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## **Porrajmos**

The Romani and the Holocaust with Ian Hancock

May 07, 2014

57 minutes, 25 seconds

Speaker: Ian Hancock

Transcribed by: Rachel E Lieu

[Holocaust Living History Workshop](#)

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- Time    Transcription
- 00:00    [uctv / University of California Television / www.uctv.tv]
- 00:17    [Read Write Think Dream / The Library / UC San Diego / Channel]
- 00:22    [Read Write Think Dream / www.uctv.tv/library-channel]
- 00:27    [The UC San Diego Library and The Judaic Studies Program and UC San Diego present]
- 00:33    [The Holocaust Living History Workshop / Porrajmos: The Romani and the Holocaust / Featuring Ian Hancock, Professor of English and Linguistics - Program Director, Romani Studies - University of Texas, Austin / May 7, 2014]
- 00:41    Ian Hancock: Well first of all, thank you very much for this invitation, this opportunity, to come to beautiful San Diego and talk to you. It's not a very cheerful topic, unfortunately. I want to talk about the Holocaust of the Romani people, and normally when I give talks I don't refer to my notes, but in this instance, I'm going to be referring to my notes because there's names and dates that I just cannot keep straight in my head. And I want to have some time at the end to answer some of your questions. Usually, although I speak to very many groups - particularly Jewish groups about the Holocaust - whenever I speak about that particular topic the when it's question time, people want to know first of all well, who exactly are Roma Gypsies? Who are we talking about? We see these shows on television and so on, but we're not really sure who these people are. Very briefly Romani people are a people of Asian origin who came into Europe in the early Middle Ages and separated and spread out in all directions, and so that today it is more accurate to talk about Romani peoples. For example one of the confusions is why say Roma and Sinti? Sinti are Roma, but they are a separate division of Roma. It's, it would be a little bit like Ashkenazim and Sephardim, both Jewish but distinct. And it's sort of like that with us. So more about that a bit later on.
- 02:50    Ian Hancock: What I want to get into is to understand why Hitler wanted to eradicate the Romani people. And this immediately raises the question of terminology. [The] word holocaust gets used in my mind very freely. It's applied to all kinds of situations. I approach it as the implementation of the final solution, which was a directive ordering the extermination of the Jewish people and the Romani people. There were lots of populations - groups - victimized by the Nazis, but no directive to exterminate, and no directive to single out, just two peoples for what they were born. And that's a distinction that I make, and I see the implementation of this genocidal action in modern terms as a kind of ethnic cleansing, because Hitler wanted to create a Herrenvolk, a master race. And in order to accomplish that he sought to eradicate what he saw as genetic contaminants in the Aryan gene pool. And if we look at it from that perspective, we can then see why another group that was selected for

eradication - the mentally and physically handicapped. Not a people as such, but nevertheless people regarded as being genetically defective and therefore in need of eradication. You could argue perhaps that targeting homosexuals may have fallen under this category of genetically imperfect people because if you look at the Nazi documentation, the the male homosexual population was also regarded as somehow genetically imperfect. That didn't extend to the homosexual female population, and it wasn't a program of annihilation. But still, if we look at it in terms of cleaning up the gene pool, then we can see a bigger picture.

05:39 Ian Hancock: The Romani people, my people, have never tried to take anybody else's land, have never started a war, have never been a political or an economic or a military threat to anybody. And perhaps this is the difference between the rationale for targeting the Jews, as opposed to targeting the Roma. In the case of the Roma, it was purely a racial motive. Jews, it was racial too. They created a peculiar pseudoscience, as most of you know, measuring earlobes, and nostrils, and what have you. There are some pictures on the table there of that kind of genetic science. Jews were a threat in a great many other ways, political and so on. But for, for my people, it was none of that. It was, it was purely a racial issue for the Nazis. The inventor of the term genocide, Raphael Lemkin, actually referred, when he created the term, he referred to the genocide of the Jews and the Gypsies - that's the word that mostly crops up - even before the Holocaust was over. He recognized that the Jews and Roma were being singled out for genocide. But following the end of the Second World War, there were no Roma who were able, in a position - either factually in a position, or educationally in a position - to speak out for what had happened - no scholars. It was just a terrible situation following the war for these survivors, the Romani survivors.

8:00 Ian Hancock: And so, very little made its way into the public knowledge about what had happened to the Roma. In fact, until as late as 1947 there were some Roma, particularly Sinti Roma, who stayed hidden in the abandoned concentration camps fearing arrest because the pre-war laws against Roma were still in effect. And if you had no papers, no proof of citizenship, and so on, you were liable for arrest. And, and so, even as late as that Roma were still keeping a very low profile. And it's only been in the past 10 or 20 years that the scholarship has really begun to focus on the other group targeted for genocide, the Roma. To understand then why this attitude, this, this disdain for the Romani people existed in the minds of the Nazis, we have to go back a very long way. We have to go back to the beginning of, the arrival of Roma in Europe, particularly northern Europe. Various groups came across from Anatolia, from the Byzantine Empire, which had now become the Ottoman Empire. And the Roma, when they arrived in the south of Europe, were initially confused with the Ottoman Turks, representing the Islamic threat to the Christian world.

09:57 Ian Hancock: The southern Europeans, of course, realized very quickly that the Roma were not Turks. They weren't Muslims. They didn't speak Turkish. But when

that population moved further north into German-speaking Europe, nobody had seen a Turk. And when the dark-skinned Roma showed up, they were assumed to be Turks or spies for the Turks. And laws began to be instituted, even in the 1400s, and they were pretty harsh laws. They, they mostly forbade Roma from stopping, from taking up residence, and forced, that forced them to keep on the move. And those laws have gone on ever since. If you, one of my books - or book with my essays in - called *Danger! Educated Gypsy*, there's a chapter in there about the relationship in this country between law enforcement and the Romani-American population. And there are a lot of American laws against Roma, believe it or not. The last of which we managed to have taken off the books in 1998 in New Jersey. And although you could say, well these are old laws, surely, and they go back a long way. They go back even to colonial times, but they are as new as the most recent time that they were used, and they have been used up into the 1990s to keep Roma out of this or that county, or even state.

11:56 Ian Hancock: So we find the beginnings of the antagonism going back for centuries, and we could add other factors too. The Romani culture is shielded from non-Roma. We have a word for people who are not Roma, which is gadji, and with cultural beliefs inherited from Asia in place, in conservative Romani culture we regard non-Romani people as - not physically unclean - but spiritually unclean. In order to live as a Romani person, you have to obey certain rules. You have to prepare food in a certain way, wash things in a certain way, and the outside world is seen as dangerous, and polluting. And of course, if you keep people at a distance because of this, you're not making friends. You're inviting suspicion. This is another ingredient in the anti-Gypsyism that is developing. We also have the association in the medieval Christian dogma between lightness and purity and darkness and sin. And we rely on medieval church records a lot - this is one of the places that actually kept written records - for our evidence of the presence of Roma in different parts of Europe. And, and so often the descriptions relate the dark skin, the dark hair, with sin and dirt. So another, another factor, the fact of not having a country, the fact of being an eternal outsider - a stranger always, wherever you are. We saw this in the [19]90s, in the Balkan Wars, when the ex-Yugoslavia was breaking up. We have Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia, and so on, and each one kicking out non-ethnics. If you're a Bosnian in Croatia, go to Bosnia. Get out of here. If you're a Croatian in Serbia, go to Croatia. Get out of here. But if you were a Roma, where do you go? There is no, no place to go.

14:54 Ian Hancock: So, all of these things together over centuries have culminated in an overall suspicion and fear of Roma. There is, of course, the other aspect - the romantic one the - Esmerelda and *Carmen*, but that's fiction. The reality is much more horrible. I just got back from Slovakia last week. I went there for the State Department to monitor the racism there, and it's, it is horrible, and it's getting worse. It has to be addressed. In the case of the German-speaking parts of Europe then, we can go back to - and this is where I start looking at dates and names - we can go

back to 1416. The very first anti-Romani law was issued when they were accused of being foreign spies. They were also accused of bringing the plague into Europe. In 1500 Maximilian I ordered all Zigeuner - that's the word in German for, for Roma - to be out of Germany. They had to leave before Easter. There were expulsion and extermination orders in 1566, and in 1659, the mass murder of Romanies took place in Neudorf. In 1710 Frederick I of Prussia condemned all male Roma to forced labor and had the women whipped and branded, and their children permanently removed. And in 1721 Emperor Karl VI ordered the extermination of all Romanies 220 years before the same directive was issued by Hitler. In 1725 Friedrich Wilhelm I condemned all those 18 years and older to be hanged.

17:09 Ian Hancock: By the end of the 18th century, anti-Romani racism had received establishment sanction from the Church and the Academy after Heinrich Grellmann published his treatise demonstrating their Asian origin. And he wrote, that in studying Romanies he felt - and I'm quoting - a clear repugnancy like a biologist dissecting some nauseating crawling thing in the interests of science. This was echoed in the words of the Lutheran minister Martinus Zippel who said, Gypsies in a well-ordered state in the present day are like vermin on an animal's body. Acknowledgment of the physical and social differences of the Romanies was being increasingly incorporated into German scholarly and ecclesiastical attitudes. Zippel's statement is significant in two ways. First of all, he is contrasting the Romani way of living with an, with a well-ordered state, i.e. a country with boundaries, and a government, and so on - very important in a country where ethnic nationalism is so important. This is something that my American students still have a hard time understanding, how important this is for European countries, where you may be a national, but if you're not an ethnic as well, you're still somehow an outsider. An example would be the 2 million or more Romanian citizens of Hungarian descent. Families have been there for generations, but they're not regarded as real Romanians, regardless of their citizenship, because they have a different ethnicity and so, Zippel is referring to this idea of not having your own state. And then his other, the other part of his comment was the reference to vermin. If we come ahead in time and look at Nazi propaganda to desensitize the general population to what was coming, the first thing you do is strip the humanity from the targeted population. They're not people anymore. They're vermin. They're diseases, something that ought to be gotten rid of. So we get this language back then.

20:01 Ian Hancock: In his influential treatise, Gobineau argued that human beings could be ranked into higher and lower races, with the white Aryans - and particularly the Nordic people within them - placed at the very top. And I quote, "Aryans were the cream of mankind and the Germans, the cream of the cream: a race of princes." That's where that phrase cream of the cream comes from. This had particular impact upon the development of German philosophical and political thinking. In 1863 Richard Liebich wrote about the quote, criminal practices of the Romanies, and described them as lives unworthy of life. The first use of a phrase which was

repeated in 1869 in an essay on Romanies by [Richard] Kulemann and which was later to have ominous significance. Lives unworthy of life - Lebensunwertesleben. The opinions of these scholars were having repercussions at the highest administrative levels. For just one year later, on November the 18th 1870, Imperial Chancellor Otto von Bismarck circulated a brief demanding quote, the complete prohibition of foreign Gypsies crossing the German border, and which stated further, that when arrested they were to be transported by the closest route to their country of origin. When Alsace and Lorraine were annexed by the German Empire in 1871, each was made responsible for the control of Romanies at the borders into other areas of the new Reich. Charles Darwin, also writing in 1871, used racist language in referring to quote, the uniform appearance in various parts of the world of Gypsies and Jews which contrasts sharply with all the virtues represented by the territorially settled and culturally advanced Nordic Aryan races.

22:24 Ian Hancock: Once again, that reference to having a country. That's the bottom line here. And of course, Jews and Roma also non-territorial and also non-European in origin. That's a reason why the two populations are so often treated together. Basing his ideas on Darwin, Cesare Lombroso published his influential work *L'Uomo Delinquente* - the Criminal Man - in 1876, which contained a lengthy chapter on the genetically criminal character of the Romanies, whom he described as quote, a living example of a whole race of criminals. This was later translated into German and had a profound effect upon German legal attitudes. In 1890 the Swabian Parliament organized a conference on the Zigeunergeschmeiß - that means Gypsy scum - and suggested means by which the presence of Romanies could be signaled by ringing church bells. The military was also empowered to apprehend and move Romanies on. Under the directorship of Alfred Dillmann, the Bavarian police established the Central Office for Fighting the Gypsy Nuisance in Munich in March 1899. Relevant documents began to be collected, particularly those pertaining to legislation and criminality, and compiled into Dillmann's Zigeunerbuch in which Romanies were described as quote, a pest against which society must unflinchingly defend itself, and special instructions were issued to the police by the Prussian government to quote, combat the Gypsy nuisance.

24:26 Ian Hancock: The crimes listed in Dillmann's book consisted overwhelmingly of trespassing and stealing food. One year later, a policy statement from the House of Commons in Vienna - capital of the Austro-German alliance - was sent to the Ministers of the Interior Defense and Justice quote, concerning measures to reduce and eliminate the Gypsy population. I'll say a bit more about the crimes in the Zigeunerbuch. This is a book in three parts. The first part is this lengthy essay, warning the German people to protect itself from race-mixing. The largest part of the book is a register. Each different German land, the police department in each land had to compile a register over the following five years, submit them to Dillmann, and they were all compiled into a long register of individuals - their names, their family connections, their relatives, and their criminal record if they had one. And then the

third part of the book is mug shots, photographs. If you analyze the crimes they were, as I said, mostly trespass and the theft of food. But if you put that in the context of the times - where Roma were not being allowed to stop anywhere, and we're not being served by shopkeepers - then the trespass and stealing food, mostly from farms, makes sense. But it's still criminal activity.

26:24 Ian Hancock: Under the directorship of Dillmann, no, I've read that part. Using Liebich's phrase in the title of their book, *The Lives Unworthy of Life*, psychiatrist Karl Binding and magistrate Alfred Hoche argued in 1920 for the euthanizing of those who were Ballastexistenzen - dead weight in humanity. Three populations were considered: those with gross physical disfigurements, those carrying hereditary diseases, and those in comas considered unlikely to recover. Romanies belong to the second category. Their genetically transmitted disease being criminality. This rationalized the quote, prevented, prevented detention of Romanies in Weimar Germany, and was clearly racial. Even if one had not committed a crime, one was likely to do so eventually because criminality was a genetic, i.e. a racial characteristic. By 1922 all Romanies in Baden were to be photographed and fingerprinted. The Bavarian Parliament issued a new law to combat Gypsies, nomads, and idlers, and the Provincial Criminal Commission endorsed another, dated July the 16th 1926, aimed at controlling the Zigeunerplage, the Gypsy Plague.

28:08 Ian Hancock: By 1927 legislation requiring the photographing and fingerprinting of Romanies had been introduced in Prussia where 8,000 were processed in this way. Bavaria instituted laws forbidding any to travel in family groups or to own firearms. Those over 16 were liable for incarceration in work camps, while those without proof of Bavarian birth began to be expelled from Germany. In further direct violation of the Weimar Constitution - which guaranteed equal rights for all citizens - after April 12, 1928 Romanies in Germany were placed under permanent police surveillance. And in the same year, Professor Hans Günther wrote that quote, it was the Gypsies who introduced foreign blood into Europe. On April 16th, 1929 the Munich Bureau's National Center jointly established a Division of Romani Affairs with the International Criminology Bureau, that was INTERPOL. Working closely together, they enforced restrictions on travel for all Romanies who didn't have documents and imposed up to two years detention in rehabilitation camps upon those 16 years of age or older. On January the 20th, 1933 officials in Burgenland called for the withdrawal of all civil rights from Romanies. In May a law was passed, was introduced to legalize eugenic sterilization. On July the 14th Hitler's cabinet passed a law against the propagation of lives unworthy of life, that very same phrase. It was called the Law for the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring and ordered sterilization for certain categories of people, specifically - and I'm quoting - Gypsies and most of the Germans of black color.

- 30:16 Ian Hancock: This is a population that doesn't get much acknowledgement because actually they were almost all eradicated before 1939. But by, by the 1930s there was a substantial but small population of Afro-Europeans. They, for the most part, resulted from unions between the African troops that the French had brought in during the First World War and European women, German women. And for the most part, they were easily identifiable and, I think, they're about 6,000 of them but they, they were taken out pretty, pretty soon. I've had survivors come up and tell me that they remember in the [19]30s how they were Afro-Germans and then suddenly there weren't any, almost overnight. Other 1933 laws to prevent offspring with hereditary defects and the reform of habitual criminals and social deviants, directly targeted Romanies. From January 1934 onwards they were being selected for transfer to camps at Dachau, Dieselstrasse, Sachsenhausen, Marzahn, and Vennhausen for processing, which included sterilization by injection and castration. Two laws issued in Nuremberg in July forbade Germans from marrying Jews, Negroes, and Gypsies. Starting on September the 15th 1935, Romanies became subject to the restrictions of the Nuremberg Law for the Protection of Blood and Honor, which forbade intermarriage or sexual relationships between Aryan and non-Aryan people. It's called The Law for Marriage Health. The telling policy statement issued by the Nazi Party read quote, in Europe generally only Jews and Gypsies come under consideration as members of an alien people.
- 32:32 Ian Hancock: The earliest Nazi document referring to the introduction of the total solution of the Gypsy problem on either a national or an international level - end of quote - was drafted under the direction of state secretary Hans Pfundtner of the Reichs Ministry of the Interior in March 1936. In June and July, several hundred were transported to Dachau by order of the Minister of the Interior as dependents of the Munich Bureau of Gypsy Affairs. And in this year Dr. Hans Globke, Head of Service at the Ministry of the Interior for the Third Reich who served on the panel on racial laws declared that in Europe quote, only Jews and Gypsies are of foreign blood. And race-hygienist Dr. Robert Körber wrote in an essay entitled *Volk und Staat* that quote, the Jews and the Gypsies are today remote from us because of their Asiatic ancestry, just as ours is Nordic. This sentiment was reiterated by Dr. Brandis who wrote that besides the Jews only the Gypsies are to be considered as an alien people in Europe. German Romaphobia became transnational when INTERPOL established the International Centre for Combating the Gypsy Menace, formerly the Bureau of Gypsy Affairs. The main Nazi institution to deal with Romanies, The Racial Hygiene and Population Biology and Research Unit of the Ministry of Health, was established under the directorship of Dr. Robert Ritter at Berlin-Dahlem, the express purpose of which was to determine whether the Romani people were Aryans or subhumans, Untermenschen.
- 34:24 Ian Hancock: In Berlin, Romanies were cleared off the streets away from public view because of the upcoming Olympic Games and placed in a toxic waste dump. Pamphlets were distributed to those attending the games promoting anti-Gypsyism



among the general public. In his address to the German Association for Racial Research Dr. Adolph Würth of the Racial Hygiene Research Unit said quote, the Gypsy question is a racial question for us today. In the same way, as the National Socialist State has solved the Jewish question, it will also have to settle the Gypsy question once and for all. The race biological research on Gypsies is an unconditional prerequisite for the Final Solution of the Gypsy Question, end of quote. This was further supported by Dr. Kurt Ammon who stated that the Nazi policy quote, views the Gypsy problem as being foremost a racial one. Himmler thereafter put groups of Romanies at this disposal of a team of doctors for experiments and sterilization techniques. Ironically, the more Romani ancestry an individual had, the less threatening he was seen to be. Himmler's suggestion that a number of quotes, pure Romanies be exempt and subject to quote, the law for the protection of historic monuments for future anthropologists to study was mocked, and never implemented. An order released on December the 14th stated that persons could be incarcerated on the grounds of their being inherently, as well as habitually, criminal i.e. whether they were actually engaged in criminal activity or not, depending upon genetic makeup, and potential threat to Aryan security. By the end of this year, large-scale roundups of Romanies had begun. At Buchenwald, a special camp for Romanies was set up and Romanies were incarcerated in camps in Nazi-controlled territories throughout Europe.

36:36 Ian Hancock: Four hundred were sent to Taucha, others to Mauthausen, Gusen, Dautmergen, Natzweiler, Stutthoff, Flossenberg, Salzwed, Ravensbrück, Dusseldorf, Lackenbach, Westerbork, Malines and elsewhere. From 1937 onwards the Wehrmacht High Command began issuing decrees ordering the exclusion of all Romanies from military service for reasons of racial policy. In March 1938 Romanies were prohibited from voting and in that same month a letter to the Imperial Leader of the SS from Dr. Werner Best, Head of the Nazi Security Police, addressed the initiation of the Final Solution to the Gypsy problem from a racial point of view. The first official publicly-posted statement to refer to the Final Solution of the Gypsy Question - die endgültige Lösung der Zigeunerfrage - was also issued at that time signed by Himmler, who also ordered the Bureau of Romani Affairs to be moved from Munich to Berlin. Between June 12th and the 18th Gypsy clean-up week, Zigeuneraufräumungswoche was in effect, and hundreds throughout Germany and Austria were rounded up and incarcerated. In Mannworth three hundred Romani farmers and vineyard owners were arrested in a single night. In a parallel development to the 1938 Jewish expulsions, Romanies were expelled from the left bank of the Rhine in August. In that month too Karl Hannermann wrote that rats, bedbugs, and fleas are also natural occurrences in the same way as Jews and Gypsies. All existence is a struggle; we must therefore gradually biologically eradicate all these vermin. After September the 4th Romani children were forbidden to attend school.

- 38:39 Ian Hancock: 1938's a significant year because it was also the year of Kristallnacht and both of those events, the cleanup week and the Kristallnacht, sent a very clear message to the general public because it was the police who were brutalizing Jews and Roma, and the police are the ones who are supposed to protect us. But if the police could do it openly, it meant that it was ok. Individuals were categorized by percentage of Romani ancestry. If two of one's eight great-grandparents were even part Romani, that individual had too much quote, Gypsy blood to be allowed later to live. These criteria were twice as strict as those applying to Jews. If the criteria for determining Jewishness had been applied to Romanies, some 18,000 would have escaped death. Romani women married to non-Romani, non-Romani men and, and children over the age of 13 were sent to Dusseldorf-Lierenfeld to be sterilized. Five thousand German Romanies were concentrated in the Gypsy section of the concentration camp at Łódź. On December the 8th 1938 Hitler signed a new order based upon the findings of the Office of Racial Hygiene which are determined that Romani blood was very dangerous to Aryan purity. Dr. Tobias Portschy, Area Commander in Styria, wrote in a memorandum to Hitler's Chancellery that quote, Gypsies place the purity of the blood of German peasantry in peril, and recommended mass sterilization as a solution. On March the 1st 1939, the order for the implementation of the Reich Criminal Police Department was issued that stated quote, the decree of the Reichsführer SS of August 12, 1938 orders the registration of persons living in the Reich territory who count as Gypsies. Once it has been established how many there are in the Reich territory, further measures can be taken. And instructions for carrying out those orders were issued in March, stating that the aim of the measures taken by the state must be the racial separation once and for all of the Gypsy race from the German nation, and the prevention of racial mixing.
- 41:12 Ian Hancock: Every Police Headquarters were set up to a unit to monitor Romani matters and one or more persons were to be permanently responsible for Romanies. According to the minutes of a meeting organized by [Reinhard] Heydrich on September the 27th, Hitler instructed the German Romanies and Jews, Romanies and Jews were to be moved by rail into Poland. That order came on October the 16th quote, with regard to the transportation of the Gypsies, we advise that the first transport of Jews is leaving Vienna on Friday 20th of October 1939 and four wagons of Gypsies are to be added to that transport. In December, Hitler issued a new decree regarding these transportations forbidding all quote, Gypsies and part Gypsies not already in camps for moving out of their area. And trains were subsequently reported moving East packed with Gypsies. Dr. Johannes Behrendt of the Office of Racial Hygiene issued the statement that quote, all Gypsies should be treated, treated as hereditarily sick. The only solution is elimination. The aim should therefore be the elimination without hesitation of this defective element in the population, end of quote. Justice Reichs Minister Thierack would later write to Bormann that he quote, intended to make the Reichsführer SS responsible for the prosecution of Poles, Russians, Jews, and Gypsies; Poles and Russians can only be

prosecuted by the police if they lived in the area of the former Polish state prior to September the 1st. Prosecution proceedings against Jews and Gypsies, however, should be taken without observing these reservations.

- 43:06 Ian Hancock: The first mass genocidal action of the Holocaust took place in January or February in 1940, when 250 Romani children in the concentration camp at Buchenwald were used as guinea pigs for testing the gas Zyklon B, later used for mass killings at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Nazis in Alsace complied with an order to round up the Jews and the Gypsies. In this year Nazi statisticians Wetzel and Hecht estimated that 100,000 Gypsies and others were scheduled for deportation to Poland and were shipped between May the 15th and the 18th. A memorandum from Leonardo Conti, Secretary of State for Health in the Ministry of Interior, to the Main Office of the Security Police, and the Reich's Health Department read, it is known that the lives of Romanies and part Romanies are to be regulated by a Gypsy law (Zigeunergesetz). I firmly believe, now as before, that the final solution of the Gypsy problem can only be achieved through the sterilization of full and part Romanies. I think that the time for a legal resolution of these problems is over and that we must immediately try to sterilize the Romanies and part Romanies as a special measure, using analogous precedents. Once sterilization is completed and these people are rendered biologically harmless, it is of no great consequence whether they are expelled or used as labor on the home front.
- 44:46 Ian Hancock: On May the 18th Romanies were deported from seven assembly centers in the Old Reich to Lublin, located in the General Government. The first transport included 2,500 German Romanies, selected as full families wherever possible. The transport included 1,000 from Hamburg and Bremen, 1,000 from Cologne, Düsseldorf, and Hannover, and 500 from Stuttgart. In a speech delivered on February 29th to top-level Nazi Party officials, Himmler said quote, the Gypsies are a question in themselves. I want to be rid of them this year if it is at all possible. There are only 30,000 of them in the entire Reich, but they do great racial damage. On April 27th the joint order from the Nazi Headquarters and the Chief of Police stated that quote, the first transport of Gypsies to the General Government will leave in the middle of May. The following day Reinhard Heydrich, Chief of the Reich Security Main Office, sent out more precise instructions to chiefs of police and district governors in Germany in the so-called Umsiedlungserlaß for the resettlement, arrest, and deportation of Romanies above the age of 17. An ordinance dated February 11th, 1941 forbade Gypsies and part-Gypsies from serving in the German army on the grounds of racial policy. On July the 31st Heydrich, who had been entrusted with the details of the final solution, included Romanies together with Jews quote, the Einsatzkommandos received the order to kill all Jews, Gypsies, and mental patients, end of quote.
- 46:36 Ian Hancock: I'm skipping some of this. If you, if you want fuller detail you can certainly have copies of this paper, but it's just dates and incidents one after the

other. I should read the, the more significant ones. In early 1942, Romanies were selected for experimentation at Dachau and Buchenwald by Dr. Adolf Pokorny to see how long they could survive on seawater claiming that they, must not only be conquered but exterminated also. Nazi death squads entered Greece in June, murdering hundreds of Romanies. In Serbia, Military Governor Harold Turner announced - prematurely - that quote, Serbia is the only country in which the Jewish question and the Gypsy question have been resolved, warning quote, that one must not forget that the Jews and the Gypsies generally constitute a threat to security and, as such, posed a threat to peace and public order; it is the Jewish nature which is responsible for this war and, as for the Gypsy, by his nature, he can never be a useful member of international society. In Greece, fifty Romanies were murdered for each German casualty. In Croatia between 80,000 and 100,000 Romanies are estimated to have perished at the hands of the Ustaša, mostly at the Jasenovac camp. On May the 14th 1942 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Italy issued bulletin number SER 27869 which read quote, official recognition of Gypsy residence in Germany in the same way as Jews. For your information, we have the pleasure of communicating to you that the Reich's Ambassador of Berlin has officially recognized Gypsy residents in the Reich as the same as Jews, and therefore current anti-semitic laws will be effective in their case as well. Gypsies are considered Gypsies, not only with a 100 percent Gypsy blood, but so those that have only some Gypsy blood. On July the 31st the Ministry of the Eastern Occupied Territories reaffirmed to the SS and police leaders in Riga the order that quote, the treatment of both Jews and Romanies was to be placed on equal footing.

49:07 Ian Hancock: Romanies were being exterminated at Majdanek, Belzec, Sanok, Sobibor, Chelmno, and Treblinka. In Bucharest, a policy statement that for Romania, the Gypsy question is as important as the Jewish was published. In the minutes of a September the 14th meeting Justice Minister Otto Thierack proposed that quote, Jews and Gypsies should be unconditionally exterminated. A memo signed by Himmler requested data on Romani populations in Britain in anticipation of the eventual takeover of that country. In January 1943, the president of the National Criminal Police Association issued the following statement quote, political preventive custody can be ordered to stop any further children of mixed blood issuing from the willful continuation of sexual union between Gypsies and Gypsies of mixed race and those of German blood, end a quote. In February the remaining Romanies were transported to Birkenau; the largest transport ever of Polish Romanies was brought to the same camp in March and exterminated within the first month. Dutch Romanies began being transported to Auschwitz as well. A party bulletin entitled *Maintenance of the Race and the Genotype in German Law* stated that quote, Gypsies are a foreign blood pursuant to German racial legislation; their political, biological, cultural, and vocational separation from the German race has now been effected by means of the elimination of those of foreign blood in the same way as was done for the Jews. In his memoirs, SS Officer Perry Broad, who worked in the political division at

Auschwitz, wrote that quote, it is the will of the all-powerful Reichsfuhrer Hitler to have the Gypsies disappear from the face of the earth. He reiterated this elsewhere saying, the Central Office knew it was Hitler's aim to wipe out all the Gypsies without exception.

- 51:14 Ian Hancock: Eva Justin's book dealing with Romani children appeared in 1944. In it, she expressed the hope that it would serve as a basis for future race hygiene laws regulating such unworthy primitive elements. In May, when she had finished studying the children, they were all sent to Auschwitz and were killed there. I should say something about Eva Justin. One of the pictures on the table is of her. She worked for Ritter and she had red hair and pretended to be a friend to the Roma, but she was really gathering information for the Party. She would tell the Roma that they and their families were likely to be arrested, so would they please tell her where all the relatives live, so she could go and warn them. And then she would turn that information over. But she did such a good job of gaining their confidence that - because of her red hair - they had given her a nickname - Loli Tschai - which means red-haired lady. But she really did that and her dissertation, we have a copy of it in the archives. We also have the *Zigeunerbuch* in the archives in Austin, a dissertation on the backwardness of Romani children compared with the white children in school. In the early morning hours of August the 2nd and 3rd 2,900 Romanies at Auschwitz-Birkenau were killed and cremated in one mass action, referred to as Zigeunernacht. On September 26th a further 200 Romanies, mostly children, were shipped to Auschwitz from Buchenwald and gassed two weeks later. Another survivor sometime ago came and told me afterwards he survived Auschwitz. And he said he remembered Zigeunernacht and the greasy black smoke that hung over the camp from, from the bodies that had been put into the ovens, the Roma.
- 53:43 Ian Hancock: Not one Romani was called to testify on behalf of his own people at the Nuremberg trials that began in October 1945. Current estimates now indicate that between one and a half - a half and one and a half million Romanies died during the period 1933 to 1945. If this estimate is correct, between 50 and 75 percent of the entire Romani population in Nazi-controlled Europe had perished at the hands of the Nazis - victims of racially motive, motivated genocidal policy. At the Nuremberg Military Tribunals in September 1947, former SS General Otto Ohlendorf told presiding Judge Michael Musmanno that in the killing campaigns quote, there was no difference between Gypsies and Jews. Despite the overwhelming documentary evidence to the contrary, in 1951 the Württemberg Ministry of the Interior in Germany issued a statement that judges hearing restitution claims should bear in mind that quote, Gypsies were persecuted under the National Socialist regime not for any racial reason, but because of a social and criminal record. It's clear from quotes I've given you today that race was front and center, but there were no Roma speaking out at this time.

- 55:09 Ian Hancock: Members of the shattered post-war remnants of the surviving Romani population lacked the wherewithal legally to challenge the statement and no outside agency came forward to take up the Romani case. A report was issued by the German Ministry of Finance in 1986 which concluded that quote, all those victimized by Nazism have been adequately compensated. The circle of those deserving compensation need not be extended any further. Two years later, in February, the East German government announced its resolution to pay a 100 million dollars in war crimes reparations to Jewish survivors but refused to pay anything to Romani survivors. Finally, on April the 12th 1990, the East German government released a statement apologizing for the quote, immeasurable sorrow the National Socialist regime had inflicted upon its victims, including Romanies but quote, while the world celebrates the changes in Eastern Europe the traditional Gypsy role of scapegoat is already being resurrected in countries like Romania and Hungary. Collective rights for minorities, such as Gypsies, remain as elusive as ever. Thank you.
- 56:33 [Read Write Think Dream / The Library / UC San Diego / Channel]
- 56:39 [Read Write Think Dream / [www.uctv.tv/library-channel](http://www.uctv.tv/library-channel)]
- 56:45 [The Holocaust Living History Workshop / Porrajmos: The Romani and the Holocaust / Featuring Ian Hancock, Professor of English and Linguistics - Program Director, Romani Studies - University of Texas, Austin / May 7, 2014]
- 56:51 [Presented by / The Judaic Studies Program at UC San Diego / and / The UC San Diego Library]
- 56:57 [The Audrey Geisel University Librarian / Brian E.C. Schottlaender / Director of Communications and Outreach / UC San Diego Library / Dolores Davies / Director, The Judaic Studies Program / UC San Diego / Deborah Hertz / Program Coordinator, The Holocaust Living History Workshop / Susanne Hillman ]
- 57:03 [UCSD-TV / Producer, Shannon Bradley / Camera Operators, Marci Bretts, Jacob Parker / Editor, Matt Alioto]
- 57:07 [UCSD-TV / Production Coordinator, RachelBradley / Post-Production Supervisor, Mike Weber / Managing Director, Lynn Burtstan / General Manager, Mary L. Walshok]
- 57:11 [The views, contents and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of the University of California]

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