli? and the Usta?e considered them " potential turncoats " in what they wanted to be an ethnically pure state composed solely of Croats . Racist and antisemitic laws were passed , and ethnic Serbs , representing about thirty percent of the NDH 's population of 6 @. @ 3 million , became targets of large @-@ scale massacres perpetrated by the Usta?e . By the middle of 1941 , these killings reached degrees of brutality that shocked even some Germans . The Cyrillic script was subsequently banned by Croatian authorities , Orthodox Christian church schools were closed , and Serbs were ordered to wear identifying armbands . Mile Budak , the Croatian Minister of Education , is reported to have said that one @-@ third of Serbs in the NDH were to be killed , one @-@ third were to be expelled , and one @-@ third were to be converted to Roman Catholicism . The Usta?e then established numerous concentration camps where thousands of Serbs were mistreated , starved , and murdered .

Glina is a small market town in the Banovina region of Croatia located about 55 kilometers ( 34 miles ) south of Zagreb . In 1931 , the town itself had a population of 2 @, @ 315 people and was inhabited mostly by Serbs , Croats , and Jews . Shortly after the Usta?e took power , the Croatian Minister of Justice , Mirko Puk , established a base in the town .

= = Massacres = =

= = = May 1941 = = =

On 11 or 12 May 1941 , a band of Ustaše led by Puk seized a group of Serb males from Glina and detained them regardless of occupation or class . The Ustaše then herded the group into an Orthodox Church and demanded that they be given documents proving the Serbs had all converted to Catholicism . Two Serbs produced the required documents and were released . The Ustaše then locked inside and massacred those who did not possess conversion certificates , including priest Bogdan Opačić . The bodies were then left to burn as the Ustaše set the church on fire and waited outside to shoot any survivors attempting to escape the flames . On 13 May , a further 100 Serb males were executed by the Ustaše in the nearby village of Prekopi .

Estimates of the number of Serbs killed on 11 ? 13 May vary . Historians Jozo Tomasevich and Ivo Goldstein put the number at 260 . Historians Sabrina P. Ramet and Marko Attila Hoare estimate that about 300 Serbs were massacred while historian Davide Rodogno puts the number at 417 killed . On 14 May , the Archbishop of Zagreb , Aloysius Stepinac , sent a letter of protest to Pavelić after receiving news of the killings . He failed to condemn the atrocity publicly . The next day , Pavelić visited Rome and was granted a private audience with Pope Pius XII , who offered de facto recognition of the NDH on behalf of the Holy See . Although he was aware that Pavelić was a totalitarian dictator , there is no evidence that he had knowledge of the first Glina massacre at the time .

= = = July ? August 1941 = = =

On the night of 30 July 1941 , a massacre similar to the one in May again occurred in Glina . That summer , the Ustaše had offered amnesty for all Serbs in the NDH who would convert from Eastern Orthodoxy to Roman Catholicism . Many Serbs responded positively , and one group turned up at a Serbian Orthodox church in Glina where a conversion ceremony was to take place . The Serbs who had gathered , thinking they were to undergo a conversion ceremony , were greeted by six members of the Ustaše under the direct command of Vjekoslav Luburić . When all were inside , the doors to the church were sealed . The Serbs were then forced to lie on the ground as the six Ustaše struck them one by one on the head with spiked clubs . More Ustaše then appeared and the killings continued . Victims were killed by having their throats cut or by having their heads smashed in with rifle butts . Only one of the victims , Ljubo Jednak , survived after playing dead and later described what had happened :

They started with one huge husky peasant who began singing an old historical heroic song of the Serbs . They put his head on the table and as he continued to sing they slit his throat and then the next squad moved in to smash his skull . I was paralyzed . " This is what you are getting , " an Ustaša screamed . Ustaše surrounded us . There was absolutely no escape . Then the slaughter began . One group stabbed with knives , the other followed , smashing heads to make certain everyone was dead . Within a matter of minutes we stood in a lake of blood . Screams and wails , bodies dropping right and left .

The bodies were then put into trucks and were taken to a large burial pit , where they were left unattended long enough for Jednak to escape . It is estimated that 200 Serbs were killed that evening . Killings continued on 3 August , when the Ustaše murdered the inhabitants of Serb villages in the vicinity of the church . About one month later , the church was burned down by the Ustaše . Estimates of the number of Serbs killed from 30 July to 3 August vary widely . Sociologist Damir Mirković and historian Paul Mojzes state that 700 Serbs were killed . Journalist Tim Judah puts the number at 1 @, @ 200 , and historian Iván T. Berend writes that the Ustaše killed 1 @, @ 800 people . Hoare writes that as many as 2 @, @ 000 Serbs were murdered .

= = Aftermath = =

Following the massacres , many Serbs from Glina and its surroundings fled to Serbia or were deported to Ustaše @-@ controlled concentration camps . The NDH collapsed in May 1945 , and the following year the Nuremberg trials judged that the persecution experienced by Serbs in the

country was a crime of genocide . Local Serbs returned to Glina after the war , partly out of a desire to remain near the graves of their deceased family members , and lived peacefully alongside their Croat neighbours until the outbreak of the Yugoslav Wars in the 1990s .

Puk , the organizer of the first massacre , was captured by British forces while attempting to flee to Austria in May 1945 and was extradited to Yugoslavia several months later , where he committed suicide by slitting his wrists with a razor blade . Luburić , the organizer of the second massacre , escaped Yugoslavia after the war and moved to fascist Spain , where he was assassinated by a person generally assumed to have been an agent of the Yugoslav State Security Service ( UDBA ) . Pavelić survived the war and died in Spain in 1959 . Štepinac , who failed to publicly condemn the atrocities in Glina , was accused of collaborating with the Ustaše by Yugoslavia 's new Communist government and was tried in 1946 , where Jednak testified against him . He was subsequently sentenced to sixteen years imprisonment and died while under house arrest in 1960 . In 1986 , Jednak testified against the Ustaše government 's Minister of the Interior , Andrija Artuković , at his trial in Croatia .

= = = Legacy = = =

From an estimated 300 @, @ 000 Croatian Serbs that were murdered by the Ustaše from 1941 to 1945 , more than 18 @, @ 000 were from Glina at its surroundings . According to historians Hannes Grandits and Christian Promitzer , the massacres that occurred in the town in 1941 took the lives of approximately 2 @, @ 000 Serbs . Professor Mark Levene estimates that 2 @, @ 400 people lost their lives over the course of five mass killings that occurred in Glina during 1941 . Sometimes called pogroms , the killings have been described by Judah as being one of the most infamous of the early atrocities perpetrated by the Ustaše . Professor Manus I. Midlarsky has noted that the burning of victims inside a church during the May killings " foreshadowed the later German massing of Jews inside their wooden synagogues in Poland ... [ and ] setting fire to the buildings as the congregants inside burned alive . "

The poem Requiem ( Serbian : Rekvijem , ????????? ) by poet Ivan V. Lalić is dedicated to the victims of the massacres in Glina . After the war , Yugoslav authorities removed the physical remnants where the church which had been burned down on 30 July had stood . In 1969 , a monument by Antun Augustinović and a museum ( Croatian : Spomen @-@ dom , lit . " Memorial home " ) were erected on the site and were dedicated to the victims of the massacres .

Following the independence of Croatia from Yugoslavia , the monument , a marble tablet bearing the names of Serbs killed in the massacres , was removed by Croatian authorities in the town . The memorial museum was heavily damaged in 1991 , during the Croatian War of Independence . In August 1995 , the Augustinović monument was damaged and removed again after it had been restored by Croatian Serb authorities following its initial removal in 1991 . Croatian authorities began working on the conversion of the museum into a general @-@ purpose cultural institution named the " Croatian Home " ( Croatian : Hrvatski dom ) . The move was met with indignation by the Serbian community , who complained to the local authorities , to the Ministry of Culture , and to the Prime Minister of Croatia . They were publicly supported by writer Slavko Goldstein , but local Croatian Peasant Party politicians rejected their pleas .

= = = Newspapers = = =

= = = Websites = = =