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# THE SILENT WITNESS OF HISTORY



The synagogue in Novi Sad is a grandiose building, a witness of the history of a whole nation. The “monument” makes us stop for a moment in the Jewish Street. People have a lot of questions in their minds when they see it. How could all this happen? Why were those people tortured, deported and killed by the fascists? Is it because they call their temple a synagogue and not a cathedral? Why?

Student's name: **Jovanka Čolaković**

The title of the writing: *The silent witness of history*

School: “Kosta Trifković” Primary School, Novi Sad, 8th grade

Teacher: **Dragana Benić**

Place of the picture taken: Jewish Street, Novi Sad

Source: Pavle Šosberger, Novosadski Jevreji, Književna zajednica Novog Sada, 1988

# TODAY, JUST LIKE IT WAS BEFORE



The present day School of Ballet in Novi Sad once used to be a Jewish primary school. Just as it was back then, the building is filled with voices, silences, desires, and hopes of the youth. The building is standing silently and strongly in the Jewish street right beside the synagogue. It gives evidence of the bygone days of young people, who were violently torn apart by fascism.

Why did it happen? Just because they were raised in Jewish culture and religion? Why?...

Student's name: **Jovanka Čolaković**

The title of the writing: *Today, just like it was before*

School: "Kosta Trifković" Primary School, Novi Sad, 8th grade

Teacher: **Dragana Benić**

Place of the picture taken: Jewish Street, Novi Sad

Source: Pavle Šosberger, Novosadski Jevreji, Književna zajednica Novog Sada, 1988.



# EVERY BUILDING HAS GOT A STORY TO TELL



We learnt in history classes about the Jews in Novi Sad and the buildings they left behind. There was an institution, called “Kora Hleba” — established by Jelena Kon — that especially raised my interest. Nowadays, this building is used as a kindergarten. While doing my research I learnt that the original purpose of this institution was to help the poor and the ones in need by giving them free bread.

I entered this building for the first time ten years ago and it became my kindergarten. I went there for five days every week. I used to play there and had a lot of fun. Now that I am older I think back to those days with pleasure. After I had found out the real history of this building, I realized how significant it was for the Jewish community in Novi Sad. Just like people, buildings have their own stories to tell.

Student's name: **Nataša Maksimović**

The title of the writing: *Every building has got a story to tell*

School: “Kosta Trifković” Primary School, Novi Sad, 8th grade

Teacher: **Dragana Benić**

Place of the picture taken: Sonja Marinković Street, Novi Sad

Source: Pavle Šosberger, Novosadski Jevreji, Književna zajednica Novog Sada, 1988.

# THE JEWISH CEMETERY IN NOVI SAD



As I was walking on these worn and stony paths, I asked myself how many people had walked there crying in the past 200 years. I watched the deserted graves, nothing could be seen on them, except the Star of David. How could the descendants grieve, the rich, the poor and everyone who was buried here side by side? If the stones could talk, would they tell the stories of all those people and their traditions, their hopes? I'm wondering if we would be able to learn everything about a nation that suffered so much. We should never forget that civilization would not be the same without them.

Student's name: **Nina Kustudić**

The title of the writing: *The Jewish cemetery in Novi Sad*

School: "Kosta Trifković" Primary School, Novi Sad, 8th grade

Teacher: **Dragana Benić**

Place of the picture taken: György Dózsa Street, Novi Sad

Source: Pavle Šosberger, Novosadski Jevreji, Književna zajednica Novog Sada, 1988.



# THE SYNAGOGUE IN NOVI SAD



I've attended several concerts in the synagogue but I never thought about the real significance of this building. As a young girl I saw it as a beautiful monument where we go to live shows to listen to music. Thanks to my history teacher I learnt what the synagogue truly means to the Jewish nation. This is their temple where they can practice their prayers. Now that I enter the building, I hear the silent prayers, the voices singing the hymns, the joyful noise of celebration. I know that horrible things happened to the Jews in the past. People were deported and killed. Through the walls I hear the sighs and whispers of people marching to their deaths.

Student's name: **Sofija Milovanović**

The title of the writing: *The synagogue in Novi Sad*

School: "Kosta Trifković" Primary School, Novi Sad, 8th grade

Teacher: **Dragana Benić**

Place of the picture taken: Jewish Street, Novi Sad

Source: Pavle Šosberger, Novosadski Jevreji, Književna zajednica Novog Sada, 1988

# IN MEMORY OF THE SYNAGOGUE AND THE HOLOCAUST



As some documents prove, the architecture of the synagogues in Voivodina are quite simplistic. The first synagogues were built in the style of baroque. As the classicism took over in the 19th century, the synagogues became to be a lot more appealing to the eye. They were built in various places, like Sremska Mitrovica, Novi Sad, Subotica, Zrenjanin, Pančevo, Ada, Senta and in Bela Crkva. According to some older photos, there was also one synagogue in Vrbas however, it was demolished in the Second World War. Now in that very place there is a hexagonal. The memorial contains engraved tags and words in different languages.

It is said that two boards of marble with the words of the ten commandments have been transported to Israel, where they stand as a memory of the Jewish victims of fascist terrorism.

Altogether there were 76 synagogues and houses in Voivodina. In Bácska there were a lot of places where Jewish people settled and made a community so they also built synagogues in these places, such as: Ada, Apatin, Bačka Palanka, Bačka Topola, Bački Brestovac, Banoštor, Bački Petrovac, Bajmok, Bajša, Bezdan, Crvenka, Čonoplja, Čurug, Đurđevo, Feketić, Gospođinci, Horgoš, Kisač, Kavilja, Kucora, Kula, Mali Idoš, Martonoš, Mol, Novi Sad, Ratkovo, Pivnice, Prigrevica, Ridica, Selenca, Silbas, Sombor, Sonta, Srbobran, Stanišić, Stara Moravica, Stari Bečej, Subotica, Srpski Miletić, Temerin, Titel, Tovariševo, Vrbas, Zmajevu and Žabalj.

Most of the synagogues were demolished at the beginning of the Second World War, right after the entering of armed forces of Nazi Germany.

Some of the above mentioned buildings were completely put to the ground and the destruction continued even after the war. Valuable cultural and historical inheritance was forever abolished from these territories alongside with a lot of Jewish people during the Holocaust and even after it. On the places of once demolished synagogues new buildings were built, but there are not nearly as nice-looking as the old ones were.

Student's name: **Ana Sekulić**

The title of the writing: *In memory of the Synagogue and the Holocaust*

School: "Žarko Zrenjanin" High School, Vrbas, 3rd grade

Teacher: **Snežana Škrbić**

Place of the picture taken: The memorial in Vrbas, Narodni Front Street, in front of the high school. In the same place where the synagogue used to stand now there is a supermarket.

Sources: Pavle Šosberger, *Jevreji u Vojvodini, Kratak pregled istorije vojvođanskih Jevreja* — Prometej, Beograd, 1998.

<http://pulse.rs/srpske-sinagoge-kojih-nema/>

<http://www.makabijada.com/dopis/gradovi/vojvodina.htm>

[https://books.google.rs/books?id=cWh8DAAQBAJ&pg=PA329&lpg=PA329&dq=jevreji+u+kuli&source=bl&ots=iq\\_Ku2OwPC&sig=m3N6WDvcWnayT8RzKdnjAkjSsS4&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjJyKy\\_h-DTAhXEHJoKHVUQCqkQ6AEINzAC#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.rs/books?id=cWh8DAAQBAJ&pg=PA329&lpg=PA329&dq=jevreji+u+kuli&source=bl&ots=iq_Ku2OwPC&sig=m3N6WDvcWnayT8RzKdnjAkjSsS4&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjJyKy_h-DTAhXEHJoKHVUQCqkQ6AEINzAC#v=onepage&q&f=false)

<http://savezjos.org/blog/jevrejska-opstina-sombor/>

<http://kpolisa.com/KP4-5/Pdf/kp06-IV-1-Medic.pdf>

<http://arsmagine.com/judaizam/srpske-sinagoge-kojih-nema/>

<http://haver.rs/sinagoga/>



# **BRICK FACTORY IN CRVENKA — THE PLACE OF POGROM OF 800 JEWS FROM BOR**



I didn't know until now that in my hometown, Crvenka there were more than 700 Jewish people from Bačka who got slaughtered in 1944 by Germans and their supporters. These Jews were forced to work in the mines in Bor during the years of 1942, 1943 and 1944. Germans decided that the prisoners should be transported from there, as the Russian Red Army was about to arrive and the Germans had to make a quick move. They sent some 6000 Jewish prisoners to Belgrade on their feet. They were marching to the south.

A part of the group arrived to Crvenka in October. Those who survived were tired, exhausted, hungry and extremely weak. However, many of them died. Some of them were killed along the way if they broke the inhuman and nonsense rules of the march. Some others were killed in groups of 20, 30, 50 or even 100. Some died of exhaustion. They had to sleep in the mud, without any blanket, soaking in rain all day long. Though, some of them miraculously managed to escape, most of the attempts failed and the runaways got punished.

When the survivors of the march arrived to Crvenka, their lives got in the hands of the SS army soldiers. The prisoners were put up to the brick factory, where they spent the night. They didn't continue marching the next day. At night, in 7th October the soldiers started to take away all the remaining personal things from them and the execution soon began. Their bodies were dropped at the pits they had to dig earlier. More than 700 Jews were shot. Only a few could somehow escape. The rest of the Jews, around 1600 of them left the brick factory and Crvenka early in the next morning.

Four days after the victims were buried in the pits where they lay. In January 1945 the bodies were taken and buried in the cemetery of Sombor, where now stands a monument. The brick factory is still at the same place it used to be, however almost no one knows what happened to the Jews there and in Crvenka some 70 years ago.

Student's name: **Uroš Bijekić**

The title of the writing: *Brick factory in Crvenka – the place of pogrom of 800 Jews from Bor*

School: Economic and Commercial school, Kula, 4th grade

Teacher: **Aleksandra Sekulić**

Place of the picture taken: brick factory "Jedinstvo" in Crvenka

Sources:

Shaul Esh, *Yad Washem Studies on The European Jewish Catastrophe and Resistance*, Yad Washem, Jerusalem, 1958.

Pokrajinska komisija za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača, *Zločini okupatora i njihovih pomagača u Vojvodini protiv Jevreja*, priredio dr Drago Njegovan, IK Prometej, Novi Sad, 2011.

<http://zsido.com/fejezetek/a-teglagyar/>

<http://savezjos.org/blog/jevrejska-opstina-sombor/>

<http://kpolisa.com/KP4-5/Pdf/kp06-IV-1-Medic.pdf>

# THE JEWISH HOUSE





Houses like this (illustrated in the picture) are called "the old Swabian houses" by the people of Crvenka. It means that the Germans who lived in Crvenka used to own these buildings before the Second World War. After the war the houses were given to settlers.

However, only a few people know that the Jews once lived in Crvenka and there was also a synagogue in the village.

Germans were the majority of the population of Crvenka. Some of them took part in the actions of the war later on, some just wanted to survive and some helped their occupation army. During the Second World War anti-Semites deported the Jewish people of Crvenka who were taken as prisoners and sent to death camps. Their houses were taken by strangers, their synagogue was destructed. Entire Jewish families disappeared from the village and the settlers moved to the "Swabian houses."

Oblivion spread over Crvenka and most of the people are simply unfamiliar with the fact that long time ago there were Jewish people who lived in this village. A friend of my father's — who works at the authority of Kula — claims that the house represented above was the property of a Jewish family before, but he doesn't know who they were or what happened to them.

Student's name: **Uroš Bijekić**

The title of the writing: *The Jewish house*

School: Economic and Commercial school, Kula, 4th grade

Teacher: **Aleksandra Sekulić**

Place of the picture taken: Crvenka

Source:

Shaul Esh, Yad Washem Studies on The European Jewish Catastrophe and Resistance, Yad Washem, Jerusalem, 1958.

Pokrajinska komisija za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača, Zločini okupatora i njihovih pomagača u Vojvodini protiv Jevreja, priredio dr Drago Njegovan, IK Prometej, Novi Sad, 2011.

<http://savezjos.org/blog/jevrejska-opstina-sombor/>

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[http://www.crvenka.com/crvenka/istorija-crvenke\\_190.html](http://www.crvenka.com/crvenka/istorija-crvenke_190.html)

# THE JEWISH CEMETERY IN CRVENKA — REMEMBRANCE AND SILENCE



The Jews came to Bačka in the 18th century. Most of them lived in bigger cities like Apatin, Senta, Kula, Vrbas, Bačka Palanka, Novi Sad, Subotica and Sombor. Apart from these places there were only just a few hundred families in the area. Though they were no more just tolerated in the Christian surroundings they tried to assimilate. However, the more they tried to fit in, the more they got separated. In the economy of Bačka, they had an important role in leather and wool business. The only places that keep the memory of the Jewish people in Bačka are the abandoned cemeteries. It seems that their traditions have been slowly forgotten, just like the houses they lived in, the buildings that were once the synagogues that were often simply destroyed. The memories are vague.

In the end, the mark of their two-century-long presence in most of the places in Bačka got wiped out after the tragedies of the Second World War. They are hardly remembered in my hometown, Crvenka as well. As historical data shows Jews settled in Crvenka in the 18th century. According to the official census in 1900, there were 7563 inhabitants and 1166 houses in Crvenka. The numbers divided by nationalities were the following: 6911 Germans, 499 Hungarians, 60 Serbs, 49 Croats, 38 Slovaks, 67 Jews, 1 Ruthenian and 4 other. Before the Second World War some 130 Jews lived in Crvenka, but after the war — if I am not mistaken — no one left.

The long forgotten small Jewish cemetery in Crvenka lies near the village on a mildly sloping hillside. It looks at the place where the buried once used to live, and where no one remembers them anymore. In 2016 a brand-new fence was built around the cemetery in a memory of the victims of the Holocaust once lived in Crvenka.

Does it mean the end of silence and the beginning of remembrance?

Student's name: **Nemanja Kukić**

The title of the writing: *The Jewish cemetery in Crvenka — Remembrance and Silence*

School: Economic and Commercial school, Kula, 4th grade

Teacher: **Aleksandra Sekulić**

Place of the picture taken: Crvenka, Jewish cemetery, Slobodan Penezić Street

Sources:

Pokrajinska komisija za utvrđivanje zločina okupatora i njihovih pomagača, Zločini okupatora i njihovih pomagača u Vojvodini protiv Jevreja, priredio dr Drago Njegovan, IK Prometej, Novi Sad, 2011.

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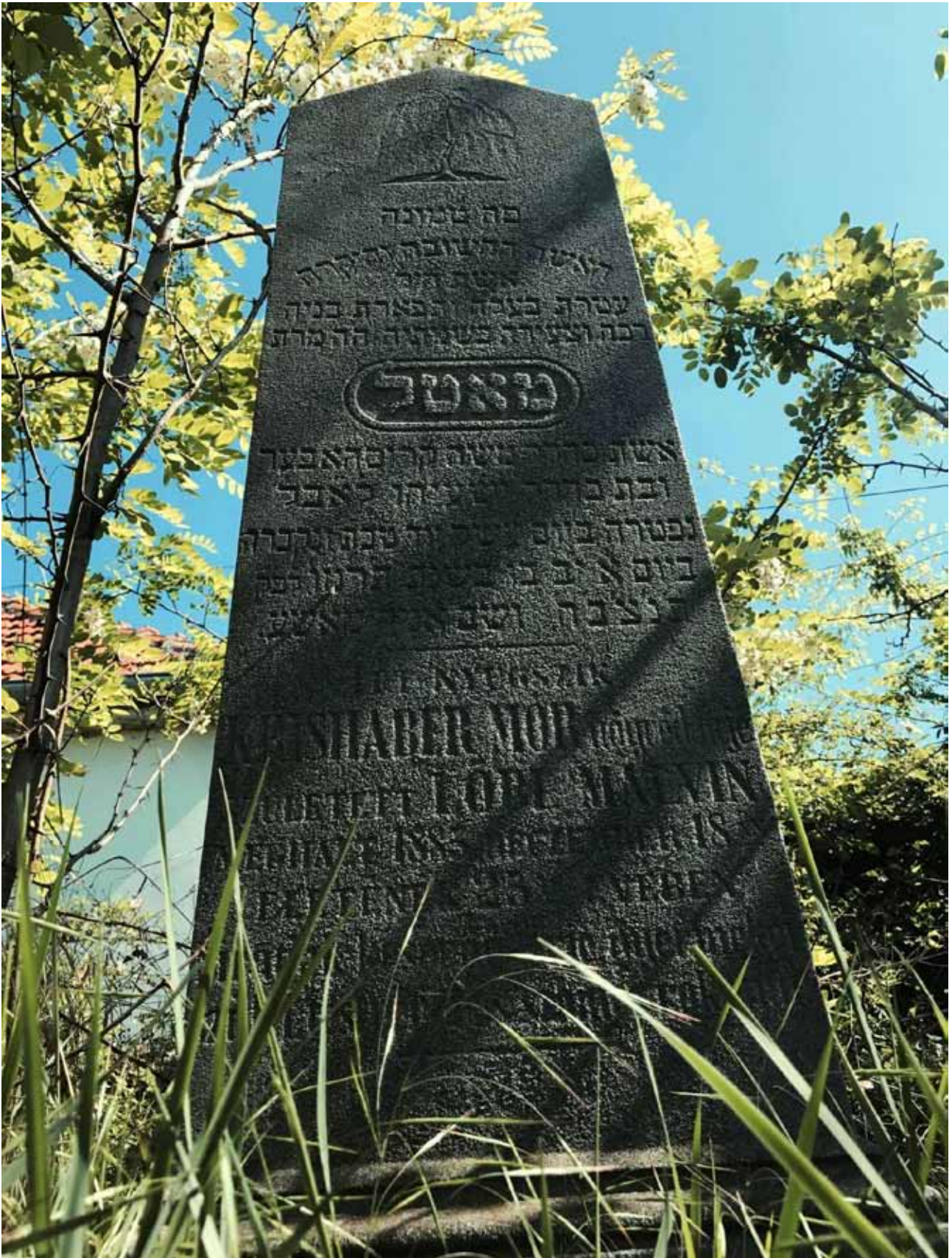
<http://kpolisa.com/KP4-5/Pdf/kp06-IV-1-Medic.pdf>

[http://www.makabijada.com/jg/Simon\\_Dubnov.pdf](http://www.makabijada.com/jg/Simon_Dubnov.pdf)

<http://www.makabijada.com/dopis/gradovi/vojvodina.htm>



# THE TREE OF LIFE



In mythology the tree of life symbolizes the unbreakable connection between the ground and the sky. It's like the power of nature. The ancient Celts for instance, had a really strong relationship with nature. The tree of life is a traditional Celtic symbol, which tells us about the interconnectedness of the Celts and nature. For them the tree of life means nature, power, wisdom and the eternal life.

Among the Slavic nations and in the Slav mythology, the tree of life meant the life itself where everything began, from which everything originated. According to an ancient Slavic myth, after death human spirit goes into the trunks of trees and it stays there forever. We may come across similar myths in the Nordic and the German mythology. The tree of life is also a part of the Cabbala, where it represents the essence of God in the matter and the sky. Different mythologies, but similar myths. In the cemetery in Kula there are trees engraved into the tombstones, just like the attached picture shows. I look at it as a symbol. It represents a mythological tree of life or the tree of the cognition of right and wrong from the Old Testament. I can't read the text which is written on the tomb in Hebrew. Beneath it there is a Hungarian text which I can hardly understand, but somehow I can sense its melody. I can read the Hungarian names. As much as I can understand from it, Jewish people were buried there. They believed in the connection of humans and the universe, the ground and the skies, and the never-ending life. They believed in everything that people still believe in. They believed in the Old Testament.

This grave makes us think about the memory of many Jews in Kula. It is the evidence of the victory of life, the symbol of eternity engraved in a stone. There is a tree growing from behind. Even if we forget, nature won't.

Student's name: **Sonja Tomčić**

The title of the writing: *The tree of life*

School: Economic and Commercial school, Kula, 4th grade

Teacher: **Aleksandra Sekulić**

Place of the picture taken: The Jewish cemetery in Kula

Sources: A. Gerbran i Ž. Ševalije, Rečnik simbola, Stilos, Novi Sad, 2004.

<http://www.makabijada.com/dopis/gradovi/vojvodina.htm>

[https://books.google.rs/books?id=cWh8DAAQBAJ&pg=PA329&lpg=PA329&dq=jevreji+u+kuli&source=bl&ots=iq\\_Ku2OwPC&sig=m3N6WDvcWnayT8RzKdnjAkjSsS4&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjJyKy\\_h-DTAhXEHJoKHVUQCqkQ6AEINzAC#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.rs/books?id=cWh8DAAQBAJ&pg=PA329&lpg=PA329&dq=jevreji+u+kuli&source=bl&ots=iq_Ku2OwPC&sig=m3N6WDvcWnayT8RzKdnjAkjSsS4&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjJyKy_h-DTAhXEHJoKHVUQCqkQ6AEINzAC#v=onepage&q&f=false)

<http://savezjos.org/blog/jevrejska-opstina-sombor/>

<http://kpolisa.com/KP4-5/Pdf/kp06-IV-1-Medic.pdf>

<http://wikimapia.org/#lang=en&lat=45.616347&lon=19.537653&z=19&m=h&show=/23982391/sr/Jevrejsko-groblje>



# THREE JEWISH TOMBSTONES





"The Jewish cemetery is a place where it is prohibited to eat, to drink, to smoke and to pay a visit on holidays. It's not a tradition to bring flowers and to put them on the tomb. However, you can put a rock on it because it represents the connection between the living and the dead, the faith in the spirit of the decedent."

I went to the Jewish cemetery in Kula with my best friend. It's located at the corner of Stevan Sremac Street and 8th March Street. It was a sunny day, the gate was wide open, the entrance could be hardly seen from all the rank grass. I could feel fear and doubtfulness. The sunlight was dancing on the tombstones. "Should I put a gravel on a tombstone?" — I asked myself. "[Do I have to leave a sign that a living person was here and pay respect to the spirit of the dead?"

I feel ashamed that we let this holy place to be forgotten and we neglected the only inheritance that proves that once Jews lived in my town. Most of the descendants of the people buried in this cemetery were later on victims of the Holocaust. The few who survived do not live here anymore. They've been driven away.

It'd be wrong to let a memory of a whole nation disappear, their fate can't be forgotten and all the injustice that happened to them must stop.

What kind of neighbours and inheritors are we? It's sad that the residents of a small town like this are consciously neglecting these places and are trying to erase the memory of them: "People are always the responsible ones, no matter whether they did something on purpose or by accident, awake or asleep."

Student's name: **Tijana Miličić**

Naslov dela: *Three Jewish tombstone*

School: Economic and Commercial school, Kula, 4th grade

Teacher: **Aleksandra Sekulić**

Place of the picture taken: The Jewish cemetery

Sources: <http://www.makabijada.com/dopis/gradovi/vojvodina.htm>

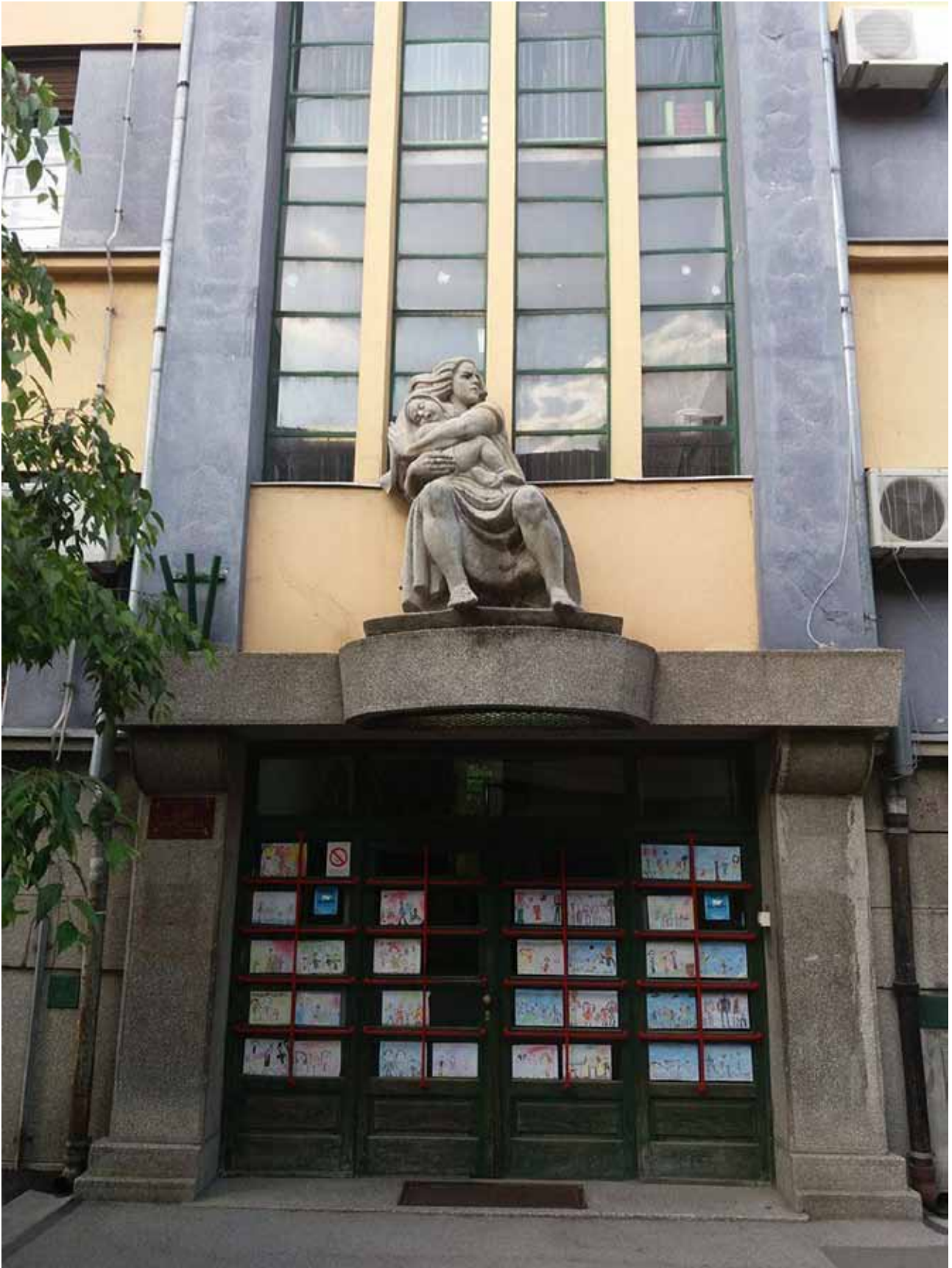
[https://books.google.rs/books?id=cWh8DAAAQBAJ&pg=PA329&lpg=PA329&dq=jevreji+u+kuli&source=bl&ots=iq\\_Ku2OwPC&sig=m3N6WDvcWnayT8RzKdnjAkjSsS4&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjJyKy\\_h-DTAhXEHJoKHVUQCqkQ6AEINzAC#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.rs/books?id=cWh8DAAAQBAJ&pg=PA329&lpg=PA329&dq=jevreji+u+kuli&source=bl&ots=iq_Ku2OwPC&sig=m3N6WDvcWnayT8RzKdnjAkjSsS4&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjJyKy_h-DTAhXEHJoKHVUQCqkQ6AEINzAC#v=onepage&q&f=false)

<http://savezjos.org/blog/jevrejska-opstina-sombor/>

<http://kpolisa.com/KP4-5/Pdf/kp06-IV-1-Medic.pdf>

<http://wikimapia.org/#lang=en&lat=45.616347&lon=19.537653&z=19&m=h&show=/23982391/sr/Jevrejsko-groblje>

# JELENA KON



We attended a seminar about the Holocaust in April. We became really interested in this subject and we wanted to learn more about it. As we had spoken to our teacher, we decided with a friend of mine to do a research about a woman who left her mark in the history of Novi Sad. The name of this woman is Jelena Kon.

### **Jelena Kon (1883—1942) benefactress**

During the great economic crisis in 1925, Jelena Kon founded a charity club named "Kora Hleba" (Bread Crust) which was mainly taking care of poor children, mothers and other people in trouble. However, not only this club but a kindergarten and an advisory for mothers operated in the building. They also provided mother's milk to children in need. To get as much donation as possible, Jelena Kon organized charity concerts. Artists like Bronislav Huberman (1928) and Arthur Rubinstein (1929) played shows in Novi Sad. Thanks to the collected money Jelena bought this building (illustrated in the above photo) which was used to help the poor, no matter what nationalities they were or which religion they practiced. During the Hungarian Occupation and Raid in Novi Sad she had been arrested just because of her Jewish ethnicity and later on she was tortured and killed and thrown to the Danube River together with other Serbs, Jews and Gypsies.

Unfortunately, nowadays there isn't a single plaque or any sign that may refer to Jelena Kon's connection to the building. Projects like this should motivate students to find out more about similar topics and also to remember Jelena Kon. What I personally find positive is that the building she left behind for us is still functioning as a center for helping children in need because a kindergarten, named Čarolija is located here.

Student's name: **Nina Dikić, Jana Kovačević, Jelena Ćurčić i Magdalena Đurović**

The title of the writing: *Jelena Kon*

School: "Svetozar Miletić" High School, Novi Sad, 2nd grade

Teacher: **Dragica Krajčir**

Place of the picture taken: Sonja Marinković Street, Novi Sad



# WE OWN THEM A REMEMBRANCE



It doesn't matter how long ago it was, we cannot allow ourselves to forget a whole nation that used to live – in not only our town but – all around the world. Their culture played a significant part in our society.

Aranka from Sombor is also Jewish, she is a friend of our family and this is her story.

*I was born from a mixed marriage: my mother Verona Ernst (Béres) was Hungarian and my father, Antun Ernst was Jewish. It was my father's second marriage. I remember that we followed the Christian and the Jewish traditions as well. His first wife, Aranka Singer was Jewish. They had two sons and a daughter.*

*During the Second World War and before it, the Ernst family lived in Sombor and they were part of the Jewish community. In 26th April 1944 they were deported alongside with other Jewish people. My father and one of his sons (my stepbrother) got out of the concentration camp alive. His wife, Aranka and his other son and daughter and the rest of his relatives got deported to Auschwitz. Unfortunately, except Ljubica, my stepsister, no one survived. My father was very sick and died when I was eight. After losing him it was really hard but I don't remember too much from that time.*

*I became a member of the local Jewish community, which helped me with everything (clothing, food, medicine, money). I'm still a member of the Jewish community in Sombor. During the occasions of the Jewish holidays we often go to Subotica, Novi Sad or Osijek where we meet other Jewish people. When Hanukah comes, I light a candle in the memory of my father.*

*According to the Jewish calendar, it's 5777 (2016. October 3rd — 2017. October 20th).*

Student's name: **Dragana Laslo**

The title of the writing: *We own them a remembrance*

School: Medical High School, Subotica, 4th grade

The picture was taken from Aranka's Jewish calendar, year 5772. (2011—2012)

Informant: story told by Mladenović (Ernst) Aranka

# ISREALITE GRAVEYARD — DEMBITZ VILMOS



Vilmos Dembitz was the doctor of the community in Stara Moravica for 46 years. He was born in 1828 and died in 1909. He was serving at the War of Independence as the main doctor for soldiers. In the Israelite cemetery there stands an obelisk-shaped tombstone for the honour of him.

Student's name: **Zsuzsanna Kurucz**

The title of the writing: *Isrealite graveyard — Dembitz Vilmos*

School: "Id. Kovács Gyula" Primary School, Stara Moravica, 7th grade

Teacher: **Sztella Antal**

Place of the picture taken: The cemetery is located on the fields near the Reformed Cemetery. It's abandoned.



# SIGH OF THE JEWS



I look around. I see nothing, the cemetery is overgrown with grass, the tombs are covered by creeping ivy and worn-out by the years. I feel too weak and it's unimaginable that I, a teenage girl could somehow remind the whole world about the importance of preserving traditions, the power of caring about and loving each other. It's sad that as a photographer I need to show that there is life in these pictures taken in the cemetery, because you can only feel the true atmosphere of the place when you're there. I try to suppress my anger, sadness and disgust towards the world and all the injustice, but in vain.

Humans are blind, the world is deaf, and people are almost robots.

It's hard to explain the feeling you have in this cemetery. It's pale and colorless but in the same time it's blooming somehow. Empty, though still full of the everlasting spirit of dreamers. It's all incomprehensible! "Like a theater full of people, full of seriousness". — as the Jews said in their first play.

Unfortunately, the Jews became known worldwide by the monstrous actions that were done against them, but they have never ever returned the great pain to the ones who hurt them because they lived by this saying: God is following with attention people's lives, and he rewards them for their good deeds and punishes them for their bad ones. So, they've always gave mercy to their enemies, because according to Bible all humans are equally good. I hope that today generations think the same...

Student's name: **Réka Rontó**

The title of the writing: *Sigh of the Jews*

School: "Id. Kovács Gyula" Elementary School, Stara Moravica, 7th grade

Teacher: **Sztella Antal**

Place of the picture taken: The Jewish cemetery, Stara Moravica

Source: [www.zsidokozmondasok.com](http://www.zsidokozmondasok.com)

# 1 PHOTO/1 STORY



The Ungars arrived at the beginning of the 19th century from Silesia to the Hungarian villages of that time (Subotica, Ada, Novi Sad, Stara Moravica). Moizes Ungar was the first Ungar in the village. He lived in poor conditions but his descendants soon became wealthy. They are considered the most determinative family in the history of Stara Moravica.

They are well-known for building the synagogue as well for the story of Kálmán Mikszáth's famous novel called "A Noszty fiú esete Tóth Marival" — which could be connected to them. As for the most of other Jewish families, the 20th century meant great ruination for the Ungars. It was Alice Ungar who lived the most, she died in 1997.

The memory of the family lives on in the mausoleum at the Jewish cemetery.

Student's name: **Adriana Jovanović**

The title of the writing: *1 photo/1 story*

School: Id. Kovács Gyula Elementary School, Stara Moravica, 7th grade

Teacher: **Sztella Antal**

Place of the picture taken: Jewish cemetery, Stara Moravica

# THE JEWISH CEMETERY



The Jewish cemetery is quite neglected nowadays. It was a place where wealthy people were also buried. It can be found on the fields in Perdó valley (in Firemen's street), near the village. The small cemetery and the chapel are nearly unrecognizable because of all the rank grass. However, there is one tomb that's in good condition. It's Mrs Ungar's (Pálné Ungár). The Ungars settled in Moravica in the 1800's. The Second World War abolished the Jewish culture and people were sent to concentration camps. Most of them were killed there. The Ungar family is most famous from a novel by Kálmán Mikszáth, the „Noszty fiú esete Tóth Marival”. The story takes place in Moravica. Tóth Mari's character is actually Ungár Piroska.

Student's name: **Zsuzsanna Patócskai**

The title of the writing: *The Jewish cemetery*

School: "Id. Kovács Gyula" Elementary School, Stara Moravica, 7th grade

Teacher: **Sztella Antal**

Place of the picture taken: The Jewish cemetery, Stara Moravica



# WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN?



Most people try to leave a mark behind so they would be remembered long after their death. In the past, the stories got round but nowadays it's much more complicated than that. In the age of the internet all the information can be easily saved but what would happen if this system somehow collapsed or there would be no electricity all of a sudden?

All the information would be lost. If we don't care about stories, mementos, buildings or even a nation's own language and culture they could all easily just disappear after a while.

The same could've happened to this cemetery. After the Jews had been deported, nobody took care of the graves, some even got damaged. However, fortunately the story doesn't stop here, as a group of people with the help of a non-governmental organization have built a fence around the graveyard and they are taking care of it ever since. Now every time I pass the cemetery, I'm glad that it will be still here for the future generations so they can learn about what happened to the Jews and what could have been.

Student's name: **Aleksandra Kresoja**

The title of the writing: *What could have been?*

School: Medical High School, Subotica, 2nd grade

Teacher: **Irén Tóth**

Place of the picture taken: Slobodan Penević Street, Crvenka

Sources: My family and the message board itself

# MY GRANDFATHER AND THE TITHE





My grandfather started a research on Jewish culture in the early 80's. The more he read about it, the more and more interested he became in their history and culture. He found their unity and devotion really inspiring, he also learnt about some negative myths about the Jews (for example, Christians were spreading a rumour that the Jews walled up Christian children). He also visited some Jewish churches and read a lot from Jewish writers, for example Josephus Flavius, who knew everything about the stories of wars and was also an eyewitness of the destruction of the wall in Jerusalem. After a while my grandfather read the Talmud as well. He was surprised how well the Jews treated the poor. They made sure the poor people got their subsistence even when they could hardly make both ends meet. There was a law, the Tithe, which made the rich to support poor people. So what my grandfather is trying to illustrate with this picture above is that a part of the reaped wheat field was left to the ones who didn't have any grain. The Tithe was an ancient tax system in Israel but since the destruction of the Tabernacle, it's not in use anymore.

This law has been extended to everything. Like the Creator is taking care of the birds so they don't die of hunger, this law provided balance between the rich and the poor. A nation like this to remain is only possible if its people have strong beliefs and support each other.

Why was my grandfather interested in this subject? His parents used to work for Jewish people, and it was a great honour for them. My grandfather also saw the deportation of the Jews in Kanjiža, he also had a childhood friend, Dan Reisinger, who later on became Israel's most famous painter and designer of graphics.

Student's name: **Rita Novák**

The title of the writing: *My grandfather and the Tithe*

School: Kosztolányi Dezső High School, 3rd grade

Informant: **Mihály Novák Sr.**

Photo: Artwork by Mihály Novák Sr.

# GRAVELS AND FLOWERS



Flowers in the hearts, pebbles on the graves. Millions of flowers faded away, millions of flowers are still crying, but the tombstones are here, standing still, keeping the memories of the victims of the Holocaust.

I've visited the Jewish cemetery in Subotica not so long ago. I feel like this experience had a huge impact on me and I won't forget it for a long time. I've never felt such sadness before but I think — for the first time — I really understood what really had happened back then and how truly terrible it had been.

I could hardly find a grave where the exact times of people's deaths were mentioned. On most of the tombstones, only the name of the person and the name of concentration camp — such as Auschwitz, Dachau or Treblinka — can be read.

I was in tears while I was reading them:

"Klárka, her father, her mother, Auschwitz, 1944". "Laczi Glie, lived for 14 months". "The Lord gives it, the Lord takes away, praise the Lord". A nameless mother who died in Treblinka... her five children and her loving husband is forever in grief..."

Though I truly believe the scars that the anti-Semitism caused will never be healed, we must never forget them. We have to make sure that a tragedy like this will never happen again. They were people just like us, not better, not worse, only human and each of them was valuable and none of them deserved this tragic fate. Unfortunately, in our times there are still similar things going on like slaughters, though nothing can be compared to the Holocaust. This is only a really good example how we should NOT ever behave.

Let the empathy and their memory stay in our hearts like the gravels on the tombstones: never-changing, to the end of times and let's take action against all the evil so a tragedy like this would never happen again.

Student's name: **Johanna Tóth**

The title of the writing: *Gravels and flowers*

School: Medical High School, Subotica, 3rd grade

Place of the picture taken: Jewish cemetery, Subotica



# PEACE



In Čantavir they are buried in a hidden place. They are resting peacefully. I wonder how much they had to suffer and worry in the past, if they were well respected residents of their town, if anyone remembers them, where their families are, if they are buried in the same place or if they are scattered all around far from each other.

Once a year, the students of "Hunyadi János" Elementary School have a memorial day for remembering the tragedies of the Second World War and the Holocaust. It reminds us, the students that we have to respect each other's culture and traditions and that every human being has the same value in the eyes of the Lord and no one can take one's life away.

Student's name: **Kitti Kecsenovics**

The title of the writing: *Peace*

School: "Kosztolányi Dezső" High School, 1st grade

Place of the picture taken: The Jewish cemetery in Čantavir

# 1 PHOTO/1 STORY

The *Zenith Workshop* from Subotica has announced a competition that goes by the name **1 photo/1 story**. The subject was the culture and history of Jews in Vojvodina.

The members of the jury were: Sonja Viličić, the managing director of the non-governmental organization Haver Srbija from Belgrade, Róbert Kovács from the Jewish community in Subotica and the chairman of the Zenith Workshop, Erika Roncsák Petrovics, pedagogue.

## REPORT

### Deserving students from the primary schools

**Nataša Maksimović: *Every building has got a story to tell* (Kosta Trifković Primary School, Novi Sad, teacher – Dragana Benić):** this piece of work has a really touching, personal tone, the content is also really detailed and goes well with the title.

**Nina Kustudić: *The Jewish cemetery in Novi Sad* (Kosta Trifković Primary School, Novi Sad, teacher – Dragana Benić):** mature writing for her age. The photo is cut on the top, which symbolises the fate of the Jews, "our civilisation wouldn't be the same without them" — as the student states at the end of her work.

**Réka Rontó: *Sigh of the Jews* (Id. Kovács Gyula Primary School, Stara Moravica, teacher – Sztella Antal):** for the great photography and the harmony and coherence between the content and its form. Réka visited the cemetery in Stara Moravica and she puts down her reflections about her experience with just the correct amount of "pathetic tone" for a 14 years old pupil.

### Deserving students from the high schools

**Tijana Miličić: *Three Jewish Tombstones* (Economic and Commercial School, Kula, teacher — Aleksandra Sekulić):** this is a writing of high standards that goes well with the photography itself. A really mature piece of work stylistically, with a great amount of literature used as a reference. She writes with responsibility and sensitivity towards the social issues.

**Uroš Bijekić: *The Jewish house* (Economic and Commercial School, Kula, mentor — Aleksandra Sekulić):** authentic and profound writing with a well-composed photo of a Jewish house that carries a significant message of this nation.

**Aleksandra Kresoja: *What could have been?* (Medical High School, Subotica) and Nemanja Kukić: *The Jewish cemetery in Crvenka — Remembrance and Silence* (Economic and Commercial School, Kula):** both students worked with the same subject, namely the Jewish cemetery in Crvenka. The writing of Aleksandra is a philosophical etude in which she emphasises the importance of the maintenance of the Jewish cemeteries, for instance she heightens a non-governmental organization which put a memorial at the entry of the cemetery. Her photo collage perfectly fits with the writing. Nemanja wrote a quite lyrical essay ending. He also made some quality photographs.

**Nina Dikić, Jana Kovačević, Jelena Čurčić and Magdalena Đurović: *Jelena Kon* (Svetozar Miletić High School, Novi Sad, teacher — Dragica Krajčir):** these students achieved a really impressive teamwork. Cooperative skills are one of the five competences — according to a research done by Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation — which are essential to an employee in the 21st century. The highlights of this writing are the detailed research work, the way the events of the past and the present are linked to each other and the personal tone at the ending. (The students have some strong PR skills as well, as they were the only participants who took and sent a photo of themselves; the team).

June, 2017



Erika Roncsák Petrovics,  
Chairman of *Radionica Zenith Műhely*

**Projekat koordinirala / A projekt koordinátora / The coordinator of the project:**



**Prevodioci tekstova / A szövegek fordítói / Translators:**

*László Paulina, Roncsák Marcell, Soós Edit*

**Lektori / Lektorok / Lectors:**

*Zora Ćujić, Tóth Ágota*

**Prelom / Tördelő / Word processing:**

*Roncsák Alexander*

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