

RG-50.944.0030

October 25, 2017, Bratislava, Slovakia

Summary

Valeria SLAMOVÁ (born PROPSTEIN) was born on February 12, 1928 in Csata, (Čata) Czechoslovakia, in a very religious Jewish family. There were only seven Jewish families in the village. Her father was a bookkeeper. She had an older sister, Viola, and a younger brother, Desider. They ate kosher at home, celebrated the Sabbath, and the high holidays. Her mother wore a wig. They had good relations with their Christian neighbors.

After the Hungarian occupation of the *Felvidék* (Upper Province, November 3-8, 1938), Hungarian gendarmes also appeared. They cut off the rabbi's beard and requisitioned goods from their pantry. Valeria saw her father cry. Before the occupation, her father had intended to go to Palestine.

She did not remember very well dates and places of her ordeal during the Holocaust. She kept referring to her memoirs that she wrote in the Hungarian and Slovak languages: "Return from Hell," (Visszatérés a pokolból). Her family was rounded up around May 8, 1944. It is not clear where they were held before being transferred to the ghetto in Léva (Levice) [set up on or after June 5]. She remembered the lack of hygiene in the ghetto and that it was close to the river. She also remembered that she arrived in Auschwitz on June 16. Initially Mengele selected her for the group that was directed to the gas chamber, but she pleaded to be together with her sister. The Czech *Kapo* gave her a huge slap in the face that threw her back into the line, and, the second time, she survived the selection. She was tattooed with the number 65657. She remained together with her two cousins. She worked in a kitchen. It is not clear, when and where she was transferred from Auschwitz. She mentioned Stutthof, where she saw a famous Czech actress, Luba Hermanova. They were placed in horse stalls. She also remembered being in a death march, which began on November 29, 1944, after a huge snowfall. She was liberated by the Russians. She lost 53 members of her extended family. She was the only one who survived of her immediate family.

The Russians put her on a train to Budapest. She petitioned to return to Czechoslovakia. She went to Bratislava, to a collection place for young people without family. She met her future husband there who was a Mauthausen survivor and a communist. With him she had two children.

For over twenty years, from the 1960s, they lived in Israel after her daughter managed to get an exit visa from Czechoslovakia.

She returned to Bratislava. She lives in an old-age home and is looked after by her daughter. Her son lives in Los Angeles.

She showed family pictures on her wall: children, grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren.