



# Witnesses, Judges, Spectators

The Risiera di San Sabba trial

Trieste 1976

produced by  
Dunja Nanut and Franco Cecotti

Aned Trieste 2013



Risiera di San Sabba (1945): macerie del locale dove si trovava il forno crematorio

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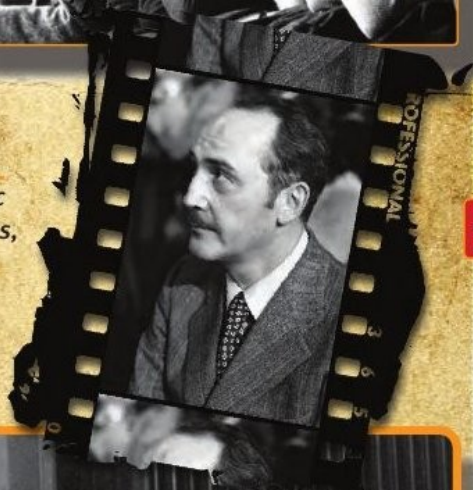
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## Spectators

Tribunal of Trieste



All 31 sessions of the court were followed by a packed public gallery. Some were attended by delegates from associations, councils and political parties, including the mayor of Marzabotto (pictured right).



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## Witnesses, Judges, Spectators

The Risiera di San Sabba trial

Trieste 1976

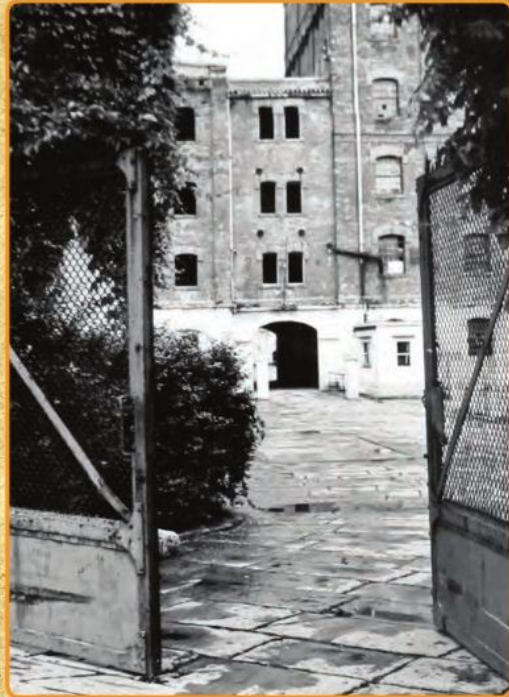


Criminal proceedings for the crimes committed at the Risiera di San Sabba, during the period of Nazi occupation from September 1943 to April 1945, took place at Trieste Court from Feb to April 1976.

The trial is an event of huge significance: it took place after a long period of judicial disinterest in Nazi crimes committed in Italy - a previous era had seen Herbert Kappler prosecuted (in Rome in 1948) and Walter Reder (in Bologna in 1951).

The proceedings that took place in the Assizes Court of Trieste in 1976 helped highlight crimes committed by the occupying German forces in the so-called Litorale Adriatico area, crimes committed against partisans, and against Jews awaiting deportation to the extermination camps, plus people who in reality had nothing to do with anti-German activity.

This exhibition aims to re-focus attention on the famous trial held at Trieste in 1976, which saw the testimony of many civilians, of Italian, Slovenian and Croat nationality, who described the incredible experiences in which they were either involved or had personally witnessed.



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*The display is divided into the following five sections:*

A- Proceedings

B- The Assize Court of Trieste

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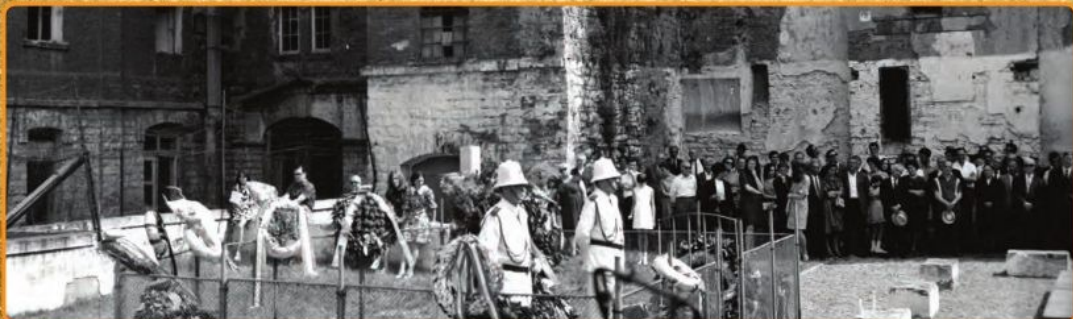
D- Lawyers

E- The public and the press

The pictures of the trial are by photographer Janko Furlan, along with some by Mario Magajna from the Slovenian newspaper Primorski dnevnik. These images were preserved in the photographic archive

of the Trieste branch of Aned.

Other images come from the Bubnic Foundation, the Nsk archive, and the photo archive of IrsmIFVG.





## Slow steps towards a trial

After the Nazis fled the area, various people entered the Risiera di San Sabba: they noted a large pile of rubble at the base of a chimney stack, they saw hooks in a cell, and blood on the floor, and they found a bag full of identity cards. A historian noted graffiti written inside one of the cells. Photographs were taken. Workers removing the rubble left by the Nazi explosions found three bags of human bone and ash. A police official wrote a report on the murders in the risiera, and the State Prosecutor was informed. The human remains were given a decent burial.

Neither the Allied military government, nor

the Italian state (after 1954) or the Trieste court conducted any further investigation. The first historical studies of the Risiera came out in the early 1960s, and in 1965, the entire site was declared a national monument.

### Germany gives justice a push

Between 1964 and 1967, German courts in Hamburg and Frankfurt enquired about the activities of the Einsatzkommando Reinhardt in the Litorale Adriatico, from Italian partisan groups, the Jewish community and the Historical Institute of the Liberation Movement. Now the Trieste court became involved in gathering evidence.



### Litorale Adriatico (Command structure)

Supreme commander:	Friedrich Rainer
Military commander:	Ludwig Kübler
SS and Higher Police commander:	Odilo Globočnik
Einsatzkommando Reinhardt commander:	Christian Wirth, later August Dietrich Allers
Commander Risiera San Sabba (R1):	Gottlieb Hering, later Joseph Oberhauser

# Slow steps towards a trial



Judge Sergio Serbo, asked to study the documents gathered by German magistrates, informed the President of the Trieste Tribunal on 18 December 1968 of "definite proof of crimes" committed at the Risiera di San Sabba; on 11 March 1970, he handed a list of people to be prosecuted to the Prosecutor General.

On 17 March 1970, the Public Minister of the Trieste Tribunal opened proceedings against a number of people accused of crimes at the Risiera, and handed the prosecution over to Sergio Serbo. The Military Procurator of Padova took it upon himself in 1972 to try to take over the trial: the jurisdictional dispute was resolved by the Italian Supreme Court on 23 March 1973 in favour of the standard civilian court (at Trieste). Judge Serbo re-started the investigation, and on 22 February 1975, laid charges of multiple murder against Dietrich Allers and Joseph Oberhauser.

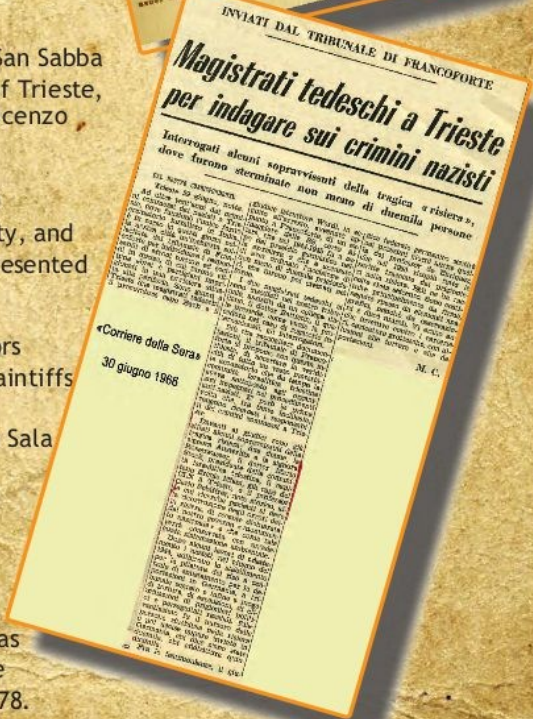
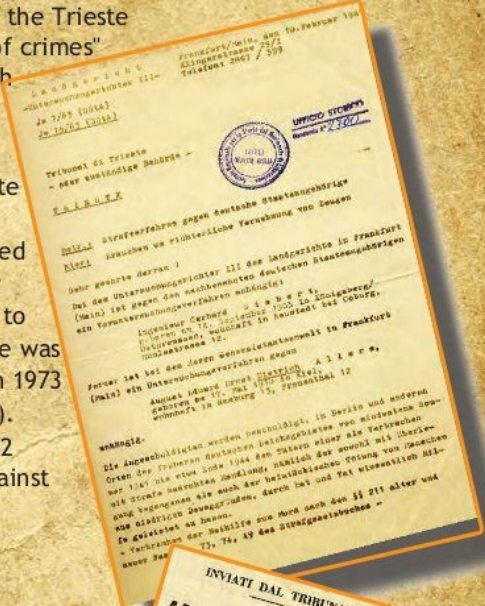
### The Trieste trial

The trial for crimes committed at the Risiera di San Sabba began on 16 February 1976, at the Assize Court of Trieste, with Domenico Maltese in charge, along with Vincenzo D'Amato, and prosecutor Claudio Coassin.

There were 30 lawyers involved, representing 60 plaintiffs. The defendants' bench remained empty, and Joseph Oberhauser and Dietrich Allers were represented by two lawyers nominated by the court.

174 witnesses appeared before the court, survivors of the Risiera and relatives of the victims, as plaintiffs. Five historians participated: Enzo Collotti, Tone Ferenc, Mario Pacor, Galliano Fogar and Teodoro Sala. Statements made by members of the Einsatzkommando Reinhard to judges in Germany were read out in court as evidence.

Sentence was pronounced on 29 April 1976: the death of Dietrich Allers led to the dropping of charges against him, while Joseph Oberhauser was sentenced to life imprisonment in absentia. The verdict was confirmed by the Appeal Court in 1978.





## The Nazis in the Risiera

Origins, experiences and characteristics



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The Nazis present in the Risiera di San Sabba between 1943 and 1945 came from the T4 Euthanasia programme, the murder of the so-called incurably sick in Germany that started in 1939. Led by Christian Wirth, the programme operated out of Brandenburg, Bernburg, Grafeneck, Hartheim, Sonnenstein and Hadamar. With the commencement of the Final Solution, some of the T4 staff were sent to General Government of Poland, to the Action Reinhardt (AR) extermination camps at Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka, under the direction of Lublin district SS and Higher Police commander Odilo Globocnik.

From September 1943, nearly all the AR staff were sent to the Litorale Adriatico zone in Italy, which was divided into three areas: R1 (Trieste), R2 (Fiume) and R3 (Udine). R1 was based out of the Risiera, and was led by Gottlieb Hering, who was succeeded in summer 1944 by Joseph Oberhauser. Franz Reichleitner led R2 and Franz Stangl commanded R3. They answered to Christian Wirth (and later Dietrich Allers).

Statements on what happened in Trieste were gathered by German investigators, and then handed over to the Risiera trial in 1976.



## The Nazis in the Risiera

Statements gathered by German magistrates



### Karl SCHIFFNER

Bad Reichental, 22 October 1965

« I guess that there were partisans being held in There were also Jewish prisoners, but not in the cells, they were held in a large dormitory. There were male and female Jewish prisoners. I did not see any children [...].

Behind the courtyard, there was a sort of crematorium [...] When I arrived at San Sabba, it was already in existence. It was used during the night.

I also noticed the unpleasant smell of burning. The staff who worked on the cremation of the corpses were Ukrainian members of the SS. I am not in a position to say who was leading these operations or who organised them.

«In front of the crematorium oven, there was a large room, into which the Jews were driven. I did not hear the sound of gunshots.

As far as I recall, there was no gas chamber in the room in which the Jewish prisoners were sealed. I suppose that the prisoners were hanged, because during the night, you could sometimes hear screams. The Ukrainian guards were in charge of the hangings. »

### Karl WERNER DUBOIS

Schwelm, 15 September 1965

« In San Sabba, there was a very primitive crematorium oven. It had been built by Lambert. I remember that the bodies of 70 or 80 partisans were burnt there. They had been killed outside the camp. The bodies were transported on a truck.

«The San Sabba camp was run for some time by Hering. But the real power, and the fate of the prisoners, lay with Wirth, and then with Allers.

«There were both male and female Jews in the camp at San Sabba. They were housed in various dormitories. As regards the work they did, I can only say that I saw a platoon of them working as wood-cutters

«When they ask me where the Jewish owners of the houses that were cleared, I can only say that they had fled. The Jews in or around Trieste had vanished.

I would clarify that not all the Jews had fled. Those who were still in the Trieste area and the surrounding zone arrived at the camp at San Sabba. »

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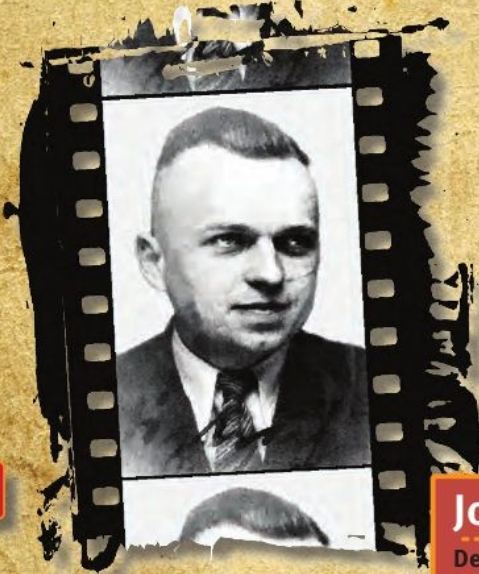


## Dietrich ALLERS (1910-1975)

Statement  
Tribunal of Frankfurt

24 November 1970

*Lawyer, became part of the T4 operation in Berlin in 1941. In June 1944, he replaced Christian Wirth, who had been killed by partisans, as commander of the Einsatzkommando Reinhardt in Trieste.*



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« I came to know in the final few weeks before collapse - around March or April 1945 - that in the district of the barracks at the Risiera, there was a crematorium. At that time, I had been told it would be used to burn the bodies of people who had been executed as hostages.»

Moreover, I remember that in the period when I was in Trieste, there was an order - also sent to me as commander of the security of the karsk road, to round-up all the Jewish bastards in the area. But I quickly made it clear I did not need to do this, and that there have been too much already done in regards to this question. »

## Joseph OBERHAUSER (1915-1979)

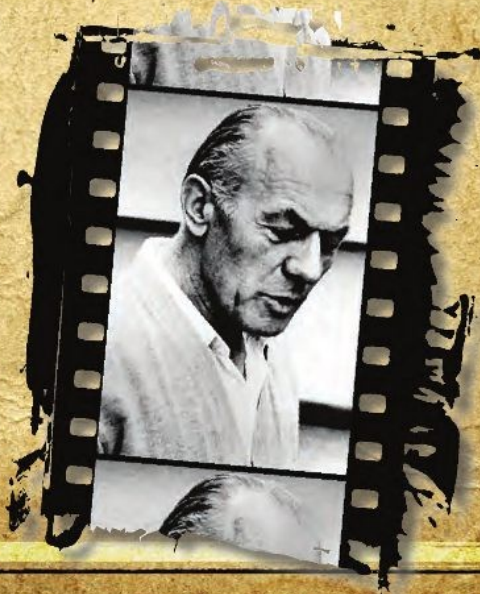
Deposizione  
Tribunale di Francoforte sul Meno

3 maggio 1971

*A member of T4 from 1939, he answered directly to Christian Wirth, in Aktion Reinhard from 1941. At Trieste, he became commander of the Risiera di San Sabba (in zone R1) in the summer of 1944.*

« In the building marked E on the map, there was an oven, where, I was told, bodies were burned. These were the bodies of partisans who had been condemned by the competent SS and Higher police Tribunals, and who had been killed in the area around Opicina.

During the period when Wirth and Hering were in charge, this facility was also used to cremate Jews who had been killed with gas. »



## Albin BUBNIČ (1915- 1978)

from the «Primorski dnevnik» paper 16 May 1965



*Albin Bubnič was arrested in Trieste in spring 1943, and interned for anti-Fašcist activities at Cairo Montenotte (province of Savona). After Italy made peace with the Allies, he was deported by the Germans to Mauthausen and then Gusen, where he remained until May 1945. After the war, he became a famous writer for the Trieste Slovenian newspaper «Primorski dnevnik». His first investigations into the crimes committed at the Risiera began in the 1950s, and on 16 May 1965, he published a list of the victims and prisoners of the camp, becoming known as the Italian Wiesenthal.*

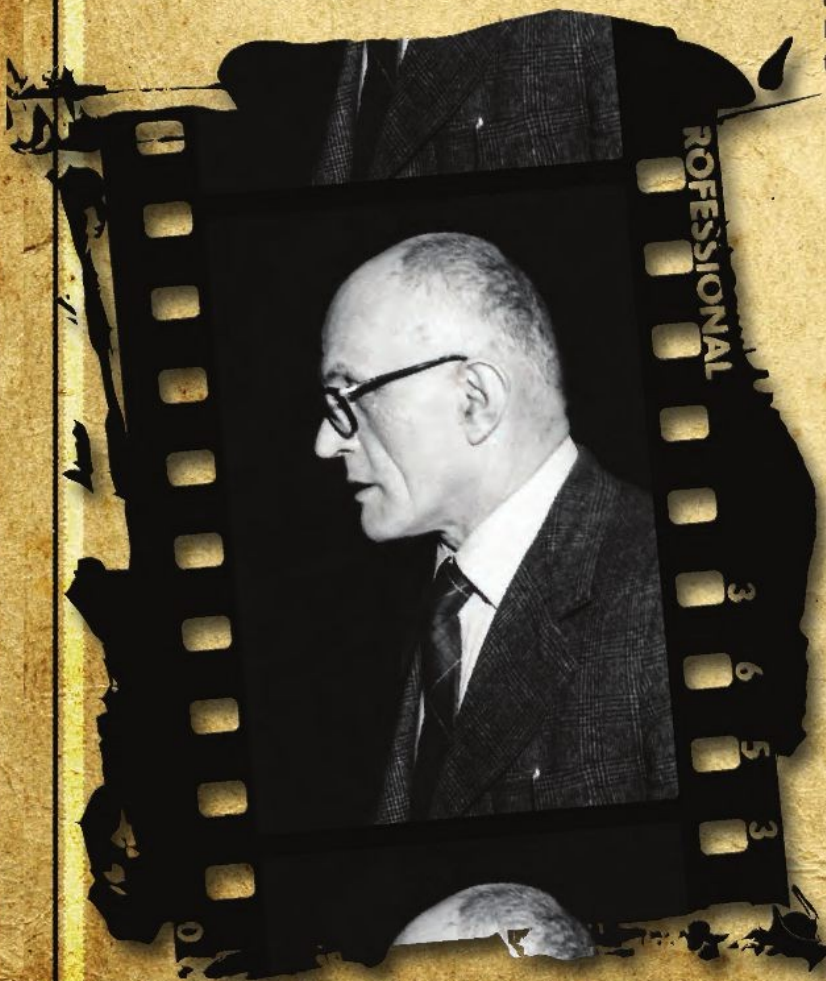
« From statements by survivors, from the graffiti in the cells and from rare documents that survived, we can hypothesise that in the Risiera, between

2000-2500 activists, partisans and anti-fascists were held, and that in total more than 20.000 people were imprisoned there [...]

In the Risiera, a crematorium oven was built that began to function long before June 1944, as we had believed previously. From the statements of AR members, it is clear in fact that cremations of people who had been murdered in other places had begun as early as the start of that year.

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In the Risiera, prisoners would be brutally beaten and tortured, forced into freezing water, hung from hooks and chopped into pieces. The victims, who knew what fate that awaited them, would be dragged to the oven. They were butchered, one after another, or beaten over the head, and dragged off to the oven. To cover the sound of their screams, a truck motor was revved, or speakers would play at full volume. Often you could hear the German shepherd dogs barking. This all happened at night. »





## The list of Albin BUBNIČ

People murdered in the Risiera di San Sabba

According to the court proceedings, the total number of victims of the Risiera was at least 2,000. Historians have estimated in fact that there were in fact not less than 4,000 dead.

A partial list of the names of the victims was published in the Trieste newspaper «Primorski dnevnik» on 16 May 1954, and was then reprinted on 20 April 1975. The list was the result of long research by writer Albin Bubnič. The names listed here are just a small part of the total victims of San Sabba. The photographs of some of the dead come from documents gathered by Albin Bubnič.

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Ajello Egone, Andriani Giuseppe, Anti Pasquale, Antoniĉ Edoardo, Auer Angela in Giovanni, Bajc Josip, Bartoli Giuseppe, Barut Ivan, Barut Servolo, Bastiani in Toniolli Francesca, Bavĉer Antonio, Bavĉer Zorko, Benci Giacomo, Benci Giulio, Benci Josip, Benporath Abramo, Belussi Giuseppe, Berghinz Giovanni, Bernardini Vitaliano, Bevilacqua Giovanni, Binkar Josip, Blasic Giuseppe, Blazic Venceslav, Bodi Francesca, Bolle Baldo, Bon Antonio, Bordignon in Sereni Giovannina, Braĉkoviĉ Ermanno, Bratonja / Bratogna Vera, Brubnjak Anna, Brubnjak Emilia, Buiaĉti Albino, Burole Agostino, Camiloti Nicola, Campanini Giuseppe, Canarutto Leone, Catanzaro Carmen, Cataruzzi Luigia, Cecco Rodolfo, Cenedese Angelo, Cergolj (o Cergol) Franciška, Cemicca Peter, Cettina Ilario, Cibirica Francesco, Cobalti (o Kobal) Carlo, Cocon Giovanni, Colarich-Kolariĉ Natale, Corazza Alessandro, Cosiliani Maria, Curcio Giovanni, Damiani Pietro, Daris Virgilio, De Bianchi (o Bianchi) Oliviero, De Forti Sante, De Mirkovich Antonia, Deganutti Cecilia, Degrassi Angelo, Deskovic Milena, Di Bitonto Antonio, Dolenc Ivanka, Dominis Giorgio, Don Romeo, Donati Ercole, Donati Mariol, Dundociĉ Renato, Fabretto Aldo, Facchin Luigi, Ferfolja Giuseppe, Ferfolja Augustin, Ferruzzi Bruno, Figon Cristoforo, Fiorinecchi Carlo, Fonda Vittorio, Forza Giuseppe, France-



schini Angelo, Franco Girolamo Carlo, Frank Edmondo, Frausin Giorgio, Frausin Luigi, Furlan Ivan, Gabrielli Carlo, Gal / Gallo Giuseppe, Gallo Ines, Garbo Erminio, Gergali Francesca, Gerlanc / Gherlani Bruno, Gigante Vincenzo, Giovannini Giuseppe, Glace Venceslao, Glavina Anton, Gojĉa Stanko, Golec Jože, Goljevšĉek Dominik, Grom / Grandi Renato, Grzinĉiĉ Franjo, Halik Katerina, Hartman Rimini Eleonora, Hrvatin Anton, Husu Antonia, Hus Konrad, Iliĉ-Fano (o Fano Itlich) Bruno, Ilus Konrad, Iskra Francesco, Jakac (o Giacaz) Antonio, Jelerĉic in Mihelcic-Michelini Francesca, Juraniĉ / Surani Ivan, Juriševiĉ Mario, Jurkoviĉ Zora, Jurman Francesco, Kalister in Decleva Vera, Kante Bruno, Kariz Elio, Kobal Viktor, Kogoj Anton, Kovaĉiĉ Albin, Kovaĉiĉ Katica, Koverlica Darinka, Kozlovic Anton, Kralj in Petek Ivanka, Kramer Stanko, Krasov Josep, Kregar Andrej, Kreševiĉ Sreĉko-Feliks, Krevatin Angel, Krizmanĉiĉ / Crismani Lidija, La Guardia Amelia, Lariĉ / Larice Mario, Leghissa-Legiša Rosa, Lenardic / Lenardo in Sibenik Francesca, Leonardelli Antonio, Leonardelli Giusto, Lipaviĉ Pavel, Lorenzi-Lavrencic Marjan, Lothar David, Lucani Giovanni, Luksetiĉ Dušan, Mamich Alexander, Mandiĉ Rudolf, Manli Luciano, Manziĉ Antonio, Marassi Giulio, Martinis Villi, Mendek Daniela, Menon Edoardo, Micali o Mihalic Matja, Miconi Matteo,

## The list of Albin BUBNIČ

People murdered in the Risiera di San Sabba



Mignussi o Miniussi Aldo, Mihelčič / Michelini Klara, Mijot Josip, Mikočič Ivan, Milazzi Stanislao, Milcinčič Stefania, Milevoj Bruno, Milič (o Mili) Giovanni, Milotič / Milotti Dušan, Misi-goi Evaristo, Molina Valentino, Mošettic o Mosetti Mario, Musković Anna, Mustacchi Felice, Naker Josip, Nardin Bruno, Neri Ernesto, Nežič / Nessi Stanislao, Novel Giovanni, Pahlic Ivan Giovanni, Pahor Anton, Pahor Antonio, Pahor Danica, Paoletic Ivan, Paoletti Maria, Pasquinucci Sonia, Pavletič Bence, Pecchiari Dario, Pecenko Fulvio, Peciarich in Forza Adelaide, Pehar Karol, Pelangelli Guido, Penko Maria, Perdec José, Perugia Margherita in Loria, Perusco Giuseppe, Pesenti Ottorino, Petaros Danilo, Petek Aldo, Petrič Krisenc, Pezzoli Luigi, Piccoli Antonio, Pincherle Lina Dina, Pines / Puia Alessandro, Pintaric Ivan, Pipan Milan, Piscanc Darinka, Piuca Renato, Pizziga Angelo, Pizzulin Leonardo, Plečnik Franc, Poli Vittorio, Poropat Antonio, Pozar Rafael, Prasel in Jerzog Albina, Pravdica Fanny (Fana), Primožič / Primossi Stefanija, Primožič Amalija, Puc Ivan, Puhalj Ida, Puhar Josip, Purger Albona, Purger Clara, Purger Spira, Puric Anton, Randich Leo, Rasborsek in Sibenik Matilde, Raspolič Joahin, Ratossa Antonio, Ravnič Stefania, Reti Paolo, Ribarič / Pescatori Vladimir, Robusti Pino, Rocco Ezio, Roici / Rojc Anton, Rosemberg Elena, Rosic Domenico, Rožanc Silvester, Rozze Albino, Rusič Ilija, Salvi Antonio, Samec Angela in Viola, Sancin Sava, Sanic / Sani Emil, Sanzin Marcello, Sartori Rodolfo, Saule Angelo, Savi / Z-



vab Vereha, Scalamera Giovanni, Schettino Fernando, Segulin Franz-Boro, Serio Giovanni, Sibenik Mattia, Simcic Radoslao, Sirca / Sirk Ivan, Šiscovič Paolo, Skabar Franz, Slavec / Salvi Marija, Slosar Antonio, Slosar Antonio, Slosar Giovanna, Slosar Maria, Slosar Maria, Slosar Mario, Smak Ermenegildo, Smerdu Stefan, Sosič Amalija, Spacapan Emilio, Spangher Voimir, Spiller in Palmi Marcella, Srednik in Orel Cirilla, Stefano Pietro, Sterle Giuseppe, Stival Ferruccio, Stocco Ivan, Stoini Paolo Dante, Strani Antonio, Stranič (o Stanič) Franc, Šturm / Storni Antonio, Susani Francesco, Sušanj Davarin, Tambarin Augusto, TamisariAdriano, Tardivo Arcu, Tedeschi Bruno, Tičac Ladi, Tiselli Oliviero, Toljanič Ivan, Tomasi Luigi, Tomei Mario, Tomič Irene, Tomljanović Katerina, Tončič Ivan, Tonelli in Zappollo Virginia, Tramčar Carolina, Trirro Vincenzo, Tull Franc, Ugotti Ernesto, Umek Josip, Uršič Franz, Valdemarin Alfredo, Valencic Giuseppe, Valencic Ivanka, Velenik Bruno, Velušček / Veruzzi Anton, Vičič Daniela, Vidal Giuseppe, Vidali Bruno, Vidali Lorenzo, Vivoda Giovanni, Vlah Maria, Vratovic Matija, Zaccaria Alessandro, Zaccaria Ettore, Zahar Milan, Zancolich Emilio, Žane Lorenzo, Zanetti Oreste, Zankolich Ardemia, Zanon Dino, Zelen Milovan, Železnik in Franza Olga, Železnik in Penko Antonija, Zerial / Zeriali Aloiz, Zerial Bruno, Zeriali in Sancin Viktorija, Žigovich Giuseppe, Ziuliani / Zulfjan Anna, Colja / Zoli Luigi, Zollia-Colja Maria, Zorza Gabriele, Zvokel Josip.



## The Assizes Court of Trieste

16 February 1976 – 29 April 1976

*Court President Domenico Maltese, Counsellor Vincenzo D'Amato, Public Prosecutor Claudio Coassin, and six other judges.*



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THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC  
IN THE NAME OF THE ITALIAN PEOPLE  
The Judge of the Criminal and Civil tribunal of Trieste

has laid the following charges against:

1. ALLERS August Ernst Dietrich – born in Kiel on 17/5/1910 [...]
2. OBERHAUSER Joseph – born in Munich (Baviara) on 20/9/1915 [...]

### The Charges:

Multiple and repeated counts of murder [...]

for having, in a collective display of will and action (in a group of at least five people), as members of the SS (Allgemeine-SS, the Waffen-SS and the Police) and tasked with carrying out political and racial persecution and repression, as part of the "Einsatzkommando Reinhard", [...]

murdered - outside any possible application of the rules of war, without any judicial proceedings of any kind, without any contingent military motive or necessity - an indeterminate but significant number of people who had been handed into their custody by the German civil and military authorities occupying the provinces of Trieste, Fiume, Pola, Gorizia, Udine, or who had been deprived of their liberty as part of the systematic repressive and political and/or racial persecutive measures (which the accused in part has been tasked with carrying out). These murders were committed in the detention centre in Trieste selected precisely for these criminal measures, known as the "Risiera di San Sabba". [...]

These charges are aggravated by the fact that these murders were sometimes carried out via the use of poisonous substances (gassings), and sometimes by torture (blows with a club, slashing etc). In Trieste, from October 1943 to Aprile 1945.

[...]

Trieste, 22 February 1975

The prosecutor, signed S. Serbo

## Domenico MALTESE

The Risiera di San Sabba TRIAL

Trieste 1976



ASSIZES COURT OF TRIESTE

READING OUT

of the sentence dated 29/4/1976 following the criminal trial of

**ALLERS August Ernst DIETRICH, OBERHAUSER Joseph**

accused of multiple repeated aggravated murder

IN THE NAME OF THE ITALIAN PEOPLE

the Assizes court declares

defendant Oberhauser Joseph guilty of the charges brought against him, and sentences him to life imprisonment, with three years solitary confinement, and payment of the costs of the trial.

[...]

itself unable to continue with the trial against Allers August Ernst Dietrich on the charges brought against him, on the grounds of the death of the accused.

Court President  
Domenico Maltese

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## Claudio COASSIN, Prosecutor

closing statement

28 April 1976

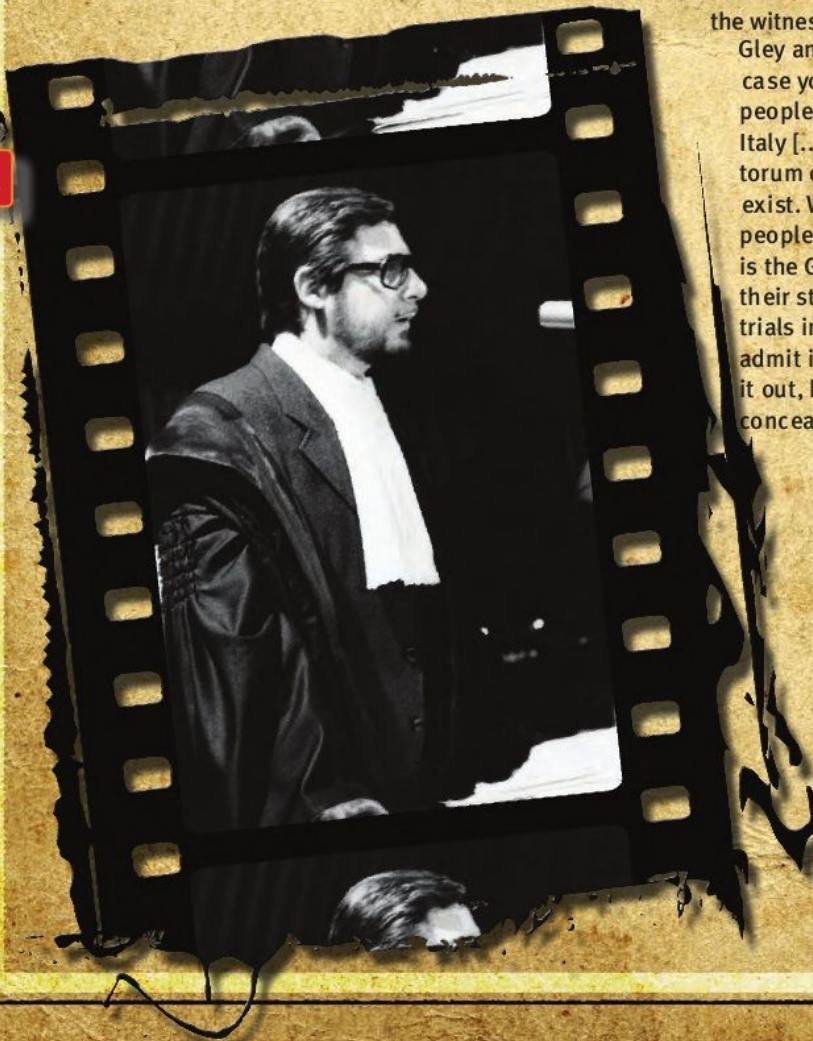
*The prosecutor revealed the importance of statements gathered in Germany to the trial, reading out to the court the statement made by Heinrich Gley, a member of T4 and Aktion Reinhardt.*

« Discussing the oven, Heinrich Gley continues: "I knew that there was a crematorium facility at the Risiera in Trieste. This was built by Lambert, like most of the plants of this type built for the extermination camps and the Euthanasia action killing centres. The chimney was adapted from existing facilities at the Risiera. [...] At its base, there was a stone oven about 2x2m in size with a large steel grill. I believe that sometimes 8-12 bodies could be loaded into it at the

same time. The oven and the chimney were open. There was no iron door. It was very primitive and was only able to work at all thanks to the chimney height, which gave it strong suction. It was located on the warehouse wall. Wirth was also there when the bodies were gathered together. I saw the crematorium [...] early in 44, when some trucks loaded with only male bodies arrived [...] the oven was run on wood".

Gentlemen, why have I read you these the witness statements by Heinrich Gley and Dubois? because, in case you do not know, there are people, in Trieste and across Italy [...] who claim that the crematorium oven at the Risiera did not exist. We must repeat to those people: the oven did exist, and it is the Germans themselves, in their statements used in other trials in Germany, who say it, who admit it, who reveal it, who scream it out, because this cannot be concealed and must be said. »

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## Giovanni WACHSBERGER

Statement

18 February 1976



*Arrested at Fiume under the racial laws, and held in the Risiera from April 1944 until Liberation.*

« I was captured at Fiume, where I lived with my mother, in April 1944 following a denunciation - we were taken to a villa in Sussak, and then loaded onto an armoured truck and taken to the Risiera. We were held in a large room with another 150 prisoners of my religion, who had been captured in Trieste, Fiume and across Yugoslavia.

I was given various types of work to do, along with other craftsmen.

It was in June 1944 that I became aware for the

first time of the existence of the crematorium oven, when I saw a truck arrive one evening stuffed full of bodies, we could clearly see their shoes sticking out. The next morning, I saw the bosses, Allers and Oberhauser, going into the entrance to the oven, and then come out again with their faces twisted in horror as if they had seen something awful. That day, we were made to carry much more wood than usual.

»







## Giovanni WACHSBERGER

Statement

18 February 1976

« To be clear: after the executions and the cremations, all the clothes taken from the victims were piled up near the warehouse door, where the women who worked there would then shift them and arrange them inside the same warehouse. Often the women who worked in the warehouse

would ask me to go inside, to try and identify the victims from the clothes they had been wearing. There was nearly always a mass execution on Friday evenings, and we knew when it was happening because we would bring the truck stuffed full of wood into the garage.



## Giovanni WACHSBERGER

Statement

18 February 1976



« On 30 April, I went inside for the first time, into the area where the garage was, there was a step ladder that came down from the plant.

«As regards the number of murders that took place in the Risiera, I would estimate that there would have been a couple of thousand.

«The executions reached their peak from the period

from the end of 1944 until April 1945, and in fact it was in that period that we gathered many ID cards and scraps of paper on which prisoners had given vent to their emotions: we kept hold of these documents for a while, but then we had to destroy them for fear

of being discovered.

»





## Maria DEL MONTE

Investigation

19 March 1971

*Imprisoned in the Risiera and released after paying 380,000 lire to a member of R1*

«[...] I was taken to the Risiera di San Sabba. My detention was due to the fact that I was living at the time with a Jew, my partner even today, Salonicchio Zaccaria. He had never been picked up, until he was arrested and taken to a house in via Locchi, where I was able to get him released by paying 700,000 lire to an Italian - now dead - three days later. [...] the Italian who I paid the 70,000 lire to was called Collotti».

This is a reference to Dr. Gaetano Collotti, director of the Special Police Inspectorate for

Venice and Giulia, who was sent to Trieste in 1942 by the Fascist authorities. His record is full of vile crimes both before and after the German occupation.

«With the Dessardo family, I was taken to the Risiera and held in a cell for 45 days. It was maybe two metres square and there were five of us there, two men, two women and a child. For all my time there, every day I had to submit to a fresh interrogation, complete with violence and blows.»

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