



המרכז לאמנות יהודית
THE CENTER FOR JEWISH ART
האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים • THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM



Jewish Heritage in Croatia

Expedition Report 2021



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by the generous support of the Keller Foundation

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All expedition materials are available online
in the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art, <https://cja.huji.ac.il/>

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Front page image: Orthodox Synagogue in Rijeka (1930–32, arch. V. Angyal and P. Fabbrio).
View from the northwest. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

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INTRODUCTION

This report assesses the current situation of Jewish heritage in Croatia as seen in the research expedition by the Center for Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 2021. The expedition was undertaken as a part of the research project, generously supported by the Keller Foundation, devoted to historic Hungary, hence the following discussion concentrates on the Croatian regions that were part of the Lands of the Crown of Saint Stephen, known in 1868–1918 as the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia and the Corpus separatum of Fiume (Rijeka). The Dalmatian communities of Split and Dubrovnik never belonged to the Hungarian state and will be discussed separately (Fig. 1).

The team of the Center for Jewish Art travelled to Croatia from 26 July to 5 August 2021 and visited the following cities and towns:

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 1. Bjelovar | 10. Osijek |
| 2. Čakovec | 11. Rijeka |
| 3. Cernik | 12. Sisak |
| 4. Đakovo | 13. Slatina |
| 5. Daruvar | 14. Slavonski Brod |
| 6. Karlovac | 15. Varaždin |
| 7. Koprivnica | 16. Virovitica |
| 8. Križevci | 17. Vukovar |
| 9. Opatija | 18. Zagreb |

The main goal of the expedition was to survey the preserved buildings of active and former synagogues and cemetery chapels. The team also surveyed Jewish cemeteries and Holocaust monuments.¹

About 7,000 photographs taken on the expedition have been uploaded to the Bezalel Narkiss Index of Jewish Art.



1. Map of Croatia. The Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia and the Corpus separatum of Fiume (Rijeka) are in red and purple.
Via Wikimedia Commons.

Free settlement of Jews in territories of the future Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia became possible only in 1783, as a consequence of the Edict of Tolerance issued by emperor Joseph II in 1792. Jewish migrants to Croatia came mostly from Hungary and from other Habsburg Lands like Austria, Bohemia and Moravia. In the interwar period, some 20,000 Jews lived in Croatia.

During WWII, the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) ruled by the fascist organization Ustaša embarked upon the annihilation of local Jews. According to Yad Vashem, 81% of Jews in Croatia (as well as in Bosnia and Herzegovina occupied by NDH) perished in the Holocaust (30,000 out of 37,000).² Survivors managed to commemorate these losses; there are hundreds of epitaphs in Croatian Jewish cemeteries mentioning one or more family members as “victims of Fascism.” The survivors, however, were unable to revive the pre-war level of community activities and restore synagogues.

The World Jewish Congress estimates the current Jewish population of Croatia at approximately 1,700 (as of 2001). Three quarters of Croatia’s Jews live in the capital of Zagreb, with other small communities in Osijek, Rijeka, Split, and Dubrovnik. The present situation of Jewish built heritage in Croatia – like in many other countries – emerged as the combination of the impact of the Shoah, the post-war policies towards the Jews, and contemporary developments in the European Union.

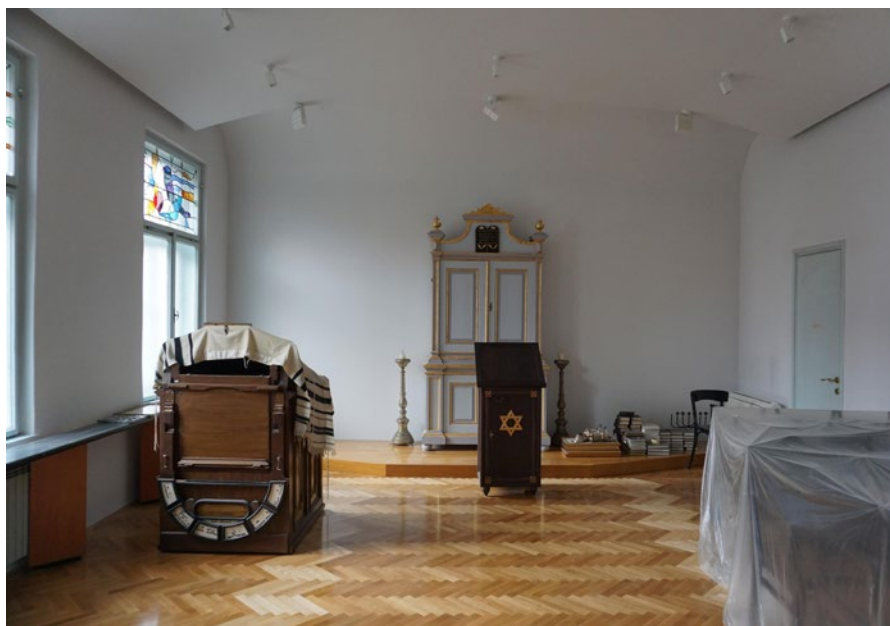
¹ For an overview of Jewish sites in Croatia see *Jewish Heritage Sites in Croatia: Preliminary Report* (Washington, DC: United States Commission for the Preservation of America’s Heritage Abroad, 2005).

² <https://www.yadvashem.org/righteous/stories/the-holocaust-in-croatia.html>. According to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 30,148 Jews out of 39,400 perished in the territory of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, annexed to the Independent State of Croatia, and Dalmatia, occupied by Italy, see <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/jewish-losses-during-the-holocaust-by-country>.

SYNAGOGUES

The earliest synagogues in Croatia were constructed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, but none of them survived.³ All preserved Croatian synagogues were constructed in the second half of the nineteenth and the first three decades of the twentieth century.

As a consequence of the Holocaust and the after-war politics of Tito's Yugoslavia, only nine synagogue buildings – besides Split and Dubrovnik – survive today. At least twenty synagogues were demolished. Of those nine buildings, only one – the Orthodox Synagogue in Rijeka – belongs to the Jewish community and functions as the synagogue.⁴ Eight other buildings belong to municipalities and are not used for Jewish communal or ritual purposes. Substituting the destroyed synagogues, the Jewish communities of Zagreb and Osijek established prayer halls in the community's buildings (Figs. 2 and 3).



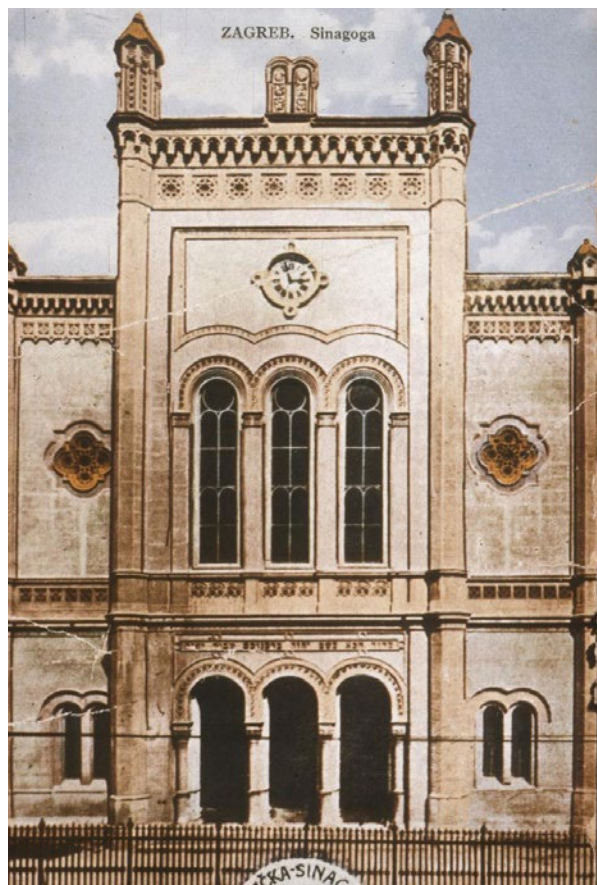
2. Prayer Hall in the Jewish Community Building in Zagreb, in the process of renovation after the earthquake in 2020. Photo by Vladimir Levin, 2021. © Center for Jewish Art.



3. Prayer Hall in the Jewish Community Building in Osijek. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

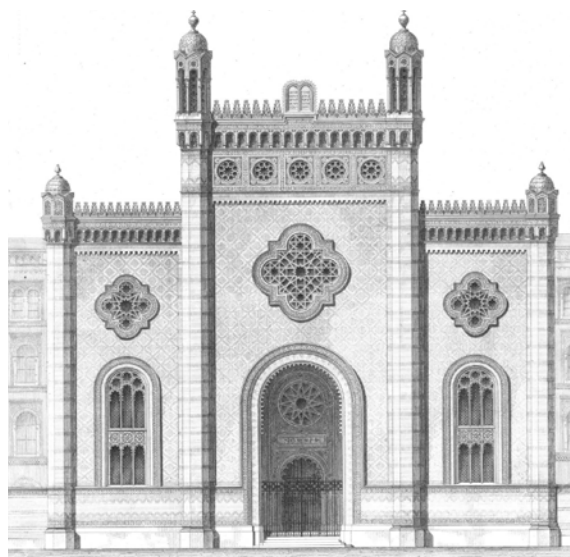
³ Zlatko Karač, *Studije o arhitekturi sinagoga u Hrvatskoj: Odabrani tekstovi* (Zagreb: UPI 2 M Books, 2020), 51.

⁴ On the history of the Jewish community in Rijeka, see Teodoro Morgani, *Židovi Rijeke i Opatije (1441–1945)*, trans. Mirna Ristić (Rijeka: Adamic, 2006); Rina Brumini, *The Jewish Community in Rijeka*, trans. Maja Lazarević Branišelj (Rijeka: Libertin, 2019).



4. Temple in Zagreb (1867, arch. Franjo Klein). Western facade. Postcard, early 20th century.

In general, the architecture of synagogues in Croatia is close to Austria and Hungary's architecture.⁵ The main Temple in Zagreb (Fig. 4) was built in 1867⁶ and was modelled after the Leopoldstädter Tempel in Vienna (1858, Fig. 5). The moderate reform Leopoldstädter Tempel served as a model for a dozen synagogues in the Habsburg Empire.⁷ In Croatia, the Leopoldstadt and Zagreb Temples served as the model for the synagogue in Koprivnica, constructed in 1875–76 (Fig. 6).⁸



5. Leopoldstädter Tempel in Vienna (1858, arch. Ludwig Förster). Western facade. Allgemeine Bauzeitung, 1859, plate 232.



6. Former synagogue in Koprivnica (1875, arch. Julius Deutsch). View from the northwest. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

5 On the history and architecture of synagogues in Croatia see, for instance, Rudolf Klein, "Sinagoga na tlu Hrvatske u kontekstu Austro-Ugarske Monarhije," in *Dva stoljeća povijesti i kulture Židova u Zagrebu i Hrvatskoj*, ed. Ognjen Kraus (Zagreb: Jevrejska općina Zagreb, 1998); Karač, *Studije o arhitekturi sinagoga u Hrvatskoj*.

6 On the Temple in Zagreb, see Rudolf Klein, *Synagogues in Hungary, 1782–1918: Genealogy, Typology and Architectural Significance* (Budapest: TERC, 2017), 254–55, 500–501; Karač, *Studije o arhitekturi sinagoga u Hrvatskoj*, 88–89.

7 See, for instance, Sergey Kravtsov, "Architecture of 'New Synagogues' in Central-Eastern Europe," in *Reform Judaism and Architecture*, ed. Andreas Brämer, Mirko Przystawik, and Harmen H. Thies (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016), 58–60.

8 On the synagogue in Koprivnica, see Karač, *Studije o arhitekturi sinagoga u Hrvatskoj*, 94.



In the later periods, Croatian communities used different methods of making their synagogues prominent and meaningful. The synagogues in Vukovar (1889), Vinkovci (1922), and the Great Synagogue in Rijeka (1903) – none of which survive – featured prominent domes and had dominating positions in the cityscapes. In their situation, they are similar to many synagogues in Hungary that also dominated local cityscapes.

7. Synagogue in Vukovar (1889, arch. Ludwig Schöne, demolished in 1958). View from the southwest. Postcard, early 20th century.



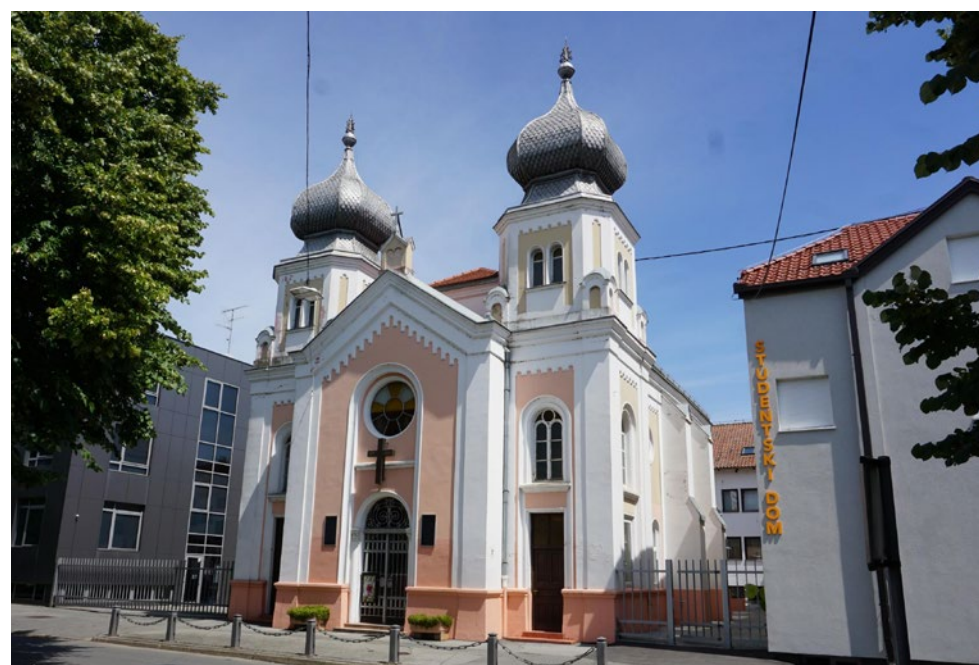
8. Great Synagogue in Rijeka (1903, arch. Lippòt Baumhorn, demolished in 1944 and 1948). Photo, early 20th century. Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.

Seven synagogues in Croatia had two towers flanking their main façade:

1. Synagogue in Varaždin, built in 1860–61
2. Synagogue in Đakovo, built in 1863–80, demolished in 1941
3. Synagogue in the Upper Town of Osijek, built in 1869, burnt down in 1941, demolished in 1950
4. Synagogue in Našice, built in 1893–98, demolished in 1942
5. Synagogue in Slavonski Brod, built in 1896, demolished in 1944 (Fig. 9)
6. Synagogue in the Lower Town of Osijek, built in 1901–03
7. Synagogue in Bjelovar, built in 1913–14



9. Synagogue in Slavonski Brod (1896, arch. Leo Hönigsberg and Julius Deutsch).
View from the southwest. Postcard, early 20th century © Gross Family Collection.



10. Former synagogue in the Lower Town of Osijek.
(1903, arch. Vilim Karl Hofbauer).
View from the west.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

This form of building, defined by Rudolf Klein as “Catholic church type,”⁹ was widespread in Austria-Hungary in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Among them, only the synagogue in the Lower Town of Osijek is preserved in its original form, while the synagogues in Bjelovar and Varaždin lost their towers after WWII.

The Lower Town synagogue in Osijek (Fig. 10) was constructed in 1902–03. In 1970, it was sold to the Evangelical church, but its building remains well preserved and renovated. As one of our contacts in Croatia said, “remove the cross and it is ready for Jewish worship.” A plaque at the entrance to the church states that this is a former synagogue established by the Jewish community in 1902 and renovated by the Evangelical church in 1980 (Fig. 11).¹⁰



11. Plaque on the former synagogue
in the Lower Town of Osijek.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

⁹ Klein, *Synagogues in Hungary*, 317–48.

¹⁰ On the synagogue in Osijek see Rudolf Klein, “Sinagoga u Osijeku,” in *Secesija u Hrvatskoj: Program i sažeci znanstvenog skupa* (Osijek, 1997); Klein, *Synagogues in Hungary*, 336–37; Karač, *Studije o arhitekturi sinagoga u Hrvatskoj*, 101, 111–12, 155–56.



12. Former synagogue in Varaždin (1861, arch. Valent Morandini and Ludwig Deutsch), after its reconstruction in 1969. View from the west. Photo by Zoya Arshavsky, 2000 © CJA.



13. Former synagogue in Varaždin (1861, arch. Valent Morandini and Ludwig Deutsch), during its reconstruction of 2021. View from the west. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

The synagogue in Varaždin is currently under renovation.¹¹ Its “Socialist” façade from 1969 (Fig. 12) has been replaced by a historically correct reconstruction (Fig. 13). The façade has two onion domes. The main entrance is surmounted by the Hebrew inscription כי ביתי / בית תפלה יקרא לכל העמים (“For my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations”). This verse from Isaiah 56:7 with a clear inclusive message decorated many Reform and “progressive” synagogues in central and eastern Europe. This inscription served to demonstrate these congregations’ “openness” to the surrounding non-Jewish society (a similar inscription could be found before 1951 above the entrance to the synagogue in Bjelovar).¹² As can be deduced from the inscription on the fence surrounding the building site, the Jewish history of this building will be publicly stated in signage once the reconstruction comes to an end.



14 Former synagogue in Daruvar (1860). View from the west. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

Other synagogues were less prominent architecturally and did not dominate townscapes, but nonetheless they were situated owtown like Daruvar (Fig. 14), Sisak (Fig. 15) or unpreserved Karlovac. In some cases, such synagogues had very central location in the main street, like in Slatina (Fig. 16), Križevci or unpreserved Virovitica.



15. Former synagogue in Sisak (1870, arch. Franjo Klein). View from the west. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



16. Former synagogue in Slatina (1896). View from the northwest. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

¹¹ On the synagogue in Varaždin, see Karač, *Studije o arhitekturi sinagoga u Hrvatskoj*, 86.

¹² <https://cja.huji.ac.il/browser.php?id=173747&mode=alone>.



17. Former Synagogue in Bjelovar (1913–14, arch. Otto Goldscheider). View from the southeast. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



18. Orthodox Synagogue in Rijeka (1930–32, arch. V. Angyal and P. Fabbrio). View from the northwest. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



19. Mikveh and rabbi's house in Rijeka (1931). View from the north. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, one sees a new influence upon the local synagogue architecture; several Croatian synagogues were designed in the modernist style:¹³

1. Synagogue in Kutina, built in 1913–14 and demolished in 1968–69¹⁴
2. Synagogue in Bjelovar, built in 1913–14 and reconstructed as a House of Culture in 1951 (Fig. 17)¹⁵
3. Synagogue in Opatija, designed in 1925–27, was never built¹⁶
4. Orthodox Synagogue in Rijeka, built in 1930–32 (Figs. 18, 19 and 20).

Only the synagogue in Rijeka is preserved in its original form and serves an active Jewish



20. Orthodox Synagogue in Rijeka, Torah ark (Trieste, 1797). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

13 On modernist synagogues, see Samuel D. Gruber, "Modern Synagogue Architecture," in *Jewish Religious Architecture: From Biblical Israel to Modern Judaism*, ed. Steven Fine (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 307–33. On the twentieth-century synagogues in Croatia, see Karač, *Studije o arhitekturi sinagoga u Hrvatskoj*, 69–79.

14 On the synagogue in Kutina, see Karač, *Studije o arhitekturi sinagoga u Hrvatskoj*, 133–52.

15 On the synagogue in Bjelovar, see *Ibid.*, 120.

16 *Ibid.*, 105, 125–26.



21. Memorial plaque on the former synagogue in Sisak, as installed in 1999. Photo of 1999. Archives of the Center for Jewish Art.



22. Memorial plaque on the former synagogue in Sisak. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



23. Memorial plaque on the former synagogue in Slatina (2008). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



24. Information board at the former synagogue in Koprivnica. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



25. Former synagogue in Križevci (1895, arch. Leo Hönigsberg and Julius Deutsch), after its reconstruction in 1956. View from the northwest. Photo by Zev Radovan, 2000 © CJA.



26. Former synagogue in Križevci (1895, arch. Leo Hönigsberg and Julius Deutsch), after its reconstruction in the 2010s. View from the northwest. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

community.¹⁷ Next to it, a modernist building with the rabbi's apartment and mikveh is preserved.

The commemoration of the existing buildings that do not serve Jewish needs leaves something to be desired. Buildings in Osijek (Fig. 11), Koprivnica, Slatina and Sisak are marked as former synagogues. The small memorial plaque in Sisak contains texts in Hebrew and Croatian. It was unveiled in 1999 by the Jewish community and later replaced by a newer version (Figs. 21 and 22). The plaque in Slatina (Fig. 23), also in Hebrew and Croatian, was sponsored by the Jewish community of Virovitica and the city of Slatina in 2008. In Koprivnica, the board, written in four languages, was placed several years ago by the Tourist Association of Koprivnica-Križevačka (Fig. 24).

Surprisingly, the synagogue in Križevci (probably modelled after the Great Neolog Synagogue in Pécs in Hungary),¹⁸ has no inscription or sign that would tell the visitor that the building was once a synagogue. The exterior was recently reconstructed to its (almost) original façade (Figs. 25 and 26). This is quite remarkable as the building houses a Tourist Information Center. Equally, the former synagogues in Bjelovar and Daruvar – the former serving as a cultural center and the latter as a church – have no signage informing visitors of their Jewish past.

¹⁷ On the Orthodox community and its synagogue, see Brumini, *The Jewish Community in Rijeka*, 64–65; Karač, *Studije o arhitekturi sinagoga u Hrvatskoj*, 127–28, 162–63, 176–83.

¹⁸ On the synagogue in Križevci, see Karač, *Studije o arhitekturi sinagoga u Hrvatskoj*, 98.



27. "Shnoder signs" on the bimah-pulpit in the prayer hall in Zagreb.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



28. "Shnoder signs" in the Orthodox Synagogue in Rijeka.
Photo by Ivan Čerešnješ, 2002 © CJA.



29. Plaque for the "shnoder signs" (left) and benediction plaques from the synagogue in Koprivnica donated by Vilim and Eugenija Grünwald.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

The postwar prayer halls in Zagreb and in Osijek still possess objects that connect them to Hungary. The prayer hall in Osijek is furnished with a wooden Torah ark in the Hungarian Secession style (Fig. 3), while the prayer hall in Zagreb houses a movable bimah brought from Hungary. This bimah can be converted into a pulpit (Fig. 2). According to Hungarian custom, it has "shnoder signs" – a list of communal institutions that those who were called to read the Torah were supposed to support with their donations (Fig. 27).¹⁹ Such "shnoder sign" also existed in the Orthodox synagogue in Rijeka until its 2006 renovation (Fig. 28). Remnants of another "shnoder sign," donated to the synagogue in Koprivnica by Vilim and Eugenija Grünwald, are displayed in the Koprivnica City Museum (Fig. 29). The tombstone of the donors is preserved in the Jewish cemetery of Koprivnica (Fig. 30).



30. The tombstone of Vilim and Eugenija Grünwald in the Jewish cemetery of Koprivnica.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

¹⁹ On "shnoder signs," see Viktória Bányai and Szonja Ráhel Komoróczy, "Synagogue Objects Related to Charity on Shabbat: Shnoder-Signs and Shnoder-Books in the Hungarian Lands," *Arts* 9, no. 2 (May 21, 2020).

CEMETERIES

In contrast to synagogues, Jewish cemeteries in Croatia are relatively well preserved and well kept. Our expedition did not aim to survey all standing Jewish cemeteries in Croatia but concentrated on cemeteries in the cities where synagogues or cemetery chapels are preserved. Eighteen cemeteries were visited and thoroughly surveyed. A significant part of their tombstones were photographed (about 3,000 graves). Analyzing this material brings several important conclusions, especially about the processes of Jewish acculturation in Croatia.²⁰

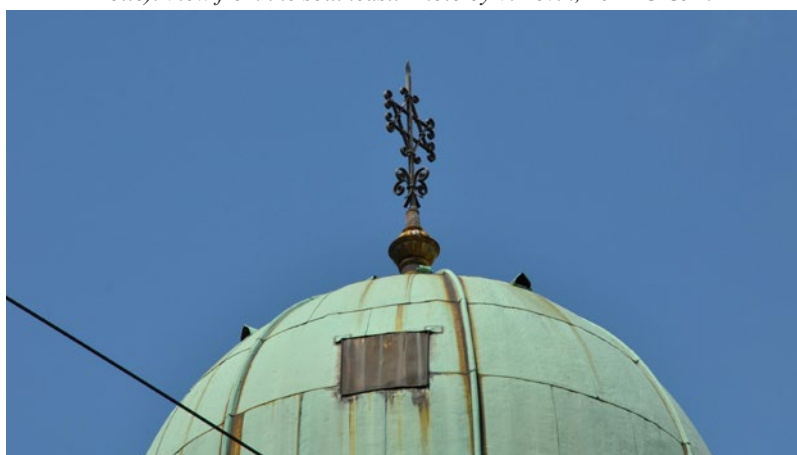
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The largest Jewish cemetery in Croatia is the cemetery in Zagreb. It was established by the city authorities in the Mirogoj suburb in 1876 and had sections for all denominations living in the city. The most distinctive feature of this cemetery is the Arcades building, constructed by the architect Hermann Bollé in 1879–1929.²¹ The Arcades separate the necropolis from the city: their plain wall faces the city, while an arcade on the cemetery side serves as a place for prominent graves (Fig. 31). Besides the main Catholic church in the center, the Arcades have ten domes, two of which – corresponding to the Jewish sectors – are topped by the Stars of David (Fig. 32). The building of the Arcades was damaged in the earthquake of December 24, 2020.

Initially, eleven sectors of the cemetery were designated for Jewish burials, but in the post-war years, the city authorities took over seven Jewish sectors for Catholic burials and introduced Christian burials in the remaining four Jewish sectors. The absent division between Jews and Christians allows for the observation of visual expression of mixed marriages and conversion to Christianity which could be rarely observed in exclusively Jewish cemeteries. Many graves were used for several generations; while the first buried people have Jewish names and symbols on their graves, the names of their relatives buried after WWII are often accompanied by crosses (Fig. 33).



31. The Arcades in the Mirogoj Cemetery in Zagreb (1879–1929, arch. Hermann Bollé). View from the southeast. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



32. One of the two Jewish domes in the Arcades in the Mirogoj Cemetery in Zagreb (1879–1929, arch. Hermann Bollé). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



33. Tombstone of the Feldman family in the Mirogoj Cemetery in Zagreb (1928–77). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

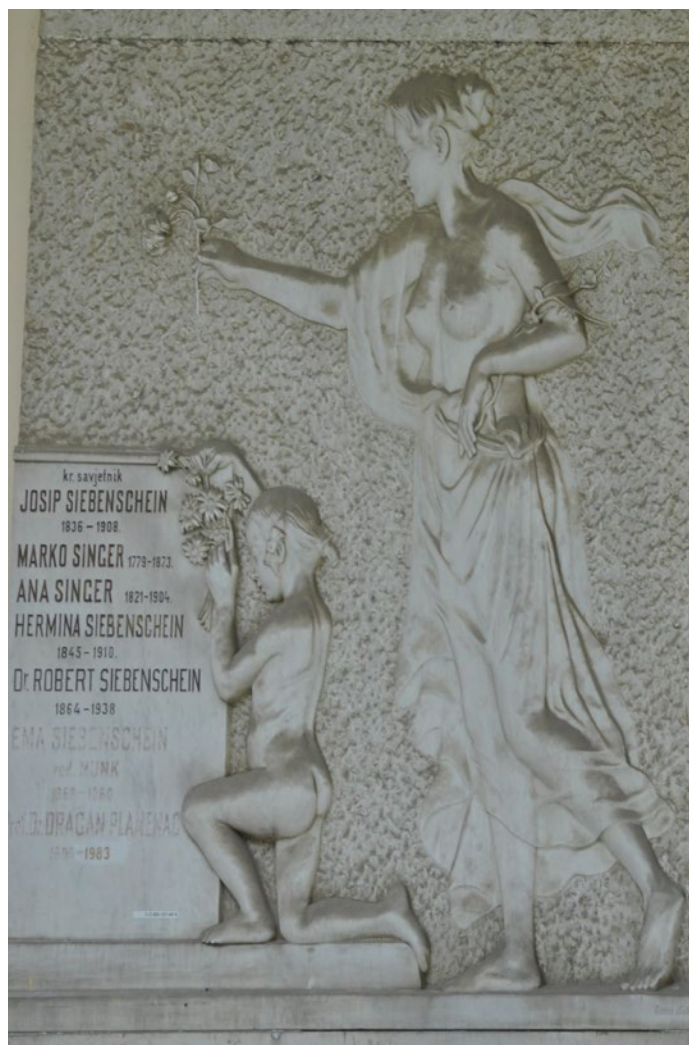
²⁰ For research on acculturation that is based, inter alia, on the analyses of tombstones, see Agnieszka Jagodzińska, *Pomiędzy: akulturacja Żydów Warszawy w drugiej połowie XIX wieku* (Wrocław: Wydawn. Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2008).

²¹ Rudolf Klein, *Metropolitan Jewish Cemeteries of the 19th and 20th Centuries in Central and Eastern Europe: A Comparative Study* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2018), 396.

The majority of graves surveyed in Zagreb are from the twentieth century. It seems that the late nineteenth-century Jewish tombstones are not well preserved. Among hundreds of Jewish graves, we found only 24 tombstones with Hebrew epitaphs, including the graves of two rabbis, a cantor, and a rabbi's wife.²² On four tombstones, the Hebrew text is followed by the German one.²³ All other tombstones we saw are inscribed only in Croatian.

The only Jewish sign on the tombstones is the abbreviation ן"פ or ט"פ before the name of the deceased (Fig. 33). While ן"פ (*po nitman/nitmena*) appears in all Ashkenazi communities, the abbreviation ט"פ (*po tamun/temunah*) is characteristic exclusively of German and Hungarian Jewish use. Another marker of Jewishness, the Star of David, became popularity relatively late. Although the Arcades had two domes topped by Stars of David and there are five tombs in the arcades with Stars of David,²⁴ this motif is widely used only from the late 1930s and after WWII.

Several Jewish graves are marked by three-dimensional sculptures or by reliefs depicting a human figure. In many cases, this figure is a half-naked female, sometimes with a child, symbolizing sorrow (Fig. 34).²⁵ The grave of the Müller/Miler family in the Arcades is decorated by a male figure with his hat in his hand (Fig. 35), and the grave of the Mayer family has two male figures, which Rudolf Klein interpreted as Moses and Aaron.²⁶ (For a discussion of another statue of Moses, see in the Holocaust Memorials chapter.)



34. Siebenschein family tombstone in the Arcades in the Mirogoj Cemetery in Zagreb (1908).
Photo by Ekaterina Oleshkevich, 2021 © CJA.



35. Müller /Miler family tombstone in the Arcades in the Mirogoj Cemetery in Zagreb (1930s?).
Photo by E. Oleshkevich, 2021 © CJA.

22 Rabbi Dr. Hosea Jacobi (d. 1925), and Rabbi Dr. M. Margel (d. 1940), cantor Josip Rendi (d. 1934), and Hindl Hessel, wife of Rabbi Shimon Hessel (d. 1939).

23 Jakob Deutsch (d. 1896), Theresia Deutsch (d. 1901), Johanna Oblatt (d. 1903), and Sonja Gemünder from Sarajevo (d. 1929).

24 The Bernstein family grave (after 1876), Prister family grave (after 1877), the tombstone of Lavoslav Schwarz (d. 1894), Herman Eisner family grave (after 1915), Amaliye Deutsch family grave (after 1920).

25 The graves of Emanuel Prister (1882), the Siebenschein family (1908), the Schoenstein family (1930s?) in the Arcades and the tombstones of Tinka Fröhlich (d. 1922), Vatroslav Löwy (d. 1930), Oskar Weismayer (d. 1931), Lavoslav Kraus (d. 1934), and Benö Blumschein (d. 1937).

26 Klein, *Metropolitan Jewish Cemeteries*, 399.

BESIDES ZAGREB



36. The Arcades in new Jewish cemetery of Križevci (1910, arch. Stjepan Podhorski).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



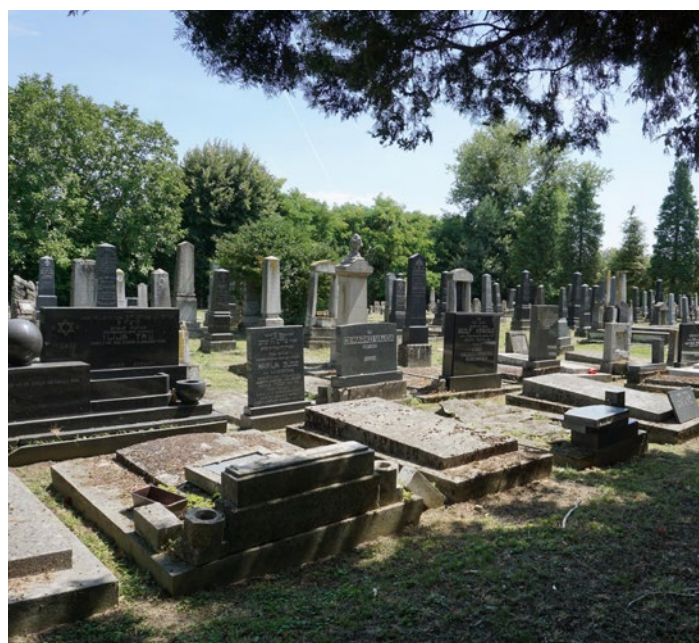
37. Quasi-arcade in the Jewish cemetery of Čakovec (1920s).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



38. Tombstone of Gitl (Kati) Brück in the Jewish cemetery of Vukovar (1885).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021
© CJA.



39. Tombstone of Katica (Gitl) and Josefina (Perl) Neumann in Slavonski Brod (1918). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



40. Obelisks of the early 20th century and low slabs from the 1930s in the Upper Town Jewish cemetery in Osijek.
Photo by E. Oleshkevich, 2021
© CJA.

Other surveyed Jewish cemeteries in Croatia are less extravagant than Zagreb,²⁷ although the influence of the Croatian capital city is felt. The Jewish sector of the municipal cemetery in Križevci has an Arcade built by the architect Stjepan Podhorski in 1910, clearly following the model of Zagreb (Fig. 36). In Čakovec, three family graves are also arranged in a kind of arcade (Fig. 37). Two of the structures were for burials in the 1920s, while the third one was converted into a Holocaust memorial in the late 1940s (see the Holocaust Memorials chapter).

Jewish cemeteries in Croatia are typologically close to Jewish cemeteries in Hungary: tombstones of the nineteenth century are mostly upright sandstone steles (Fig. 38), while tombstones of the early twentieth century are mostly marble obelisks or obelisk-like monuments. Like in Hungary, the only decoration depicted on the tombstones is a willow, while the symbols of Cohanim and Levi'im rarely appear (Fig. 39). However, in the late 1920s, another type of monument became popular – low marble slabs with minimalist epitaphs and typically without decoration (Fig. 40).

²⁷ Rare exception is, for instance, the tombstone of Carl Schwarz in the Upper Town cemetery in Osijek (d. 1929), with a relief of a grieving woman.

The language of epitaphs deserves special attention. Epitaphs from the mid-nineteenth century are in Hebrew, while in the following decades, a Hebrew epitaph is usually followed by a German one. At the end of the nineteenth century, German was replaced by Hungarian in Greater Hungary, but not in Croatia, which at that time was part of Hungary. We were able to find only six tombstones inscribed in Hungarian, five of them in Rijeka and Opatija, the former city was ruled directly from Budapest.²⁸ In Rijeka and Opatija, which had large Italian population, Italian epitaphs appear from 1905 on. In the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia, in contrast, the German in the epitaphs was gradually substituted by Croatian from the late nineteenth century.

The earliest tombstone with a Croatian epitaph that we found is the tombstone of Jula/Juli/Yentl Fuchs in Đakovo, who died in 1882: it has a traditional Hebrew and German epitaphs on both sides of an obelisk-like monument and the Croatian text is written after the German one (Fig. 41). There are at least five more early twentieth-century monuments with epitaphs in three languages in Đakovo and Slavonski Brod; on some of them the Croatian inscription is placed before the German one. The tombstone of Kopp family in Slavonski Brod demonstrates the alteration of languages: It starts in Hebrew, 1"9 (meaning here is buried), then continues in German: *Unserem Sohne* (to our son) *Emil Kopp*, 1896–1906, and then switches into Croatian: *i* (and) *Rihard*, 1895–1922 (Fig. 42).²⁹ It shows how the same parents wrote an epitaph for the first deceased son in 1906 in German, but in 1922 they added the name of another son already in Croatian. In general, the frequency of German epitaphs in the 1920s significantly diminishes. The latest epitaphs in German surveyed by our expedition were found in Osijek in 1931 and 1932 and in Opatija in 1931 and 1934 (at that period Opatija was part of Italy, under the name Abbazia).³⁰ After that dates, all epitaphs were written in Croatian.



41. Tombstone of Jula/Juli/Entl Fuchs in Đakovo (1882), with epitaphs in Hebrew, German, and Croatian.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



42. Tombstone of Kopp family in Slavonski Brod (1906, 1922), with the epitaph switching from German into Croatian.
Photo by E. Oleshkevich, 2021 © CJA.

²⁸ The tombstones of Gyuláné (Hindl) Fischl (d. 1906), Beila Gold (d. 1907), Salamon Laufer (d. 1912), and Béla Lampel (d. 1918) in Rijeka and the tombstone of Mór Polgar from Budapest (d. 1930) in Opatija. Another tombstone with a Hungarian epitaph is that of Leo Hirschmann (d. 1918) in Čakovec.

²⁹ This phrase was originally written in singular *Unserem Sohne* [= to our son] and in 1922 it was not corrected into plural.

³⁰ The tombstones of Marie Müller (d. 1931) and Bela Springer (d. 1932) in Osijek; the tombstones of the child Avraham Rafael ben Hana (d. 1931) and Hermann Herbst (d. 1934) in Opatija.

The alteration of non-Hebrew epitaphs from German into Croatian – and virtual absence of Hungarian – demonstrates the fast and strong acculturation of local Jews into Croatian culture, which took place long before the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy in 1918. Notwithstanding that the family names of Croatian Jews were often written on tombstones according to Hungarian spelling (for instance, Krausz, Weisz) and their first names were often Hungarian (for instance, Sandor, Miksa), their tombstones testify to the absence of Hungarian language acculturation.³¹ These epigraphic evidences are supported by the census data of 1900 and 1910, which demonstrates that between a third and a half of Croatian Jews declared Croatian to be their mother tongue. On the other hand, the shortening of Hebrew epitaphs, first to the name of the deceased alone and later to the abbreviation פ"נ (or ט"פ) testifies to the strong secularization of the Croatian Jews.



43. Mausoleum of Schlenger family in the Jewish cemetery of Varaždin (1920s). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

Some affluent Croatian Jews built family mausoleums – structures with walls and a roof, intended for the burial of the members of a family. Our expeditions documented such mausoleums in Slavonski Brod (Kohn Family, 1902), Cernik (Schmidek-Schulzer Family, early 20th c.), Čakovec (Graner Family, 1925), and Varaždin (Schlenger Family, 1920s, Fig. 43). The only cemetery where more than one mausoleum is situated is Koprivnica with five mausoleums of the families Pulgram (1924), Fischer (1924), Loewy (1929), Sheyer (1932), and Hirschl (1936) (Fig. 36). This demonstrates that the idea to have a family mausoleum – as opposed to a family grave – was quite popular in Koprivnica of the interwar period. While in Germany affluent family tombstones were mostly attached to cemetery's walls, free standing mausoleums were widespread in Russia and Greater Hungary. In other words, the Koprivnica Jewish elite was following the Hungarian custom already after the partition of Greater Hungary and the inclusion of Croatia into Yugoslavia.

Another built structure often found in the Jewish cemeteries – the ohel of the community's rabbi – was absent in Croatia. Our expedition surveyed eight graves of rabbis and all of them are regular grave markers, not ohalim or mausoleums.³² The absence of ohalim on rabbinical graves is an additional demonstration of the modernized character of the Croatian Jewish community.



44. Mausolea of Pulgram (left, 1924) and Sheyer (1932) families at the Jewish cemetery of Koprivnica. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

Among around 3,000 tombstones surveyed by our expedition, 690 bear names of the stonemasons who produced them in the late nineteenth and the first four decades of the twentieth century. When the stonemason was based in the same city, he usually signed only his name, but when a tombstone was shipped from another place, the name of the stonemason usually contained the name of the city where his workshop was situated. Among those names are neighboring cities in Croatia, as well as more remote ones, like Ljubljana in Slovenia, Novi Sad, Sombor, and Subotica in Vojvodina (Serbia), Nagykanizsa, Kaposvár, and Budapest in Hungary, Graz and Vienna in Austria, and even Munich in Germany. This unique material allows the analyzes of interconnections between Jews within Croatia and beyond its borders. Currently, we are preparing an academic article on this matter to be submitted to one of the leading journals of Jewish history and culture.

³¹ The spelling of German and Hungarian names according to the rules of Croatian language (for instance, Kraus, Miler, Šandor, Šarlota) also testifies to strong Croatian acculturation.

³² Rabbi Aaron Reich (d. 1876) in Karlovac, Rabbi Herman Somer (d. 1895) in Đakovo, Rabbi Dr. Hosea Jacobi (d. 1925) in Zagreb, Rabbi Samuel David Tauber (1927) in Bjelovar, Rabbi Saul Stern (d. 1930) in Slavonski Brod, Rabbi Dr. Herman Ezekiel Kaufmann (d. 1932) in Virovitica, Rabbi Dr. Guiseppe Frank (d. 1937) in Rijeka, and Rabbi Dr. M. Margel (d. 1940) in Zagreb.

CEMETERY CHAPELS

Buildings erected in Jewish cemeteries for conducting funeral ceremonies and for cleansing dead bodies have no commonly accepted name in Hebrew or other languages. While the facilities for ritual cleansing are called *beit taharah* (the house of cleansing) in Hebrew, they are not always present in the buildings documented in Jewish cemeteries. Therefore, we use the term “cemetery chapel,” which allows for the inclusion of all buildings in the cemeteries (besides houses clearly intended for caretakers).

Cemetery chapels are characteristic of Jewish cemeteries in central Europe, especially for Germany and Hungary, while in eastern Europe they were constructed only in largest communities.³³ The chapels not only created a dissent place for conducting funeral rituals, but many of them shaped the entrance to the cemetery and had the major role in the cemetery’s layout. Many cemetery chapels in Germany had special arrangements for the Cohanim, who are prohibited by *halakhah* to be under the same roof as a dead body. Therefore, chapels were built so that one of the rooms had a completely separate roof, in order to allow Cohanim to be present during funeral services. Most of the chapels have large doors or gates on their façades facing the street and the cemetery, in order to allow the passage of a coffin or a bier carried by several people.

In Croatia, we found twelve standing cemetery chapels. The chapel in Čakovec was demolished in 1991 and only its footprint is preserved (Fig. 45).³⁴ All twelve standing chapels have nothing in common in regards to their size, architectural style or placement in the cemetery. The most prominent chapel is the one in Đakovo (1891), which resembles a typical Hungarian synagogue with two towers (Fig. 46). The synagogue in Đakovo, constructed in 1880 and destroyed in 1943, was built according to the same scheme of two tower flanking an entrance.³⁵ The chapel is placed at the entrance to the cemetery so that cemetery’s central alley starts from its back door. The chapel in Koprivnica (late 19th century) was built in a kind of the Baroque Revival style (Fig. 47). The building nearly collapsed by the year 2000 and therefore was partly demolished, so only its façade is preserved as a memorial (Fig. 48).



45. Place of the Cemetery chapel in the Jewish cemetery of Čakovec, demolished in 1991. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



46. Cemetery chapel in the Jewish cemetery of Đakovo (1891). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



47. Cemetery chapel in the Jewish cemetery of Koprivnica (late 19th century). Photo by Zoya Arshavsky, 2000 © CJA.



48. Cemetery chapel in the Jewish cemetery of Koprivnica (late 19th century, 2000). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

³³ To the best of our knowledge, the only systematic research on cemetery chapels is Ulrich Knufinke, *Bauwerke jüdischer Friedhöfe in Deutschland* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2007).

³⁴ For a short overview of cemetery chapels in Croatia, see Karač, *Studije o arhitekturi sinagoga u Hrvatskoj*, 130–31.

³⁵ On the synagogue in Đakovo, see *Ibid.*, 95.

The chapels in Slavonski Brod (1880, Fig. 49), Rijeka (1893, Fig. 50), Karlovac (early 20th century, Fig. 51), and Varaždin (1927, Fig. 52) were built in the Neo-Classical style. Those in Virovitica (late 19th century, Fig. 53), the Upper Town of Osijek (1909, Fig. 54), the Lower Town of Osijek (1927, Fig. 55), and Vukovar (1928, Fig. 56) are Romantic Historicist in style. The chapel in Bjelovar was likely built in the early twentieth century but its present condition prevents any stylistic analysis (Fig. 57).



49. Cemetery chapel in the Jewish cemetery of Slavonski Brod (1880).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



50. Cemetery chapel in the Kozala Jewish cemetery of Rijeka (1893). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



51. Cemetery chapel in the Jewish cemetery of Karlovac (early 20th century). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



52. Cemetery chapel in the Jewish cemetery of Varaždin (1927).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



53. Cemetery chapel in the Jewish cemetery of Virovitica (late 19th century). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



54. Cemetery chapel in the Jewish cemetery in the Upper Town of Osijek (1909). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



55. Cemetery chapel in the Jewish cemetery in the Lower Town of Osijek (1927). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



56. Cemetery chapel in the Jewish cemetery of Vukovar (1928, arch. Fran Funtak). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

All these chapels have several rooms: the central room was intended for funeral service while one of the side rooms was used for ritual cleansing. A special table for ritual cleansing is preserved only in Rijeka (Fig. 58). The chapel in Cernik (1937, Fig. 59) had no place for ritual cleansing, since it is a simple room with two wide gates, which forms the entrance to the cemetery.

All chapels, except one in the Upper Town of Osijek, have an important structural role. Many chapels are situated at the border between the cemetery and the street, forming a solemn entrance. Other chapels (Virovitica, the Lower Town of Osijek, and Vukovar) are placed at a significant distance away from the street, but nevertheless, they closed off the graves from the view of passers-by.

Some chapels have Hebrew inscriptions and/or the Stars of David on their façades to mark these buildings as Jewish. For the Jewish viewer, the inscriptions signify the purpose of the building: the name בית עולם (House of eternity) appears on the chapels in Slavonski Brod and in Karlovac (Figs. 49 and 51). In Varaždin, the inscription reads, כל איש יבוא בשלום (Every man will come in peace) (Fig. 52). In Rijeka it says מי לי בשמים ועמך לא חפצתי בארץ (Ps. 73:25, “Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you”) (Fig. 50), and in Virovitica – ורבים חשבי [צ”ל מישני] אדמת עפר יקיצו אלה לחיי עולם ואלה לחרפות לדראון עולם (Daniel 12:2, “Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt”) (Fig. 53).

The majority of cemetery chapels are in relatively good conditions, having been renovated by the municipalities or Jewish communities, depending on who owns them.



57. Cemetery chapel
in the Jewish cemetery of Bjelovar (early 20th century).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



58. Table for ritual cleansing
in the Cemetery chapel in the Kozala Jewish cemetery of Rijeka.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



59. Cemetery chapel in the Jewish cemetery of Cernik (1937).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

SPLIT AND DUBROVNIK

The communities of Split and Dubrovnik are significantly older than the communities in the rest of Croatia, and they are non-Ashkenazi, i.e. their customs are a mixture of Sephardi, Italian, and probably Romaniote traditions.

SPLIT

The oldest traces of Jewish presence in Split could be dated to the seventh century, when the neighboring Roman city of Salona, where a significant Jewish community existed, was destroyed by the Avars.³⁶ Many refugees from Salona settled in the palace of Diocletian, from which the city of Split emerged.³⁷ In the eastern substructure of the palace, 13 seven-branched *menorot* were carved into the walls (Fig. 60). It could be that the central room in the eastern substructure served as a synagogue.

The current synagogue in Split was established in the beginning of the sixteenth century in the upper floor of a house in the Jewish ghetto (in the street called *Židovski prolaz*);³⁸ its interior was remodeled in 1728. While the synagogue's furniture was burnt in 1942, the marble Baroque Torah ark at the eastern wall (Fig. 61), the high *tevah* at the western wall (Fig. 62), and ritual objects are preserved (Fig. 63).



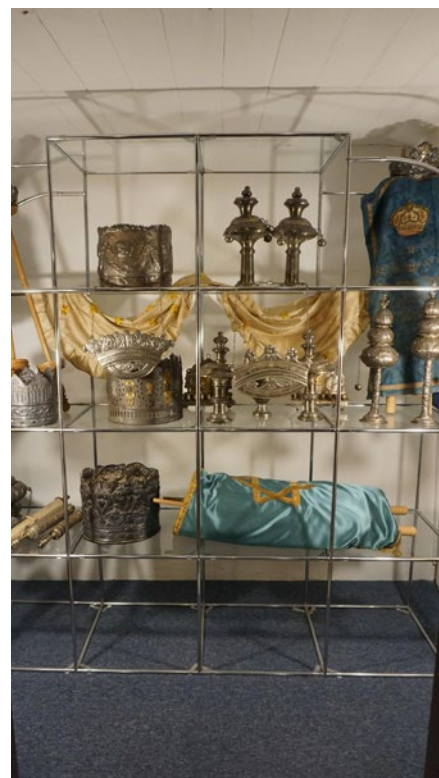
60. Menorot in Diocletian's palace in Split.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



61. Synagogue in Split (1728),
view towards the Torah ark.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



62. Synagogue in Split (1728),
view towards the tevah.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



63. Collection of ritual objects
in the synagogue in Split.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

³⁶ On the history of Jews in Split see Duško Kečkemet, *Židovi u povijesti Splita*, 2nd revised ed. (Split: Jewish Community of Split, 2010).

³⁷ Duško Kečkemet, *The Place of Jews in the History of the City of Split*, trans. Živko Vekarić, 5th ed. (Split: Dalmatina Tisak, 2018), 6.

³⁸ Zusia Efron, "Omanut yehudit be-yugoslaviyah," in *Pinkas ha-kehilot: Yugoslaviyah*, ed. Zvi Loker (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), 323.



64. Old Jewish cemetery of Split. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

The old Jewish cemetery in Split is situated on Mount Marjan and contains about 700 tombstones from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth century (the oldest tombstone dates to 1717).³⁹ Almost all of the tombstones are Sephardi horizontal slabs with Hebrew epitaphs (Fig. 64). A former cemetery chapel – a double-story building – stands at the entrance of the cemetery and serves currently as a restaurant (Fig. 65). Its façade bears an inscription צדוק הדין (Tzidduk ha-din, righteous judgement) – a common name for the Sephardi cemetery chapels in the Balkans. The remnants of the table for ritual cleansing are situated nearby (Fig. 66). The Jewish Community of Split has undertaken scientific restoration of several tombstones (Fig. 67). The new Jewish cemetery is situated in Lovrinac district.



65. Cemetery chapel in the old Jewish cemetery of Split.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



66. Table for ritual cleansing
in the old Jewish cemetery of Split.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



67. Tombstone of Rifka Finzi (d. 1942)
in the old Jewish cemetery of Split.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

³⁹ Zusja Efron and Duško Kečkemet, *Židovsko groblje u Splitu*, 2nd ed. (Split: Poljica – Drugi Rat, 2008), 22.

DUBROVNIK

Jews began to settle in Dubrovnik, then known as Ragusa, in the fourteenth century.⁴⁰ In the early sixteenth century Jews were prohibited to live in the city, but from 1538, Jewish settlement was allowed again. The ghetto in Dubrovnik/Ragusa was established in 1546.⁴¹

The synagogue in Dubrovnik was mentioned in 1537. After the earthquake of 1677, the synagogue was moved to its current location in the upper floor of a house at Žudioska Street; the women's sections are situated in the neighboring buildings and connected to the prayer hall through windows covered with wooden latticed bars (a new women's gallery at the western wall was made apparently in the twentieth century).⁴² The prayer hall consists of two rooms connected through large arches; the *tevah* stands under the central arch (Fig. 68). The wooden Baroque Torah ark is situated between two windows at the eastern wall (Fig. 69). The lower floor of the synagogue building houses and exceptionally rich collection of ritual and ceremonial objects (Fig. 70).



68. Synagogue in Dubrovnik (1667), view towards the tevah.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



69. Synagogue in Dubrovnik (1667), view towards the Torah ark.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



70. Jewish museum in the synagogue in Dubrovnik.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

⁴⁰ On the history of Jews in Dubrovnik see Bernard Stulli, *Zidovi u Dubrovniku* (Zagreb: Jevrejska općina Zagreb, 1989).

⁴¹ Bernard Stulli, "Dubrovnik," in *Pinkas ha-kehilot: Yugoslaviyah*, ed. Zvi Loker (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), 90–91.

⁴² Ivan Čerešnješ, "A City within a City: Jewish Habitat in Dubrovnik," unpublished lecture delivered on 26 April 2007 in the Mandel Institute, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The existing Jewish cemetery in Boninovo district was established in 1911, but graves from the old cemetery in Ploce district were transferred to it. The majority of about 200 tombstones are Sephardi horizontal slabs with Hebrew epitaphs (Fig. 71). Many of them are decorated with depictions of a single crown inscribed with ט"ש" – the crown of the good name (from a Mishnaic saying that the crown of the good name is above other crowns, Avot 4:13; Fig. 72). The cemetery chapel is a small building in the middle of the cemetery (Fig. 73); a Holocaust monument was built next to it in 2016 according to the design of Ivan Čerešnješ (see below).



71. Jewish cemetery of Dubrovnik.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



72. The crown of good name on the tombstone of Colomba Mandel (d. 1920) in the Jewish cemetery of Dubrovnik. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



73. Cemetery Chapel in the Jewish cemetery of Dubrovnik.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021
© CJA.

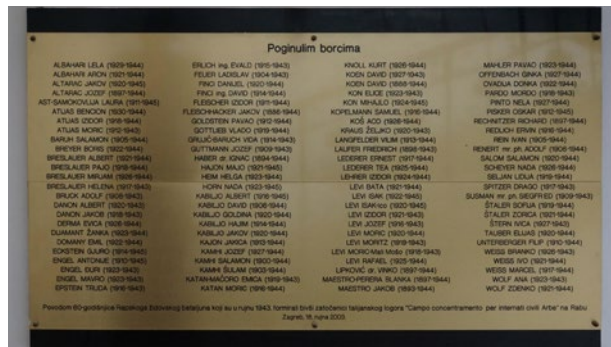
HOLOCAUST MEMORIALS

Our expedition did not aim to visit and document all Holocaust memorial monuments in Croatia, but we paid especial attention to the monuments and commemorative signs in the cities and towns we visited.

It seems that monuments commemorating the Holocaust in Croatia are mostly situated in spaces that could be defined as the interior Jewish space and are not visible to the general public. For example, memorial plaques commemorating the victims of the Holocaust and Jewish fighters of Tito's partisans are placed inside the Jewish Community building in Zagreb (Figs. 74–76) and the synagogue of Split (Figs. 77 and 78). A modest monument is situated at the entrance to the synagogue in Rijeka (Fig. 79).



74. Holocaust memorial plaque in the Jewish Community Building in Zagreb (1961). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



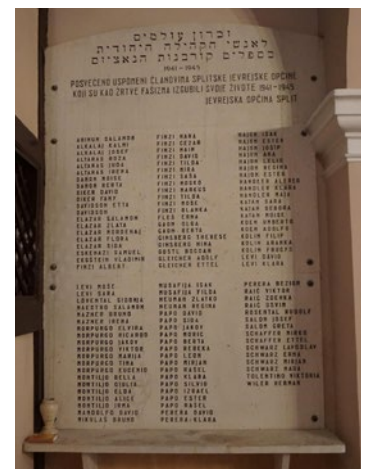
75. Memorial plaque to the Jewish fighters in the Jewish Community Building in Zagreb (2003). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



76. Holocaust memorial plaque in the Jewish Community Building in Zagreb. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



77. Memorial plaque to the Jewish fighters in the synagogue in Split (1961). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



78. Memorial plaque to Jewish fighters in the synagogue in Split. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



79. Holocaust memorial plaque at the entrance to the synagogue in Rijeka. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



80. Holocaust Memorial in the Jewish cemetery of Daruvar (1960s?).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



82. Holocaust Memorial in the Kozala Jewish cemetery of Rijeka (1981, sculptor Zdenko Sila).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



85. Holocaust Memorial in the New Jewish cemetery of Križevci (2020).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

Many memorial monuments are situated in the Jewish cemeteries, both the monuments erected under the Tito's Communist regime, like in Čakovec (late 1940s?), Opatija (1950s), Zagreb (1960s?), Daruvar (1960s?, Fig. 80), Split (1973, Fig. 81), Koprivnica (1975), Rijeka (1981, Fig. 82), and more recent monuments like in Varaždin (2015, Fig. 83), Dubrovnik (2019, Fig. 84), and Križevci (2020, Fig. 85). The memorial in Đakovo by a Croatia-born Israeli sculptor Dina Merhav (2013) is placed at the entrance to the Jewish cemetery (Fig. 86). Thus, the Holocaust memorials speak mostly to a Jewish audience with the intention of expressing Jewish sorrow and therefore are removed from the sight of non-Jews.



81. Holocaust Memorial in the Lovrinac Jewish cemetery of Split (1973, sculptor Nandor Glid). Photo courtesy of Ana Lebl.



83. Holocaust Memorial in the Jewish cemetery of Varaždin (2015).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



84. Holocaust Memorial in the Jewish cemetery of Dubrovnik (2016, arch. Ivan Čerešnješ).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



86. “Peace and Heaven” memorial at the entrance to the Jewish cemetery of Đakovo (2013, sculptor Dina Merhav).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



87. Memorial to the Jewish soldiers of the First World War in the New Jewish cemetery of Križevci (1920s).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



88. Holocaust Memorial in the Jewish cemetery of Koprivnica (1975), combined with the memorial to the Jewish soldiers of World War I (1920s).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



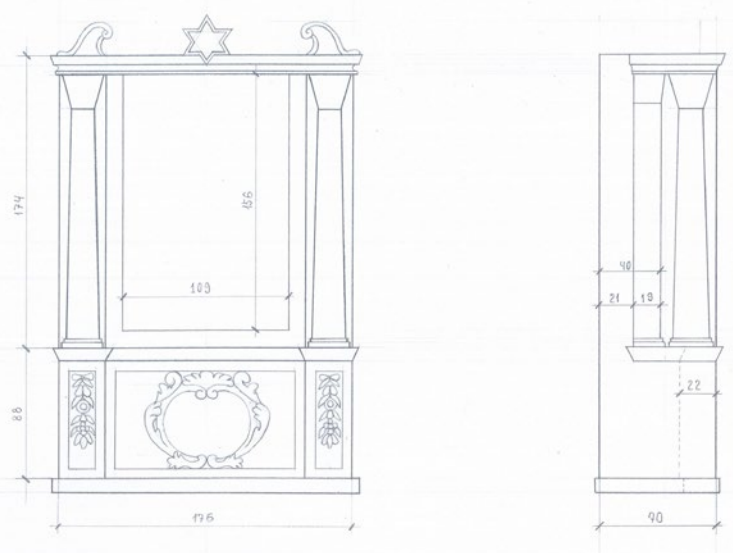
90. Holocaust memorial in the Jewish sector of the cemetery in Opatija (1950s). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

Such placement of the monuments follows the pattern of the memorials to the fallen Jewish soldiers of the First World War, which are also situated in the cemeteries (for instance, Koprivnica, Slavonski Brod, Križevci, Fig. 87). In Koprivnica, the monument commemorating the victims of the Holocaust is combined with the memorial to the soldiers of WWI (Fig. 88).

Three Holocaust memorials in Croatian cemeteries deserve special attention. In Čakovec, the memorial was made – probably in the late 1940s – of an unused prominent family grave. This monument includes a statue of a medieval/ barbaric soldier suppressing a mother holding a child in her hands (Fig. 89). The monument in the Jewish section of the municipal cemetery in Opatija – as discovered by Ivan Čerešnješ – was made from the eighteenth-century Italian Torah ark, donated by the Jewish community in Trieste for the new synagogue in Opatija, which had never been built (Figs. 90 and 91). In Zagreb, the monument in the Mirogoj Cemetery was constructed using the statue of Moses taken



89. Holocaust memorial in the Jewish sector of the cemetery in Čakovec (1940s).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



91. Holocaust memorial in the Jewish sector of the cemetery in Opatija (1950s). Drawing by Ekaterina Sosensky © CJA.

from the grave of the Glück family (Fig. 92). Moses keeps in his hands the Tablets of the Law, where all commandments are represented by Roman numerals, except for two which are written in Croatian: “thou shalt not kill” and “thou shalt not steal” (Fig. 93). A special plaque was installed on the grave of the Glück family where the statue originally stood (Fig. 94).

Our expedition saw only two Holocaust memorials situated in prominent public places. The first is the sculpture “Mother and Child” in Osijek by the renown British Jewish sculptor Oscar Nemon (1965), a native of Osijek. The statue stands in the center of a square, in front of the Jewish Community Building (Fig. 95). Its meaning as the Holocaust memorial, however, is obscure. Daniel Zec, who researched the *Rezeptionsgeschichte* (reception history) of Nemon’s statue, argued that “from the very beginning ... the interpretation of the meaning of the monument varied between the war sufferings of the Jews and the universal victims of fascist terror.”⁴³ Another public monument is a plaque in the pavement in the central square in Split, on the place where synagogue furniture was burnt (Fig. 96). Installed by the Split municipality in 2018, the small plaque could not be seen well, especially when the square is full of people.



92. Holocaust memorial in the Mirogoj Cemetery in Zagreb.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



93. Holocaust memorial in the Mirogoj Cemetery in Zagreb.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



94. Grave of the Glück family, from which the statue of Moses was taken for the Holocaust memorial in the Mirogoj Cemetery in Zagreb.
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



95. Mother and Child in Osijek (1965, sculptor Oscar Nemon). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



96. A sign at the place of the synagogue furniture burning in Split (2018).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

43 Danijel Zec, “Danica Pinterović, Oscar Nemon i spomenik osječkim i slavonskim Židovima – žrtvama Holokausta,” *Scrinia Slavonica* 18, no. 1 (2018): 405–28. (<https://hrcak.srce.hr/212080>).



97. Memorial sign marking the place of the synagogue in Čakovec (1997).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

Commemorative signs in the places where destroyed synagogues stood are also Holocaust memorials. Most prominent memorial sign marks the place of the synagogue in Čakovec (1997, Fig. 97). Modest plaques, hardly seen by passers-by, mark the places of the Temple in Zagreb (1990s, Fig. 98) and the synagogue in Virovitica (1996, Fig. 99).⁴⁴ A large plaque in the form of a Star of David was recently installed at the place of the synagogue in the Upper town in Osijek (Fig. 100). The place of the Great Synagogue in Rijeka is marked by an information board in six languages (Fig. 101).



98. Memorial sign marking the place of the Temple in Zagreb (1990s). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



99. Memorial sign marking the place of the synagogue in Virovitica (1996). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.



100. Memorial sign marking the place of the synagogue in the Upper Town of Osijek (2010s). Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

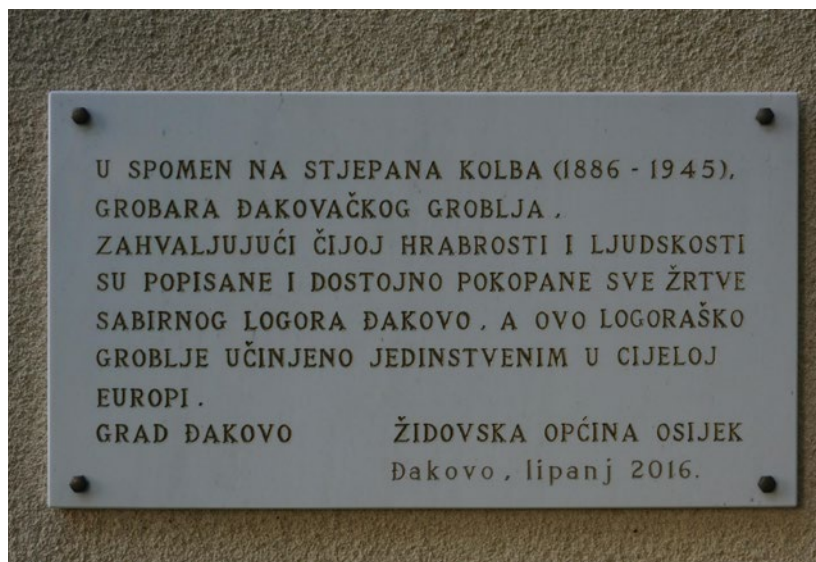


101. Information board marking the place of the Great Synagogue in Rijeka. Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

⁴⁴ There is also a plaque marking the place of the synagogue in Slavonski Brod, see Karač, *Studije o arhitekturi sinagoga u Hrvatskoj*, 30.

Already after our expedition, on 13 September 2021, a memorial plaque was placed on the site of the demolished synagogue in Karlovac.⁴⁵ The memorial plaques on the former synagogues in Sisak (1999) and Slatina (2008) were discussed above.

In general, it could be stated that the visibility of the Croatian Holocaust memorials is not especially high and they are mostly confined to the Jewish spaces. The following example is quite illustrative. In 2016, the city of Đakovo and the Jewish Community of Osijek inaugurated a marble wall plaque in the memory of the gravedigger, Stjepan Kolb, who buried Jewish victims of the Đakovo Concentration Camp in separate graves and recorded their names, so that the graves could be identified after the war (Fig. 102).⁴⁶ This plaque, written in Croatian and stating that such respectful burial was unique “in all of Europe,” faces the cemetery, not the street. In other words, the plaque could be read only by people who entered the cemetery, while passers-by cannot see it.



102. Wall plaque commemorating the gravedigger Stjepan Kolb in Đakovo (2016).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

The last decade witnessed a certain change in the policies of Holocaust memorialization in Croatia. We see that municipalities became involved in Holocaust commemoration, for example, Slatina synagogue plaque in 2008 (Fig. 23), memorial sign at the place of the Tenja concentration camp near Osijek in 2016 (Fig. 103), the above mentioned plaque in Đakovo in 2016 (Fig. 102), the plaque in Split in 2018 (Fig. 96), and the monument in Križevci in 2020 (Fig. 85). In 2019, the city council decided to erect a large memorial in the main railway station of Zagreb.⁴⁷ The involvement of the municipalities makes the memorials hidden in the Jewish spaces more known and more exposed to the public attention.



103. Memorial sign commemorating the Tenja concentration camp near Osijek (renovated in 2004 by the Jewish Community and in 2016 by the municipality).
Photo by V. Levin, 2021 © CJA.

⁴⁵ <https://www.total-croatia-news.com/politics/56027-memorial-plaque-placed-in-karlovac-at-site-of-former-synagogue>.

⁴⁶ Five original post-war tin grave markers were donated to Yad Vashem in 2011, see <https://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/bearing-witness/djakovo.asp>.

⁴⁷ See <https://www.zagreb.hr/izgradnja-spomenika-zrtvama-holokausta/165645>; <https://www.total-croatia-news.com/made-in-croatia/45893-zagreb-s-epic-new-holocaust-monument-is-ready-this-is-how-it-looks>. On the controversy, see, for instance, <https://balkaninsight.com/2019/06/04/zagreb-prepares-new-monument-to-holocaust-victims/>.

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