

# Arne Mann, Zuzsa Kumanová: Ma bisteren! Do not forget!

## In The Nazi Third Reich

The most tragic part of the modern Romani history is the period of World War II. The 1935 Nuremberg laws about German citizenship, blood and honour and consequent Nazi decrees classified Gypsies, together with Jews and „Negroes“, as a threat to racial purity. Any marriage of “Gypsies, Negroes and their bastard offsprings” with Germans was forbidden, and any Gypsy person in such union was supposed to be sterilized. Consequently, all Gypsies were denied the Reich’s citizenship.

In 1936 the Ministry of the Interior established the *Race Hygiene and Population Biology Research Centre* under the leadership of Dr. Robert Ritter, a psychiatrist. Ritter worked out „a scientific theory for recognizing the presence of Gypsy blood“. His theory stated the following: „the Gypsies are characterised by hereditary asocial and criminal behaviour and these traits cannot be eliminated through any means. The only “solution” to this “problem” was *Sonderbehandlung* (special treatment), a euphemism for mass murder.

According to *the Decree on Registry of All Gypsies, Gypsy Half-Breeds and Persons Leading a Gypsy Way of Life in the Reich*, all persons on this registry were supposed to undergo a race-biological examination (blood sampling, eye and hair examination, and anthropometric measurement). On the basis of this examination, they were divided into five different groups according to their levels of Gypsy and German blood.

On April 17, 1940 head of the Reich’s SS, Heinrich Himmler, ordered first transports of Gypsies into concentration camps in Poland. The Gypsies that were working in the German arms industry were forcefully sterilized.

Throughout The Third Reich, camps for beggars, undesirables and asocials were established and many Romani men were interned there. Such camps were also established in Bohemia - Léty u Písku, and in Moravia – Hodonín u Kunštátu. In 1942 they were turned into Gypsy camps, where women and children were interned as well. People from these camps were later transported to extermination camps, especially to Auschwitz. Out of the 6,500 Roma living Czech lands in 1940, less than 800 survived the war.

On December 16, 1942 Himmler issued an order – the so-called Auschwitz Decree (*Auschwitz Erlass*). This decree ordered deportations of all Gypsies “without consideration of blood” from the Reich and its annexed territories to Auschwitz, where a separate Gypsy part – also called the *Family Section* – was created for this purpose. Approximately 5,600 Roma were transported to this camp. The prisoners were labeled with black triangles (a sign for asocials) with the letter Z (from German *Zigeuner*, a Gypsy) on their clothes, and had identification numbers tattooed on their

forearms. Roma from the Czech lands, Moravia, the Netherlands, Belgium, Northern France, Poland and the Soviet Union were transported to Auschwitz.

Dr. Joseph Mengele (also known as the “angel of death”) was appointed as the head of the camp, and he was given a free hand in conducting his “scientific research” on these people. More than 22,000 European Roma went through this camp and about 19,000 died there. On August 2, 1944, after selecting some young Roma, the remaining 2,897 prisoners from the Gypsy camp were sent to gas chambers and the section was closed down. Therefore, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August has become The Memorial Day of the Romani Holocaust. It is estimated that more than 300,000 Roma were killed during World War II.

## Discrimination of the Roma in Slovakia

The Slovak State that was established in 1939 after the breakup of Czechoslovakia, followed the discriminatory racial laws of Nazi Germany in many ways. Following a 1940 defense decree (decree no. 20), all Roma, as well as the Jews, were denied the right to enter the regular army. They served their active military service in a special battalion -- the Sixth Battalion of the Work Division of the Ministry of National Defense. Within the battalion in particular, they were assigned into the 24<sup>th</sup>, so-called Gypsy, platoon (the Jews and unreliable “Arians” were put into separate platoons). The Jews and the Roma were in an inferior position within this Division, which could also be seen on their uniforms (for instance, while Arians had a cap with a peak, a neck shade, and the State’s coat of arms, the Jews and the Roma had navy hats without these elements). The type of their duties also reflected their position: while “Arians” were given infantry weapons in 1943 and served as guards of military premises, the Jews and the Roma worked as ground and construction workers.

According to a 1940 decree by the Ministry of the Interior (Decree no. 127), “The term Gypsy indicates ... only a person of the Gypsy race that belongs to this race because of his or her two parents and leads a nomadic life, or even sedentary life, but avoids work.” In April 1941 the Ministry published another decree (Decree no. 163) “on influencing conditions of Gypsies”. This decree affected not only the small group of Vlach Roma, whose itinerant way of life was forbidden, and whose horses and wagons were taken away; but also the larger group of settled Roma, who were forced to move their houses away from state or municipal roads and to place their hamlets “on a site separate from the village and demarcated by the village for this purpose”.

If there were more than three Romani families in a village, the county office instituted a Gypsy *vajda* (a leader). The *vajda* was subordinate to the mayor and was responsible for meeting individual anti-Romani orders. The Roma were forbidden from using the public transportation system, had only limited access to public spaces, and they were allowed to enter cities and villages only during designated times (for instance, only twice a week during morning hours). The Roma were not allowed to own dogs, to buy alcohol in shops or pubs, and were regularly forced to undergo humiliating medical examinations. In executing this anti-Romani legislation, a lot of leeway was given to the Hlinka guards, a paramilitary organization. The legislation allowed the guards all kinds of direct physical aggression, such as night searches in

Romani hamlets, when they controlled the presence of all people that were registered there; or physically punishing the violation of times when the Roma could visit towns. Under the excuse of fighting lice, they targeted especially Romani women, and cut, or even shaved, their hair, which was extremely humiliating. The guards actively cooperated with the police when picking up men capable of work and transporting them to work camps, demolishing Romani hamlets, and forcing the Roma out of towns and villages. It is no wonder that inter-ethnic relations radically worsened during this period, and that mutual distrust and fear of future had grown.

## Forced Labour Crews in Slovakia

One of the measures taken by the Slovak State that were aimed against the Roma was the establishment of persecution camps. At first, there were the so-called *labour crews*. During the existence of the Slovak State, they were spread across the whole Slovakian territory. Formally, they were established for asocial persons, but in most cases this only served as pretence for interning Roma, who constituted approximately half of all inmates. These crews were mostly composed of young Romani men, who were forced to do the most difficult manual labour, such as building dams, railroads and roads. The Roma in these crews worked eleven-hour work days for a minimal wage. It is possible to prove that these crews served a function in persecuting the Roma. The Romani men were accommodated separately and there was a double list of inmates -- a blue register listed the Roma, and a gray one listed all other inmates. However, the most important proof comes with the dissolution of these forced labour crews -- non-Roma inmates were allowed to leave, but the Roma were moved to other camps.

First labour crews were established in 1941. They were in **Očová**, **Most na Ostrove** and **Horaren Trnava**. These three lasted only for a short while and were closed down by the end of 1941. One of the largest labour crews operated in **Dubnica nad Váhom** (1942 – 1944), together with a few crews in eastern Slovakia (1943 – 1944). In Dubnica nad Váhom, inmates worked for three years constructing a river dam. In eastern Slovakia, there was a whole complex of labour crews in **Hanušovce nad Topľou**, **Bystré**, **Petič** and **Nižný Hrabovec**. The Roma in eastern Slovakia built a railroad from Prešov to Strážske. Under the coordination of the Hanušovce nad Topľou crew, the labour crew in **Jarabá** (1942) built a road from Čertovica to Mýto pod Ďumbierom. A smaller labour crew was established in 1943 in **Ilava**, with the goal to finish the water dam there. From 1943 to 1944 there was a functioning labour crew in **Revúca**, which constructed parts of the railroad between Revúca and Tisovec. The last larger labour crew was stationed in **Ústie nad Oravou**, where Roma inmates worked on constructing the Orava dam, one of the biggest and most important constructions of the Slovak State. This crew finished its work in December 1944, and it was the last labour crew to be dissolved. However, the persecution of the Roma and their concentration in camps did not stop with the dissolution of this crew; quite the opposite.

## The Detention Camp in

# Dubnica nad Váhom

The persecution of the Slovak Roma peaked in the years 1944 and 1945. For the Roma, this was the most difficult period of the War. *The Gypsy Detention Camp* was created in place of the former labour crew in Dubnica nad Váhom. The camp was established by the Ministry of National Defense and was a part of its structures. This *Gypsy Detention Camp* was one of its kinds in Slovakia. It was a *de facto* concentration camp -- the Roma were sent there from across the entire country with their whole families. Shortly after its establishment, the number of inmates was already much higher than the capacity of the camp. In December 1944, there were more than 700 people interned in Dubnica nad Vahom. The living situation in the camp was very cruel. Extremely cold weather and poor hygienic conditions affected the health of the elderly and children. Although there was a doctor in the camp, his task was extremely difficult. Due to the ongoing war, medications and other health care supplies lacked throughout all of Slovakia. The situation was even more critical in the camp and created difficulties in treating even minor illnesses. Children were especially affected, dying of illnesses such as pneumonia. However, the greatest death toll was caused by typhus epidemics. During January 1945 several inmates and one guard fell ill with typhus. This led to unrests in the camp as well as in the nearby town. The Roma started to escape from the camp, which caused distress among the civilians fearing the spread of the illness. The Ministry of National Defense forbade sending more inmates, and the camp was put into quarantine. At this time, the German army took control of the camp, and decided to solve the epidemic for once and for all. On February 23, 1945, under the pretence of transporting the sick people to a hospital, they put them on a truck, took them to a local weapon factory, and murdered them.

The list of names from a mass grave in the Dubnica Valley is daunting. Remains of 26 people were found in this mass grave. The brutality with which these people were murdered is also shocking. An exhumation shed more light on this mass murder: Among those 26 killed, there were 19 men, a fifteen years old boy, and six women (one of which was in her seventh month of pregnancy). Only 18 out of these 26 people were hit by bullets and even most of these were not death shots. The rest were buried alive in a mass grave.

After the quarantine was over, it was impossible to bring the camp back to its original state. A front was near, and the camp was left without guards. When the inmates found out about this, they escaped. The remainder of the camp's inventory that was not confiscated by the Germans, was taken by soldiers and civilians from Dubnica and its surroundings. After the front passed, one building in which the Roma had been incarcerated was lit on fire and the other buildings were torn down by the company *Lozovský a Štefanec*, which owned these premises. The camp was perfectly demolished, as if it had never existed.

## Persecutions in 1944 – 1945

After the Slovak National Uprising broke out, several German army units entered Slovakia. Repressions against soldiers, resistance fighters and civilians were carried out by members of the Wehrmacht, the SS, Emergency Group H (*Einsatzgruppe H*), security police SIPO and the security service SD. SIPO and SD established their offices in Bratislava, Nitra, Trenčín, Ružomberok and Banská Bystrica. In other localities, so-called backup points (*Stutzpunkt*) were established.

The Emergency Group H had special privileges. For example, it had the right to send people to concentration camps without trial, or even to kill them on the spot.

After suppressing the Uprising, out of all the military and security groups, the *Einsatzkommando 14* was the most active in terms of persecuting the Roma. It was based in Banská Bystrica, but its backup points in Zvolen and Žilina. also carried out repression.

Other units also conducted terror against the Roma. In Svätý Kríž nad Hronom it was the members of SS from the combat group Schill. In Tisovec, there were members of the 18<sup>th</sup> Division SS *Horst Wesel*. In Slatina it was the brigade *Dirlewanger* and the 14<sup>th</sup> Division SS, the so-called Galician. Persecution was also carried out by groups drafted from among Carpathian Germans, the so-called *Heimatschutz*, by members of the Emergency units of the Hlinka Guards and by the gendarmerie.

Most repressive actions against the Roma took place between November 1944 and January 1945. Probably the first site of a Romani mass murder was in Kvetnica, in the Poprad district, where on September 15, 1944 seven people were killed.

However, the worst persecution took place in the so-called Uprising area. We can delineate this area geographically as one around Hnúšťa, Tisovec, Banská Bystrica and Horehronie. Other sites were around Zvolen, Detva, Lovinobaňa, Krupina, Svätý Kríž nad Hronom, and from Kremnica towards the Turiec region. Isolated repressions also took place in the Považie region, Záhorie and the district of Humenné.

The main reason for persecutions was the active role of the Roma in guerrilla groups active in the Uprising. However, most of the times, even the slightest suspicion was sufficient for persecution. Often, the Roma were executed right on the spot: such was the case in Čierny Balog, Svätý Kríž nad Hronom, or Motyčky settlement Stubňa. In several cases, the Roma were forcefully deported and killed at execution sites in Kremnička, Nemecká, Kováčová, and a Jewish cemetery in Zvolen. The largest numbers of victims came from Ilija, Banská Štiavnica, Čierny Balog, Tisovec, Lutilla and Krupina.

- September 15, 1945

Seven Roma were murdered in Kvetnica.

- End of September 1944

Members of *Einsatzkommando 27* at the borders of **Spišská Teplica** shot an unknown Rom.

- October 6, 1944

*Einsatzkommando 14* from Prievidza attacked **Valaská Belá**. They deported 13 Roma from the village and later killed them in the Škrípov Valley.

- Beginning of October 1944

German police units and German militias captured several people in **Sklené** on the suspicion that they were helping the partisans. Among those executed were also two local Roma men.

- October 17, 1944

In **Križ nad Hronom**, 23 Roma were burnt alive after being accused of helping the partisans.

- Beginning of November 1944

More than 40 Roma were deported from the village of **Lutila**. A few days later, they were executed at the cemetery in Dolný Turček.

- November 14, 1944

Several dozens of Roma from Nerestince by Zvolen were captured in **Čierny Balog** in the **Jegorovo** Valley. All the men were shot and the women were burnt alive. Another group of Roma was murdered in a similar manner. A Romani settlement in Pustô was burnt down. In total, more than 60 Roma were murdered on this day.

- November 17, 1944

Members of the Emergency Hlinka Guards captured 34 Romany men aging 14 – 60 in Krupina. They were killed at a mass execution site in Kremnička.

- November 20, 1944

Roma in **Tisovec** were believed to be provocateurs pretending to be partisans and were later executed. The men were shot on the spot; the women and the children were executed in Kremnička. In total, more than 48 people were executed.

- November 20, 1944

Member of *Einsatzkommando 14* attacked **Hriňová**. After a house search, 2 Romani men were captured and later executed.

- November 22, 1944

111 Romany men, women and children were dragged from **Ilija** and murdered at a mass execution site in Kremnička.

- End of November 1944

German soldiers attacked **Polomka**. While chasing a partisan, they shot a 14 year old Romani boy and burnt down a local Romani settlement.

- November 1944

In the **Štubňa** settlement in the village of **Motyčka**, Wehrmacht soldiers burnt about 20 Roma alive.

- November 1944

In **Sásová**, 5 Romani men and 3 women were captured and later executed.

- December 8, 1944

Due to cooperation with partisans, 15 men were taken from the settlement of **Dúbrava**. They were shot at a cemetery in Zvolen.

- December 1944

After a train exploded near **Detva**, 4 Romani men were accused of sabotage and were later executed at a Jewish cemetery in Zvolen.

- March 1945

Wehrmacht soldiers murdered 11 Roma in **Motyčka**, the settlement in **Jergaly**.

In the past years, the growing interest in topic of Roma persecutions, has brought more knowledge about this difficult period of the war. The list of localities

where Roma were murdered has expanded and now also includes **Lopeji** (4 Roma killed), **Ľubietová** (1 Romani man killed), and **Podlavice** (3 Romani women captured and then executed in Kremnička). More Romany victims were killed in **Jakub** (3 victims), **Skubín** (4 murdered), **Hájniky** (2 Romani victims), **Bartošová Lehote** (3 executed Roma). Archival materials also reveal disappeared Roma in **Dolné Hámre** and **Jastrabá**. There is a still unknown number of Romani victims from **Babiná, Ihráč** and **Pohorelá**. About 11 Roma from **Podkriváň – Dolná Bzová** were executed on the cemetery in Zvolen.

It is likely that there are still more sites where repressions and executions of the Roma took place. Gradually, new sources that talk about the incredible suffering and pain inflicted on the Slovak Roma during World War II are coming to light.

After the war, memorial places were established to commemorate the victims of Nazi persecution. The Romani victims were often forgotten, and so far there are only four memorials devoted to them, commemorating atrocities in various communities. However, even these memorials do not mention that victims commemorated by them were of Romani origin.

## The Situation in Areas of Slovakia Occupied By Hungary

The Vienna Arbitral Award in November 1938 adjudicated southern and eastern parts of Slovakia, an area of 10.400 km<sup>2</sup> and 860.000 inhabitants, to the Horthy Hungary (Miklós Horthy was the Hungarian Prime Minister until 1944). In March 1939, Hungarian soldiers began the occupation of these territories, which significantly influenced the living conditions of all residents in this area. Among other things, the Hungarian officials started registering “enemy elements”. Members of other ethnic groups, especially all the Jews and the Roma, were considered such “enemy elements”.

*... For instance In southern Gemer, already at the beginning of 1939, public notary offices started registering Romani abodes and creating name registers of their inhabitants. In May 1939, these name registers were made more exact by including names of children below 14 years of age...*

Nečas, C.: *Českoslovenští Romové v letech 1938 – 1945* [Czechoslovak Roma in years 1938 – 1945]. Masarykova univerzita, Brno 1994, s.95.

Besides the registering, the living conditions of the people were also getting worse, which naturally led to fear and insecurity. Gradually, the Roma were pushed out of social life; they were not allowed to enter public spaces or attend schools. The Hungarian legislation allowed the gendarmerie to make “order raids” in Romany

abodes, to take “suspects” into custody, to check the health situation, or to order disinfection.

Steadily, the situation radicalized, and various politicians and newspapers started to advertise ideas about establishing labour camps for the Roma, or even deportations beyond Hungarian borders.

The situation deteriorated rapidly at the beginning of 1944, after Regent Miklós Horthy was forced to resign and the German army occupied Hungary. During this occupation, the country was governed by the racist *Nyilaskeresztés Part Hungarianista Mosgalom* (the Arrow Cross Party). After Ferenc Szálasi became the Prime Minister of Hungary, a large portion of the Romani population was incarcerated in labour camps and later deported to concentration camps. An estimated 20.000 to 30.000 Romani men and women were deported from Hungary and the areas annexed to Hungary through the Vienna Arbitral Award.

The Roma from the occupied territories in eastern Slovakia were first assembled in Košice and later transported to Komárno. The Roma from southern Slovakia were transported directly to a military base in Komárno. Later, several trains were sent from Komárno to the Dachau concentration camp. However, only small groups of Roma stayed in this camp; most of them were transported to other camps.

By the end of the War, the terror had increased and entire Romani communities were murdered. One such tragic event occurred in Slatina.

*In the first half of December 1944, the village was liberated by the Soviet Army, but one day before Christmas, the German soldiers returned. They herded the local Roma into a house of Koloman Fizik, shot them dead and burnt down the house. More than 50 Roma men, women and children died.*

Another tragedy happened on Žitný Ostrov....

*When retreating west, the “Nyilashes” dragged a group of Roma from the Hurbanovo area. Around March 30, 1945 they stopped at an estate in Trhovo Mýto. They forced all Roma men, women and children to the Small Danube, pushed them into water and shot them down. The wild river carried corpses of 53 adults and 7 children. Only Alžbeta Lakatošová survived the massacre...*

Nečas, C.: *Českoslovenští Romové v letech 1938 – 1945*[Czechoslovak Roma in years 1938 – 1945]. Masarykova univerzita, Brno 1994, s.97.

Although specific in-depth research is yet to be conducted, from the few sources we have, it is clear that the Roma living in the eastern and southern parts of Slovakia, annexed to Horthy’s Hungary during the period of 1938 – 1945, also faced discrimination, repressions, terror, deportations and mass murders.

## Commemorating the Romani Holocaust

The persecutions that the Roma faced during World War II were played down after the liberation. Many crimes were not investigated and their perpetrators went



unpunished. The dominant opinion within the Roma community itself was that it was better to forget the tragedy and the suffering as quickly as possible. The only public expression of the war experience was a theatre play, "*The Burning Gypsy Camp*", written by Elena Lacková, who wrote it a few years after the war. The play was first staged in her Romani hamlet with the participation of her family. As she wrote herself:

*...At the same time, thoughts of our wartime experiences kept coming back to me, and composing themselves as scenes on a stage. Before the War, I used to visit the amateur theatrical group and so I knew what theater was. And so one night when the moon was full I decided that I would write a play for the theater. For our Romani theatre! And that we would show the gadže who we were, what we had been through and what we were going through, the feelings we had, and how we wanted to live.*

Lacková, I.: *A false dawn. My life as a Gypsy woman in Slovakia*. Hatfield 1999. s.126.

For almost two years, an itinerant amateur Romani theatre group led by Elena Lacková performed across eastern Slovakia and the western part of the Czech Republic, staging a total of 106 performances. From time to time, amateur theater groups came back to this play. In 2000, the professional Romani theatre 'Romanthan' produced the play under the title *Romano lagros (The Gypsy Camp)*.

Elena Lacková (1921 – 2003), one of the most significant Romani personalities of 20<sup>th</sup> century Slovakia, never forgot the horrors of World War II. Amongst other things, she returned to this topic in her collection of short stories published in Czech under the title *The Holocaust of the Roma in the Short Stories of Elena Lacková*. She was an indefatigable discussion partner, describing her authentic experiences from the war at hundreds of meetings. She was one of few who has tried to make sure that the Romani holocaust never fades into obscurity .

In the field of professional historiography, the most concerted effort to explore the Romani holocaust can be attributed to the Czech historian Ctibor Nečas. In the 1980s and 1990s, he published several books on documents , as well as comprehensive works on the situation of the Roma in former Czechoslovakia. His basic works written in Czech include *Nad osudem českých a slovenkých Cikánů v letech 1939-1945 [About The Fate of the Czech and the Slovak Roma In 1939 – 1945]* (Brno, 1981), *Českoslovenští Romové v letech 1938-1945 [The Czechoslovak Roma in 1938 – 1945]* (Brno, 1994), *Nemůžeme zapomenout – naši bisteras [We Shall Not Forget]* (Olomouc, 1994).

In the past few years there has been a growing interest in the Romani Holocaust. Besides archival research, several research efforts focusing on biographical narratives have been conducted. Personal testimonies of those who survived the holocaust provide an invaluable source of learning about the past. Such works include the books *Žalující píseň [A Mourning Song]* (Brno 1993) written by Dušan Holý and Ctibor Nečas, a collection of testimonies *Východoslovenskí Rómovia [The Roma of Eastern Slovakia]* (Košice, 1997) edited by V. Fedič , or a book from René Lužica *Keď bola vojna, nebol som doma [I Was Not at Home During the War]* (Bratislava, 2004).

In 1999 – 2000 The Milan Šimečka Foundation conducted a unique project called *The Fates Of Those Who Survive Holocaust*, originally initiated by Yale University. The Foundation's researchers interviewed Roma that lived through World

War II, and recorded these testimonies on video. This visual material not only serves as a unique source of historical knowledge, but also forms the basis for the Foundation's public awareness and education projects.

Remembrance plaques, monuments and commemorative rooms memorialize the suffering of the Roma during World War II. Memorials commemorating those who were killed during the war were erected in the villages of Ilija, Tisovec and Dúbravy. However, any information honouring the fact that these victims were of Roma origin is lacking. In 1995 the local municipality in Čierny Balog erected a monument remembering the Romani victims executed in the village. Other sites where similar Romani tragedies took place – places where the forced labour crews were based, the site of the Gypsy Detention Camp in Dubnica nad Váhom, towns from which trains to concentration camps were sent, and other sites of killings – are still unknown to the wider public.

An initiative to remember the Romani Holocaust victims in Slovakia was launched at the beginning of the 1990s. The first commemoration ceremony was held in Dúbrava in 1991. Besides various Romani representatives, this ceremony was also attended by various state representatives. A few years later, within a program called *Let's Get to Know Each Other*, the civic association 'Jekhetane' from Prešov organized another remembrance ceremony in Dúbravy.

## Do not forget!

In 2005, the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic initiated formation of a working group that shared the preparation of Ma bisteren! project. Slovak National Museum and civil association In minorita became executors of the project. The first phase of the project included an objective to realize a few commemorative information boards (objects) set directly on the places associated with servitude and suffering of the Romany people during the war. The second, no less important, objective was to encourage a societal discussion on the topic and inform the public of basic facts.

Commemorative information boards (objects) have been set:as follows:

- Banská Bystrica – Pieta Hall in the Monument of the Slovak National Uprising – ceremonious unveiling took place in the occasion of the International Remembrance Day of the Holocaust of the Romany people, August 2nd, 2005.
- Lutíla – location from which more than 40 local Romany people were deported and later executed on the cemetery in Dolný Turček. Pieta act took place December 15th, 2005.
- Nemecká – mass executions took place in the local lime-kiln. There were Romany people among the victims. Pieta act took place December 15th, 2005. Jaroslava

and Ján Šicko are the authors the monument, forged elements were made in the forge of Robert Rigo in Dunajská Lužná.

- Hanušovce nad Topľou – in years 1941 – 43 there was a seat of the system of East-Slovakia forced-labour units where mainly Romany men were interned. Pieta act took place February 17th, 2006. Ladislav Čisárik, Jr. and Alexander Reindl are the authors of the monument.
- Zvolen – victims of repressions buried in mass graves at the Jewish cemetery, Romany people from close villages among them. Pieta act took place April 8th, 2006. Jaroslava and Ján Šicko are the authors the monument, forged elements were made in the forge of Robert Rigo in Dunajská Lužná.
- Slatina – a mass grave lies at the local cemetery. In 1944, almost 60 local Romany people were slaughtered by German troops. The location lied on the former border of wartime Slovak and Hungarian states. Pieta act took place December 22nd, 2006. Norbert Kelecsényi is the author of the monument, forged elements were made in the forges in Dunajská Lužná.
- Dubnica nad Váhom – within the premises of ZVS Holding, a.s. there is a cemetery with 26 buried from acustodial camp. Pieta act took place February 23rd, 2007. Ján Šicko is the author the monument. Pavol Rác made forged fence.

In 2006, from the initiative of the local Romany people, new monuments came up in Dunajska Streda and Čata.

No less important goal was to encourage a discussion on the topic within the society and inform public on basic facts. An opening of the exhibition was a part of the first reverent ceremony in the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising in Banská Bystrica. Visitors could have seen it in the Museum of Jewish Culture in Bratislava - in 2005, in Hanušovce nad Topľou, Vrútky, Zvolen, Košice, Dunajská Streda, and again Bratislava - all in 2006. In 2007, the exhibition was reinstalled in the Museum of Romany Culture in Brno, and in the Gallery of the Municipal Office in Prague 7. Lectures for pupils and teachers were parts of the exhibition in particular towns supplemented with documentary movies projections.

A colloquium *The Romany holocaust denied* was dedicated to summarization of achievements and knowledge. It took place in Bratislava, June 2006. Anthology *A holocaust denied, Romany people in 1939-1944* became one of outputs of the event.

In collaboration with Atarax community from Košice a documentary movie *Ma bisteren!* came up covering testimonies of the Romany people from Slovakia having passed the horrors of WWII.

Within the forthcoming period, the executors of the project prepare accessibility of other information bringing closer a sad chapter of modern Romany history, and also an unveiling of commemoration tablet at the place of custodial camp in Komárno.