

The Forgotten Crimes and the Mass Crimes against the Roma in the Independent State of Croatia (1941-1945)

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Roma in Kingdom of Yugoslavia

Kingdom of Yugoslavia



Kingdom of Yugoslavia	1931	
	Number of Roma	The percentage of Roma
Dravska	515	0.73 %
Hrvatska	14,879	21.18 %
Vrbaska	485	0.69 %
Drinska	3109	4.42 %
Zetska	6338	9.02 %
Dunavska	10,787	15.36 %
Moravska	8 919	12.7 %
Vardarska	24,494	34.87 %
Grad Beograd	699	0.99%
Kraljevina Jugoslavija	70,225	100%



Banat of Croatia, 1939 - 1941

Turkish Gypsies (from the area of the former Ottoman Empire, Muslim religion, speak Serbian, Romani and Turkish languages)

White gypsies (part of the Turkish gypsies, settled from Bosnia, Muslim religion, play music, blacksmithing and jambas work, speak Serbian)

German/Banat Gypsies (from the Banat area, speak Serbian and Romani languages, engage in agriculture, blacksmithing, trade and music)

Vlach Gypsies (of Romanian origin, speak Serbian, "Vlach"/Romanian and Roma languages) Roma subgroups (occupation): Torlaci (donkey traders)

Arlije (musicians, small craftsmen and merchants in Macedonia)

Arabacs (blacksmiths in South Serbia and Macedonia)



Roma in u okolici Zagreba, 1920s

NDH – the beginning of the persecution of Roma

Legal regulation

April 17, 1941; Legal provision for the defense of nations and states

April 30, 1941; Legal provision on race

April 30, 1941; Legal provision on the protection of Aryan blood and the honor of the Croatian people

April 30, 1941; Legal provision on citizenship

Legal provision on race

§4. "... as a Gypsy in the sense of this legal provision, a person who comes from two or more ancestors of the second generation, who are Gypsies by race..."

Legal provision on the protection of Aryan blood and honor of the Croatian people

§2. "... A special marriage license is required in the following cases: 1. for the marriage of a person with two ancestors of the second generation of Jews by race with a person who has one ancestor of the second generation of a European non-Aryan by race, or with a person of Aryan origin; 2. for the marriage of a person who has among his ancestors members of other non-European races with persons of the same origin, or with a person who has one or two ancestors of the second generation of Jews by race or one ancestor of the second generation of Gypsies by race, or with a person of Aryan origin; 3. for marriages between citizens and members of the state, unless prohibited by point 1. The license for such a marriage is issued by the Ministry of the Interior after hearing the Racial Political Commission..."

SI EZOR ANDO THAN
NUSESTAR MAJRALO
ROMANE LIMORJA
1942 - 1945
NUMERO E LIMORENGO-21
SAJEKHETHANE LIMORJA-1218m2
LIMORJA SI BARE SAJEKHETHANE-4292m2
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First measures against the Roma: population census - colonization

Colonization of Roma

Initiative local authorities (Križevci) –

Institute for Colonization –

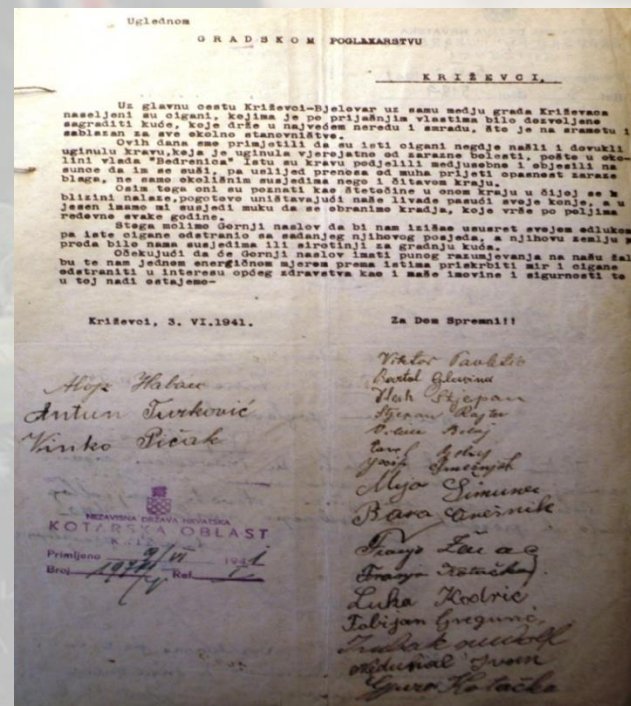
Office for supported assets

Census of the Roma

Instructions for writing a statement on racial affiliation

July 3, 1941: Census - Personal information; data related to their lifestyle (sedentary or nomadic) and occupations

Ministry of Internal Affairs - Local authorities – Police Department of the (municipal and city governments) – Great prefect of NDH - Ministry of Internal Affairs



Petition of the residents of Križevci sent to the Križevci City Administration on the need to persecute the Roma, June 3, 1941; Source: Croatian State Archive

REDARSTVENO RAVNATELJSTVO U ZAGREBU

Pos. br. 11885/1041

Zagreb, dan 17. srpnja 1941

Predmet: CIGANA POPIS.

OGLAS

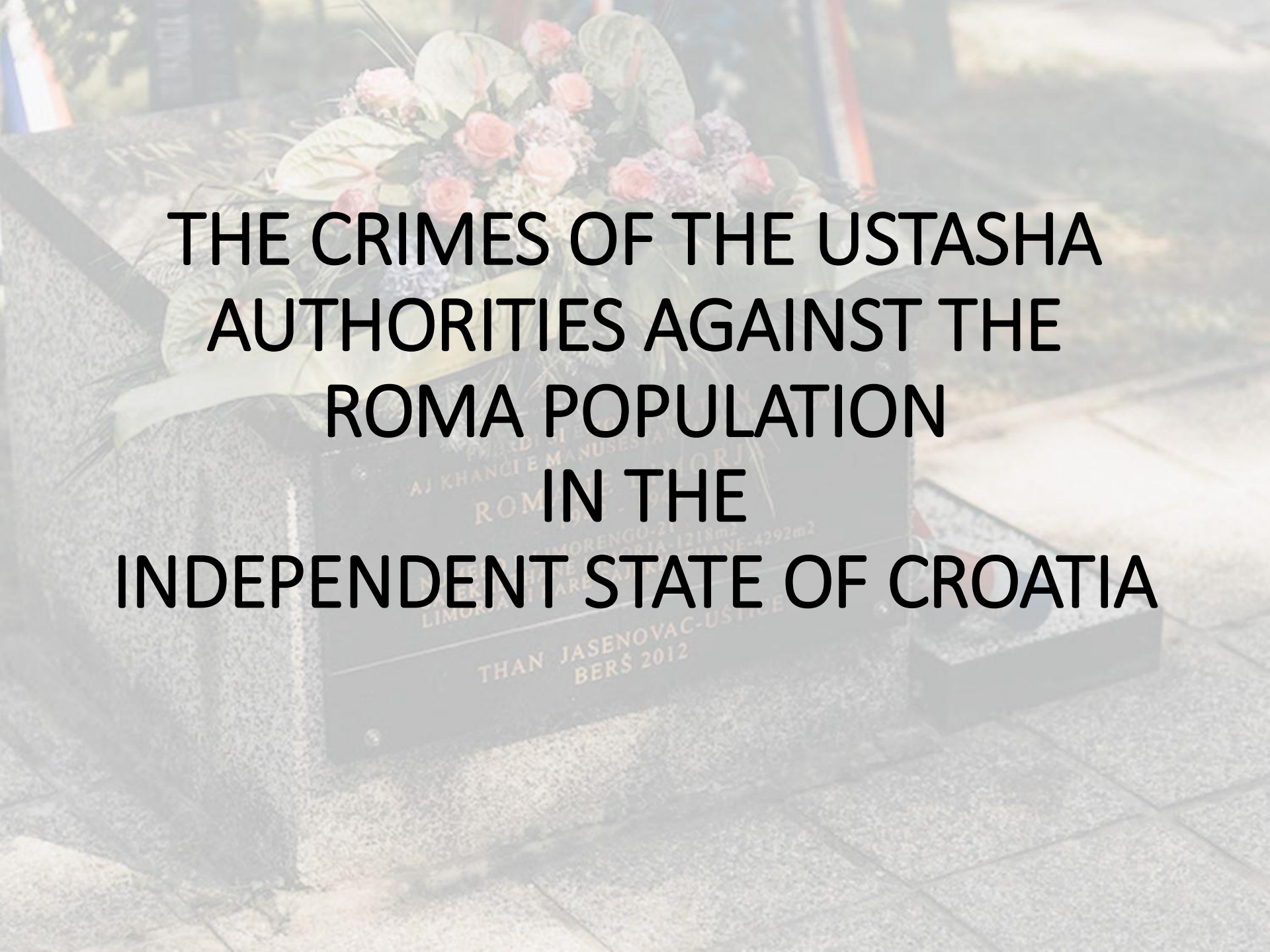
Odredbom Ministarstva unutarnjih poslova od 3 VII 1941 broj 13542 Pr. M. U. P.-1941 imaju se popisati svi cigani obojeg spola, kao i djeca koji borave stalno i nestalno na području grada Zagreba bez obzira na zanimanje.

Obzirom na to pozivaju se svi cigani, koji borave na području grada Zagreba, da se radi popisa prijave kod Redarstvenog ravnateljstva u Zagrebu, Gjorgjićeva ulica broj 4 u I katu soba broj 12 i to dana 22 i 23 srpnja o. g. od 16 do 19 sati.

Tko se pozivu ne odazove snažit će najteže zakonske posljedice.

REDARSTVENO RAVNATELJSTVO.

Official advertisement for the census of Roma, July 1941; Source: JUSP Jasenovac

A photograph of a memorial stone, likely made of granite, with a bouquet of pink and purple flowers resting on top. The stone is inscribed with names and dates. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with other memorial stones.

**THE CRIMES OF THE USTASHA
AUTHORITIES AGAINST THE
ROMA POPULATION
IN THE
INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA**

WYKONANE
AJ KHANCI E MANUSE
ROMA
MORINGO-21
CROATIA-1218m2
LIMORAJI
THAN JASENOVAC-USTICE
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Jasenovac system of camps

- Roma were not officially recorded individually, but on railway "wagons"
- the first deportations of Roma in August 1941 from the Danica camp
- frequent liquidations upon arrival (women's and children's)
- three places of the subcamps: Camp 3 c, Uštica, Gradina
- from July/August 1942, there were almost no Roma in Jasenovac, except for a small number of "gravediggers" (killed at the beginning of 1945)

Problems:

- questionable determination of the exact number of Roma victims
- lack of documentation by the camp authorities
- questionable determination of the ethnic identity of Roma inmates
- the prevalence of oral testimonies as primary historical sources



Roma in Jasenovac; Source: Jasenovac Memorial Site

BANIA

- at the end of April 1941, the NDH authorities: terror and mass crimes against the Serbian population
- Glina 12 - 13 May 1941: 307 Serbs were killed, 6 Croats, 15 Jews and 15 Roma were taken to camps, where they were killed.
- end of June 1941: the outbreak of a partisan (anti-fascist) uprising in the area of Kordun and Bania
- July 24, 1941: killing of Serbs and Roma in Banski Grabovac
- July 31, 1941, Donje Bučiče (Glina district) killed 11 Roma, along with 19 Serbs and 3 Croats

Problems:

- lack of documentation by the Ustasha authorities
- absence of Roma testimony



KORDUN

- at the end of 1941, intensified partisan military action in Kordun - immediate threat to the Zagreb area
- December 1941, military operation of the Ustasha authorities (the “December Offensive”) in the area of Kordun and Petrova Gora
- by the middle of January 1942, a total of around 11,000 inhabitants were killed, more than 15,000 escaped
- December 21, 1941, Ustasha military units capture Roma in villages in the municipality of Lasinja (Vrginmost district): villages Desno Sredičko, Lasinja, Stipan = Roma execution in Rakov Potok (Zagreb district)
- December 31, 1941: 28 (or 29) Roma killed in the village of Skakavac from the settlements of Pištac and Glavica
- January 6, 1942. Ustasha killed 41 Roma from the village of Popović Brdo in the Domačaj lug forest
- January 7, 1942 part of the arrested (mostly Serbian) population was taken from the Domačaj lug forest by trucks to the Lipjansko forest, where they were executed; 15 Roma gravediggers were killed

Problems:

- lack of documentation by the Ustasha authorities
- absence of Roma testimony



JEZERANE

- njemačke i ustaške vojne jedinice „početkom 1944.“ odvele iz Jezerana sedam romskih obitelji sa ukupno 38 osoba
- ubijeni na području brda Maljen (između Križpolja i Jezerana)
- nisu poznate okolnosti u kojima su ustaške vlasti u srpnju 1944 ubijaju više romskih obitelji u Sv. Roku. Lovincu, Ličkom Cerju (kotar Gračac, općina Lovinac)



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BOSANSKA GRADIŠKA

- in the fall of 1944, the military offensive of Ustasha military units in the area of Kozara
- September 1944, the front line from Mokrice to Rovina (Roma settlements in Batar, Mokrice, Rovina, Muslimanska Dubrava)
- Ustasha units deported Roma to Uskočka forest (area between the villages of Gornji Varoš and Jablanac), where a significant number of them were killed
- questionable number of Roma victims (200 – 600 – 900)
- questionable exact date (September - October 1944)
- questionable exact location
- monument, Žerjavica, 1970.



Problems

- sources based on oral testimonies
- critical analysis of sources
- lack of Ustasha documentation

HRASTINA

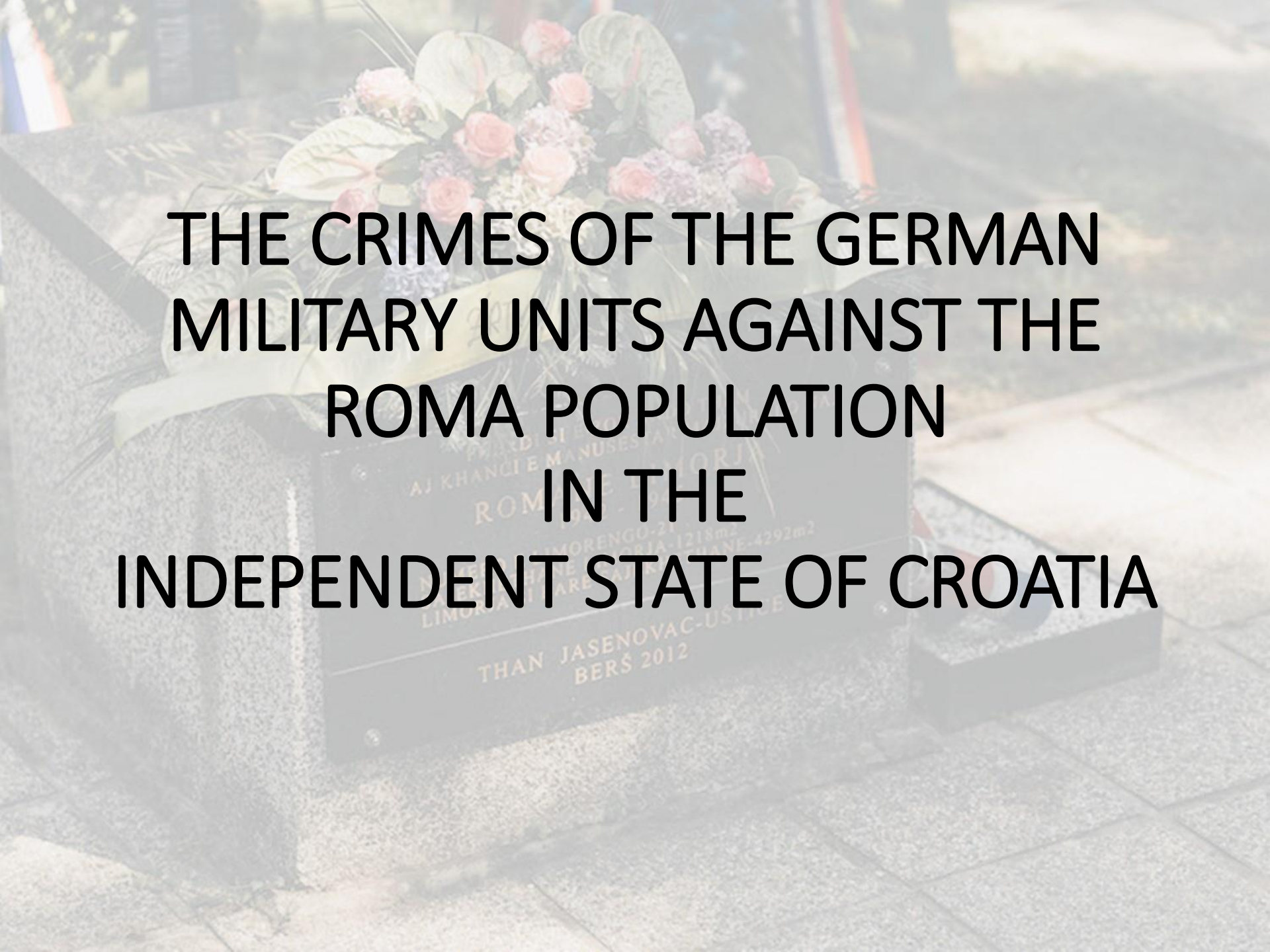
- a group of 58 Sinti Circus artists
- village of Kraj Donji (Zagreb district, Brdovec municipality) on April 23, 1945. Ustasha soldiers tortured, raped, and killed 43 of them and then burned them and buried them in Hrastina



- in mid-May 1945, buried at the nearby cemetery in Marija Gorica
- After War distortion: perpetrators - members of the SS military units; victims: Jews
- 1977, the local branch of SUBNOR erected a monument to the victims at the local cemetery in Marija Gorica
- 2021, Mario Šimunković and Đorđe Mihovilović published a book about this mass crime: Sinti as victims, Ustasha soldiers as perpetrators

Problems

- distortion
- the need for systematic scientific research



**THE CRIMES OF THE GERMAN
MILITARY UNITS AGAINST THE
ROMA POPULATION
IN THE
INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA**

Podorašac

- 7. SS dragovoljačka gorska divizija „Princ Eugen“ (7. SS-Freiwilligen-Gebirgs-Division „Prinz Eugen“ (skraćeno Princ Eugen)
- 9. kolovoza 1943. god. zločin nad 36 Roma u selu Podorašcu kod Konjica
- suradnja Roma sa partizanima / kriminalitet Roma



- “(...) Dana 9.VIII.1943. poubijali su SS. trupe naših 32 osobe, a medju njima 15 žena. Taj de dan bio ponedjeljak i to su oni učinili odmah iza svanuća, dok još naši nisu bili niti ustali. Učitelj Josip Jelić, došao prije na dan u Podorožac, te je u nedjelju odnio u večer litra rakije kod komandanta tih SS. trupa, i ostao kod njih neznam dokle, samo znam, da je u nedjelju u pol noći otišao na željez. stanicu, sjeo u voz i otišao za Sarajevo, a to s eje sa žrtvama dogodilo odmah u jutro rano u svanuće. Neznam na koliko prije legija je došla jednog dana u Podorožac i tu logorovala, a ja i naši bili smo u tunelu – sakrivali se od bombardovanja, te su ti legionari provalili u školu u Podrašcu i iz stana Jelićevog odnijeli mnogo stvari, odijela i obuće. Jelić je iza toga uvijek mislio i sumnjao na nas, da smo mu mi te stvari opljačkali, pa zato sumnjam, da ih je Jelić i nagovorio, da naše toliko ljude poubijaju te SS. Trupe (...).”

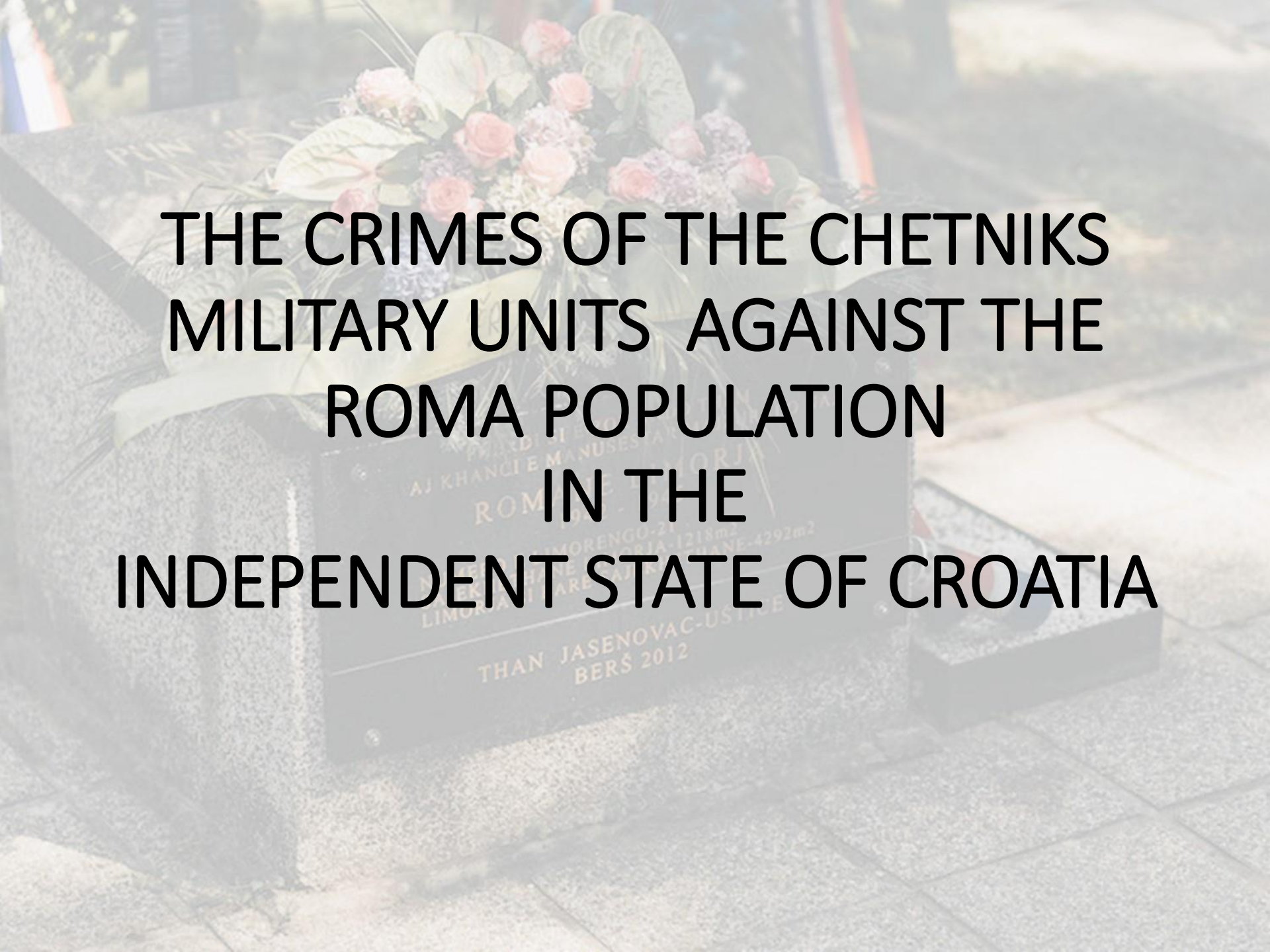
Izvor: Svjedočanstvo Sejdo Ahmetović iz Podoršca 20. lipnja 1945; ABH, ZKUZ, kut. 134, inventarni broj 57016.

JEZERANE

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**THE CRIMES OF THE CHETNIKS
MILITARY UNITS AGAINST THE
ROMA POPULATION
IN THE
INDEPENDENT STATE OF CROATIA**

VLAŠKI BRIJEG

- Attack of 40 Chetnik soldiers on the night of January 1, 1942 to January 2, 1942 in the village of Vlaški brijeg (Banja Luka district)
- Roma houses looted, 10 Roma taken to the forest - fate unknown



HRVATSKE MORAVICE

- On October 17, 1942, Chetnik military units killed 14 members of the Roma family Hudorović in Hrvatske Moravice.
- Roma were tied with wire and forcibly locked in a house, which was then burned with them



„...on October 17, 1942 MILAN HUDOROVIĆ, his father FRANJO, children TOMO, MILAN, and MARICA, mother DRAGICA, sisters BARICA, KATA, DANICA, MARICA - all in the house tied with wire and burned together with the house...”

Source: Croatian state Archive.

The number of Roma victims

-the issue of determining the exact number of Roma victims in the NDH (Jasenovac)

-estimates: 7,000 - 100,000 Roma victims; Narcisa Lengel – Krizman 8570 Roma (including about 3000 unidentified persons); Milan Bulajić 40,000 Roma; Antun Miletić 25,000 Roma; Ivo Goldstein 15,000 Roma; Manachem Shelah and Dennis Reinhartz 26000 Roma

-problems:

lack of sources on the exact demographic situation of the Roma population on the eve of World War II

lack of documents from the Ustasha authorities, existence of the possibility of Roma "escape" to other areas (Serbia, Italy)

„Proportionately speaking" the largest genocide against the Roma population during the Second World War was carried out in the territory of the NDH (Dennis Reinhartz)



**MASS CRIMES AGAINST THE
ROMA**

CONCLUDING REMARKS

- systematic scientific research
- critical analysis of sources
- the culture of memory
- disperse research on mass crimes against Roma outside the Jasenovac camp



Hrastina, place of mass crime of Sinti victims



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European Union**
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Thank you for attention!

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