

THE FATE OF DON JURAJ PARŠIĆ, PRIEST IN JASENOVEC, RAKOVICA AND DREŽNIK

Catholic priest Juraj Paršić was born in 1911. in Sveta Nedjelja, on the island of Hvar. He studied theology in Split and was ordained in Senj in the year 1937. After managing the parish in Poljice (Hvar), he came to Zagreb as refugee due to war. His life was in danger both from Italians and from Hvar's partisans. In 1942. Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac sent him to parish of village Jasenovac, nearby a labor and concentration camp Jasenovac, established in 1941. He stayed there until 1945. When the war ended, he was arrested and interrogated, and finally released from captivity. Since 1948., under a false name „Matej Marušić“, he has been working as a parish priest in Zavalje near Bihać and in the parishes of Rakovica, Drežnik and Vaganac. In 1958. he fled to Austria and then to Germany, where he lived until his death in 1991. The article includes previously unpublished documents from archives about his activities in Jasenovac and two letters he sent to the former commander of camp Jasenovac Dinko Šakić, which were found in Šakić's personal legacy, and letters from correspondence between Paršić and some his friends and acquaintances. The article reviews credibility of Paršić assessment of number of Jasenovac camp's victims (30 – 40 thousands). Although this number is by half smaller than the current Croatian official list (83 145), this Paršić assessment was disputed (as being far too large) by former camp guard, shortly after Paršić 1985. published his article in magazine *Hrvatska revija*. Paršić assessment is also in contradiction with some original documents, statements of former inmates, size of the camp's objects and excavations of human body remains on the site of the camp. However, Juraj Paršić's article in *Hrvatska revija*, his accounts of events and his assessment of victim's number, open some new questions which could be answered in further historical researches.

Keywords: Juraj Paršić, Jasenovac concentration camp, Drežnik, Rakovica, Dinko Šakić