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**ACTA**

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**ECCLESIASTICA**

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**SLOVENIAE**

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**29**

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**Edo Škulj**

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**JEREBOVA KRONIKA ŽUPNIJE**

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**ŠKOCIJAN PRI TURJAKU**

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**LJUBLJANA 2007**

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## SUMMARY

Immediately after his arrival to the parish of Škocijan, the parish priest Janez Jereb began to write the parish chronicle. Preserved are the following four books:

1. Škocijan near Turjak. [A Parish History.] Book I.
2. Škocijan near Turjak. A Parish History. Book II.
3. Škocijan near Turjak. A Parish History. Book III.
4. Škocijan near Turjak. A Parish History. Book IV.

Book V, announced by Rev. Jereb at the end of Book IV, has unfortunately not been preserved. Probably he took it with him on taking leave from Škocijan and was lost together with the rest of his legacy. Large-sized books contain 288, 238, 308 and 311 pages, totalling 1145 pages. They are written in fountain pen in clearly legible, almost calligraphic handwriting. Jereb's writing style is a borderline between a history and a chronicle because it records important everyday events, which is typical for a chronicle, while interweaving past events more or less connected with the life of the parish, which is typical for a history. The first book is mainly historical, the rest are chronicles because he regularly notes down everything that is in direct connection with the life of the parish or the parishioners. The most interesting is the description of the daily events occurring during the construction of Škocijan church. The events are recorded day by day. The chronicle describes the celebrations of religious festivals, different devotions, adventures from the parish life, the weather, the crops. Notable are the descriptions of deanery meetings of parish and assistant priests who gathered every month in one of the parishes to discuss not only the pastoral but also political questions.

The topics are interesting also to a wider public despite their local character. On the one hand they mirror the local reactions to national and even European events such as World War I, on the other hand they use events and examples from life to describe what the national history presents in general. Note of interest: There is probably no other parish in Slovenia to be better described at the time of the Reformation than Škocijan near Turjak. Notable figures, both Protestant and Catholic can be found here: the Counts of Turjak and Jurij Dalmatin on the Protestant side, the Cistercian abbot Lovrenc and Vicedom Rabata and others on the Catholic side. Since the battle for supremacy was fought at this specific parish, it plays a crucial role as the milestone between Reformation and Catholic revival.

The present publication aims to present Jereb's chronicle in its most authentic form. Because it is mainly a chronicle, the main part of the publication includes Books II, III and IV, while Book I serves as a supplement and provides



a historical frame, especially in the supplement and appendices. *Jereb's Chronicle of the Parish Škocijan near Turjak* is divided in four parts, following the division of the manuscripts:

**1. Škocijan near Turjak. [A Parish History.] Book I.** The historical frame of the first part is the presentation of all the parish priests collected by Janez Jereb in Book I. which was later completed. It describes all the priests from the first recorded parish priest Baltazar of Turjak to Jereb's predecessor Jakob Merc. It is understandable that there exist some gaps which he could not fill in. He proved a reliable historian by quoting all the historical sources available at the time: *Mittheilungen des historischen Vereins für Krain* (MHK) and *Mittheilungen des Museal-Vereins für Krain* (MMK) and *Izvestja Muzej-skega društva za Kranjsko* (IMK). Although he uses a collective abbreviation »Mitth.« and adds a number which at times signifies the volume and sometimes the year, we must grant him extreme accuracy which has helped to check most of his quotations. This also proves that he was far better educated than most of the average country priests. Where possible, the notes include biograms of (all) the people mentioned. From 1789 until the end of World War I a register of the Ljubljana diocese was published every year which has helped to make out the basic data and posts of individual priests.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the first part we find the biography of Janez Jereb and his successors up to the present time what rounds off the history of the parish.

*Jereb's Chronicle of the Parish Škocijan near Turjak* is published in parts 2, 3 and 4. The chronicle is given in a diplomatic transcript, written out in full. Minor aberrations are nothing worth mentioning e.g. the abbreviations written out in full for easier understanding, establishing uniform writing of the dates at the beginning of each paragraph, newspaper and article headlines are in cursive; local names are made uniform according to the present spelling to make it clear that the same place is mentioned. The only exception is the name of the place which Janez Jereb consistently writes with *i* (Škocijan) both in substantival and adjectival form while the present form leaves it out (Škocjan). This exception is evident already in the title of the book. If written differently, the reading of the book would be much more difficult. The passages from the first book which refer to the event dealt with are written in the note as an explanation. The notes also include the biograms of the personalities and the description of the historical events mentioned in the text.

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<sup>1</sup>The work was accomplished by Dr. Alojz Kovačič SJ to whom I express my warmest thanks. The posts include a year written in parentheses which refers to the year of publication in the registers. The actual year is in most cases the year before.



2. **Škocijan near Turjak. A Parish History. Book II.** The chronicle brings an account of the events from Jereb's arrival to Škocijan on 25<sup>th</sup> October, 1906 to confirmation on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 1912.

3. **Škocijan near Turjak. A Parish History. Book III** records the events from the confirmation on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 1912 to 7<sup>th</sup> February 1915.

4. **Škocijan near Turjak. Parish Memorandum. Book IV** describes all the events from 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1915 to 23<sup>th</sup> August, 1919 but without an appropriate conclusion.

In the **supplement** we find the Parish chronicle after 1955 following the structure of the books with announcements.

The **appendices** that follow contain different compositions copied by Janez Jereb. For example the indulgences granted to Škocijan parish by Pope Urban V in Avignon in 1363. The document is taken from Valvasor's *Glory of the Dutchy of Carniola*. We find *Slovene Church Address from 1706* published by Josip Mantuani in the periodical *Dom in Svet* (Home and World).

The two transcripts are followed by five Jereb's essays which he probably delivered as lectures in the Cultural society for promoting education. Interesting about them is the way they echo (inter)national events in the local surroundings because they involved the local people.

As usual a list of abbreviations follows, a bibliography and a place index to help the local people trace the events connected with their ancestors.

The introduction concludes with the description of Tone Zrnc about the rescue of *Jereb's Chronicle of the Parish Škocijan near Turjak*

### **The rescue of Jereb's Chronicle of the Parish Škocijan near Turjak**

1941 approached our native country with menacing clouds on the horizon. The war had been raging in Europe for more than a year. Month after month we could feel the greedy gaze of the strong Hitler's Reich.

On 25<sup>th</sup> March, the Yugoslav government and Hitler signed a treaty. Mass demonstrations followed in Belgrade and a coup d'état by the army on 27<sup>th</sup> March. At once general mobilisation was declared. At the Diocesan Classical Gymnasium, the lessons were cancelled and the students sent home.

As soon as I arrived home, I got a call from the Škocjan parish priest Janez Zupančič who said: "Anton- he always called me Anton, not Tone- we are afraid the Germans may come here any moment. The Nazis are planning to destroy the



Slovenes. Im worried about the parish documents and the valuables. We need to safeguard them. Go to Ljubljana to the Ničmans as quick as you can. Its next to the Yugoslav printing house near the Dragon Bridge. Take my account and bring a parchment, that is a water proof paper. Hurry up!" I hurried off to Ljubljana, carried out the order and returned with the paper.

Before we started the work, Father Zupančič had explained his plan. He spoke quietly and mysteriously.

They showed me the place: a small chapel along the road between the presbytery and the fire station. Next to the entrance, between the doorstep and the altar the tiles were removed and a pit was dug, approximately one and a half meter deep, long and wide. The pit where the chest should be laid had already been fitted with a wooden framework to protect the chest from water and damp. One of the church supervisors explained, "we're going to place the chest in here and cover it safely with the tiles."

Among the ones cognizant of the plan were: church supervisors Jože Zabukovec (Šklajbar) from Gra-dež and Jože Gregorič (Birtov) from Mali Lipljen, the sacristan Alojz Lunder from Škoc-ja-n and Ivan Mihelič (Kocjanov). His parents owned a house and a mill by the brook below Zabukovje. The parish hireling Ivan dug out a pit in the chapel. All of this was also known to Zupančič sister Lojzka, a housewife.

We filled the chest. The first thing to be put inside was Jereb's Chronicle of Škocijan parish, four volumes. Deeply moved, I held the precious books in my hands! We wrapped the volumes firmly and placed them at the bottom of the chest. After that followed: some documents wrapped in the parchment paper, some registers, a Baroque chalice, a chasuble embroidered in gold and some other religious artefacts. I witnessed the preparations myself. The chest was closed and taken to the chapel. Nobody saw that. The pit with the hidden treasure was closed and perfectly covered with tiles.

That happened before 6<sup>th</sup> April, 1941, the date of Hitler's attack on Yugoslavia. Škocijan was caught in the maelstrom of war, revolution and partisan raving. The presbytery was attacked as well. After the Turjak tragedy in 1943, partisan detachments burnt down the presbytery in 1944 and would not let anyone save anything. The fire destroyed everything.

In fear of the new rulers, the treasure in the chapel was heaved in secrecy and transported to the cleric's house. This probably happened when Rev. Ciril Zajc was parish priest of Škocijan.