

Third Reich

- 1933: Adolf Hitler becomes Chancellor.
- 1933 July 14: the *Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring* is published. It allows for compulsory sterilization in cases of "congenital mental defects, schizophrenia, manic-depressive psychosis, hereditary epilepsy...and severe alcoholism."
- **1934: The Ministry of the Interior begins to finance and coordinate Centres for Racial Hygiene and Genetic Research.**
- **1935 September 15: at the Nazi Party Rally in Nuremberg, proclamation of the *Law for the Protection and Honour of German Blood*.** Gypsies are not mentioned but included among those defined as being "of mixed blood and degenerate".
- **1936 June: the Ministry of Interior issues a circular containing new directives for "Fighting the Gypsy Plague".** The circular also authorizes police authorities to direct raids against the Gypsies "intensifying harassment, coercion and intimidation of the Gypsies." **Deportations** begin: the first document refers to the transport of some **hundred Gypsies to Dachau.**
- 1936: during the Berlin Olympics, in a bid to "cleanse" the city, 600 Gypsies are rounded up and marched under police guard to Marzhan, a former sewage dump, later officially declared a concentration camp. The next year, following pressure from the Nazi party, the **Gypsy camp at Frankfurt am Main** is set-up.
- 1936-7: with the support of the Germany Society for Research (DFG), psychologist and psychiatrist Dr. Ritter begins his investigation on Gypsies at the Racial Hygiene and Population Biology Research Unit of the Reich in Berlin. Aided by his assistant Eva Justin, investigations begin resulting in the **theory of the presence of the Wandertrieb gene in Gypsy blood, i.e. "an impulse to wander or travel"**.
- 1936-7: requests by mayors, local administrators and bodies for Public Safety increase urging central authorities "to build concentration camps for Gypsies", or "erect new labor camps for Gypsies"
- 1938: Tobia Portschy, governor of Stiria, sends the Fuhrer a memorandum in which he underlines the need to sterilize the Gypsies prior to their deportation to labour camps.
- 1938: May 3. The DFG agrees to give Dr. Ritter a "contribution of 15,000 German Marks to continue his investigation on the anti-socialism and biology of hybrids (Gypsies, Jews)."
- 1938: May 16: Himmler annexes the Central Office of the Reich to combat the Gypsy Menace to the Central Office of the Reich's Criminal Police (the RPKA). **The issue of "Gypsy disturbance" is centralized and removed from the jurisdiction of individual Länder.**
- **1938: December 8: Himmler issues a decree on the "Fight Against the Gypsy Menace",** the first law against the Gypsies as such; it establishes that, based on experience and biological-racial research, the Gypsy problem will be treated as a "matter of race. The distinction between "pure Gypsies", "half-breeds" and "vagabonds" implies the need to "determine the racial heritage of each Gypsy in the Reich".
- 1939: March: instructions regarding application of the "Fight Against the Gypsy Menace" highlight the acts to be performed: a **census, a biological investigation** on each individual and, as a consequence, the **issue of a differently coloured Reich certificate indicating Gypsy racial origin and degree of racial mixture** of the individual in question.

Italy

- **1938 January 17: Arturo Bocchini orders the ethnic cleansing of the Roma and Sinti in Istria**
- 1938: The “Race Manifesto” is published in the *Giornale d'Italia* and *Measures for Defence of the Italian Race* are issued; Gypsies are not mentioned.

Other European Countries

- 1934: Sweden: initiation of the sterilization of women belonging to Romany communities, a practice destined to continue until 1975.
- 1938: USSR: Stalin bans the use of the Roma language and culture.