

KRAJNOVIĆ, Bogdan
Former Yugoslavia Witnesses Documentation Project
Serbian
RG-50.585*0003

Box 1, Tape 1

In this interview Bogdan Krajnovic discusses the beginning of World War II when the Hungarian army entered his village. He talks about the time that he spent as young boy as prisoner in a camp and the death of his mother there. He discusses the living conditions in the camps explaining that the conditions were particularly difficult for children. He explains that children died in great numbers in the camps. He focuses on the substantial amount of help from the Serbian Orthodox Church, which managed to get children and old people out of the camps.

[01:] 00:31:00 – [01:] 11:10:09

Bogdan Krajnovic states that he was born in 1933 in **Lika [Licki Sitluk]** in the community of **Gospic** (in present-day Croatia); he discusses the beginning of the war in 1941 and the subsequent mobilization of men into the army; explains that both his brother and father joined the army but his father was rejected because of his age; talks about the friendly relationship between Hungary and Yugoslavia that existed until the formation of the Independent State of Croatia and the invasion of Serbia by the Hungarian army in 1941; discusses an incident where a Jewish doctor, a priest's son, and a man convicted for killing a Hungarian person were executed without trial; explains that the village drummer announced the approximately 2,000 inhabitants of the village must pack and leave for the camp because the Hungarians were moving in; describes the difficult journey to the first camp during which some people died, including his godmother.

[01:] 11:10:10 – [01:] 20:40:15

He talks about their arrival to Jugovicevo, the former airport of Yugoslavia (presently the Majevisa barracks); says that there was no torture in Jugovicevo and that the prisoners could purchase food from the merchants even though they were given food in the camp three times a day; says that after six weeks around 80 percent of the residents from his village left for Serbia and the remaining 20 percent left either for the camp in **Nac Kanjiza** or were sent in cattle wagons to the camp in Sarvar as he was; describes the difficult conditions in the wagons in which they traveled for two days—they were unable to go out, eat, or drink and the train windows remained closed; explains that a factory was turned into the camp in Sarvar; explains that it was very cold there during the winter and that the food was horrible; says that the death of his mother in the camp in 1941 was due to difficult living conditions; points out that he was not permitted to go to her funeral; explains that this was the most difficult time for him.

[01:] 20:40:16 – [01:] 31:29:13

He talks about difficult winters in the Sarvar camp where many children died, focusing on the role of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which sent packages with food and clothes to the prisoners; mentions bishop **Irinej Ciric** who negotiated with the Hungarian authorities and managed to free around 3,500 children from the camp including him; adds that **Ciric** was later tortured by the Yugoslav Communists who accused him of collaborating with Hungarians; says that people were not murdered in the camp although the undisciplined ones were sent to a prison inside the camp called the "flea room" because the whole camp was full of fleas and lice; describes the Easter when the officials of the Serbian Orthodox Church came to the camp and took the children and gave them to families to take care of them until the liberation; says that he was extremely exhausted and weak after he left the camp and that he needed to repeat the first grade; adds that in 1944 his sister came and took him to live with her because the family had him sleep with the cattle in the stable; says that he lived with his sister in the **Farkata** village near **Sehes Fejvar** where they stayed until the Red Army liberated them in 1944.

[01:] 31:29:14 – [01:] 37:26:15

He returns to the subject of the initial order for all the people from his village to leave their homes; points out that the healthy men from 16 to 60 years of age were taken to the sugar factory in **Stara Crvenka** (in present-day Serbia) near their village where some of them were tortured; says that 2 to 10 people died each day in Sarvar; adds that there were approximately 9,000 people in the camp from which about 800 died; points out that the death toll was the worst in 1941; mentions again the Serbian Orthodox Church, which contributed greatly to the liberation and its help to the people in the camps.