

A Romani hamlet above Matiašovce



A gypsy woman Štefánia Holomek from the Czechoslovak Republic, picture taken by the SS prison guards while held as a prisoner in the Auschwitz camp

Osvätim. Cikánka s číslom Z-9260 na táborovém snímku.



The Roma of Nitra at the beginning of 20th century



23, 1945 under the pretence of transportation to the hospital in Trenčín, all sick Roma inmates were loaded onto a truck and transported to the local gun factory. During the following mass execution, 26 Roma people were killed.

Further cases of Roma killings took place, for example in Kremnička (minimum of 109 persons of Roma descent from a total of 747 people), Kvetnica pri Poprade, Tisovec, Zvolen, Brezno, etc. The total number of Roma victims is estimated to be in the hundreds. The Slovak Roma were not transported to the German concentration camps where mass killings of the Roma people were taking place.

## THE ROMANI HOLOCAUST IN THE WORLD

The final number of the Romani holocaust victims during World War II is still unknown today even though there is estimated to be up to 500,000 murdered people. In the Romani language, the term for holocaust is "porajmos" which can be translated as "gobbling up". The mass killings of the Roma were part of the race solution, which according to German ideas was to follow the so called Final solution to the Jewish Question.

***"During the Slovak State the Gypsies did not even have a proper ID. They only had a sort of card that said they were Gypsies. If an innkeeper poured a drink to a Rom***

***and a police officer saw him, he would reprimand the innkeeper."***

Jan Riga from Podunajske Biskupice remembering World War Two

***"One day trucks with German soldiers came to the camp. They told the sick they were taking them to hospital. In reality, they took them to large holes where they shot them dead and buried them."***

Helena Surmajova remembering the Detention Camp for Gypsies in Dubnica nad Váhom

Sources of photographs: The State Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau in Oswiecim, Slovakia in historical photographs (facebook), Archive of Karol Janas

## THE ROMANI HOLOCAUST

**The Romani Holocaust was the attempt of Nazi Germany and its allies to annihilate all the Roma people in Europe during World War II. These persecutions affected many enclaves of the Roma citizens in those parts of Europe where the German expansion or its allies asserted themselves.**



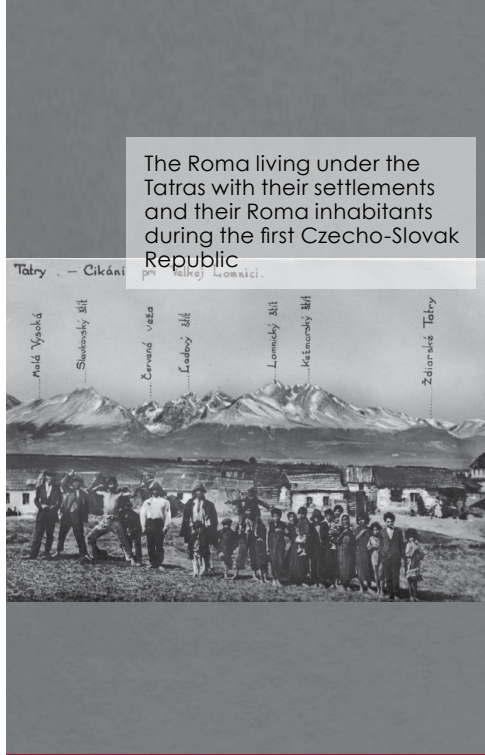
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The Roma living under the Tatras with their settlements and their Roma inhabitants during the first Czecho-Slovak Republic



Graves of the murdered Roma in the Dubnica Valley



An exhumed body of a murdered Rom - Dubnica nad Váhom

Cikánský evidenční list.		Číslo listu: 1												
1	Jméno a příjmení: <i>Stojka Jan</i>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Klas. prosl.</td> <td>43333332</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Číslo spis. matricy</td> <td>43233333</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Číslo matricy</td> <td colspan="2">3124</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Číslo spis. pátrací stanice</td> <td colspan="2">G. 3453, A-216</td> </tr> </table>	Klas. prosl.	43333332	11	Číslo spis. matricy	43233333	15	Číslo matricy	3124		Číslo spis. pátrací stanice	G. 3453, A-216	
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2	Palebné jméno: <i>Jojinko</i>													
3	Křestní jméno: <i>Stojka Jan</i>													
4	narozen: <i>2. 5. 1900 v Náměti</i> , pol. okr. <i>Náměti</i>													
5	přisluší do: <i>Nedede</i> , pol. okr. <i>Pala</i>													
6	rodice: <i>Jan Stojka a Maria Lakatosová</i>													
7	rozsa: <i>nera (potulný cikán)</i>													
8	průkaz: <i>č. 3124</i>													
9	Občasně bydlí: <i>Nedede</i> , pol. okr. <i>Pala</i>	Viditelná znamení v oddělení zakresliti:												
10	Jiná nápadná znamení: <i>Pod pravou obrávkou jímá jazyk, 3 cm dlouhá, ková, nad otčenou obrávkou</i>	Při zatčení otisknouti pravý palec, chybí-li, nejblíže prst:												
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Podpis orgánu služ. konajícího: <i>Škárko. Vohelka</i> Státní tiskárna v Praze. — 4612-36.		A Gypsy registration record from June 1938												

## THE ROMA AND THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

According to census records, there were 26,265 Roma citizens living in Slovakia in 1938. However, this figure is informative only. We can safely presume that the real figure was much higher as they often reported a different nationality. In 1940 there were over 37,000 of them living in the Slovak Republic. Many Roma led a nomadic lifestyle which was one of the reasons they were considered to be asocial, unable to fully integrate into society. The term Gypsy is a contemporaneous term designating the Roma.

## THE PROCESS OF ROMA PERSECUTIONS IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

The Roma persecutions during World War II can be divided into 2 parts. During the first part between 1939 and the autumn of 1944, the persecutions had three basic elements: efforts to eliminate the nomadic lifestyle, the creation of labour crews for so called asocial persons and the Roma, and persecution measures aimed at army recruits.

The second part includes the period after the Slovak National Uprising started when the Slovak Republic was de facto under the direct occupation of the German army. The measures here were much more brutal in nature and they were approved by many supporters

of the Slovak radicals of this time.

The first persecution measure against the Roma was the publishing of a circular by the Country office in Bratislava on June 23, 1939 about "allocation of the Roma citizens into home communities and horse trading ban." The Roma were also discriminated against by the Constitutional law No. 255 from 1939 concerning citizenship. Amongst the so called foreign elements were included those people who did not have the right of domicile and continuous employment since October 30, 1918. This was, of course, a problem for people with a Roma lifestyle. The outline of the government bill on the vagrant Gypsies introduced among other things the so called Gypsy IDs that each Rom of 14 years of age or older had to carry. The attempt to limit the possibilities of travelling for the Roma came with the Ministry of the Interior Decree from April 20, 1941. The travelling permissions of the Roma were cancelled and they had eight days to return to their home communities. In the end the bill was not passed but further attempts and measures against the travelling Roma followed.

In 1941 another form of persecution of the Roma began. In April 1941, so called asocial persons were being placed in labour crews. This category of person also included unemployed Roma people.

The first labour crews consisting of Romani citizens were

established in 1941 in Očová and Most na Ostrove. These crews were not yet permanent; the inmates were released and returned home in December. In 1942 permanent Labour Crews for Gypsies and asocial persons were established. The first was located in Hanušovce nad Topľou. More followed in Dubnica nad Váhom, Ilava, Revúca and Ústie nad Oravou. Inmates in these camps worked on the construction of hydro stations, railways, etc. The labour camps became the main persecution tool of the anti-Roma policy in 1942 – 1944.

## THE DETENTION CAMP FOR GYPSIES IN DUBNICA NAD VÁHOM

After the suppression of the Slovak National Uprising and occupation of the Slovak Republic, a Detention Camp for Gypsies was established by the Ministry of Defense in Dubnica nad Váhom. It was far more brutal than the previous labour crews. The number of Roma inmates at this camp (capacity 300 persons) was 729, of which 250 were children. This situation, i.e. lack of food and terrible sanitary conditions, led to an epidemic of typhus. Gradually the number of infected people grew and the Germans became concerned that the epidemic would spread into Dubnica nad Váhom and pose a threat to production in the local weapons factory. On February