



## SUMMARIES

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### NIKOLAY BESSONOV

#### ROMA OF THE USSR UNDER THE OCCUPATION PERIOD. SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

The author deals with the question of survival on the territory of USSR of the Roma (over a half of Romani population survived) as compared to Jews (over 90% perished). Since the model for genocide was the same (identification, collection on the pretext of registration and then mass execution), the ratio of the murdered and the survivors should have been comparable. However, we see that Jews suffered more losses than Roma. Trying to expose the reasons for that the author logically rejects a number of versions. One can often hear claims that nomadic life was one of the reasons. In fact, most of the Roma were settled and the nomadic minority traditionally rented houses from peasants in winter months and were as vulnerable as all other victims. The hypothesis concerning the gift of prediction is also untenable. Like the Jews, most Roma did not anticipate the coming extermination and even the nomadic camps often did not try to escape following the retreating Red Army. One should also reject the version claiming the special love for freedom of the Gypsies, who, allegedly, ignored the orders of occupational authorities. In reality, Roma, like Jews, came to the registration (in fact an execution) hoping until the last minute that re-settlement was being planned. The reason for survival of half of the Roma lies in the attitude of local Slavic population. In the Russian Empire and later USSR the attitude to Roma could be called «watchful benevolence». There existed anti-Roma mythology, but at the same time the peasants rented their houses to the nomades for winter. Roma were hired for ploughing or lumber supplies, they also delivered cheap handicraft to the villages. Roma

art was very popular. At the same time no political accusations of Roma were found. If a part of Soviet citizens had hard feelings against Jews because of their part in the revolution, collectivization etc., Roma were considered an apolitical people. There was also no envy (everybody saw that nomadic Roma have no home or good clothes, their women and children beg). Sympathy and pity became the reason for warning Roma when the executioners were coming and even hiding them risking one's life. Nikolay Bessonov also discusses the behaviour of the Roma during the occupation. Their survival strategy was quite similar to the Jewish one. Mimicry played important role. Already during the pre-war Stalin repressions many Roma obtained documents with false nationality entry. Owing to that many could under the occupation claim themselves Russians, Ukrainians, Moldavians. One should not also forget that owing to the intermarriage a part of Roma had Slavonic appearance. Wearing the same clothing as the local population and talking without an accent, then Roma had a good chance for survival. In such conditions the fact of absent collaborationism surprises. Despite the searches it is practically impossible to find Roma who would go serve in the police or so-called Vlasov units. On the other hand, many cases of partisan involvement are recorded.

In the concluding part of the article N. Bessonov analyses the peculiarities of Roma collective memory. He shows different opinions of «simple people» and group leadership. The latter are unsuccessfully trying to make the Nazi genocide a consolidating factor. The average people, however, prefer not to mention dark pages of the past and focus on the military combat with the Nazism, tired of the image of the «eternal victim».

## ALEXANDER FRIEDMAN

### «ONLY BECAUSE THEY WERE GYPSIES...». ON THE GENOCIDE OF THE ROMA IN BELARUS DURING THE SOVIET-GERMAN WAR

The tragedy of Roma in Belarus during the German occupation is one of the least known and least researched chapters in the history of the latest world war. Belarusian and foreign historians still have to reconstruct the cases of mass murder, determine the murderers, find out the role of Wehrmacht as well

as Belorussian collaborators and private individuals (for example informers) in the persecution and annihilation of Roma, and also show the opinion of the local people towards the anti-Roma policy of the Nazis.

This article analyzes the cases of mass execution of Roma in Glubokoe (December 1941) and Gorodišče (November 1942). The analysis is based on the testimonies of eyewitnesses, and on the materials of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission for ascertaining and investigating crimes perpetrated by the German-Fascist invaders and their accomplices. It shows some complications that emerge when working with such sources. The selected examples demonstrate general characteristics which are typical for genocide of both Roma and Jews.

## **ALEKSANDR KRUGLOV**

### **GENOCIDE OF THE ROMA IN UKRAINE, 1941–1944: STATISTIC AND REGIONAL ASPECTS**

The article concerns the fate of Ukrainian Roma during the World War II. Based on analysis of the archival documents and materials, relevant domestic and foreign scholarly publications, it attempts to find answers to the following questions: how many Roma lived on Ukrainian territories before the war; which were peculiarities of persecution and murder of the Roma in different occupational zones of Ukraine; how many Roma were killed in Ukraine in general and its regions and oblasts in particular.

The author arrives at the conclusion that the fate of the Roma was almost totally similar to that of the Jews. Like Jews the Roma underwent total annihilation for their sole ethnicity, leaving no differences between nomadic and settled Roma. The murders of Roma began already in August 1941, but it was not until spring 1942 (especially concerning Reichskommissariat Ukraine) that their character grew into systematic, planned and total action. This allows for suggesting that around that time the Nazi leadership could have issued an order on total execution of the Roma.

Since the spring of 1943 one can trace that the policies concerning Roma became «moderate»: due to the lack of manpower it was issued not to kill them on the spot, as it was done before, but to assign them to various

forced labour points. For Ukraine this decree had no relevance at all, since by that time the extermination of Roma was in fact finished.

The author estimates the number of the Roma exterminated on the occupied territory of Ukraine in 1941–1943 at 19–20 thousand people. One should bear in mind, however, that over the half of the victims are the Roma deported to Ukraine from Romania in 1942. The percentage of the Ukrainian Roma among the total number of victims is about 45%.

## **ANNA LENCHOVSKA**

### **VIDEOTESTIMONIES AT THE USC SHOAH FOUNDATION INSTITUTE AS A SOURCE TO STUDY AND TEACH THE HISTORY OF THE UKRAINIAN ROMA IN 1941-44**

The paper aims to present collection of the videotestimonies of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute as a source to study and teach the history of Roma survivors in Ukraine during 1941–1944. With a collection of nearly 52,000 video testimonies in 32 languages and from 56 countries, the USC Shoah Foundation Institute's archive is one of the largest visual history archive in the world. The Institute interviewed Jewish survivors, homosexual survivors, Jehovah's Witness survivors, liberators and liberation witnesses, political prisoners, rescuers and aid providers, Roma and Sinti survivors, survivors of Eugenics policies, and war crimes trials participants. In total, 3,446 interviews were conducted in Ukraine and in the Ukrainian language outside of Ukraine. Among them there are 135 interviews were conducted with Roma survivors. Considering the language of the testimony, 69 were recorded in Russian, 42 in Ukrainian and 20 in Romani. These testimonies are a valuable source of information about the fate of numerous Roma communities during Nazi occupation in different regions of Ukraine. Roma communities on Transcarpathia (military service in Hungarian army, persecution by Hungarians, ghetto in Beregovo), in Odessa region (testimonies of Muslim Roma, about Gypsy kolkhozes, concentration camp in Domanevka, ghettos in Golta and Vradievka). Information about Gypsy kolkhozes in Dnipropetrovsk and Kherson region

can be also found there alongside with Roma experiences in such regions as Donetsk, Vinnytsa, Zhitomyr, Poltava, Harkiv, Mykolaiv, Sumy, Kyiv, Kirovograd and Crimea.

The author gives an example of educational use of Roma survivors' testimonies within the framework of the Institute's educational program «Encountering memory», 2007–2009. The comprehensive guide of the same name is designed to accompany *Spell Your Name*, a documentary film about the Holocaust in Ukraine directed by Sergey Bukovsky. One of the guide modules «Jews, Roma, who will be the next?» is based on the testimonies of three Roma survivors from Ukraine. The module addresses such topics as xenophobia, discrimination, tolerance, and democratic coexistence, and is suited for use in secondary school history classes as well as specialized civics courses and extracurricular activities. The USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education encourages usage of Roma and Sinti testimonies in research and educational projects to reveal this tragic page of Nazi occupation in Europe and help to overcome prejudice, intolerance, and bigotry—and the suffering they cause.

## **YEVHENIYA NAVROTSKA**

### **ANTI-ROMANI POLITICS IN TRANSCARPATHIA DURING WWII: TESTIMONIES COLLECTION AND COMMEMORATION**

The research of Roma genocide in Ukraine has finally moved on from the dead point. For the first time, owing to the Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies, a representative meeting has launched exchange of academic research on this painful topic. It is painful, since the research started when most of the survivors had passed away.

In due time, when the war ended, testimonies of the Roma genocide survivors were not properly collected. Not collected and realized by the academia remained reasons, events, results and conclusions of the hateful practices of National-Socialism against the Ukrainian Roma.

Romani communities and organisations, which began their work mostly in the late 1990s, started collecting the testimonies from Roma

during the process of filling out questionnaires for one-time material support to them as victims of the Nazi persecutions in WWII. These questionnaires were sent via Ukrainian National Foundation for Mutual Understanding and Reconciliation to the circuit court of Los-Angeles. It was envisaged to proceed with the help of American lawyers the claims to Swiss banks on behalf of victims or objects of Nazi persecutions. It firstly concerned the prisoners of ghettos and concentration camps. In 1999 over three thousand such questionnaires were collected.

The collection of questionnaires from Roma was renewed again in 2001 to receive compensations at the expense of German Fund «Memory, Responsibility and Future» for the slavery and forced labor, confiscated property, imprisonment in concentration camps and ghettos. Over three months in 2001 questionnaires and a four-page application form was completed for five thousand Roma of Transcarpathia oblast (in the meantime the census of 2001 claimed 14 003 Roma in the oblast!). For the first time it were living words in such broad scale of those who suffered for their ethnic background. For historians this is a valuable scholarly source of testimonies, historical memory of the community; way of combating negationist trends in talking about the fact of genocide against Roma; proof of persecution for ethnicity only and not for any fault.

The fragments of the testimonies published in the article shed light upon the various aspect of the persecution of the Roma of Transcarpathia during the WWII.

**MAY PANCHUK**

## ROMA IN TRANSCARPATHIA UNDER THE HUNGARIAN OCCUPATION AND DURING THE WORLD WAR II

Despite the extremely limited scope of research sources the article proves a claim that Hungarian occupation of Subcarpathia and the years of WWII especially, brought great changed to the life of local Roma (Gypsy) community. The occupational authorities more and more efficiently adopted the criminal experience of the Nazi in the «solution» of the Jewish and Gypsy questions.

Roma were interned into special ghetto-camps, women and girls were sterilized, underwent medical experiments and finally exterminated in concentration camps. But, unfortunately, it is not possible to find out the number of Roma victims due to the lack of sources.

## **OLEKSANDR VOITENKO**

### **ROMANI GENOCIDE IN THE EDUCATION COURSES OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF UKRAINE AND INFORMAL COMMEMORATION PRACTICES IN THE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

In 1999 the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe passed a Recommendation № R (99) 2 on secondary education, which among other modern challenges recalls the danger of isolationism, racism, xenophobia, and ultra-nationalism... The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe believes «secondary education plays an important role in solving these problems». Speaking about the challenges of multiculturalism one would mean not only issues related to integration of the new migration wave representatives, but also change of attitude to the representatives of the ethnic minorities who were marginalized and remained on the roadside of the «common European history». One of the first issues to rise here is the issue of Roma community; and education is seen as one of the significant levers for better change. Roma history and the Nazi practices turning into mass destruction of this group in some countries during WWII are found in teaching manuals and curricula of a number of countries. In the last decade quite a few Ukrainian institutions passed numerous documents suggesting programs and recommendations for social integration of Roma, overcoming negative tendencies in education etc. However, likewise to the previous years, the general approach to teaching the histories of ethnic minorities did not change: Roma, like other minorities, are seen as communities separated from the wider society. In Ukrainian textbooks and teaching manuals multiculturalism and multi-ethnic character of the country are hardly represented. Ukrainian history is viewed in educational literature as monoethnic. Poles,

Tatars, Russians, Romanians and Hungarians are depicted mostly as oppressors and subjugators. And Roma, judging from the analysis of educational textbooks in history for junior and senior schools, have never been present in Ukrainian history. So, how are Roma represented in school teaching materials? The only mention of Roma in the context of Nazi racial policies is found in textbooks on World History and Ukrainian History for the 10 Grade. But from these textbooks we do not see why Jews? Why Roma? Why was it them to be «chosen» as victims? And where from do they appear in Ukraine, if they haven't been mentioned in earlier schooling? Roma history, their culture and contribution to the culture of Europe and Ukraine, history of their national movement, integration issues etc. must be included in the school courses of history. Information on Roma genocide in WWII must be embraced by the school curricula. It must not be «separated» from the context of Roma history in Europe and Ukraine.

## **ANTON WEISS-WENDT**

### **EXTERMINATION OF THE ROMA IN THE BALTIC STATES. CENTRAL DECISIONS AND LOCAL INITIATIVES**

This article gives an overview of anti-Roma policies in Nazi occupied Baltic States, focusing primarily on Estonia. When observing the patterns during the initial months of Nazi occupation, it appears that the Einsatzgruppe A did not target Roma as a blanket category, at least not officially. Unlike the situation in the Ukraine, where due to the scope of anti-German guerilla activity, many Roma were branded as partisans or spies, the Roma captured in the Baltic countries were automatically listed as subversive elements. The discrimination between sedentary and itinerant Roma imposed by German military, police, and civil authorities offered a slim chance for survival. German civil administration had contributed to shaping the anti-Roma policies, particularly in Latvia and Estonia. In December 1941 the Reich commissioner for the Baltic States and Belorussia established that itinerant Roma should be treated in the same way as the Jews, in other words, murdered. He did not specify, though, what should be done with sedentary



Roma, thus permitting different interpretations. The decision in the case of individual Roma effectively depended on the whim of local authorities, who could determine whether they were itinerant or sedentary. As a result, in Latvia the mass murder went on unimpeded from April 1942 to March 1943, carrying off nearly half of Latvia's prewar Romani population of 3,839. Evidently, Latvia was the only country in the Baltic where sterilization of the Roma was carried out. In Estonia, the single largest execution of the Roma (terminating the lives of the 243 men and women) took place in early October 1942, carried out by the Estonian Security Police on the order from the Head of the German Criminal Police in Estonia. The February 1943 *Zigeuneraktion* was the first and the only such police operation in Estonia aimed specifically at Roma. Out of over five hundred Roma from all over Estonia who had been herded into Tallinn Central prison approximately two hundred women with children were executed upon arrival. By early 1944 all but few Estonia's Roma were dead. Mass arrests and executions of the Roma in Lithuania began in summer 1942. The arrested Roma as a rule ended up in Praveniškės forced labor camp; the executions were carried out by the German Security Police in Lithuania, which often invoked a security threat as a pretext. Due to rather sketchy evidence existing in the case of Lithuania, it is impossible to determine what factors had contributed to the relatively high survival rate among the Roma in that particular country. All in all, out of approximately 6,000 Roma residing in the Baltic on the eve of the Nazi invasion less than one-third survived the war.

### **WOLFGANG WIPPERMANN**

#### **«JUST LIKE THE JEWS?» PORRAJMOS IN GERMAN POLITICS AND SCHOLARSHIP**

On the Nuremberg tribunal the accused military criminals testified that, together with Jews, Roma also became the victims of the Nazi murderous practices. But the prosecutors and the judges did not recognize the fate of Roma as one more Holocaust. The results are seen even today. If even the victors of WWII did not consider it important to broach the topic of Roma

genocide, the Germans did not at all see it necessary to plea guilty and provide contributions to the victims. Leave alone confession.

Whole groups of population were excluded from the list of the persecuted. Among them were Roma, who after 1945 were taken not as Jews, despite their being victims of persecution and extermination on «racial grounds» «like Jews». Therefore, neither the «old» BRD, nor DDR, nor the united Germany started negotiations with the representatives of Roma on global reparations. Moreover, the Roma-Reich citizens, or those Roma who could have been the Reich citizens, for a long time had no chance for compensations. And the guilt for that lies not only on German politicians and lawyers, but also on historians, who for a long time have been marginalizing and denying the racist character of Roma and Sinti genocide, thus becoming the willing executors of the BRD anti-Roma policies. It seems that the theses of the research by M. Zimmermann and the immediately translated into German book by G. Levi, where they claim that Roma were not persecuted or were persecuted «not like the Jews», were approved of in Germany. In this way Roma were rejected the right to «compensations». Both of these theses are wrong and have no right for existence. Other recent researches prove the contrary. However, these innovative researches are hardly taken in Germany and are hardly if ever translated into German. But historical truth has to prevail over political ideology. This must be our historical task, obliging us to find the truth and reject ideological clichés of any character. Roma were persecuted and killed «like the Jews».

## **NATALIJA ZINEVICH**

### **ON THE PECULIARITIES OF THE ROMA GENOCIDE ON UKRAINIAN TERRITORIES DURING WWII**

The article deals with the question of peculiarities of Roma (Gypsy) genocide on Ukrainian territories during WWII. It is mentioned that recently this issue has become more topical in Ukraine, whereas Western researchers have been working on the topic of Roma genocide for over thirty years and were already influenced by the political factor, which has to be taken

into account by Ukrainian researchers. The modern relevant historiography is also given.

To unveil the peculiarities of the given phenomenon some aspects are given, namely: differences in anti-Roma policies within modern Ukrainian territories, which at that time were incorporated into several states; differences within separate occupied regions where it was implemented by other means; differences in anti-Roma policies concerning various Romani sub-ethnic groups; differences between anti-Jewish policies (the Holocaust) and anti-Roma policies; and various approaches to «solving the Gypsy question» in different countries of occupied Europe and Nazi Germany itself.

The following peculiarities of Roma genocide on Ukrainian territories are mentioned: high «effectiveness» of repressions in the first months of occupation; absence of ghettos and labour camps with the exception of southern and western regions, where they could be labelled as places of temporary concentration; extermination of evacuated Roma; various extermination practices often depending on the personal viewpoint of the heads of SS and military units and the subjugation of a given territory to military and civil administrations. The politics of genocide on the territory of Ukraine was performed in two forms: organised and spontaneous (by Wehrmacht units).

It is also stated that the genocide against various sub-ethnic Romani groups was implemented in various forms and in different timespans. The reasons, events and consequences of the Roma genocide in USSR and other regions is still to be studied separately, using archival documents. It is important not only to compare the numbers of victims, but to describe the legal foundations, the mechanism and ideology of genocide, theory and practice of national politics of the Nazis on German lands and the occupied territories, their direct implementations.