

The Tragedy of Slovak Jews

NATIONAL
CZECH &
SLOVAK
MUSEUM &
LIBRARY



***The Tragedy of Slovak Jews* tells the true story of the Jewish holocaust in Slovakia. Researched and prepared by The Museum of the Slovak National Uprising in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia, the first public exhibition of *The Tragedy of Slovak Jews* opened in 2002 at the Auschwitz – Birkenau State Museum in Auschwitz, Poland, where it is still on display today. In 2004, the NCSML partnered with the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising to translate it into English. The first exhibition in the United States was at the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library in Cedar Rapids, IA November 4, 2005 to February 26, 2006.**

The Tragedy of Slovak Jews examines the holocaust in relation to the development of Slovak society and the regime of the Slovak war republic in the years 1938 – 1945. The exhibition focuses on the key milestones of this story including the acceptance of the Jewish codex, the first wave of deportations (March-October 1942), the origin and activity of working and prison camps, the second wave of deportations in 1944, and the reprisals of Nazis and members of the Flying Squads of Hlinka's Guards in 1944 - 1945. It includes four thematic units.

1st Section: Jewish Community in Slovakia until 1938

Until 1938 the Jewish community was an integral part of the population of Slovakia. This unit documents the early settlement of Jewish citizens, progressing through the years of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the first Czechoslovak republic.

2nd Section: Slovak Society and the Solution of the Jewish Question (1938 – 1945)

Based on the Vienna arbitration of November 2, 1938, the territory of Southern Slovakia was ceded to Hungary by force. This unit documents the Slovak State as a totalitarian regime with its deep political and racial crisis, which meant great intervention in the lives of all citizens of Slovakia, but mostly the Jews. The first anti-Jewish governmental directives, made without the consultation of the Slovak parliament, excluded Jewish citizens from economic and social life, culminating in the acceptance of the Jewish Codex on September 9, 1941. This codex predestined the death of almost

80,000 Slovak Jews. The Slovak government deported almost 58,000 Jews from Slovakia to Nazi extermination camps from March to October 1942. Slovakia paid 500 Reich Marks for each deported Jew as an evacuation fee. An additional 14,000 persons were transported to Auschwitz and Terezin in the second wave of deportations from September 30 to November 2, 1944. German military units and members of the Flying Squads of Hlinka's Guards tortured and killed more than 5,300 persons (civilians, Roma and other racially persecuted persons) after the repression of the Slovak National Uprising in 1944 –1945. The victims were found in 211 mass graves and more than 90 villages were burned down.

3rd Section: Slovak Jews in Nazi Concentration Camps (1942 - 1945)

This unit documents the life of prisoners in the concentration camps in Third Reich territory as well as their participation in the illegal resistance movement and rescue actions in the camps. More than 800 prisoners escaped from the extermination camp, including many prisoners from Slovakia. After their successful escape, Alfréd Wetzler and Walter Rosenberg wrote an expose about the situation and murder in the concentration camps. "The March of Death" and the liberation of Auschwitz in January 1945 ends the unit.

4th Section: Participation of the Jews in Antifascist Resistance in Slovakia (1939 – 1945)

The Jews actively participated in fighting against Nazism and Fascism in spite of their persecution. The largest Zionist youth movement in Slovakia – Hashomer Hacair - and the Jewish National Fund – Keren Kayemett Lejisrael - were started in 1939. During the deportations in March 1942, the first partisan groups were created. Before the outbreak of the Slovak National Uprising, Jews established resistance organisations in detention camps in Nováky and in Sered'. At the beginning of the Uprising, a troupe of 300 Jewish men headed by Imrich Müller was formed in the camp of Nováky and later became part of the insurgent army. Overall, 1,650 Jews joined the resistance and heroically fought in the Slovak National Uprising, making hundreds of sacrifices.

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Exhibit Rental Information

The Tragedy of Slovak Jews is comprised of 33 panels with hundreds of original photos and documents pictured, a title panel, bilingual text in English and Slovak, and several reproduction artifacts and posters, including a concentration camp uniform.

Exhibit Contains:

- 33 Panels that are 26x57 inches
- Panels fit into 2 crates (59½ inches long, 16 inches wide and 29½ inches high;
- Reproduced artifacts and posters fit into 1 crate that is 26" long, 18" wide and 19" high
- Each large crate weighs about 140lbs. and the small crate weighs about 50 lbs.

Space Requirements:

- 82 liner feet (Wall mounted)

Time:

- Duration of exhibit is negotiable

Medium Security

- Periodic checks of exhibit area
- Open to the public only while there is an attendant in the building

Procedures for Booking:

Shipping arrangements are the responsibility of the borrowing institution. We advise working with the previous or next borrowing institution to minimize costs. We recommend shipping by Federal Express Freight (due to size). Crates may not be shipped in an uncovered vehicle. Host institution must provide a certificate of insurance for exhibit while on display and during transit (nail to nail coverage) prior to shipment.

Setting up the exhibition:

The exhibit is displayed by hanging panels on gallery walls. Each panel has small hooks in the back to accomplish this.

The NCSML traveling exhibition program is generously supported by American Czech Association, Los Angeles and American Sokol Los Angeles.

Questions about this exhibit?

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