

**Re-remembering *Porraimos*:
Memories of the Roma Holocaust in Post-Socialist Ukraine and Russia**

by

Maria Konstantinov
BFA, University of Victoria, 2010

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program

© Maria Konstantinov, 2015
University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This thesis may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other means, without the permission of the author.

Supervisory Committee

**Re-remembering *Porraimos*:
Memories of the Roma Holocaust in Post-Socialist Ukraine and Russia**

by

Maria Konstantinov
BFA, University of Victoria, 2010

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Serhy Yekelchuk, Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies
Co-Supervisor

Dr. Margot Wilson, Department of Anthropology
Co-Supervisor

Abstract

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Serhy Yekelchuk, Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies
Co-Supervisor

Dr. Margot Wilson, Department of Anthropology
Co-Supervisor

This thesis explores the ways in which the Holocaust experiences and memories of Roma communities in post-Socialist Ukraine and Russia have been both remembered and forgotten. In these nations, the *Porraimos*, meaning the “Great Devouring” in some Romani dialects, has been largely silenced by the politics of national memory, and by the societal discrimination and ostracization of Roma communities. While Ukraine has made strides towards memorializing *Porraimos* in the last few decades, the Russian state has yet to do the same. I question how experiences of the *Porraimos* fit into Holocaust memory in these nations, why the memorialization of the *Porraimos* is important, what the relationship between communal and public memory is, and lastly, how communal Roma memory is instrumental in reshaping the public memory of the Holocaust. I approach these questions through a comparative, interdisciplinary framework that combines historical analysis, interviews with two Russian Roma individuals from St. Petersburg Russia, an overview of existing literature and film that focus on the *Porraimos*, and a survey of the memorials for Roma victims in Western, Central, and Eastern Europe. Using these methods, I determine how the *Porraimos* fits into political and cultural memory in these nations, and what the future of *Porraimos* memory might look like.

Table of Contents

Supervisory Committee	ii
Abstract	iii
Table of Contents	iv
Acknowledgments	vi
Dedication	vii
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: <i>Porraimos</i> and the Legacy of Soviet Ethnic Policies	6
0.1 The Roots of Prejudice: Roma in Ukraine and Russia prior to Communism	9
1.0 Early Soviet Policies towards the Roma, 1917–1930	11
1.1.1 The New Gypsy Worker – Developing a Rural and Urban Roma Workforce	14
1.1.2 Educated Gypsy—A Means of Mobilizing a New Soviet Roma	18
1.2 The Roma and Other Minorities in the Nazi-Occupied Soviet Union	21
1.3 Roma in the Soviet Union, Post-war to 1991	23
1.3.1 The Great Patriotic War – Post-War National Memory	26
1.4 The Roma in Ukraine and Russia: 1991 and onward	28
Chapter 2: The Challenges in Researching The <i>Porraimos</i> : Representations in Literature and Film	33
2.0.1 Writing on the Romani prior to the <i>Porraimos</i>	38
2.1 Early writing on The <i>Porraimos</i>	40
2.2 Contemporary Representations of the <i>Porraimos</i>	45
2.3 The <i>Porraimos</i> Visualized through Film	49
2.4 <i>Porraimos</i> Representations from the Outside	53
2.5 <i>Porraimos</i> Representation in the East?	56
Chapter 3: Interviewing Memory: Vadik, The <i>Porraimos</i> , and Silence	58
3.1 An Academic Void – Researching the Roma in Russia	61
3.1.1 Interview and Participant Observation Guidelines	63
3.2 Observing Memory: Interview and Active Silence in St. Petersburg	66
3.2.1 Meeting Vadik	69

3.2.2 The Initial Meeting.....	71
3.3 Getting Acquainted with Memory.....	73
3.4 Finding Insight in Silence.....	79
Chapter 4: Spaces and Places of Remembrance.....	81
4.1 Memorialization of the Roma Massacre at Babi Yar.....	84
4.2 <i>Porraimos</i> Memory in Russia.....	91
4.3 Memorialization: Eastern and Western Europe.....	94
4.4 Looking Forward: The Importance of Memorialization.....	101
Concluding Thoughts.....	103
Works Cited.....	108
Appendix A: Films About The <i>Porraimos</i>	116
Appendix B: Literature about The <i>Porraimos</i>	118
Appendix C: Invitation to Participate.....	122
Appendix D: Themes and Questions for Interviewing.....	123

Acknowledgments

It is with great gratitude that I would like to thank everyone who has helped me during my graduate studies at the University of Victoria. I sincerely thank my supervisors, Dr. Serhy Yekelchuk and Dr. Margot Wilson, for their patience, support, and guidance. I am very grateful to have worked with such exceptional and dedicated individuals over the years. I also thank the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies for providing me with a home during my studies.

An enormous thank you to my family – George, Tamara, Lisa and Annie - for championing and encouraging me until the end. Last but not least, a very special thank you to Guy Ferguson and Shannon Lake, for their help and moral support.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to everyone who participated in this research, asked questions about it, and shared it with others. It is this support and validation that helped get this thesis to the finish line.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of the *Porraimos*.

Introduction

Holocaust memory is a continually evolving political and cultural entity, although certain minority experiences have continued to exist outside of it. The Romani¹ Holocaust experience, *Porraimos*², has arguably only recently³ begun to enter the public memory of Western and Central Europe, while in Eastern Europe, any memory of the Holocaust⁴ has only recently been recognized. So, what form does the memory of the *Porraimos* take in Eastern Europe? Although memorialization in the Soviet Union focuses on Soviet civilians and Jewish victims, no efforts were ever made by the State to maintain, memorialize or mourn the genocide of Soviet Roma⁵ under Nazi occupation during the Second World War. While Ukraine has made strides towards memorializing the *Porraimos*, the Russian state has yet to commemorate Roma victimhood by including

¹ The term “Romani” refers to the ethnic group commonly known as the Gypsies. A “Rom” is an individual member of the Roma, either male or female.

² The *Porraimos* or the “Great Devouring,” a Romani term used to refer to the Romani Holocaust experience (Hancock 37). For the purposes of this thesis, I use the term *Porraimos* when speaking about the Romani Holocaust experience and generally reserve “Holocaust” to refer to all ethnic minorities of the genocide perpetrated by Nazi Germany and its allies.

³ The highly publicized unveiling of *The Memorial to The Sinti and Roma Victims of National Socialism* on October 24th 2012, in Berlin, Germany, generated substantial national and international attention to the subject of Romani Holocaust history and victimhood. This memorial has arguably been the most substantial act for acknowledging the *Porraimos* in Western Europe in the in the last few decades.

⁴ The term “Holocaust” used in this thesis refers to the “systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder” of Jews, Romani, and other minorities by the Nazi regime and its collaborators (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum).

⁵ The term “Roma” refers to a subgroup of the Romani who are geographically tied to Central and Eastern Europe. Although “Roma” is often used as an exonym for “Romani”, in this thesis I use it to refer to Romani communities in Central and Eastern European countries. Soviet Roma were primarily made up of two subgroups, one living in Soviet Ukraine known as *Servitka* (Серви) Roma, while the subgroup living in Soviet Russia are referred to as *Ruska* Roma. The *Ruska* (Russian) Roma are a subgroup of the Romani that live primarily in Russia but also in Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Belarus. This group sometimes refers to itself as the *Xaladitka* Roma. They are descended from the Romani groups that entered Russia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These same Roma communities continue to live in Ukraine and Russia today (Marushiakova and Popov 60).

their Holocaust experiences in either states national public memory relating to the Holocaust and the Second World War.

Due to the continued social and political discrimination of minorities in Russia and Ukraine, the Holocaust experiences of the Roma have little platform for preservation and memorialization. This is due to a legacy of a homogenized commemoration of the war that was established in the Soviet era, as well as the contemporary politics of memory⁶ in Russia and Ukraine. As seventy years have passed since the end of the Second World War, there are now very few first - and second - generation survivors from Western European nations who can act as primary Roma sources concerning the *Porraimos* experiences, and even fewer from post-Soviet Eastern European nations. For the sake of our future understanding of this often forgotten aspect of Holocaust history, it is important to analyze the ways in which the *Porraimos* has been publicly memorialized and presented, and how its history has been publicly silenced.

This thesis explores the contemporary status of communal and public memory regarding the *Porraimos* in general, with a specific focus on memory and memorialization in Russia and Ukraine from 1991 until present day. I have chosen this focus primarily because no in-depth study exists on the status of memory relating to the genocide of Roma individuals within Nazi-occupied areas of Soviet Russia and Ukraine. In addition, as Russian and Ukraine are the national and ethnic origins of my family, the topic is personally significant. Using a comparative, interdisciplinary framework, I question how the *Porraimos* has been presented, shared, and memorialized by Romani communities in Eastern Europe. I also present the relationship between communal and

⁶ When speaking of the 'politics of memory', I refer to the ways in which events are both remembered and forgotten, based on how they are politically instrumentalized on collective and historical memory.

public memorialization, specifically to understand what shapes the *Porraimos* memory in Russia and Ukraine. I analyze representations of the *Porraimos* in (academic and popular) literature, film, historical and archival texts, contemporary commemorative efforts, and interviews conducted with a *Ruska Roma* family in St. Petersburg, Russia. Examples of commemorative events for the *Porraimos* in Western and Central Europe provide a context for considering the lack of remembrance in the Russia and Ukraine.

The major research questions of the thesis are the following:

1. How have experiences of the *Porraimos* been approached by researchers, and what are the challenges in researching and representing *Porraimos* experiences?
2. How and where do experiences of the *Porraimos* fit into greater state-sponsored Holocaust memory in Ukraine and Russia, as well as in other Western, Central, and Eastern European countries?
3. Why is the memorialization of the *Porraimos* important for both the Roma communities in Ukraine and Russia and the ‘greater Holocaust narrative’?
4. What is the relationship between communal and public memory, and in what ways is communal Romani memory instrumental in reshaping the public memory of the *Porraimos*?

These fundamental questions are addressed through each of the four chapters that make up the thesis.

In Chapter One, I contextualize my discussion of the representation and memorialization of the *Porraimos* through an introduction to the history of the Roma in Russia and Ukraine, both before the Soviet era and during the period of the Soviet Union.

I then focus on the legacy left by Communist policies particularly in terms of the socio-political status of the Roma and the public memory of the *Porraimos*, as well as the Holocaust in general. The contemporary status of the Roma in Russia and Ukraine is a direct result of Soviet policies that aimed to assimilate minority ethnicities with dominant Russian culture, but failed to address the racism and discriminatory attitudes towards some ethnic groups that were, and still are, deeply ingrained in mainstream Russian and Ukrainian culture. I will be providing firsthand examples of this kind of racism and prejudice in Chapter Three. Chapter One also presents a history of the genocide of the Roma in Nazi-occupied Soviet territories from 1941 to 1944.

Chapter Two considers how the *Porraimos* has been represented and remembered through literature and film, as well as the difficulties that researchers have faced in conducting research. By providing an analysis of the “state of the art” of literature and film concerned with topics of the *Porraimos*, the chapter offers insight into the approaches of researchers and authors in their written and visual presentation of Romani Holocaust history. There exists a limited number of primary Romani sources for the experiences of the *Porraimos*, primarily because these experiences are contained in oral history. The literary sources that do exist share the experiences of Western and Central Romani individuals who have adapted literary mediums, or have worked with researchers to document their experiences. Due to this, analyzing the methods and approaches used by researchers is important. In doing so, I present both the merits and the shortcomings of various approaches to studying and presenting the *Porraimos*, as well as the ways in which *Porraimos* memory has been constructed in literature and film within social and cultural contexts.

Chapter Three presents research findings from my field trip to St. Petersburg, Russia, during the summer of 2012, including interviews with Vadik⁷ and his immediate family. My interviews with Vadik, and my experiences while in St. Petersburg, provide insight into the perspectives of one *Ruska* Roma family regarding communal and public *Porraimos* memory and memorialization. Although my research with Vadik was limited in time and scope, I came away with a new understanding into the ways that Roma are perceived and treated by non-Roma, perspectives that reinforce arguments that there is little space for the *Porraimos* in Russian historical and cultural memory.

The fourth and concluding chapter considers past unsuccessful efforts of memorialization of the *Porraimos* in Russia and Ukraine, as compared to the ones in Western and Central European countries that have been successfully erected and maintained. The efforts in Western and Central Europe include the work of Roma and non-Roma organizations that have attempted and in many cases succeeded in securing public commemorative spaces not only for the purposes of memorializing the victims of Romani Holocaust genocide but also for creating a dialogue around the social, political, and economic hardships experienced by Romani communities throughout the world. This research will serve to contribute to the modest body of work on the Roma Holocaust experience, and the almost non-existent subfield of the *Porraimos* and its place in the political and cultural memory of the Holocaust in Eastern Europe. By attempting to determine in what form Roma Holocaust memory currently exists in Russia and Ukraine, I hope to create a foundation on which future research on Holocaust memorialization in these nations can build.

⁷ Vadik is a pseudonym that I have allocated to the individual interviewed, as per his request to remain anonymous.

Chapter 1: *Porraimos* and the Legacy of Soviet Ethnic Policies

In present-day Russia and Ukraine, the memory of the *Porraimos* exists only within the Roma community and receives little or no acknowledgement from the State. This is due in part to how the victims of World War II have been remembered generally in the Soviet Union and after the Union's collapse, and also to the ongoing social ostracism of the Roma in these countries. The current socio-political status of the Roma in post-Soviet states has been shaped by the ambiguous and inconsistent ethnic policies of the Communist period, dating from the introduction of *Korenizatsiia* in 1923 to *Perestroika* in the early 1980s (Marushiakova and Popov 2). These policies were aimed at integrating the Roma, along with all other ethnic minority communities, into a new, multinational Soviet culture by presenting minorities with socio-economic and educational opportunities that were once inaccessible to them. Despite these aims, Soviet authorities neglected to provide the Roma with adequate assistance to make the transition from marginalized minority to a population that was expected to work alongside the dominant ethnic groups, which still held traditional prejudices.

Although the Roma experienced significant cultural and socio-economic growth during the early Soviet era, they continued to face entrenched racism and discrimination, rooted in pre-Soviet times (Lemon 64). No effective measures were taken by Soviet authorities to encourage the popular acceptance of the Roma's social and cultural transition (Crowe 175). Certain Soviet policies, such as the ethnic affirmative-action policy of *Korenizatsiia*, aimed to provide national minorities like the Roma with modern culture and educational opportunities, thus encouraging their equal participation in socialist society. Yet the Soviet social-engineering effort also involved turning all minorities into "toilers," including an attempt in the 1920s at voluntary re-location of some Roma and Jews in particular to agricultural regions and newly developed

production facilities in capital cities. The drive to settle the Roma and make them into conscientious proletarians provoked a backlash from non-Roma Soviet citizens who wanted to remain segregated from this minority group (Crowe 193).

In the past twenty years, the Roma in Russia and Ukraine have faced unemployment, social exclusion, racial violence, and increasing stigmatization. Moreover, the dissolution of the Soviet Union has left the Roma unsure of their future within continually changing social and political spaces (Kalinin and Kalinina 245-255). Arguably, continued racism and discrimination towards the Roma has affected the place of the *Porraimos* and its victims in the collective memory of World War II in both Russia and Ukraine.

In order to understand the contemporary status of Roma in Russia and Ukraine, and ultimately its effect on the way the *Porraimos* has been remembered, it is imperative to consider the history of ethnic minority groups under Communism. This past has not only shaped the Roma's contemporary socio-political status but has contributed to the absence of a *Porraimos* acknowledgment in post-Soviet Eastern European nations. This chapter looks at the history of the Roma in Russia and Ukraine during the Soviet era (1917-1991), as well as their current status within the modern-day states, in an effort to understand how these socio-political relations have affected the memory of the *Porraimos*. I begin by looking at the policies that came to shape the relationships between Roma communities and mainstream Russian and Ukrainian society, seeking the roots of the enduring discriminatory attitudes towards them and other minority groups. Although these sentiments can be found during time periods earlier than the Communist era, I argue that the Soviet regime perpetuated and strengthened them by placing the Roma in new and potentially compromising socio-economic positions while at the same time neglecting to address the existing prejudice harboured by the dominant population. The second half of this chapter looks at the *Porraimos* in the Nazi-occupied Soviet Union and its treatment during and after the war. I argue that the treatment of the *Porraimos* and

Porraimos survivors is a direct result of the failure of the Soviet minority policies to effectively address racism directed at the Roma, and that ultimately this failure prevented the Roma from finding a comfortable and safe place in modern Soviet society.

Before considering what effects Soviet ethnic policies have had on minority cultures such as the Roma and on the memory of the *Porraimos*, I will briefly outline the history of the prejudice experienced by the Roma in Eastern Europe. With this review, I aim to create a foundation for both the discussion of Roma experiences under Communism and my analysis of present-day historical memory.

0.1 The Roots of Prejudice: Roma in Ukraine and Russia prior to Communism

From the Roma's first appearance in the Byzantine Empire during the early thirteenth century (Crowe 151; Hancock 2), prejudicial and discriminatory attitudes towards them have been deeply ingrained in Christian Europe. The earliest known records of Roma migration into Europe refer to them as "Egyptians," from which the terms "Gypsy," *Tsinganos*, and *Tsygan* are derived (Hancock 329; Matras 16-17). These terms were also used in reference to slaves, foreigners, travellers, and nomads, who were seen to possess the same characteristics associated with the Roma, and vice versa (Matras 16). The Roma did not define themselves as having a "homeland," which further perpetuated the perception on the part of settled Europeans that they were a naturally rootless, lawless people. This view rendered the Roma undesirable as neighbours and unemployable, which in turn reinforced the notion on the part of locals that the Roma were work-shy and lazy (Matras 54). The Roma would come to symbolize society's ills and were considered to be a threat to traditional values. These negative and often hostile attitudes towards the Roma spread throughout Europe over the centuries as the Roma continued to live outside of traditional societies (Matras 31).

These sentiments followed the Roma as they migrated eastward into the Balkans as early as the fourteenth century (Marushiakova and Popov 36) and into Crimea by the early to mid-fifteenth century⁸ (Crowe 1996: 152). They were described as dark-skinned foreigners travelling in clans (*kumpanias*) of around one hundred persons, offering agricultural and craft services in exchange for food and other goods (Crowe 153). By the early eighteenth century, the Roma had made their way to Russia, most likely having come from the Caucasus, and to Ukraine by way of Serbia (Millar 137). From the time of those early documented appearances, the Roma were viewed socially and culturally as

⁸ It was initially believed that the Roma had arrived in Ukraine and Russia from Hungary, Moldova, and Romania as opposed to originating from India (Hancock 5).

outsiders, a view that persisted into the nineteenth century (Crowe 154). The often romanticized image of the *Tsygan* in Russian art, exemplified by Vasily Kalafati's popular opera *Tsygane* (Gypsies) based on Alexander Pushkin's 1824 poem by the same name (Smith 102), perpetuated the myth of a free and untameable *Tsygane* spirit, one that manifested itself through song and dance. This idea of the Roma was a product of an aristocratic imagination and contributed to the popularization of musical gypsy choirs⁹ throughout Russia (Crowe 162-63; Lemon 29).

By 1824 in Imperial Russian history, many Roma communities had given up travelling and were settled in various cities and towns throughout Ukraine and Russia, although some still lived a nomadic life (Crowe 159). A few families had gained considerable wealth and status as members of gypsy choirs in major cities such as St. Petersburg and Moscow (Crowe 161). These families were often said to have "worn 'Russian' clothing and drunk tea from samovars," which at the time were considered markers of affluence in lower-middle-class Russian culture (O'Keeffe 288). Despite some Roma groups seeming to have found a niche within Russian culture, the majority continued to be seen as second-class citizens with suspicious intentions and beliefs (Matras 107).

⁹ These choirs were comprised of Roma musicians, dancers, and singers, and were hired for various celebrations, such as weddings and birthdays.

1.0 Early Soviet Policies towards the Roma, 1917–1930

The revolution of 1917 generated a series of social and political changes that would alter the lives of all minority ethnic groups within the new Soviet Union. When the Bolsheviks seized power, they did not yet have clear or coherent policies towards the various Soviet minority nationalities (Martin 68). At the time, counterrevolutionary movements had encouraged the Bolsheviks to formulate a policy aimed at disarming nationalism (Martin 71). During this time, Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin wanted the support of ethnic minorities and aimed to achieve this through the creation of a multi-ethnic state. The introduction of Lenin's indigenization in 1923, known in Russian as *Korenizatsiia* ("putting roots down"), aimed to enable the development of the cultural identities of various ethnic minorities and indigenous groups while at the same time assimilating them politically into a socialist yet multicultural Soviet nation (Kalinin and Kalinina 242; Martin 198). To promote this policy, Lenin and the State aimed to place the power of restructuring and socializing these minority nations in the hands of high-status individuals from various groups, the expectation being that such indigenous Bolshevik cadres would promote and enforce the socialization of their nations (Martin 73; Stewart 189). The goal of this policy was to generate considerable growth in cultural, educational, and political activity for minority groups, and was ultimately aimed at mobilizing these minority groups towards the establishment of socialism (Martin 81). Because there was no Roma territorial entity in the Soviet Union that could serve as a vehicle for implementing such measures, this policy led to the formation of the All-Russian Union of Gypsies (ARUG), a group of educated Roma in Leningrad dedicated to promoting Roma language, Roma culture, and Soviet socialism (Marushiakova and Popov 158-59; Stewart 57). The group was dissolved in 1928, however, once the state disbanded civil

organizations, and no government committee was created in its place (Marushiakova and Popov 159).

This early and very brief period of *Korenizatsiia* can be seen as a progressive period for ethnic minority groups, in so much as the Roma were now able to participate socially and politically in a way they had not been able to prior to the revolution. For a short while, the policy allowed Roma individuals to participate in government functions, promote their culture through literary means, and enlist their children in schools that used the *Ruska Roma*¹⁰ dialect as the language of instruction (Kalinin and Kalinina 236). The socio-cultural transformations of *Korenizatsiia* eventually ended under Joseph Stalin in the early 1930s, as they did not correspond with his revised minorities policies, which aimed to encourage the domination of the Russian language as the common Soviet tongue (Roucek 19). It seems that the general Soviet view of nationalism (and national cultures) saw it as a “bourgeois phenomenon,” and that eventually all minority cultures would “certainly” undergo the process of assimilation (Stalin 196-97). During this time, some Roma chose to renounce identification with their ethnic group out of fear of being marginalized and, ultimately, discriminated against by the non-Roma population (Kalinin and Kalinina 239). Many ethnic Roma did not claim *Tsygane* identity as their official nationality, identifying instead as ethnically Russian or Ukrainian (Crowe 140-41). In its attempts to avoid prejudicial or discriminatory attention, the Roma population of the Soviet Union underrepresented itself in official statistics. It is most likely these inaccurate statistics in part prevented the development of large-scale cultural and labour measures. Such low population figures exaggerated the Roma’s minority status, leaving researchers of the Holocaust with contradictory and fragmentary information relevant to the study of

¹⁰ The *Ruska Roma* dialect is a regional Romani dialect spoken by Roma communities in Russia.

the *Porraimos* and the history of the Roma in the USSR.

The Soviet authorities aimed to make the Roma communities “modern” and integrate them into the new Soviet nation through the introduction of cooperative farms, artisan workshops, and the promotion of Roma language and literature. Despite the cultural and socio-political growth that these policies generated, they also presented new problems as they forced Roma communities into closer interaction, and sometimes economic competition, with other Soviet ethnic groups such as Jews and ethnic Ukrainians. By analyzing how these policies contributed to the construction of Soviet and post-Soviet Roma identity, as well as the historical memory of the Holocaust, we can develop a better understanding of how the legacy of the *Porraimos* has come to be forcefully forgotten in Russia and Ukraine.

1.1.1 The New Gypsy Worker – Developing a Rural and Urban Roma Workforce

The Soviet authorities saw the Romani nomadic lifestyle and traditional occupations as a sign of “backwardness” to be corrected if the Romani were to participate fully in the construction of the socialist nation-state. During this period in early Soviet history, the Communist party aimed to learn of the traditional and “outdated” cultural practices of minority groups through the process of *razoblacheniye* (unmasking) (Kemper 441). Soviet orientalists sought to reveal the de facto class relationships in traditional societies throughout the Union and to “understand” the practices that would supposedly prevent these groups from undergoing a socialist transformation (Jersild 15; Kemper 441). Knowledge of various historical cultural practices was used to engage respective groups through specifically crafted socialist propaganda, anchored with representations of regional folk traditions and histories as a means of conveying the State’s supposed cultural understanding and sensitivity (Kemper 444).

As with the Roma, the Bolshevik ideologues wanted to “correct” the Jews’ role in the production process as primarily small traders. The Tsarist government prevented the Jews from owning land or living in the cities; the Soviets sought to undo this legacy by encouraging the Jews to farm the land and work in the factories. Similarly, early on in *Korenizatiia*, the Roma were strongly encouraged to adopt a non-itinerant lifestyle on rural agricultural land in exchange for subsidized property costs, access to transportation and tax exemptions (Crowe 175). Other minority groups, such as Jews and indigenous populations from the Russian interior and the Caucasus, were allotted similar settlements throughout southern Russia and, primarily, Ukraine (Dekel-Chen 850-851; Martin 34). The creation of these settlements, which were sometimes given the status of “autonomous” nationality districts, coincided with the State’s desire to put the ethnic minority groups in charge of the lands they occupied. The First All-Union Census of the

Soviet Union in 1926 indicated a total Roma population of 61,227, with any estimated 39,089 having settled in rural Ukraine (Collum and Lucero 139; Crowe 176). However, this number is very likely inaccurate, as many Roma would have not declared themselves *Tsygan* in their passport nationality.

The Roma's resistance of the State-mandated relocation to agricultural land led to the government's October 1926 decree titled *O nadelenii zemlei tsygan, perekhodyachshikh k trudovomu osedlomu obrazu zhizni* ("On the allotment of land to the Gypsies for the transition to a working and settled way of life") (Crowe 175). This decree prioritized the issuing of subsidized land to Roma communities that sought to undertake agricultural work, and required local and regional authorities to provide these communities with the material and institutional aid needed to run their farms. (Crowe 175-76; O'Keeffe 310). The ARUG (then still in existence) was entrusted with facilitating these transactions as well as recruiting Roma families and communities for agricultural settlements (O'Keeffe 312). The small numbers of Roma who attempted to continue living nomadically were harassed by local police, who branded them as non-productive and bourgeois, issued penalty fines, and coerced them into relocating to existing cooperative farms (Marushiakova and Popov 165).

By 1927, six collective farms, or *kolkhoze* (*s. kolkhoz*), were set up throughout the USSR, with most of them located in the Ukrainian republic: *Tsyganskii Trud* (A Gypsy's Labour) in the Caucasus; *Svoboda* (Freedom) in Kardimovo in the Smolensk Region, *Novaya Zhizn* (New Life) in the Gorki Region; *Novoe Schastie* (New Happiness) in the Sarapul Region; *Krasnyi Put* (Red Road) in Sumy; and *Laskovaya* (My Affection) in the Kharkov Region (Marushiakova and Popov 165). By this time, roughly five hundred Ukrainian Roma families had been allotted land by the state; three more cooperative

farms had been established, in addition to the original six. This number would increase to twenty-five by 1932, and to thirty-two by 1938 (Marushiakova and Popov 165), yet only 2.3% of all Roma in the USSR were living in *kolkhoze* (Marushiakova and Popov 177). Despite the various promises of support made by the state to the Roma who had transitioned from their nomadic lifestyle to the *kolkhoze*, little to no investment in agriculture and agricultural workers was made by the state at that time (Marushiakova and Popov 180). Most cooperative farms run by ethnic minority groups in the Soviet Union were poorly regulated and financially impoverished (Dekel-Chen 853). Faced with resistance and unrest by non-Roma locals who felt threatened by an increase in the numbers of ethnic minorities in their region and the perceived problems inherent in the re-allotment of land to ethnic minorities, life within the *kolkhoze* was far from ideal (Marushiakova and Popov 181). It seems that despite the Soviet government's stated efforts to modernize and empower the Roma and other groups both economically and culturally, its true policy was one of neglect of ethnic minorities.

In addition to establishing a rural agricultural workforce, Soviet authorities instituted the creation of a Roma "working class" by developing artisan workshops known as *artels* (s. *artel*) in Kharkov, Leningrad, and Moscow, as a means of capitalizing on traditional Roma trades such as metalsmithing (Kalinin and Kalinina 10). Many Roma found success working as artisans in industrialized cities in the decades that followed, making and trading goods that were in short supply, such as those made of iron, copper, and other metals. Similar *artels* were created to focus on new forms of production—*Tsigkhimprom* (Gypsy chemical industry), *Tsigpishcheprom* (Gypsy food industry), *Tsigkhimlabor* (Gypsy chemical laboratory)—producing various paints, chemicals, and

packaging for food products (Marushiakova and Popov 171-72). Life in the *artels*, as on the farms, was difficult, with hundreds of Roma working in poorly ventilated and unkempt factories, with virtually no support from Soviet authorities for facility maintenance or improvement (Marushiakova and Popov 302). In 1936, the State issued a series of decrees aimed at improving working conditions and management, but like earlier promises, the decrees were not enacted and no funding was allotted to improve the situation in the *artels*. Eventually most were dissolved (Collum and Lucero 145).

The short-lived *artels* exacerbated the hostile attitudes towards the Roma from the surrounding non-Roma population, which blamed the Roma for doing work that had once been done by ethnic Russians and for supposedly profiting at the expense of the majority population, which had now fallen on hard times (Kalinin and Kalinina 245). Social tensions in both the workplace and the community increased, and the Roma were criticized for doing what the State had initially encouraged them to do (Kalinin and Kalinina 246; Stewart 59).

Despite the overall failure of the *kolkhoze* and the *artels* to integrate the Roma into society and the workforce, one element of *Korenizatsiia* did create new opportunities for the Roma. The introduction of texts in the *Ruska* Roma dialect—on cultural, historical, and political matters pertaining to the Roma—created new opportunities for those interested in earning an education or participating in politics, and literalized the *Ruska* Roma dialect for the first time.

1.1.2 Educated Gypsy—A Means of Mobilizing a New Soviet Roma

Arguably, when it came to language and literary culture, the Roma fared quite well during the early Soviet period. A wide array of Roma literary publications was circulated during *Korenizatsiia*. Many of these State issued publications focused on Romani folklore; others were pro-Communist works written by Soviet Roma activists encouraging the social and cultural development of the Roma (Marushiakova and Popov 183). Prominent Communist journals geared towards socializing the Roma included the *Romani Zroya* (Roma Daybreak), *Nevo Drom* (New Way), and *Butyariitko Roma* (Working Roma), all of which employed Romani folklore in conjunction with Marxist-Leninist socio-political literature to engage its readers (Kalinin and Kalinina 202-203). In addition to these journals, a series of Romani-Russian dictionaries and grammar books focused on the creation of a short-lived alphabet based on the *Ruska* Roma dialect. The schools established to educate the Roma used this dialect, which was the sole Soviet-approved language of Roma instruction, despite the various dialects spoken by Roma throughout the nation. Many of these schools were not easily accessible to all Roma, as the majority of the Roma population in the USSR inhabited the Ukrainian and spoke the *Servitka* Roma dialect (Crowe 175). In the eighty-six schools established, the majority of which were in Russia, classes were taught in the *Ruska* Roma dialect to both children and adults (Crowe 187; Kalinin and Kalinina 291). As part of the State's drive to encourage Roma communities to assimilate into the new and modern Soviet nation through the development of education, literature, and language, many of these schools and publications focused on denouncing "ancient" and "backward" Romani customs, labeling them as bourgeois and harmful to the development of the new Soviet Roma (Crowe 193). Similar literature was published for other Soviet minority groups, such as indigenous groups in central and southern Asia as well as the Jewish population in Ukraine and

southern Russia (Martin 67), all in an effort to educate them on the “destructive” effects their traditions had on the “advancement” and “well-being” of their communities (Kalinin and Kalinina 299). These texts and educational materials aimed to quickly remove all that made Roma culture (and that of other communities) unique and to replace it with a codified folklore that better suited Communist ideology (Kalinin and Kalinina 300). The price to be paid for integration into Soviet society and status as a national minority equal to that of other minorities was the renunciation of their history and communal identity. This created dissension within the Roma community, with some individuals turning on those who were willing, even eager, to pursue integration into Soviet society and politics (Kalinin and Kalinina 280-84).

By the mid-1930s, Stalin’s support for the cultural and socio-political development of the Roma community was coming to an end as these policies were abandoned in favour of the imposition of “mainstream” Russian identity (Martin 259; Marushiakova and Popov 6). The literary and linguistic publications that aimed to encourage the use of the *Ruska* Roma dialect were phased out, Roma schools were shut down, and any other policies that aimed to maintain the specific ethnicity and culture of the Roma were done away with (Crowe 356). In 1936, a new concept of the “Soviet people” suggested that the maintenance of ethnic differences was now superseded by the more important task of creating a culturally homogenized Soviet people (Crowe 358). The maintenance, or even consideration, of the cultural traditions and histories of minority nations was now regarded as an obstacle to progress and modernization of the Soviet Union (Martin 22). In line with classical Marxist ideas about the future merging of nations, the State’s long-term vision had always been to gradually eliminate all qualities that made the various ethnic minority cultures distinct from each other, and distinct from

mainstream Russian culture. Stalin's neglect in combating the prejudice and racism experienced by minority groups like the Roma further illustrates its lack of long-term commitment to supporting minority cultures. By encouraging the Roma and other socially marginal groups to integrate into the social fabric of the new Soviet state, without acknowledging or condemning racist attitudes among the majority population, the State under Stalin served to fuel prejudices already harboured by the majority.

The Nazi occupation of the eastern regions of the Soviet Union in the following years (1941-44) brought about drastic changes in the treatment of ethnic minorities. During the Nazi occupation, and the deliberate extermination of an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 Roma (Crowe 186) and one to two million Jews (Vogelsang and Larsen 2002) that came with it, the Soviet state did not openly acknowledge that the Nazis were targeting specific ethnic groups, instead claiming the victimization of all Soviet civilians (Holler 145-46). However, the German policies in the occupied territories clearly reflected ideas of Nazi racial hierarchy, which differed radically from the egalitarian Communist ideology.

1.2 The Roma and Other Minorities in the Nazi-Occupied Soviet Union

In the early 1930s, the National Socialist party had begun to target Roma residing in Germany and other Nazi-occupied countries in Western Europe (Kenrick and Puxon 144). By the time the German armies occupied the western part of the Soviet Union, the Nazi state had developed policies for Roma and Jews in the Soviet Union, aimed at the systematic annihilation of both groups (Heuss 24; Holler 155; Kenrick and Puxon 14). As with the early Soviet policies that meant to undo “backward” and “unproductive” ways of life among certain ethnic minorities, the instructions issued to Nazi occupiers called on them to treat the Roma as being made up of two distinct groups: the settled Roma and the nomadic Roma (Holler 115). Only the nomadic Roma, along with the Jews, were to be deported to concentration camps (Ducey 125; Holler 116; Kenrick and Puxon 90-91); sedentary Roma were to be treated like other Soviet civilians of non-German background (Holler 116). Over the course of the war, however, the Nazi treatment of Roma in the occupied Soviet Union changed, until there was no longer a distinction made between the two groups (Ducey 125).

During the late 1930s, the Soviet papers began to report on the persecution of the Roma, the Jews, and other minority groups in Nazi Germany and its occupied nations (Ducey 120; Holler 117). Although the Soviet media and authorities admitted that the Nazi party in Germany was targeting specific minority groups, the same acknowledgment was not made about the Nazi occupation policies in the Soviet Union (Ducey 121). Rather, the victims targeted in the Soviet Union were presented by the Soviet media as “Soviet civilians,” despite the Nazis’ specific, stated agendas for the Jews and the Roma (Dekel-Chen 755; Ducey 127). It is clear that the Soviet state intentionally homogenized

the victims of Nazi occupiers in order to mobilize anti-Nazi sentiment across the entire Soviet population (Crowe 211).

We now know that specific orders were issued to the SS *Einsatzgruppen*¹¹ operating in the Baltic states to target all “Gypsies wandering around the country” and “[treat] them in the same way as the Jews” because the Roma allegedly: (a) carried diseases such as typhus, (b) were unreliable elements who could not be put to useful work, and (c) were harmful to the German cause as they would allegedly pass on hostile news reports (Holler 176). It is estimated that six thousands of seventeen thousand Roma from the Baltic region were killed at a concentration camp at Trastianiets, near Minsk in Belarus (Holler 180); a few hundred more were transported to Auschwitz (Kenrick and Puxon 95). Historians speculate that many Roma were able to flee eastward to unoccupied regions of the USSR (Blutinger 125; Guy 24; Holler 122), with estimates totalling between 30,000 and 50,000 killed out of the estimated 110,000 Roma residing in the USSR (Holler 255-56).

¹¹ *Einsatzgruppe A* covered the Baltic States and was attached to the SS Army Group North (Holler 131-133). *Einsatzgruppe B* covered the western region of Russia, while *Einsatzgruppe C* was in charge of the southern regions, notably Ukraine, where the largest population of Roma in all of the USSR had been killed (Holler 204-205).

1.3 Roma in the Soviet Union, Post-war to 1991

By the end of the war, Stalin had reinstated a police state, which suppressed all the local and ethnic patriotism that had been encouraged previously during *Korenizatsiia* and later, as a mobilization tool during the war (Crowe 186-87). Any surviving Roma *kolkhoze* and *artels* still in operation were disbanded by late 1948, their members ordered to join other collectives (Crowe 187). With Stalin's death in 1953, Nikita Khrushchev ushered in the political and social reformation of de-Stalinization, ostensibly aimed at recovering the Leninist model of socialism (Martin 374). Strict regulations of the workforce continued, with the release of the 5 October 1956 decree *O priobshchenii k trudu tsygan, zanimayushchikhsya brodyazhnichestvom* ("The inclusion of itinerant Gypsies in labour activities") (Crowe 188; Kalinin and Kalinina 244), which aimed to settle any remaining nomadic Roma. The new decree reaffirmed the criminalization of the nomadic lifestyle and unemployment, and made it mandatory for Roma without other demonstrable employment to work on newly consolidated *kolkhoze* (Crowe 189). This law was not well enforced, however, and some Roma continued to live a quasi-nomadic lifestyle, often with little to no remonstrance (Kalinin and Kalinina 225; Marushiakova and Popov 164). Many continued to relocate as seasonal workers, as well as livestock traders, drovers, farm workers, and street merchants (Crowe 189). Moreover, this decree did not target Roma individuals who had settled prior to the Second World War (Crowe 190).

Based on a post-war increase in the Roma population, it is apparent that the Roma had integrated with the rest of Soviet society to a significant degree. The USSR's first post-war census in 1959 showed a Soviet Gypsy population of 132,014, a 49.7 percent

increase over figures recorded in 1939, making up 0.6 percent of the nation's total population (Crowe 190; Kalinin and Kalinina 245). This figure was to significantly increase again by 1970, indicating a population of 175,335, and again in 1979, with a population of 209,157 (Crowe 190). However, scholars estimate that the real numbers in the Soviet Union were most likely two or three times higher than reported, as many individuals did not self-identify as members of the *Tsygane* population because of the social stigma still associated with the label (Crowe 195; Holler 307). Despite restrictions on the nomadic lifestyle and the State's uncertain political climate, it is clear the population growth amongst the Roma was not negatively affected and that the transition to a settled way of life had now largely been accomplished (Kalinin and Kalinina 261).

Under Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost* ("openness") and *perestroika* ("restructuring") in the late 1980s, a new liberal atmosphere stimulated the self-expression of ethnic minority groups and their specific cultural practices (Crowe 201). With the reinstatement of many Roma theatres and the emergence of the popular television series *The Gypsy*, as well as the release of a series of televised films, a portrayal of Roma culture in its most stereotypical embodiment became popular (Kalinin and Kalinina 240). Yet this inclusion of colourful Roma characters in Soviet media perpetuated cultural stereotypes about the Roma, including their supposed duplicity and supposed gross lack of education (Kalinin and Kalinina 240; Lemon 28-29). Other ethnic groups received similar treatment in cultural media, with ethnic folk traditions and practice being portrayed as kitsch elements within Soviet society.

Reactions to the revived presence of the Roma in Soviet artistic society and media were mixed, with public surveys throughout the 1980s showing a persistence of

unfavourable attitudes towards the Roma (Lemon 230-31). These negative attitudes are not surprising, as the *Tsygane* were often depicted in Soviet film and television serials as suspicious, conniving, and , reinforcing the existing xenophobic sentiment of the larger Soviet population.

1.3.1 The Great Patriotic War – Post-War National Memory

This period in Soviet history (1945-1954) also saw a public discussion of Stalinist crimes in, as well as an acknowledgement of the Holocaust in (Martin 151). Although the State had begun to acknowledge Holocaust genocide in Nazi-occupied Soviet territories, it resisted recognizing publicly Jewish or Roma victims, and even non-Russian victims such as Ukrainians, instead focusing on a victimized “Soviet people” (Asher 30; Martin 322). After the Second World War, or the Great Patriotic War as it is remembered within the Soviet Union, the Holocaust (specifically the Holocaust of the Jews) was omitted from Soviet publications and was not part of the official culture of remembrance in the Soviet republics (Rohdewald 173). Little attention was paid to the commemoration of civilian victimhood as a whole; instead, the glorification of victory and war heroes was presented as being of great importance to the State, and thus to the Russian population (Rohdewald 175).

In contemporary Russia, the Holocaust is firmly institutionalized within the framework of the Great Patriotic War (Blutinger 74). The sculptures, monuments, and even museums erected to memorialize the war exist to encompass wartime experience without touching upon Holocaust, and are aimed at including all Soviet victims of the war against the Nazis, with emphasis placed on the commemoration of victims among the Russian people. These commemorative bodies did not serve to memorialize victims of the Holocaust but, rather, a victimized Russian people under Nazi occupation and the State’s military heroes (Blutinger 75; Golbert: 213). Any memorialization of victimhood was done within the broad category of the “Soviet peoples,” with little or no emphasis placed on the victims’ particular ethnic or political backgrounds (Gitelman 17).

The same muted treatment of Holocaust memory and discourse remained in Soviet Ukraine until the collapse of the USSR in 1991. It was not until the dissolution of the Soviet Union that minority victims, primarily Jews, were recognized; however, the notion that all Soviet civilians were victimized by the Nazi occupation has continued to dominate mass memory of the Holocaust, especially in Putin's Russia (Holler 313). To this day, the *Porraimos* remains disassociated from national Holocaust memory in both Russia and Ukraine. In Chapter Four, I present a close analysis of the ways in which Holocaust memory has been constructed in Russia and Ukraine, as well as the efforts being made by both Roma and non-Roma individuals to commemorate the *Porraimos*. Arguably the memorialization of the *Porraimos* is tied directly to the status of the Roma in these countries; extreme improvements to the social and political well-being of the Roma would have to be made before Roma Holocaust victimhood could be meaningfully acknowledged.

1.4 The Roma in Ukraine and Russia: 1991 and onward

Compared to the situation faced by the Roma in present-day Ukraine and Russia, it could be said that the Roma fared better during the Communist period. The early emerging Soviet economy needed unskilled Roma workers, while the new, post-Soviet emerging market economy did not (Guy 13). During the post-Communist economic restructuring, the closure of out-dated industries and the return of privatized collective farms led to the unemployment of many Roma. The Roma were the first to be made redundant and the last to be hired to fill vacancies (Guy 13). During this period, the number of hate crimes perpetrated against the Roma increased. Police brutality, unprovoked assaults, and destruction of Roma property could be attributed to an increase in Russian nationalism shortly after the dissolution of the USSR and to the absence of State policies designed to protect the Roma from such attacks (Lucero and Collum 99). Alongside other minorities, Roma who relied on state support and benefits were blamed for depleting limited State resources during a time of social and economic uncertainty (Fonseca 45).

The inconsistent and neglectful Soviet policies towards ethnic minorities are the underlying reason for many of the challenges faced by the Roma community today. These policies aimed to serve a newly industrialized nation while ignoring widespread anti-Roma sentiment. In the end, the policies affected Roma communities by introducing unjust and unrealistic expectations: the Roma were expected to undergo a drastic social transformation without being provided with the support they needed to do so, and without any aid to combat existing prejudices that made this transformation even more difficult.

However, the efforts made by both the Roma and the governments of post-Soviet Ukraine and Russia have differed, with the Roma being offered a greater level of socio-

political support in Ukraine than in Russia. Despite the continuing racism and discrimination that Roma experience in both countries, the Ukrainian government has demonstrated support for the efforts of various Roma organizations that have tried, often unsuccessfully, to improve the lives and positions of those in their community (Kalinin and Kalinina 12). In Russia, no similar efforts have been made to support the few Roma organizations and their communities (Castle-Kanerova 90-91).

With the end of Communism and the establishment of Ukraine's independence from Russia, the Roma faced hardships finding their place within a society that sought to develop a national identity as well as economic and political stability (Guy 15). With the support of the Ukrainian government, Roma communities have been able to create a number of organizations focused on improving the position of the Roma (Kalinin and Kalinina 250). These have made attempts to set up systems of legal self-regulation, political parties, and organizations aimed at reviving and developing their native language and cultural traditions (Kalinin and Kalinina 250). There are currently approximately eighty-eight Roma organizations registered in Ukraine (State Committee on Nationalities and Religions 2006), with the three largest being the Congress of Roma in Ukraine, the Centre for Unity and Protection of Roma Rights, and the All-Ukrainian Legal Roma Association, known as *Chapoche*. While these organizations aim to improve the socio-economic and political status of the Roma, they have yet to make any substantial progress to the economic state of Roma communities (Yevtoukh 5). Reports on incidents of violence against the Roma are widespread and continuing, often identifying not only civilians but also State police as the perpetrators (Crowe 304). Due to this hostility, many Roma have fled from Ukraine to Belarus, a quasi-Soviet state that censors public expression of prejudicial sentiments (Crowe 526-28).

Based on the 2001 census carried out by the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, the population of Romani living in Ukraine stood at 47,600 (State Statistics Committee of

Ukraine 2001), although in 2006 both the World Romani Union and the Council of Europe estimate this figure to be over 400,000. The large difference in numbers can be explained by the fact that many Roma individuals continue to not identify themselves as being ethnically Roma, potentially out of fear of prejudicial and discriminatory treatment. Despite the numerous efforts made to improve the political and social status of the Roma, these organizations ultimately hold very little political power to initiate any substantial change, and discrimination against the Roma based on their socio-economic status, their ethnicity, and their cultural practices endures, with racism towards Roma remaining deeply ingrained in the mainstream (Lucero and Collum 100; Rose 15). Many have sought refuge within EU nations and overseas (Castle-Kanerova 88) as this discrimination continues to result in violence, harassment, and the general mistreatment of the Roma.

Adversely, such efforts by Roma communities within Russia have been largely non-existent; the Roma in Russia remain fragmented politically and organizationally due to their dispersal throughout Russia, with some Roma communities in Russia being transient (International Federation of Human Rights 2013). The fact of their significant poverty and economic stress remains poorly articulated because the Roma lack representation in positions of authority (European Roma Rights Centre 2009). Western European human rights initiatives have documented several examples of human rights abuses of the Roma at the hands of law enforcement in Russia, where the Roma continue to be denied health care and access to housing and education, and experience racist violence and profiling (Minority Rights International Group World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples – Russian Federation: Roma 2005, 2008, 2011).

Recently, there have been indications of increased repression of the Roma by police. These reports of police brutality against Roma include accusations of torture, false detention, forced confessions, extortion, and abuse (European Roma Rights Centre 2006, 2009, 2011).

Although there exists a handful of organizational groups that promote Roma linguistic and cultural practices, including the Roma Ural and Romano Kerr (European Roma Rights Centre 2011), these organizations do not serve to socially, economically, or politically enhance the lives of Roma communities in Russia (Castle-Kanerova 95; European Roma Rights Centre 2011). Despite the existence of some Ukrainian Roma political organizations, accomplishments have been scant, and the socio-cultural position of Roma in both Ukraine and Russia has remained largely the same.

Based on the contemporary position of Roma in Ukraine and Russia, the underlying attitudes towards ethnic minorities in these countries, and the legacy of World War II, the *Porraimos* continues to be unacknowledged and largely forgotten in post-Soviet Eastern European memory. First, the idea of the *Porraimos* is inextricably tied to the socio-political position of the Roma, and will be acknowledged only when this community achieves social and political advancement in terms of its relations with the State and the public. The social and political problems faced by the Roma in both countries are the direct result of the poorly implemented Soviet policies that aimed to improve the lives of minorities through social integration, without addressing the difficulties such minorities would potentially face in the process. The Roma were forced to socially integrate and restructure their lives without adequate support from the Soviet system, which set them up for a future of socio-economic crises and enduring racism.

Second, there exists a barrier in public memory with regards to how the Second World War and the Holocaust are remembered and perceived, making it exceptionally difficult for the experience of minorities to be incorporated into national and cultural memory.

In the following chapter, I present an analysis of the ways that the *Porraimos* has been represented in Western literature and film. This discussion, along with the Soviet and post-Soviet Roma histories presented in this chapter, will prepare the reader for Chapter Three, in which I consider how the *Porraimos* is understood and memorialized by the Roma individuals whom I interviewed in St. Petersburg, Russia, during the summer of 2012; I then relate these interviews to my observations on the relationship between Roma and non-Roma individuals. The policies and histories discussed in this chapter will serve to contextualize both contemporary Roma/non-Roma relations in Russia and Ukraine and the sentiments expressed by the interviewees.

Chapter 2: The Challenges in Researching The *Porraimos*: Representations in Literature and Film

Up until the past three decades, much of the writing on topics relating to the Romani was aimed at explaining the traditions, linguistic dialects, and histories of the Romani (Hancock 4; Rose 15). Fortunately, this body of literature grew to present a more subtle understanding of what it is to be culturally, socially, and economically Romani. There has also been a growth of interest in *Porraimos* history and memory, which has been explored in various types of literature, ranging from memoir to fiction. This interest in the *Porraimos* has also led to the creation of documentary and feature films that seek to explore and memorialize these *Porraimos* experiences.

Researchers have come to rely on two primary methods to present experiences of the *Porraimos*. The first method discussed here is the use of the *Shoah*¹² as a comparative tool by artists and scholars who aim to better understand the experiences of the Romani. Many histories, biographies, memoirs, documentaries, and narratives have incorporated the *Shoah* to contextualize Romani Holocaust victimhood, drawing similarities between the treatment of the Jews at the hands of the Nazis and the treatment of the Gypsies. The second method employs a reflexive framework: the author or creator uses his or her own experiences in gathering and presenting *Porraimos* stories to create new insights into these experiences. This body of creative work, although small, serves as a foundation for future research and writing on the *Porraimos*. It does so by providing examples of the varying ways in which the *Porraimos* experience has been explored, shared, and

¹² Meaning “the catastrophe” in Hebrew, the term *Shoah* is attributed to the Holocaust experiences of Jewish communities throughout Europe. Although *Shoah* has often been used interchangeably with ‘Holocaust’, I reserve its use solely in reference to the Jewish experience of racial genocide as perpetrated by the Nazi Socialist party.

memorialized, all while striving for the integration of the *Porraimos* into internationally recognized Holocaust history. This integration is necessary not only for the preservation of the *Porraimos* memory, but for the enrichment and diversification of Holocaust history.

In this chapter, I present an overview of this body of literary and film work that directly concern the history and experiences of the *Porraimos*, in order to develop an understanding of how these experiences have been represented thus far, and where future representation and memorialization might lie. In my analysis, I consider the various approaches that researchers and authors have used, as well as the challenges faced in conducting research on the *Porraimos*. I argue that specific approaches, such as using *Shoah* experiences as a comparative tool, as well as using a reflexive approach to researching *Porraimos* experiences, have been useful in developing engaging, educational, and insightful representations. I believe that these qualities are important in the presentation of the Romani's marginalized history, as they promote discussion and the inclusion of the *Porraimos* in the greater Holocaust narrative.

The purpose of this chapter and its overview is to establish an understanding of how researchers have approached representing experiences of the *Porraimos*; another fundamental aspect is to identify some of the challenges faced in conducting interviews with Roma individuals, specifically on a topic that is marginalized in nations like Ukraine and Russia. An understanding of the challenges in researching and presenting the *Porraimos* will help to support my own experience of interviewing, as presented in Chapter Three.

I will begin by looking at a number of biographical works that portray the *Porraimos* through various media. These constitute the limited body of literature and film that serves to memorialize *Porraimos* experiences, as well as to provide education and insight into that period of history. After providing an introduction to these texts and films, I discuss the challenges that I believe that the researchers and writers of these texts have faced. These challenges include shortened interviews, scarce historical data, and linguistic barriers. I argue that despite these hurdles, the authors discussed in this chapter have successfully augmented and explicated their research of the *Porraimos* by positing it alongside the *Shoah* experiences for cross-comparative purposes. Similarly, reflexive analyses contribute to our understanding of the complexities of research on the *Porraimos*. With this overview, I hope to prepare the reader for the chapter that follows, in which I present my own experiences of interviewing and observing *Porraimos* memory.

The works discussed in this chapter are all accessible in English, either through a translation of the original content by the creator, or through translation by others. I have chosen these specific works out of a selection of texts that I have read, comprising various topics pertaining to Romani culture and history. Although these texts do not focus specifically on the experiences of Roma in Ukraine or Russia, their data are beneficial nonetheless because they help contextualize my own research and the *Porraimos* experience. These texts were sourced through various academic libraries, bookstores, and web databases. Out of the body of work that considers Roma culture and history, I found that only a small percentage focus specifically on *Porraimos* experience and memory.

These texts are the ones that I have chosen to include in my analysis, as they explore the memory and experience of the *Porraimos* in one way or another.

This body of work consists of a biographical novel by Alexander Ramati titled *I skrzypce przestly grac (And the Violins Stopped Playing)* (1988) and the following memoirs: Ceija Stojka's *We Live in Seclusion: The Memories of a Romani* (1988); Enzensberger's *A Gypsy in Auschwitz* (1999); Walter Winter's *Winter Time: Memoirs of a German Sinto Who Survived Auschwitz* (1999); Jan Yoors' *The Gypsies* (1967) and *Crossings: A Journey of Survival and Resistance in World War II* (1971), a chapter from Isabel Fonseca's *Bury Me Standing* (1996); Yvonne Slee's *Torn Away Forever* (2005); and lastly, Toby Sonneman's *Shared Sorrows: A Gypsy Family Remembers the Holocaust* (2002). I have also included Donald Kenrick's and Grattan Puxon's historical surveys *Gypsies under the Swastika* (1995) and *Gypsies During the Second World War* (2006), as well as Geunter's *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies* (2000). The films that I attribute to the body of work on the *Porraimos* take form as documentaries and narrativized dramas; these include Alexandra Isles' *Porraimos: Europe's Gypsies in the Holocaust* (2001); Alexander Ramati's *I skrzypce przestly grac (And the Violins Stopped Playing)* (1988), a dramatic representation of Ramati's novel by the same name; Michelle Kelso's *Hidden Sorrows: Meeting Gypsy (Roma) Survivors of the Holocaust in Romania* (2005); Tony Gatlif's *Korkoro (Alone)* (2009); and Bob Entrop and Orhan Galjus' *Broken Silence* (2012).

The body of texts and films concerning the *Porraimos* is larger than I have listed (See Appendixes A and B); other texts and films that are not included have been omitted because they are either out of print and difficult to locate. I also speculate that there may

be other texts and films in other languages, but I have not come across them or references to them during my research.

Toby Sonneman's *Shared Sorrows* (2002), which compares the narratives of two German Sinti¹³ families to the author's own familial experiences of the *Shoah*, provides the primary case study in my analysis. The work presents a historical account of the *Porraimos* as well as a biographical history of the two Sinti families and Sonneman's own family. This text is an important one: by seeking to reconcile her understanding of Romani history, culture, and Holocaust experiences with those of her own Jewish family, she creates a richly insightful text that provides a unique understanding of the *Porraimos*, one which would have been much less meaningful had she not used this a comparative approach coupled with reflexive analysis. Sonneman maintains that although the two groups experienced different forms of discrimination, the same past trauma continues to affect both cultures; and therefore, it is possible for her (and others) to develop an understanding of the *Porraimos*.

Although the texts discussed here are all important within the body of *Porraimos* literature, a comparative analysis reveals the challenges that their respective authors may have faced in conducting this research. These challenges, including incomplete interviews as well as difficulties sourcing accurate and consistent historical data on the *Porraimos*, are observed throughout the majority of the texts that I present (with the exclusion of fictional texts). By revealing these challenges I hope to better understand and contextualize my own experiences in interviewing Roma individuals (see Chapter Three).

¹³ A subgroup of the Romani primarily inhabiting Germany and Austria, as well as other Western European countries. The Sinti are sometimes referred to as the *Manush* (Hancock 4).

2.0.1 Writing on the Romani prior to the *Porraimos*

To contextualize *Porraimos* literature and film, I review the body of literature on the Romani in existence prior to the Holocaust, as well as the works published following this period. Until the past few decades, writing that explored Romani culture without a negative bias did not exist. Since then, academic writing on Romani-related topics has shifted drastically in both subject-matter and approach. This evolution can be attributed primarily to the changing public attitudes towards the Romani and the increasing participation of Romani individuals in academic research and writing (Hancock 4; Rose 15, 22-23).

Some of the earliest available writing on the Romani focuses on the folklore and mysticism attributed to Gypsies throughout Europe, as well as collections of poetry, fables, and songs. Prominent writers include “Gypsologist” Francis Hinds Groome (1851-1902) and folklorist Charles Godfrey Leland (1824-1903), whose work was definitive of all literature pertaining to the Romani (Hancock 20-21) in that it characterized the Roma as primitive and mysterious. Works published by authors in Tsarist Russia and later in the Soviet Union similarly aimed to explain the Romani’s “backwards” culture (Marishiakova and Popov 179). In Chapter One, I have commented on these texts and the socio-political, ideological motives attributed to them.

It was not until after the Holocaust that researchers and writers began to demonstrate different attitudes towards, as well as an interest in, topics relating to the Romani. These changes coincided with changes in the fields of anthropology and history with respect to methodological approaches to studying minority cultures (D’Andrade 308; Scheper-Hughes 440). This resulted in research that aimed to investigate the plight

of the Romani as opposed to romanticizing aspects of their culture or attempting to explain their “otherness,” as earlier writers had done (Hancock 18-22).

In 1982, for the first time, the Romani received acknowledgement from then Chancellor Helmut Schmidt of West Germany for the genocide of their community (Rose 13). Although this acknowledgement did not lead to monetary compensation or attempts at rehabilitation (Knesebeck 22; Rose 14), it was a significant milestone for the remembrance of the *Porraimos*. This also ushered in a small interest in the *Porraimos* a global scale; this interest can be observed in the increase in Western research on topics relating to the Romani and the *Porraimos* (ex. Acton and Mundy 1997; Kenrick and Puxon 1995; Lewy 1996; Stewart 1987).

2.1 Early writing on *The Porraimos*

One of the earliest memoirs relating to *Porraimos* experiences was written by Yan Yoors, a young Belgian who, at the age of twelve, left his family to travel with a Roma *kumpania*. *The Gypsies* (1967) documents his intimate experiences with the *kumpania* until the onset of the war, during which the *kumpania* was eventually captured by the Waffen-SS. Through his experiences, Yoors gained a unique insider's perspective as a *Gadje*.¹⁴ Yoors' account is reflexive; he speaks about his experience with the *kumpania* in relation to how these experiences shaped his perception of himself as an outsider. As he learns about the *kumpania*'s inner communal workings, traditions, laws, and histories, Yoors reflects on his own understanding of Roma culture.

Although this text predates the Second World War and the *Porraimos*, it acts as a precursor for his second account *Crossings* (1971) by providing a background on his relationship with the *kumpania*. *Crossings* chronicles the various countries to which the *kumpania* travels in an effort to avoid persecution, and the eventual arrest and deportation of its members to labour camps. Because of their enduring relevance, these two texts have been referenced by others writing on the *Porraimos* (cf. Kenrick and Puxon 225; Fonseca 277; Sonneman 118); this relevance, I believe, can be attributed at least in part to the reflexive nature of Yoors' memoir, in which he looks back at his adolescent life as a *Gadje* in a Roma *kumpania* in order to explore the significance of his experiences¹⁵. The

¹⁴ A Romani term for non-Romani individuals; the translation is "outsider" in Romany dialects. There are dozens of Romany dialects, all made up of mixed European languages and the Romany, an Indo-European language, which is an "Indian hybrid [made up of] central Indic dialect[s] that [have] undergone partial convergence with northern Indic languages" (Matras 14). This dialect is named after its people, but is spelled as Romany to differentiate between the people and the language.

¹⁵ Both *The Gypsies* and *Crossings* were written roughly twenty years after their respective events. By this point, Yoors had immigrated to the United States and had established himself as a photographer and textile artist.

following quote from *Crossings*, exemplifies the ways in which Yoors reflects on being arrested by the Waffen-SS for ‘asocial’ activity:

Then my thoughts narrowed down to my impending death. I had no illusion as to my personal fate. It was clear that I had been betrayed, the extent of the raid proved a careful and thorough preparation based on inside information. It seemed to have many ramifications. I had not recognized any of the other people arrested with me, though I now presume that they must have been run down in connection with our affair (146).

Subsequent literature on the *Porraimos* did not provide the same reflexivity, but took the form of biographies or historical studies relating to the events leading to the Romani genocide. Most often, these texts have presented the *Porraimos* loosely within the comparative context of the *Shoah* most likely due to the scarcity and unreliability of data relating particularly to the *Porraimos*.

For example, in *A Gypsy in Auschwitz* (2000), historian Ulrich Enzensberger presents the biography of Otto Rosenberg, focusing on his experiences prior to and during the Holocaust. Through transcribed interviews and historical writing by Enzensberger, the account chronicles Rosenberg’s life as a Sinti child living in a permanent Gypsy camp, the relocation of his family to a ghetto in the town of Marzahn, and his subsequent deportation to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Although the account is presented from the perspective of Rosenberg, it is not clear what form the interview took or to what extent the narrative was edited or reconstructed; Enzensberger gives no information about his methods. Arguably, the text could be considered a historical biography because it lacks Rosenberg’s reflections of his post-camp experiences, traumas, and beliefs. Although there are instances in which Rosenberg speaks of feeling guilty that he survived

the camps where others did not (Enzensberger 151), this topic is not explored in depth. However, because we do not know what form the interview took or what methods were used to collect the testimony, or what Enzensberger and Rosenberg themselves desired for this text, we cannot assume that these aspects were overlooked, in that they did not find their way into the text. Perhaps the text presents exactly what its author and subject intended. Walter Winter's *Winter Time: Memoirs of a German Sinto Who Survived Auschwitz* (2004) bears a striking resemblance to the Rosenberg account. Winter's narrative describes his upbringing as a German Sinto and provides detailed insight into the day-to-day experience of living in a Gypsy camp. Like Rosenberg's, Winter's text was also produced with outside help; in this case, the assistance of two researchers and a translator.

Alexander Ramati's *And the Violins Stopped Playing* (1988) is a fictionalized narrative based "on historical writings and data"¹⁶ pertaining to the Romani genocide. It tells of a group of Polish Roma forced to flee Poland and seek asylum in Hungary. In addition to its depiction of the Nazi persecution of the Roma, the book offers a glimpse into Romani culture by describing traditional marriage practices, Romani social positions, social structures, and events (such as the *Shero Rom*¹⁷ and the meeting of the council of elders), as well as the relationships between Romani and non-Romani individuals. The book (as well as the film) is based on historiographical research, archival data, and interviews collected by Ramati to create a narrative that depicts the experiences of a small group of Roma. However, as it is a fictional account, how Ramati interpreted the

¹⁶ Ramati states that his narrative is based on the Holocaust experiences and histories of various Romani individuals. I have not been able to find out what sources he used.

¹⁷ An elected member of a Romani community, often the eldest male patriarch. The *Shero Rom* holds meetings to discuss inner communal politics with other male members of the community (Lee 188)

information he gathered, what he excluded, or whether and to what extent it was embellished is unknown, because no detailed information about the background of Ramati's work on his book is available. Yvonne Slee's *Torn Away Forever* (2005) is similar to Ramati's narrative in that it tells of the experiences of a Romani individual and his family as they are separated and deported to various concentration camps. However, unlike Ramati's novel, Slee does not provide a more in-depth portrayal of Romani traditions and culture.

As there is a scarcity of primary sources for Romani experiences of *Porraimos*, researchers such as Donald Kenrick and Grattan Puxon (1995) and Guenter Lewy (2000) have also used the National Socialist party's treatment of the Jews for comparative purposes. In their texts, the authors provide a historical overview of the *Porraimos* and emphasize the similar ways in which this marginalized part of Holocaust history, resulted from the same racism and xenophobia as was directed towards Jewish populations. This approach provides a broader contextual foundation for the study of the *Porraimos* and promotes the inclusion of the *Porraimos* in the greater Holocaust narrative by presenting it as comparable to the experiences of the larger population of Jewish Holocaust victims. Sonneman presents the narratives of Jewish and Romani victims as being inextricably linked because of their historical, and most importantly, "humanistic experiences" (167).

Although these texts provide a window onto the history and experiences of *Porraimos*, they do not speak of the challenges in researching and representing the *Porraimos* as the following texts do. As demonstrated earlier by Yoors, reflexive writing married to comparative methods that consider the *Porraimos* experience alongside the Holocaust experiences of others continues to provide insightful and unique

representations. This is exemplified through the recent work of Matras (2014), Sonneman (2002), and Tebutt (2006). These writers acknowledge their own subjectivity and the role it plays in the research process (Nazaruk 72), and use their interpretations, as well as their experiences in gathering data, to present the *Porraimos* in a way that aims to contextualize it against the backdrop of a wider human experience. As the literature moves away from presenting the Romani as the “other” Holocaust victims, the inclusion of *Porraimos* narratives within the greater Holocaust narrative begins.

2.2 Contemporary Representations of the *Porraimos*

Toby Sonneman's *Shared Sorrows: A Gypsy Family Remembers the Holocaust* (2002) incorporates *Porraimos* experiences into an overarching Holocaust narrative. Told from the perspective of Sonneman, a cultural anthropologist and the child of a Jewish Holocaust survivor, this text presents experiences of the *Porraimos* through the experiential background of the *Shoah*. Sonneman tells us that she has always had an interest in Romani cultural history (20), specifically the *Porraimos*. Sonneman's own memories of her family's Holocaust experience were a powerful element of her childhood and likely shaped her interest (22).

Shared Sorrows is constructed from a collection of oral testimonies shared by the Mettbach and Hollenreiner families, two related Sinti families who have lived throughout both Germany and Austria for many generations. Early on, Sonneman speaks of her disinterest in a purely academic pursuit or in opening up academic debate, as she believes this does not properly convey the experiences of Holocaust survivors (5). Sonneman also believes that she must have an understanding of her own family's history, and thus of their identity, before she can begin to develop an understanding of the *Porraimos* (9). She states that she could "never become a Gypsy" (5) and thus will never be able to fully understand the effect that the *Porraimos* has had on contemporary Romani culture; her own experiences as a member of a Jewish minority differ from those of the Romani community. Although this statement marks Sonneman's awareness of her position as an outsider, as well as her expressed self-doubt (6-7), she demonstrates empathy for her Sinti interviewees. This is important, as Sonneman's intent is not only to portray the *Porraimos* experience but also to use her new insight as a counterpoint to her

understanding of her own family's experiences in the Holocaust and vice versa. To this end, she states:

I hope that the stories of a Gypsy family set against the backdrop of a Jewish family will give readers a perspective that is broader than that of just one person, yet far more personal than that which considers a whole population (5).

Sonneman had no personal or familial ties to Romani communities. In preparation for her research, she contacted Dr. Ian Hancock¹⁸ to establish a connection with the two Sinti families presented in her memoir. Using Dr. Hancock's ties with Romani communities in Western Europe, Sonneman met Reili Mettbach, a Sinti Holocaust survivor now living in the United States. With Reili serving as her translator, Sonneman traveled to Germany in the fall of 1992 in order to meet Rosa Mettbach, Reili's distant cousin, also a survivor of the *Porraimos*. With the help of Rosa, as translator, and Reili, Sonneman was able to interview a number of other Sinti individuals with first-hand *Porraimos* experience.

In my own interviews, I was fortunate not to have to rely on a translator. The interviews were conducted exclusively in Russian, my native language, which allowed me to create my own opinions and understandings from what I was told, without the interpretation of a translator. In order to augment her interview data, Sonneman relies

¹⁸ Dr. Ian Hancock is a prominent figure in the field of Romani scholarship and political advocacy; currently he is at the University of Austin, Texas. Hancock is a self-identifying Romani who has ties to Romani communities around the world, thanks to his involvement with the United Nations and the Romani Council of Europe. Hancock's work is not discussed in this thesis, as it focuses predominantly on Romani linguistics and cultural history. However, I often refer to Hancock's texts throughout this thesis to support historical figures and linguistic translations.

largely on participant observation¹⁹ to better understand her interviewees' stories. These observations and testimonies are combined with her own reflections on her experiences. Sonneman reflects on the *Shoah*, specifically the experiences of her father, in an effort to understand and empathize with the experiences of these Romani families (22); she grew up in a household where memories of the Holocaust were discussed frequently. Using this experience to her advantage, Sonneman is able to empathize with her interviewees and develops a unique understanding, and ultimately, representation of the *Porraimos*. Sonneman also speaks of her reflexive research process, saying:

I have chosen to depart from traditional oral history by exposing the seams of these unconventional interviews: recording my own role and my personal involvement, as well as recording my observations, conversations and activities with the families to add another layer to the understanding of the present day life of Sinti in Germany (5).

When it came to conducting my own interviews in St. Petersburg, I, like Sonneman, believed that my overall experience would benefit from incorporating my family's commentary, specifically that of my uncle, on my research. His opinions on the Roma and Roma/Russian relations would only serve to enrich my research by providing insight to what a typical Russian, St. Petersburg resident might think of the Roma. I was also curious whether my understanding of post-Soviet Roma/Russian relations, as discussed in Chapter One, would be realized during my experiences of interviewing both Roma and my uncle. I knew that interviewing Roma individuals in St. Petersburg over a

¹⁹ Participant Observation is a research methodology that relies on the researchers intensive observation and participation with the group of individuals under study, usually over a long period of time (Van Maanen 14-25).

relatively short amount of time would be difficult, so I was prepared to augment what I learned with my own experiences and my family's insights.

Like Sonneman's *Shared Sorrows*, Isabela Fonseca's *Bury Me Standing* (2002) employs a similar reflexive and comparative approach, although to a lesser extent. The book looks primarily at Romani history and culture, as well as contemporary issues that are faced by the Roma around the world. Nevertheless, it also includes a relatively short chapter on the *Porraimos* that provides the reader with an introductory background to the history of the Romani during the Holocaust. Fonseca's text provides insight into *Porraimos* history constructed through interviews, observation, and comparisons to the *Shoah*.

Filmmakers have also used the *Shoah* to present insights into *Porraimos* experiences. Interviews and dramatized narratives are supported with archival data and use *Shoah* comparisons to either flesh out incomplete representations of the *Porraimos* history or use them to tie the *Porraimos* into the broader Holocaust narrative. The following section explores these methods within the context of filmmaking and how the visual representations of the *Porraimos* are supported by them.

2.3 The *Porraimos* Visualized through Film

The films that explore the *Porraimos* range from documentaries comprised of oral testimony to dramas that create narratives for historical events and experiences. Although the body of film on the *Porraimos* is relatively small, like *Porraimos* literature it has received increasing attention from researchers and filmmakers in the past two decades. Documentaries such as Alexandra Isles' *Porraimos: Europe's Gypsies in the Holocaust* (2001), Michelle Kelso's *Hidden Sorrows: Meeting Gypsy (Roma) Survivors of the Holocaust in Romania* (2005), and Bob Entrop and Orhan Galjus' *Broken Silence* (2012) present the *Porraimos* as related by Romani survivors throughout Western and Central Europe. The three documentaries serve not only to *tell* of *Porraimos* experience but to *show* it.

Representation of the *Porraimos* on film is a method of preservation and inquiry in which I am particularly interested. I believed that conducting interviews with Roma individuals in Russia, specifically on a topic that has been marginalized by post-Soviet historical memory would be strengthened through film documentation, as it would provide another means of reflecting on my experiences, as well as individuals being interviewed, during the research process. This particular form of documentation also captures unspoken communication between research subjects and the research and among the research subjects. The films discussed in the remainder of this chapter serve as examples of memorializing and representing the *Porraimos* through observation and atmosphere. Michelle Kelso points out "that because of their oral history tradition, when Roma tell stories, their entire bodies become instruments of communication. Arm gestures replace action words and facial expressions convey emotion." She continues, "I

wanted my students to see what I saw, so that they could transform the facts and figures of the Holocaust into faces and names” (2005). Throughout *Hidden Sorrows*, Kelso presents her subjects’ silences as much as she does their oral testimony²⁰. The result is a film of little dialogue that aims to explore unspoken and internalized traumas; and perhaps Kelso’s own interpretation of these traumas, as she visually accentuates the unspoken and the silent.

These same silences appear in *Broken Silences*, where Entrop uses film to portray the physical journey of Orhan Galjus as he travels throughout Western Europe exploring the legacy of Holocaust memory in Romani communities. As Kelso does, Entrop focuses on his subject’s silent moments of contemplation. As Galjus learns about the experiences of others and observes the often underprivileged lifestyle of the individuals encountered, we as observers of the film are left to create our own interpretations and understandings of these experiences and histories. In *Porraimos: Europe’s Gypsies during the Holocaust*, Isles relies heavily on archival film footage and photography to contextualize and visually represent the past experiences of her interviewees. Through their visual representation of memory from individual and communal standpoints, these filmmakers have created representations of the *Porraimos* that encourage their audiences to engage with the subject matter.

Like the literary examples discussed above, these films also use the *Shoah* as a comparative tool to contextualize the *Porraimos* as an experience akin to the Holocaust experiences of the Jews. Isles’ documentary features an interview with a Jewish concentration camp survivor who speaks about her personal experiences with Romani

²⁰ An Oral Testimony is an orally shared account, acknowledgment, or recollection by an individual as they have personally understood and witnessed it.

prisoners. Kelso and Entrop both feature commentary regarding *Shoah* experiences in order to support the *Porraimos*, highlighting similarities in history, experience, and memory. Alexander Ramati's rendition of his own the novel *And the Violins Stopped Playing* and Tony Gatlif's *Korkoro* both present a fictionalized glimpse into life as a Gypsy in Nazi-occupied territories. Both of these films are based on historiographical research and data, as well as interviews collected by the filmmakers. Like the documentary films, they present the *Porraimos* not as "the other Holocaust", but as part of the greater Holocaust narrative. The film's characters are aware of the Nazi Socialist Party's policies targeting Jews and other minorities, and they place themselves in this category, alongside the Nazis' Jewish victims.

In all three films, the challenges found in conducting research with marginalized people on a topic of marginalized history are apparent. In both *Hidden Sorrows* and *Broken Silences*, I observed individuals demonstrating varying degrees of apprehension, despite their desire to speak about the affect that the *Porraimos* has had on their culture's spirit and future. In *Porraimos: Europe's Gypsies during the Holocaust*, all but one interviewee speak about their culture's experience of the *Porraimos* without providing any personal insight into their own feelings. One of these interviewees is Karl Stojka, a German Sinto. He speaks passionately, and with palpable anger, about the atrocities that were committed against his family, as well as the resentment that he feels towards these experiences going unacknowledged by Holocaust discourse in Western Europe. Most of the interviewees in Isles' documentary come from Central and Eastern European countries, where speaking about the *Porraimos* experience may not be acknowledged as it would in contemporary Germany, where support is more readily demonstrated.

Although there have been only a handful of films on the *Porraimos* over the past decade, researchers and filmmakers alike seem to use this medium to visually represent the *Porraimos* in ways that writing cannot; as a tool for representing the *Porraimos*, film has been extremely successful in creating rich narratives by splicing together various speakers and sources of data. Despite relatively few sources of information on the experiences of the *Porraimos*, filmmakers such as Gatlif effectively present a cohesive narrative by combining archival histories and interviews as well as the written experiences of individuals who interacted with Romani individuals during the war (such as villagers and Nazi Socialist party officials). A similar narrative arc is achieved in documentary films that combine interviews with historical film footage, photography, and commentary from non-Romani individuals. As a method of *Porraimos* representation, film is potentially accessible to more (and more diverse) audiences than is literature, due to film's visual nature, which crosses linguistic and cultural borders.

2.4 *Porraimos* Representations from the Outside

Discussing genocide and memory, cultural anthropologist Susan Tebbutt (2004) focuses on the lack of cultural plurality and hybridity in the work done by historians researching Romani cultural history, especially in the context of the Holocaust. She argues that most discourse on this topic moves within an established national and political boundary, and within the cultural identity of the dominant group, or within the researcher's cultural identity. In comparing the academic accounts of Kenrick and Puxon's *Gypsies under the Swastika* (2006) and Guenter Lewy's *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies* (2000), Tebbutt argues that it is often difficult to draw a line between the work of survivors and of historians, who are almost always non-Romani and who depict these histories from their own interpretations and experiences. In "*The Role of Romanies: Image and Counter Image*" Tebbutt makes the following point:

When members of a Romani community become empowered and represent the history of their own fate through autobiographical accounts, in the form of prose or artwork, they often reach a wider public through the help and endeavours of Gadje. Therefore, there is not a clear-cut dichotomy between the Gadjo and the Romani perspective, but this is more helpful than the historian/survivor dichotomy (Tebbutt 179).

Tebbutt bemoans the lack of writing by Romani, and that all existing texts have been presented from a "*Gadjocentric*", or a subjective, point of view. This point rings true for some, however, the majority of writing on *Porraimos* that I have found has been done by researchers who have produced objective accounts, and even used their outsider status and personal experience as a means of producing insightful research.

The works discussed here present the experiences of Romani Holocaust survivors.

Arguably, one of the aims of these works is to give voice to these individuals in ways that promote an awareness of their experience, history, culture, and the ongoing discrimination they face throughout the world. I also suspect that, because of this discrimination, the Romani community has chosen not to participate as openly in sharing their experiences of the *Porraimos* as some Jewish survivors have participate in the sharing of theirs of the *Shoah*. Perhaps Romani survivors and their families have not shared their stories out of fear of further marginalization, stigmatization, and discrimination, and also perhaps due in part to a lack of easy access to platforms from which information can be shared. Research on the *Porraimos* is and continues to be difficult; researchers face challenges working with a community that has learned to silence themselves and their histories out of enduring discrimination.

Thus, the Romani experiences of the *Porraimos* have been largely memorialized and shared with the assistance of individuals and technologies from other cultures. As Romani communities continue to languish at the bottom of economic, social, and political hierarchies, their history of genocide, too, has been highly marginalized, largely forgotten within the narrative of popular history. I believe that *Porraimos* experiences have been represented with insight and sensitivity by non-Romani researchers. Despite the challenges faced in researching the *Porraimos*, this body of literature and film provides a forum for meaningful collaboration between Romani and non-Romani individuals and groups to memorialize these experiences. I believe that this collaboration is empowering for the Romani community because it provides them with numerous opportunities to present their history and experiences to different cultures and to develop a dialogue around the legacy of the *Porraimos* and plight of Romani communities around the world.

This body of work has contributed to the remembrance and education of the *Porraimos*, and in turn, has created a platform from which Romani communities can continue to educate, present, and memorialize the *Porraimos*, and hopefully, the number of Romani voices in literature and film continues to grow.

2.5 *Porraimos* Representation in the East?

The literary and film works discussed in this chapter have been created by North American and Western European artists and members of the Romani communities. I have not found any works that portray *Porraimos* experiences from the perspective of Eastern European creators, either Romani or non-Romani. Although there have been many frequent efforts to memorialize the *Porraimos* by various Romani organizations in post-Soviet Eastern European nations (discussed in Chapter Four), I have not found any documents that present the *Porraimos* from Soviet or post-Soviet perspectives. I believe such texts do not exist primarily due to the social status of the Roma in post-Soviet nations, a status which does not readily encourage the sharing, preservation, or memorialization of the Holocaust, let alone the *Porraimos*, in public and national capacities.

The following chapter considers how the memory of the *Porraimos* is understood and memorialized by Vadik, a Roma man who I interviewed in St. Petersburg, Russia, during the summer of 2012. These interviews are considered along with my observations on the relationships between Roma and non-Roma individuals, and my own family's commentary on my research and demonstrate that hostility and social segregation are highly apparent. Using a reflexive approach to analyze my experienced, observed, and interviewed data from St. Petersburg, I discuss the absence of support for the Roma community, the silenced memories, and both the expected and unexpected challenges that I faced in learning about *Porraimos* memory. The policies and histories discussed in Chapter One serve to contextualize contemporary Roma/non-Roma relations and the

sentiments expressed by the interviewees, while the research and films discussed in this chapter help situate the challenges I faced and the data I gathered.

Chapter 3: Interviewing Memory: Vadik, The *Porraimos*, and Silence

No one will remember the names of those who died in my family, in my community, not in the future (Vadik 2012).

The silence that embodies the legacy of *Porraimos* memory is the same silence that is found in the marginalized contemporary social experiences of the Roma in Russia. As the Roma continue to exist as a disparaged entity in Russian society, then this legacy will too. For this reason, it is critical to explore the ways in which this legacy has been affected by, and has itself effected, the current state of the Roma community.

This chapter presents the experiences of Vadik, a third-generation *Ruska* Roma survivor of the *Porraimos* from St. Petersburg. It also presents my own experiences in gathering these data. Based on Vadik's sentiments, my experience conducting the research, and my observations about attitudes towards the Roma in St. Petersburg, it is clear that the *Porraimos* has been entirely omitted from public Holocaust and wartime memory, and the discussion of these memories is of a difficult and contentious nature. I believe this is due primarily to the socio-cultural status of the Roma in Russia, which has contributed to the disregard of a painful part of their history. Although my time in St. Petersburg was brief, and my opportunity to interact with the community was limited, I believe that I would have encountered similar sentiments and challenges from both Roma and non-Roma individuals throughout the country. I believe that based on the attitudes expressed by Vadik, as well as my own experiences and research on the attitudes towards the Roma in Russia, the memorialization of the *Porraimos* is and will continue to be a

difficult effort. In spite of this, I also believe that the challenges surrounding the acknowledgement of the *Porraimos* only reinforce the importance and seriousness of preserving this history.

My research in St. Petersburg was conducted over the course of three weeks, and is composed of three major components. The first component is my interview data with Vadik, who I met on three separate occasions. During these three meetings - which took place in the streets, at a flea market, and at a restaurant - I learned about Vadik's day-to-day experiences as a minority in St. Petersburg, his opinions on the *Porraimos* memory and Holocaust memorialization in Russia, and his impressions of the future of *Porraimos* memory. In addition to my discussions with Vadik, I observed verbal and physical interactions between Vadik and other individuals, including non-Roma Russians. These observations comprise the second component of my data, and support the argument that the Roma minorities occupy an underprivileged social position in St. Petersburg, a position that I argue contributes to the absence of the *Porraimos* in the cultural historical narrative. The third component of my data constitutes discussions regarding my research with my extended family in St. Petersburg, with whom I was staying during my trip. These three components make up my experiences of researching *Porraimos* memory, and these experiences support both the state of Holocaust memorialization and the "silences" that I have attributed to *Porraimos* memory in Russia.

In this chapter, I present these data and analyze them in the context of contemporary post-Soviet Holocaust memorialization; I also consider how they fit into other existing forms of *Porraimos* memorialization and representation. An analysis of my interviews with Vadik, the relations that I observed between Roma and non-Roma, and

my own experiences of gathering this data, substantiate my belief that the silences of the *Porraimos* are substantial.

Prior to this analysis, I present a brief overview of the state of research, both historical and anthropological, on topics pertaining to the Roma and the *Porraimos* in Russia, as well as a discussion of the research methods that I employed. This overview outlines the reasons why I believe that the Roma and the *Porraimos* have not been topics of consideration in Russian academia, an entity that often reflects the ideals of the Russian state. In addition, this overview provides insight into the challenges in researching the *Porraimos* and of working with a vulnerable community in Russia.

3.1 An Academic Void – Researching the Roma in Russia

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, ethnographic and anthropological research interests in Russia and Ukraine have slowly moved away from orientalist and traditionalist studies (Abashin 452; Golovko 454) towards a more modern academic discourse that focuses on topics such as migration, cultural borders, and Soviet identity (Abashin 453). Some Russian anthropologists maintain that, as a whole, anthropology in Russia has continued to favour topics such as “ethnos” and “tradition” (Abashin 453; Reshetov 64; Stanyukovitch 467). Research conducted within socio-cultural anthropological frameworks relating to the study of minorities has focused primarily on indigenous groups such as the Tatars, the Chuvash, the Chechens, and the Balkans, to name a few (Mastyugina and Perepelkin 22). As these minority groups have been the foundation on which modern-day Russian multinational society has developed, anthropological research focusing on these groups has served both Communist and contemporary Russian interests (Sokolovskiy 25-26).

The majority of historical and anthropological research on the Roma thus comes from various post-Soviet central and Eastern European countries, with the exclusion of Russia. This is due in part to the political and social interests of these nations, which, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, have demonstrated a desire to develop a discourse around topics relating to the experiences of minority groups during and after Soviet Communism (Sokolovskiy 29). The few researchers outside of Russia and Ukraine who have written about the Roma in Russia have relied on archival documents, statistical census data, and media reports in order to develop their research (Marushiakova and Popov 1997; Crowe 1999).

Little to no research on *Porraimos*-related topics is being conducted in Russia due, I speculate, to the following reasons: first, the research of academics in Russia is funded and most likely influenced by politicized national initiatives aimed at the construction of a heroic national memory (Abashin 453-54) that historically has not favoured minority groups like the Roma; and second, the difficulties in overcoming the reluctance on the part of the *Ruska* Roma to participate in research, as I experienced myself. These reasons have arguably contributed to the absence of minority Holocaust experiences within public memory, reinforced by the societal segregation of the Roma. With this in mind, I went to the St. Petersburg State University with a two-day visitor's pass. During my visit, I went to the library to search for texts and articles on the *Porraimos*, but was able to find nothing aside from a couple of news articles on police clashes with Roma communities.

The majority of my research on the history of the Roma and their position in Russia was undertaken prior to my trip to St. Petersburg. I had also established guidelines for interview and participant observation, but did not create specific interview questions or topics, as I was unsure how the research would proceed. Due to the inclusion of human participants, I was required to receive approval by Human Research Ethics, which ensures that the research being conducted meets the ethical standards required by the University (See Appendix C for participant invitations). Using my knowledge on the history and position of Roma in St. Petersburg, as well as an outline of the guidelines for interview and participant observation, I received this approval.

3.1.1 Interview and Participant Observation Guidelines

For the purposes of conducting interviews during my time in St. Petersburg, I used an informal and unstructured approach in order to gather qualitative data on the *Porraimos*, and to learn of the traumatic experiences that have shaped the community's perception of itself and its history. An informal interview process was undertaken in conjunction with participant observation because a more formal interview process might have been viewed as insensitive, and almost interrogatory, by some interviewees, which would have limited the detail, character, and type of potential information that could be gathered. Since my time in St. Petersburg was relatively short, developing a trusting and friendly rapport with the interviewees was important. I planned to do this by spending time with the interviewees in settings and activities where we did not discuss the *Porraimos*. I had hoped that once the interviewees were comfortable being filmed or recorded, I would supplement my observations and conversations with audio and video recordings. However, I was only able to make one audio recording (during my last meeting with Vadik), and did not make any video recordings. I was unable to proceed with documenting my interviews with Vadik due to his disappearance. In retrospect, I now believe that it was unlikely that video recording and audio recording would have been possible, or even welcome, as demonstrated by Vadik's prompt termination of our relationship and contact after being very outspoken during our last meeting. I speculate that Vadik terminated our relationship due to this last conversation, either because he regretted what he had shared, or because someone else may have encouraged him to do so.

During this process, I encouraged Vadik to speak about his individual and family's collective memory relating to the Holocaust, the experience of being a member of a generally

stigmatized minority group in Russia, and his opinions and knowledge regarding the history of the memorialization of the *Porraimos*. I did this by guiding the conversation towards these themes and questions by discussing my own opinions (see Appendix D for a list of the themes that I intended to cover). The interview was guided by the issues about which Vadik most outspoken or interested, and I asked questions about Vadik and his family's experiences, as well as Vadik's understanding and interpretation of these experiences. In this way, he was not put in the position of feeling that he had to answer specific questions. The informal interview deviated to other topics that Vadik found to be of particular interest or importance to him at that time, much of which focused on the general treatment of Roma in Russia, as opposed to his thoughts on *Porraimos* memorialization.

I developed the list of topics and themes using the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's *Oral History Interview Guidelines* (1998; revised 2007), supported by interview methodologies as presented in Stephen Schensul, Jean Schensul, and Margaret LeCompte's *Essential Ethnographic Methods: Observations, Interviews, and Questionnaires* (1991; revised 2012) and in H. Russell Bernard's *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (1988; Revised 2006). These methods encourage the interviewer to act as the facilitator of the interview by encouraging the interviewee to direct the interview's course and, ultimately, its outcome (Bernard 216; Schensul et al. 133). In an unstructured and informal approach, the type of information shared through conversation is not restricted by the boundaries of formalized questioning (Schensul et al. 137).

The US Holocaust Memorial Museum favours a more structured and formal interview approach than I adopted in order to encourage the interviewee to cover the interview topics without deviation (39). In addition, it encourages conducting interviews in

private and somewhat formal settings, in order to create a physical space that helps facilitate the interview process (40). I felt these approaches would be less appropriate for the interviews I planned, as I wanted the interviewees to have more control over the direction the interview took and the topics we discussed. Moreover, The US Holocaust Museum's approach introduced a number of topics that were not relevant to this research. Thus, I only used their list of themes to develop a list of topics to guide my interviews.

These interviews were conducted exclusively in Russian, of which I am a fluent heritage speaker. I have translated these interviews into English, and have attempted to capture their tone and mood as best as I could.

3.2 Observing Memory: Interview and Active Silence in St. Petersburg

During my stay in St. Petersburg, I was ultimately unable to gather all the interview data I had hoped to gather. This was due to a number of reasons. First, one individual who had initially agreed to meet with me cancelled our first meeting shortly after I arrived. Second, Vadik and his family unexpectedly terminated the interview process midway through my trip. This termination came after a meeting in which Vadik spoke quite candidly about his thoughts on Holocaust memory and the treatment of the Roma in Russia. I believe he may have regretted his candour and this may have been the reason for why he decided to terminate any further contact or relationship. Finally, because the overall length of the trip was cut short due to visa-related issues²¹, I did not have sufficient time to make contact with alternative interviewees.

Despite these challenges, my trip was highly instructive and insightful. In the end, I was successful in meeting a *Ruska* Roma family that had been living in the city since the mid-1960s, selling fruits and vegetables grown on nearby farms. My main point of contact was the family patriarch, Vadik. My relationship with him began in the late winter of 2012 when the acting Director of the St. Petersburg Romani Language and Culture Centre (SPRLCC) put me in contact with Vadik and another female interviewee, both of whom, upon learning of my interest in Holocaust legacy and memory in Russian Roma communities, volunteered to meet with me. Although the female interviewee withdrew from the research, Vadik and his family initially agreed to cooperate in my

²¹ Upon arriving to St. Petersburg, my aunt inquired about the date of my departure and whether my exit visa corresponded with this date. When travelling to Russia, one is required to have a visa with a specified date of departure. Not knowing this, my exit visa expired two weeks before I had planned to leave St. Petersburg. After unsuccessfully attempting to extend my visa, I had to leave Russia two weeks early in order to avoid the possibility of being detained.

research inquiry, although this later changed. I suspect that the reactions of other Roma individuals upon hearing about the subject of my research contributed to the change in Vadik's willingness to continue with the research. I suspect that Vadik and his family grew uncomfortable sharing their experiences and opinions with me, and based on what some individuals said to me at the flea market, their friends and acquaintances most likely supported these feelings.

In the end, however, I was able to come away with valuable information from my experiences with Vadik and his family, as well as many personal observations of anti-Roma attitudes. I observed how non-Roma individuals spoke and interacted with Vadik and his family; the discrimination was conspicuous, often demonstrated by individuals keeping their distance, whispering to one another, and in one case by Vadik being called *gryaznyy* (dirty) by two Russian males. As an outsider, I was unable to perceive the differences in appearance or demeanour between Roma and non-Roma individuals living in the area, but local inhabitants, such as my uncle and his friend, were easily able to point out who was a non-minority "Russian", and who was Roma. In response to being asked what criteria they used to determine this, the response was that he "just knew".

My observations of the negative interactions between Vadik and members of the non-minority population in St. Petersburg, support my speculations that discrimination by non-Roma played a role in Roma (and particularly Vadik's) reluctance to speak about certain subjects with individuals from outside of their community, especially when it comes to such culturally defining topics as the *Porraimos*. Yet, from Vadik's initial (what seemed to be) eagerness to speak about the *Porraimos*, it seems likely that despite the apprehension that may accompany the sharing of these experiences, that there is a desire

by some individuals to share these narratives. Therefore, the desire to discuss these topics (as demonstrated above and in the individual memoirs discussed in the previous chapter), apprehension and fear more often than not override any prior intentions.

As a result of these experiences, I have come to better understand the reasons for the Roma's reluctance to speak about their history, and have developed a strong appreciation for the challenges that other researchers have faced in the study and memorialization of the *Porraimos*. In Russia especially, there is little opportunity to speak out against or criticize the government, a reality of which I was well aware prior to my trip. Despite the interviewees' apprehension, I believe that a desire exists among the Roma to speak about the *Porraimos*, — a desire that is married to resentment for the socio-political and economic state in which the Roma community.

3.2.1 Meeting Vadik

My initial contact with Vadik and his family was made upon my arrival in St. Petersburg. Our first meeting was planned via internet correspondence with the assistance of the acting Director of the SPRLCC, who was able to initiate contact with two of his acquaintances; one being Vadik and the other a woman who decided to withdraw from the research prior to my arrival. Vadik, his wife Nadya²², and their two sons had agreed to meet with me at their place of work, a week into my trip. Vadik and his family ran a street-side vending stall that sold fruits and vegetables from nearby farms; the stall was usually set up in the parking lot of a chain of supermarkets called *O'keï* (O'kay). I went to my first meeting with Vadik and his family without any video- or audio-recording equipment; I intended to make their acquaintance and to introduce myself and discuss any questions that they had about my research. This meeting would be the first of only three meetings with Vadik and Nadya.

Prior to meeting with Vadik and his family, I had spoken extensively with my uncle about my project and the reasons for my interest in meeting with people whom he called “strangers.” He repeatedly told me of his inability to understand the purpose of my research, and of his concern in me meeting with *Tsygane*; upon my arrival home after every meeting with Vadik, he would always inquire whether anything had “happened” to me. Concern of this sort was never expressed when I met with a colleague who happened to be visiting in St. Petersburg, or when I spent entire days exploring the city on my own. Yet similar concerned queries regarding the purposes of my project and my safety were

²² As with ‘Vadik’, Nadya is a pseudonym that I have allocated to Vadik’s wife, as per his and her request to remain anonymous.

made by many family friends during the weeks that followed. Throughout the duration of my stay, I observed similar attitudes from people interacting with Vadik and his family. People routinely kept their distance and gave me strange looks whenever I was in the presence of Vadik and Nadja, actions that I can only attribute to discriminatory and racist attitudes towards the Roma and surprise regarding my association with them.

3.2.2 The Initial Meeting

My first meeting with Vadik and his family occurred on a Saturday morning, at an *O'keï* near the western outskirts of town. I was surprised at the size of Vadik's produce stand and at the number of people shopping at it. My initial observation was that Vadik and Nadya did not appear to look much different from most ethnic Russians in St. Petersburg; Vadik's uniform of loose blue jeans and faded polo shirts did not make him stand out from other St. Petersburg men. I wondered whether the shoppers knew they were doing business with *Tsygane*, and whether this was important to them.

Upon approaching the stand, I was greeted with friendliness and questioned about my trip to Russia. Although Vadik was busy with customers, he was able to tell me about his family and their business, and to ask me about my studies in Canada and the project I was undertaking in St. Petersburg. I presumed that the Director of the SPRLCC had shared the details and purpose of my research with Vadik, but upon meeting him I realized that he was not fully aware of my research intentions²³. We exchanged telephone numbers, and I said that I would call them the next day in order to set a time for us to meet again. As I left, I felt confident that Vadik was interested in my project and excited to meet with me again, based on the warmth and level of curiosity that he had demonstrated. Nadya, however, was busy serving customers during my meeting with Vadik, and did not contribute much to the conversation aside from the occasional nod and smile.

²³ Vadik was required to read a project description and sign a release form prior to commencing the interviews. This was a requirement by the University of Victoria Ethics Board.

As I travelled back to my uncle's home, I wondered whether local ethnic Russians were able to distinguish between Roma and non-Roma (as my uncle could), and whether there were any obvious visual cues that marked someone as a *Tsygan* or *Tsyganka*. As many Roma individuals and their families had assimilated into mainstream Russian culture during the late Soviet and early post-Soviet periods (Crowe 173), I wondered whether there were any remaining signifiers that labeled these individuals as ethnic Roma, as *Tsygane*. This question still interests me, as I routinely found it difficult to distinguish between some minorities and ethnic Russians. I planned to pose this question to Vadik, and anticipated that his answer might be different from my uncle's. Unfortunately, I did not end up having an opportunity to ask Vadik this question.

During my next two meetings with Vadik, I was able to learn about the family's history, their feelings on the status of the Roma in Russia, and their bleak outlook for the future of *pamiat' Tsyganskikh zhertv* ("the memory of Gypsy victims").

3.3 Getting Acquainted with Memory

After our first meeting, I was unable to contact Vadik for about eight days, but received a call from him on the following Friday morning. He invited me to join him during his trip to a flea market that he attended each Sunday during the summer. We drove an hour out of town to what appeared to be an outdoor *rynok* (market) that was closed for the weekend, made up of clusters of small shops with metal, garage-style doors. We parked and walked a few minutes past the *rynok* and arrived at the flea market. Vadik told me that he liked to come to the market not to buy but to see his friends (most of whom I assumed were Roma), many of whom also operated various street-side vending businesses. Most of the items being sold at the flea market were displayed on dirty towels on the muddy ground; they ranged from Soviet memorabilia to broken telephones to sunglasses. I asked Vadik who visited this flea market and whether it was a meeting spot of sorts for *Tsygane* in the area. To this he said:

Many Russians wouldn't come here, because they're not interested in buying this garbage, but mostly because they don't go out of their way to interact with *Tsygane* and such. All of this is for "just because." (Vadik 2012).

According to Vadik, the flea market served as a place to meet with friends, where they could update one another on family and work. Vadik introduced me to a number of his friends, telling them that I was in the country to talk to him about *Tsygane* in Russia. I received mixed reactions from the market vendors, varying from comments about the

validity of my motives to jokes about the lack of interest that anyone would have in the project. In hindsight, I now realize that these comments from his acquaintances may have contributed to Vadik's decision to terminate our meetings.

Many hours passed, and I wondered whether I would have the chance to interview Vadik about his family and get additional insight into his interpretation of the role of Roma Holocaust memories in Russia, but he spent the majority of our time at the flea market talking with others. It seemed that Vadik was more eager to talk to his friends than to be interviewed by me, but I saw this outing as a positive one for our rapport. In hindsight, I speculate that Vadik may have been asking his friends for their opinions on my research.

During the drive back to my uncle's apartment, Vadik asked many questions about my life in Canada. I was pleased that Vadik was taking an interest in me and letting me participate in his outings; I hoped that during our next meeting, we would be able to discuss his ideas on the *Porraimos* and its position in Russian Holocaust memory. Unfortunately, I had no way of knowing that my next meeting with him would be my last and that many of my questions would go unanswered.

Up until this point, Vadik and I had only talked about his family's business and their history in St. Petersburg, and what it was like to live in Canada. From these conversations, I learned about his fifteen years of experience in operating various produce stands throughout the city, the financial difficulties he faced while operating his stands, and his dreams of owning a "proper *kiosk*²⁴". I also observed a dislike, or perhaps distrust, of non-Roma individuals, demonstrated by the contrast between the camaraderie

²⁴ According to Vadik, a "proper *kiosk*" referred to a small shop, attached to a building or a freestanding metal unit that sold items such as fresh produce, cigarettes, lotto tickets, and alcohol.

that he exhibited when speaking to acquaintances at the flea market and a lack of it when engaging with non-Roma individuals.

A few days following the flea market, I received another call from Vadik, in which he asked me to meet Nadya and himself at a restaurant near their apartment. For my second meeting with Vadik, as for the first, I had not brought any video- or audio-recording equipment, but I decided to bring an audio recorder with me to the third meeting, as I felt that this would be a good time to begin to speak about his family's personal experiences of the *Porraimos*, and I did not want to relegate this conversation solely to memory. Vadik and Nadya were aware of my audio recorder, and its presence did not appear to have impacted our conversation at the time. Over the course of our two-hour dinner, I spoke with Vadik and Nadya about the way they saw Roma genocide experiences being remembered (or not) in Russia and what they thought future memorialization might look like.

Vadik spoke of his frustration about both what is remembered and what is forgotten. Speaking passionately both about the state of *Porraimos* memory and the Roma community in Russia, he said:

No one will remember the names of those who died in my family, in my community, not in the future. It is too idealistic to hope for a public acknowledgment for *stradanya kommunalnoy dushe* (the suffering of the community's spirit), and I do not think that there will ever be, not in this Russia. By the time someone begins to care, everything will be forgotten. Look at the Jews – millions dead and persecuted, but here, they still don't care. What can I myself do? Dozens in our family, hundreds in our communities, *vse pogibli* (everyone dead). (Vadik 2012).

I asked Vadik if other members of his family, such as his parents, had shared similar sentiments. To this he said:

His whole life, my father was very angry. His great grandparents came from the east, their siblings, their friends, all dead. (Vadik 2012).

Reflecting on this comment about his father's anger, I was reminded of something reported in Sonneman's text regarding one of her interviewees:

Mano is the toughest person I will interview; his hostility and bitterness are palpable. But he is not unique. Most of the Sinti men I interview are either reticent or very angry, it seems – much less forthcoming than the women. I wonder if it is because their experiences as victims were not only dehumanizing but also emasculating. When I mention this theory later to Reili [Sonneman's translator], she agrees. "Oh yes," she says. "The Sinto man is always ego – the Sinto men are ego-people; you know what I mean? They're always a little cocky. That's inbred." (Sonneman 147).

At this point, I noticed that Nadya had not said anything, but rather, quietly nodded in apparent agreement to all that Vadik said. Whenever I posed my questions or responded to Vadik's answers, I did so by looking at the both of them in hopes of engaging Nadya to speak with me as well. But, aside from the occasional *da* (yes) of agreement, Nadya did not contribute to the conversations. I do not know why she was so quiet, but I suspect that her reticence was due either to the nature of Vadik and Nadya's relationship, or perhaps because Nadya did not feel comfortable speaking to me in the context of researcher or in front of her husband. It was clear, however, that Vadik was more willing to voice his opinions than Nadya was, and that many of these opinions were fuelled with a passionate aggression.

I also asked Vadik about his opinion on the memorialization of the *Porraimos* in Russia, and whether he knew of any progress being made to acknowledge and commemorate Roma victims. Vadik said that he though he knew that there were memorials for Roma in Western Europe, he had not heard of or seen any in Russia; the only memorials that he knew of were “*dlya Sovki*” (for the Soviets) (Vadik 2012). I asked Vadik and Nadya whether they hoped for, or felt there was a need for acknowledgement for their community’s victims and if so, what form this acknowledgment might take. To this Vadik was quick to respond with discernable frustration, saying:

I do not want any apologies because they would not be genuine. Once they stop kicking us out of our homes, then only then will I know that there is *uvazheniye* (respect). Here in St. Petersburg it is not too bad [for the Roma], but once you leave the city it is a *koshmar* (nightmare), everywhere outside of Peter [St. Petersburg] and Moscow it is a true nightmare. But when we are hated, for reasons that most would not even know of - the apologies would mean *nichego* (nothing) (Vadik 2012).

During our conversation, it was apparent that Vadik did not see a place for the memorialization of the *Porraimos*, but it also did not seem that he necessarily desired public commemorative actions outside of his community. What was important to Vadik was to see an end to all discriminatory actions towards the Roma prior to public memorialization: the latter, he believed, disingenuous without the former.

After our dinner, Vadik and Nadya drove me to my uncle’s apartment and told me that they would be in touch over the next few days once Vadik had “cleared his schedule.” Unfortunately, I did not hear from Vadik again and was unable to reach him

for the remainder of my stay, which both worried and perplexed me. I called their home phone, as well as going to their produce stand. None of my calls were answered, and the produce stand was no longer where it had been during our first meeting, although this did not particularly surprise me, as I knew that Vadik and Nadya often relocated to other areas of town. I also called the Director of the SPRLCC to update him on the progress of my project, and to report the abrupt termination of my interviews with Vadik and Nadya. Approximately every month until August 2014, I have contacted the Director to inquire into Vadik's whereabouts or the reasons for his sudden "silence." He has not been able to provide any information and reports that he has not heard from Vadik.

Initially, I was disappointed by Vadik and Nadya's disappearance and felt that I had not gathered sufficient data to develop a representation of what the state of memory on the *Porraimos* was. After having analyzed my experiences in the context of the Roma's history and contemporary status in Russia, as well as the nature of interviewing a vulnerable community, I now see that my data supports and reflects these realities as they are represented in the literature on Roma communities and *Porraimos* memorialization in Russia.

3.4 Finding Insight in Silence

With Vadik's input and my observations about the verbal interactions with and behaviour shown towards Roma by non-Roma individuals, I was able to confirm a place for the public memorialization of *Porraimos* experiences does not currently exist in Russia, and that such a place is unlikely to exist until a drastic shift in the ways that the Roma are treated by the state and the public occurs. Moreover, until there are changes in the hierarchy that cultural memories take—wherein the primary public memorialization is predominantly Soviet and focuses on Russian victimhood — memorialization of the *Porraimos* is unlikely. This point is addressed in the following chapter. During my short time with Vadik, I came away with an understanding that he, his family, and his close community mourned their ancestors and their dead within close circles:

[My father] wrote all their names in a book, we have the book now. But aside from us now, who else will remember or care? (Vadik 2012).

With regards to the interviewee who decided not to participate, I can only speculate about her reason for changing her mind. Perhaps she did not feel comfortable talking to a stranger, or perhaps the perceived risks were too great. At the same time, based on the reactions of my uncle (and similar reactions from his various acquaintances) to my research and to the concept of Roma Holocaust memorialization in Russia, it seems apparent that the concept of commemorating the experiences of *Tsygane* is, at least to some, trivial and even strange, and as such far from a viable or worthwhile cause to champion. Although my stay in St. Petersburg was brief and my interactions with both ethnic Roma and Russian individuals few and relatively minor in scope, it was clear to me that anti-*Tsygane* sentiments are strong — sentiments that have been extensively

tracked by groups like the European Roma Rights Centre (2006, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012), and the International Federation of Human Rights (2009, 2011, 2013).

In the following chapter, I consider current politics and past efforts at Holocaust memorialization in Russia and Ukraine. I focus particularly on efforts made to commemorate the victims and experiences of Roma Holocaust genocide in the context of the dominant and homogenizing Soviet and post-Soviet Russian memory. Based on the pessimistic sentiments shared by Vadik, the deplorable treatment of Roma individuals in post-Soviet nations, and as a result, the difficulties of researching Roma communities, it seems that the future of public acknowledgement and memorialization for victims of the *Porraimos* will continue to be a challenge. Despite this, the past efforts of memorialization are fitting symbols for the state of *Porraimos* memory in both Ukraine and Russia, and through them, the memory of a silenced history endures.

Chapter 4: Spaces and Places of Remembrance

In present-day Russia, one will not find a single state-funded monument, museum, or other commemorative space memorializing, specifically, Roma victims of the Holocaust. Although various groups have made efforts to establish such monuments,²⁵ these attempts have received little or no public support. Adversely, the last decade in Ukraine has seen a dynamic shift in its politics of memory, leading to a number of existing Holocaust memorials being rededicated to commemorate Roma victimhood, as well as the construction of new memorials (Kotljarchuk 46). A notable memorial, exists in Kamianets-Podilskyi, a city in the northeast of Khmelnytsky province, although it was not originally intended for its current location or designed with that location in mind. The monument was originally intended for Babi Yar, the infamous Nazi killing field in Kyiv, but was never erected there. The erection of this memorial was not a simple process, and was initially met with tension by some local communities. The reason for this tension stems from an increasing competition of commemorative practices in this limited physical space, which is also claimed by Ukrainian nationalists, diehard communists, and Jewish groups. As monuments to the Roma victims have begun to steadily increase Ukraine, in Russia, they simply do not exist.

While the past twenty years have seen some increase in the number of memorials to Jewish victims of the Holocaust, many of the existing monuments in Russia do not pay tribute to minority victims but instead to fallen soldiers, prisoners of war, and Soviet civilians. In the popular imagination in Russia, the Holocaust continues to be framed as

²⁵ Ukrainian-born Roma architect Anatoly Ignashchenko has noted various Roma community groups and individuals who have attempted to erect commemorative monuments for Roma victims of Nazi genocide.

just one tragic aspect of a larger narrative – that of the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany in the Russian case and that of Ukraine’s suffering under foreign occupation in the Ukrainian case. Russia and Ukraine increasingly diverge, however, in the way they commemorate the Holocaust and the Second World War. With independence in Ukraine came a re-evaluation of memory, with the state aiming to deconstruct memories that had been imposed during the Soviet era. The revised version of collective memory is more inclusive of marginalized minorities and the anti-Soviet Ukrainians, whose voices previously had been suppressed in the Soviet political discourse. In contrast, Russia continues to frame its narrative of the Second World War as that of Soviet and Russian victory and heroism, only occasionally acknowledging Jewish victimhood²⁶.

In both countries, however, the specific experiences of Roma Holocaust victims continue to be marginalized. Most victims of the Holocaust in these regions, as well as throughout the rest of Eastern Europe, were Jewish, yet the state is paying little attention even to the memorialization of Jewish Holocaust victims; Roma Holocaust victims are further overlooked. The politics of remembrance in both Ukraine and Russia focuses on the experience of the two titular ethnic groups in these nations (that is, Ukrainians and Russians); the Holocaust continues to play a minor role in this narrative.

The final chapter of this thesis looks at the contemporary state of Holocaust memorialization in Russia and Ukraine and analyzes the changes this commemoration has undergone since Soviet times. I begin by discussing the sole example of public memorialization of the *Porrajmos* in the two countries, the effort to erect a memorial at Babi Yar, and the monument’s subsequent placement in Kamianets-Podilskyi, Ukraine. I

²⁶ Russia has yet to join the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, a United Nations outreach program whose aim is to preserve Holocaust history and remembrance.

argue that efforts such as these symbolize not just the Roma communities' desire for a presence in wartime and Holocaust memory, but a literal displacement of *Porraimos* history. Additional places for public commemoration of Roma victims will not exist in Russia until the State acknowledges Roma suffering during the Second World War and initiates a radical improvement in the Roma's social and political status – two factors that are highly dependent on one another. I also argue that commemorative efforts are crucial for the maintenance of any dialogue on the socio-political status of the Roma.

The concluding part of this chapter looks at the successful commemorative efforts for *Porraimos* memorialization throughout Western and Central Europe, as well as how these acts of memorialization have helped to reshape Holocaust cultural history in general. My overview of both the failed and the successful commemorative efforts for memorialization supports the arguments I have made throughout this thesis, about the “silences” in which *Porraimos* memory lives, and the challenges faced by individuals in Russia and Ukraine who attempt to study, preserve, and memorialize the legacy of the *Porraimos*.

4.1 Memorialization of the Roma Massacre at Babi Yar

Historians do not dispute the fact that Roma from various camps and the surrounding regions were murdered at Babi Yar between September 29, 1941, and February 1942; however, the exact numbers and geographic origins of the victims are not known. According to local residents, groups of Roma from up to four different labour camps were brought to Babi Yar for extermination (Holler 156); estimates of death tolls vary from 10,000 to 20,000 (Puxon and Kenrick 95). In *Babi Yar: A Document in the Form of a Novel* (1970), Russian author and Kyiv native Anatoly Kuznetsov writes about the Roma being brought to Babi Yar:

It is known that in the Ukraine the Gypsies were the victims of the same massive immediate destruction as the Jews. The passport was of decisive importance. They [Nazis] examined the passports in the streets; they examined them when they searched houses. Physical appearance was in second place. People with black eyes and hair, with a long nose, did their best not to show themselves in the street. The Gypsies were led to Babi Yar [to be killed] by entire camps and, apparently, until the last moment they did not understand what was going to be done to them. (Kuznetsov 133)

In 1991, the Ukrainian Roma organization Romanipe attempted to erect a monument for the Roma victims at Babi Yar, but failed due to two separate interventions by state police (Platonov). Although it is unknown exactly why state police intervened, I speculate that this either happened at the request of locals out of fear that a memorial might draw more Roma people to the area, or as a preemptive measure to dispel any potential protests. Despite this, local Kyiv government at one point appeared to support the memorialization of the Roma's experiences at Babi Yar, and had supposedly allocated some funding for the construction of this monument (Holler 84; Platonov). Anatoly Ignashchenko, a locally

and internationally known Ukrainian artist and architect of Romani descent, was commissioned by Romanipe to design the sculpture originally intended for Babi Yar. The sculpture, known as *Doroga Smerti* (The Road of Death) in Ukrainian and Russian, and as *Kali Tras* (Black Horror) in Romani (see figures 1 and 2), was constructed of black granite and steel. It depicts a horse-drawn caravan covered in garlands and roses. When the time came to place this monument at Babi Yar, Ignashchenko and the organizers were stopped. The project's chief architect S. Babuskhin halted the erection of the monument because it supposedly did not fit the "general layout" [of Babi Yar] (Kotljarchuk 45). Upon their second attempt to install the monument the memorial was once again indefinitely banned from that location (Platonov). As a result, the sculpture was erected instead in western Ukraine, where it sits on a hillside in the city of Kamianets-Podilskyi. The size of the sculpture was modified, and the caravan now sits atop two large steel poles. Protruding from the front of the caravan is a large steel bar, roughly forty feet in length, with a steel figure hanging from the end. This figure represents the human soul.



Figure 1. *Doroga Smerti/Kali Tras* as seen in Kamianets-Podilskyi, in Khmelnytsky province of Ukraine.
© Vasyl Shutyak 2013, used with permission.



Figure 2. *Doroga Smerti/Kali Tras* as seen in Kamianets-Podilskyi, in Khmelnytsky province of Ukraine.
© Vasyl Shutyak 2013, used with permission.

It is not known why this became the eventual location for the monument; the choice may reflect Ignashchenko's personal relationship with the town (his birthplace) and municipal authorities, or the town's history as a place of the Nazi massacre of Jews and Hungarian Roma that occurred there in August 1941 (Kotljarchuk 44). On the original plans for the sculpture, Ignashchenko, who died in May 2011, stated in a newspaper interview:

There was a gathering of Roma community of Kiev, which had decided to start raising funds for a monument to the Roma – the first²⁷ victims of Babi Yar. The monument is almost ready. Plant “Ukrgranit”²⁸ (Director A. Povzik) allocated blocks of stone weighing 50 tons and provided diamond blades to cut this stone. Kyiv University students associated with the international movement “The Community of Sant’Egidio”²⁹ dug a pit and poured concrete foundation, not to demand for this work a dime. But then it’s not moving – there is no money. The project was approved! Signed all the documents. True, the architect of the district did not want to allocate land: What else came up – a monument to the Gypsies... (Platonov)

The concrete foundation laid at Babi Yar for *Doroga Smerti/Kali Tras* now serves as a commemorative space, even though the sculpture it was intended to support is not there (see figure 3). As of September 29, 1999 a plaque indicating the absence of the monument had been placed on the spot, and was recently replaced with a new one in August 2013 after it had been vandalized (see figure 4) (Kotljarchuk 45). The absence of the monument and a plaque marking this absence are, arguably, symbolic of the silenced

²⁷ In this interview, Ignashchenko incorrectly stated that the Roma were the “first victims of Babi Yar.” The shooting of Jewish civilians started in late September 1941; the executions of the Roma did not happen until October.

²⁸ A stone processing plant located in Kyiv.

²⁹ An international Christian organization started in Italy in 1968 that is actively “dedicated to evangelisation and charity”.

Roma voice within the discourse of political and cultural memory regarding the genocide at Babi Yar. The absence of the monument is also a fitting representation of the absence of the Roma experience in the greater Holocaust narrative as embraced by post-Soviet states. The empty physical space and the missing memorial continue to serve as a place of cultural memory, regardless of the lack of support from local authorities for memorializing victims of the Roma massacre at Babi Yar.



Figure 3. The temporary plaque for *Doroga Smerti/Kali Tras* at Babi Yar.
© Jennifer Boyer 2013, used with permission.

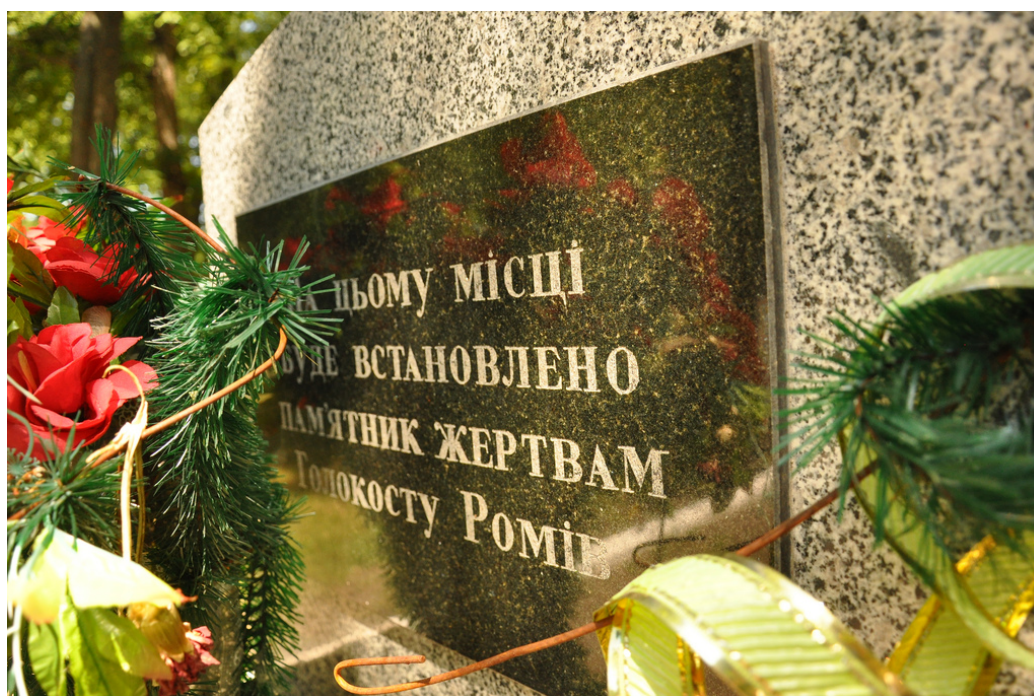


Figure 4. The inscription reads: “In this place a memorial will be placed to the victims of the Roma Holocaust.”

© Jennifer Boyer 2013, used with permission.

Doroga Smerti/Kali Tras serves as a symbol of the marginalization of Roma Holocaust history; its physical distance from Babi Yar and the memorials to other victims located here – an unfortunate and fitting symbol of the current state of public Holocaust memory in Ukraine. While changes in the politics of remembrance in Ukraine have been significant since that nation’s independence, in Russia such changes have been few and far between. As Holocaust recognition in Ukraine continues to evolve (in part because the country’s pro-Western government is influenced by the example of Holocaust memorialization in other countries), the official narrative of the Holocaust and the related memorial practices can potentially include those of surviving Roma communities. Unfortunately, even such limited recognition and understanding have yet to be demonstrated in Russia, in both political and cultural spheres.

4.2 *Porraimos* Memory in Russia

With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, many Russian groups took advantage of new democratic freedoms and aimed to raise the political profile of minorities such as the Jews and the Roma (Kalinin and Kalinina 245). These groups have attempted to include Roma memories in the general rhetoric about the war and its victims, but their perspectives have yet to find a place within post-Soviet war memory in Russia. This may very well be due to the continuing, and in some areas increasing (European Roma Rights Centre 2011-2013), discrimination faced by the Roma communities from the wider Russian population (I have described some of this discrimination during my stay in St. Petersburg). Perhaps because of this, Roma narratives continue to be excluded from Russian Holocaust remembrance – a Holocaust predominantly defined by its Soviet civilian casualties (Holler 81). Here, memories of the Holocaust are overshadowed by the commemoration of victory and the memorialization of the victims of Stalinism and the Gulag (although the latter receives much less attention than the commemoration of victory). It seems that in post-Soviet Russia, the histories that continue to be memorialized and preserved are reflective of the political present. As political discussion is still immersed in references to the twentieth century, events of the Stalinist-era remain freshly at the forefront of public memory. Although many memorials have gone from celebrating perpetrators to remembering their victims – a notable example being the removal of the Feliks Dzerzhinskii³⁰ monument in 1991 (Etkind) – the monuments

³⁰ As the founder of the *Cheka* secret police and the Gulag, Dzerzhinskii's monument in Lubyanka Square, Moscow, was toppled by protestors in August of 1991. It has since been replaced with a stone from Solovki Island as a monument to his victims (Etkind 2004).

found here are representative of a political memory that continues to grapple with its nostalgia for the Soviet past.

Despite the state's continued dedication to preserving and commemorating the memory of Soviet wartime heroes, there are two notable instances in which the commemoration of other victims, such as the Roma, has been a topic of discussion. The first instance occurred in July of 2001, in which the Moscow City Duma proposed and voted on the creation of a memorial for Roma victims of the Great War (Stoletneva 2002). This proposed monument was to be constructed in front of the city's popular Romani musical theater "Romen", but was ultimately never implemented. It seems that the primary purpose of this memorial was not to commemorate Roma victimhood, but to serve as an addition to the city's body of "monumental and decorative urban art" (Moscow City Duma 2001). Since then, the theater has gone on to produce a performance titled *Tziganskiy Ray* (Gypsy Paradise)(Dubinskaya 2012), which portrays and commemorates the Roma Holocaust experience (Theater Romen 2012-2015). Although the discussions by the Moscow Duma of commemorating the *Porraimos* is a positive step, this instance exemplifies that the memorialization of Roma victims in Russia continues to exist within the Roma community.

The second instance involved proposals for the creation of an exhibition on Roma Holocaust experiences through the collaboration of two institutions in Moscow. Throughout Russia, there exist only a few institutions and museums that commemorate and educate the public about the victims of Soviet political repression, as well as the Jewish victims of the Holocaust. These include the Interregional Holocaust Foundation (IHF), the International Sakharov Human Rights Centre (ISHRC), and the Moscow

Russian Research and Educational Holocaust Centre (MRREHC), all based in Moscow. In 2003, two years after the Moscow Duma's failed proposal for a memorial, these institutions announced their plans for a permanent program on the history of the Roma Holocaust at the MRREHC (MRREHC 2003). In a public notice, ISHRC and MRREHC director Mayer Yanko stated that he hoped that "international organizations [would] help [provide] us with materials for the Moscow Romani Holocaust Museum" (ISHRC 2003). This program took form as an exhibition at the MRREHC, but it was shut down the same year and has not been reinstated. Presently, these centres aim to educate the public on the history of genocide in Russia by including the victims of Stalinist political repression in their representation and memorialization of the Holocaust; over the past few years, these representations have come to include Russian minority groups such as the Tatars and the Chuvash, but not the Roma.

Similar to processes in Western and Central Europe, public memory has been shaped by the ways in which the Holocaust has been represented and commemorated by governments and educational institutions. As the memorialization of Holocaust victims has evolved over the past few decades to include the experiences of minority groups, public memory relating to the Holocaust has evolved with it. The Russian state has yet to take a similar initiative to include minority experiences of the Holocaust and the Second World War, specifically of the Roma. As a result, *Porraimos* memory continues to exist on the margins of Russian Holocaust memory.

4.3 Memorialization: Eastern and Western Europe

It is important to compare the state of Roma victim commemoration in Eastern Europe with that of commemoration in Western and Central Europe. The democratic practices in Western and Central Europe have gradually begun to influence the scope of Holocaust memory in Ukraine; in 2004, Ukraine recognized August 2 as the European Union's Roma Genocide Remembrance Day (Kotljarchuk 43). This has yet to be done in Russia. Throughout Western and Central Europe, various memorials and monuments, such as a highly publicized one in Germany (discussed below), have been erected due to the efforts of both Roma and non-Roma communities, as well as state governments, in order to commemorate the victims of the Roma Holocaust and their specific experiences of ethnic discrimination. As memorial dialogue continues to evolve, becoming increasingly ethnically inclusive in other areas of Europe, experiences of the "other" are re-evaluated and become part of the larger cultural and political Holocaust narrative in Western and Central European memory.

In October 2012, Germany unveiled its first memorial commemorating Roma and Sinti Holocaust victims. This memorial, located behind the Reichstag in Berlin, was funded entirely by the German government and endorsed by German Chancellor Angela Merkel.³¹ A highly significant event greeted with strong support from international Romani communities, this unveiling visibly and publicly affirmed the suffering experienced by Roma and Sinti victims and their communities in the decades following the genocide (see figures 5 and 6). The establishment of such a high-profile memorial will likely influence other regions in Europe that continue to struggle with the validation

³¹ The memorial was unveiled October 23, 2012. It is the first memorial in Germany that specifically commemorates the victims and survivors of the *Porrajmos*.

of Roma Holocaust experiences. Other memorials commemorating Roma Holocaust victims can be found in Lety, Czech Republic (figure 7); Szczurowa, Poland (figure 8); Lackenbach, Austria (figure 9); and Budapest, Hungary (figure 10) (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum 2013). These memorials have been established through the efforts of and funding from both local governments and Roma communities. Aside from the memorial in Budapest, all of these have been erected on land previously occupied by concentration and labour camps or extermination fields. These sites serve as both physical markers of the location of the historical events and places of remembrance for surviving Roma communities.



Figure 5. Memorial to the Sinti and Roma victims of National Socialism in Berlin, Germany
© Filip Maljovic 2014.



Figure 6. Memorial to the Sinti and Roma victims of National Socialism in Berlin, Germany
© Hans Nerstu, 2013.



Figure 7. Memorial for Roma Victims in Lety, Czech Republic.
© Jana Šustová, 2013.



Figure 8. Monument of Remembrance for Holocaust of the Romani
in Szczurowa, Poland.
© Natalia Gancarz, 2011.



Figure 9. Memorial to the Roma and Sinti at Lackenbach, Austria.
© Cultural Association of Austrian Roma, 2010.



Figure 10. Roma Holocaust Memorial in Budapest, Hungary.
© Tor Lillqvist, 2014.

In the context of post-Soviet republics, the only other memorial that specifically commemorates the Roma victims of Nazi occupation stands on the beaches of Kalevi Liiva, Estonia (Kasich 2007) (see figure 11). The memorial stone here depicts a caravan wheel with an inscription in both Romani and Estonian, stating that two thousand Roma were killed at this site.³² The stone was erected by the municipality in June of 1995 at the same time that memorials for the Jewish victims were established in the same area. After Estonian independence was reinstated in 1991, successive Estonian governments sought to condemn both the Nazi Holocaust and the latent anti-Semitism of the postwar Soviet Union. This led to the creation of Jewish cultural centres and museums, and the incorporation of Holocaust studies in the public education system (Estonian Foreign Ministry 2012; Estonian Institute Encyclopedia 2010). With a desire to distance itself from the Soviet treatment of Holocaust victims, Estonia has taken strides to include other minority victims, such as the Roma, in its new historical narratives of the Holocaust and the Soviet period.

³² Kalevi Liiva is the site of the execution of approximately six thousand Jews and Roma in 1942-43.



Figure 11. Memorial for Roma Victims in Kalevi Liiva, Estonia.
© Foundation Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe, 2011.
Used with permission.

4.4 Looking Forward: The Importance of Memorialization

As Western and Central European nations continue to include the experiences of Roma victims as part of their Holocaust memorialization, the post-Soviet Eastern European nations that I have mentioned, with the possible exception of Putin's Russia, are also taking the first steps towards incorporating the sufferings of minority victims in their narrative of the Soviet Holocaust experience. I believe this is of great importance for two related reasons.

Firstly, the recognition of the Roma genocide is important for the preservation of Holocaust memory in all its completeness and diversity, for current and future generations. Secondly, the incorporation of *Porraimos* experience into post-Soviet Holocaust memory and the greater European Holocaust narrative is necessary not only for the Roma communities but for all those who seek to remember the atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis and to ensure that a genocide of this scale does not happen again. The memorialization of minority Holocaust experiences enriches our memory of the Holocaust and strengthens intercultural relations by encouraging empathic understanding. As I have illustrated in previous chapters, Roma communities in Western and Central Europe desire to memorialize and share their experiences of the *Porraimos*, which I believe is exemplified by the sentiments expressed by Sinti and Roma individuals in the few memoirs and films discussed in Chapter Two.

With this recognition, however, it must be acknowledged and addressed that Roma communities in all of Europe continue to experience the injustices of racism, xenophobia, and socio-economic hardships. As Vadik said to me, the memorialization of his communities' suffering would be meaningless without a nation's recognition of, as

well as an attempt to improve, the status of its Roma communities. Initiatives developed by Germany and the European Union (EU Framework for Employment and Social Solidarity PROGRESS 2004; EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020) aim to provide housing, education, and employment to improve the social day-to-day lives of Roma individuals while promoting non-discrimination. Initiatives such as these will hopefully improve the ways in which Roma communities are perceived by their respective nation's dominant cultures. I believe that this interrelated cycle of improved social lives and changing societal perspectives will lead to the inclusion of *Porraimos* history into a diversifying international Holocaust memory.

In the concluding chapter that follows, I revisit the research questions and themes introduced at the beginning of this thesis. My analysis of the current state of memorialization and representation, as well as my own research experiences, suggest that the memory of the *Porraimos* endures within Romani communities and, in a few instances, has begun to reshape the public memory of Holocaust history.

Concluding Thoughts

In this thesis I have focused on the ways in which *Porraimos* history and experience have been remembered and silenced in the public and political cultural memory of post-Soviet Ukraine and Russia. Holocaust memory in Ukraine continues to evolve and encompass other experiences such as the *Porraimos*. Unfortunately, similar recognition and understanding has yet to be demonstrated in Russia, in both political and cultural spheres.

Through an analysis of *Porraimos* memory as preserved through literature, film, and commemorative monuments, as well as a study of the Soviet and post-Soviet experiences of the Roma, I sought to answer four primary questions. Firstly, what were the challenges of researching and representing *Porraimos* memory? By analyzing these challenges as other researchers had experienced them, I aimed to better prepare myself for conducting my own research in St. Petersburg. Secondly, where and how does the *Porraimos* fit into the greater Holocaust memory in Russia and Ukraine, as well as Western and Central Europe? Thirdly, after developing an understanding of the challenges in researching the *Porraimos*, and its status in post-Soviet Russian and Ukrainian Holocaust memory, I was interested in how the *Porraimos* was shared and memorialized through literature, documentary film, and public monuments. Lastly, I explored the differences between communal Roma memory, and public (political) memory of the *Porraimos* as an overarching theme throughout the thesis. These questions are addressed in this thesis through its four distinct chapters.

An initial overview of the history of the Roma in the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and post-communist Russia and Ukraine, provides an understanding of how socio-political relations have come to affect the memory of the *Porraimos*. In addition, this historical overview contextualizes the contemporary status of the *Porraimos*, as well as my own experiences of interviewing Vadik in St. Petersburg. I argue that due to the Soviet Union's inconsistent policies towards its ethnic minorities, as well as its lack of commitment to dismantling deep-rooted anti-Roma prejudices, contemporary *Porraimos* memory continues to exist firmly outside of Russian Holocaust and wartime memory, arguably due to the continuing racism and discrimination directed toward the Roma as much as the continuation of Soviet heroic myth of World War II. In contemporary Ukraine, *Porraimos* memory has begun to integrate into public Holocaust memory through the nation's process of breaking away from its ties to Soviet mentality and memory, a process that I believe is a positive one.

A subsequent comparative analysis on the "state of the art" of literature and film (Chapter 2) concerning the history and experiences of the *Porraimos* reveals the difficulties that past individuals have experienced in researching the *Porraimos*, and the methods that they used to better understand and represent the Roma's experience. Despite the challenges faced in working with inconsistent or scarce data, as well as with a highly vulnerable community, the available body of work explores and shares the *Porraimos* through enriching self-reflexive and cross-culturally comparative frameworks. Despite the research of American, Western and Central European authors and Romani individuals, literature from post-Soviet sources continues to be largely non-existent. This void can only be attributed to the Russia's political and cultural agendas, which I have argued exclude the Roma community.

My own experiences of conducting research on the *Porraimos*, as well as the experiences and sentiments shared with me by Vadik and Nadya while in St. Petersburg (Chapter 3), supported the lack of dialogue and research on the *Porraimos* in Russia, and mimicked the challenges that other researchers of the *Porraimos* in other parts of the world have experienced. I initially intended to interview at least three Roma individuals regarding their history, experience, and memory of the *Porraimos*, and hoped to create a short documentary film to share this experience. Although I was unsuccessful in creating the film, and was only able to interview Vadik and Nadya, I, nevertheless, came away with a first-hand understanding of the difficulties in researching a sensitive and concealed topic that is therefore seldom addressed or commemorated in post-Soviet Russia, and in the rest of the world in general. In the end, these challenges only emphasized the “silent” status of *Porraimos* memory in Russia; Vadik and Nadya’s disappearance, the withdrawal of another individual’s agreement to participate, and my observed interaction between the Roma and non-Roma Russians only supported the notion that the *Porraimos* really does exist outside of public Holocaust memory in St. Petersburg, as well as throughout Russia more generally.

Lastly, I present an analysis of the state of Holocaust memory in Russia and Ukraine generally, as well as the past and current efforts at memorializing the *Porraimos* more specifically (Chapter 4). The legacy of Holocaust memory in post-Soviet Russia exists within Roma communities and the efforts of individuals and organizations that seek to memorialize the *Porraimos*, and to incorporate it within the greater Holocaust narrative. I contextualize this idea through an overview of the Soviet history of the Roma

and the *Porraimos*, as well as my own experiences in St. Petersburg with Vadik and Nadja.

The research presented in this thesis contributes to contemporary research on the *Porraimos* in Russia and Ukraine, which is still in its infancy. Outside of academia, I hope that it serves to help preserve and educate on the *Porraimos* in a manner that supports its inclusion into the current Holocaust memory. The integration of the *Porraimos* into public Holocaust memory is crucial for the preservation of the Roma's experiences during the Second World War, and is equally important for the diversification of Holocaust history. As Western and Central European nations continue to include and memorialize the experiences of Roma victims in their Holocaust histories, the practice of memorialization in post-Soviet Eastern European nations has been positively influenced by these efforts. In the future, I hope that this will continue to result in the diversification of Holocaust memory in post-Soviet nations. To ensure that their memories are included in the broader Holocaust narrative, Roma communities and their supporters must continue to encourage the government in power to document their experiences; at the same time, the state must show its willingness to acknowledge the experiences of its minority populations. As Roma organizations and individuals in Ukraine and Russia continue to struggle for the improvement of their economical and socio-political status, the quest for acknowledgement of *Porraimos* experiences will not be an easy one.

The inclusion of *Porraimos* history in post-Soviet Holocaust history is dependent upon to the inclusion and acceptance of the Roma communities in Ukraine and Russia. Despite these challenges, however, the memory of the *Porraimos* endures in the

memories held closely by Roma communities, individual and collaborative efforts geared towards victim commemoration and socio-political emancipation. Lastly, this memory endures in the many instances in which the *Porraimos* has been, ironically, so eloquently “silenced” in public and political collective memory, memorialization, and representation.

Works Cited

- A People Uncounted*. Dir. Aaron Yeger. Urbinder Films, 2011. 99 min. DVD.
- Abashin, Sergei. "The Current State of Ethnography and Anthropology in Russia". *Forum for Anthropology and Culture*. Ed. Albert Baiburin. No. 2 (pp. 448-489). 2005. Web.
- Acton, Thomas and Gary Mundy. *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity*. University of Hertfordshire Press, 1997. Print.
- Asher, Harvey. "The Soviet Union, the Holocaust, and Auschwitz". *The Holocaust in the East: Local Perpetrators and the Soviet Response*. Ed. Michael David-Fox, Peter Holquist, Alexander M. Martin. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014. Print.
- Bernard, H. Russell. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. AltaMira Press; 4th Revised edition. 2006. Print.
- Blutinger, Jeffrey. "An Inconvenient Past: Post-Communist Holocaust Memorialization". *Shofar – An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*. Vol 29, n. 1. 2010: 73-94. Web. April 14, 2015.
- Brockman, Michaela. "Problematising Short-Term Participant Observation and Multi-Method Ethnographic Studies". *Ethnography and Education*. Volume 6. Issue 2. 2001: 229-243. Web. January 13, 2014.
- Broken Silence*. Dir. Bob Entorp and Orhan Galjus. Entorp & Dezwart Films, 2012. MP4.
- Castle-Kanerova, Mita. "Romani Refugees: the EU dimension". *Between Past and Future: the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*. Ed. Will Guy. University of Hertfordshire Press, 2001. Print.
- Collum, Jill and Florinda Lucero. "The Roma: During and After Communism". *Topical Research Digest: Human Rights in Russia and the Former Soviet Republics*. University of Denver. 2009. Print.
- Cooper, Caroline. *The Forgotten Holocaust: A Gypsy's Journey from Auschwitz to Freedom (as told by Gil Webb)*. Australian Self Publishing Group, 2012. Web.
- Council of Europe. *Protecting the Rights of Roma*. <<http://hub.coe.int/web/coe-portal/roma>>. Web. June 5, 2014.
- Crowe, David M. *A History of the Gypsies in Eastern Europe and Russia*. St Martin's Griffin, New York. 1996. Print.

- . *The Holocaust: Roots, History, and Aftermath*. Westview Press, 2008. Print.
- Dekel-Chen, Jonathan. *Farming the Red Land: Jewish Agricultural Colonization and Local Soviet Power, 1924-1941*. Yale University Press, 2005. Print.
- Ducey, Corinne. "Representations of the Holocaust in the Soviet Press, 1941-1945". *Slavonica*, 01/2008, 14 (2): 119-138. Web. January 7, 2015.
- Dubinskaya, Maria. "В театре "Ромэн" состоялась премьера спектакля по пьесе, которую хотел экранизировать Сергей Бондарчук (Theater "Romen" premier play which Sergey Bondarchuk wants to bring to the big screen). *Tass.ru*. May 30, 2012. Web. April 4, 2015.
- Eliot, Janna, *Settela's Last Road*. Trafford Publishing, 2008. Web.
- European Roma Rights Centre. *Hard Times for Roma Rights: Economics, Politics, and Violence*. Roma Rights Online Journal, 30 July, 2009. Web.
- Etkind, Alexander. "Hard and Soft in Cultural Memory: Political Mourning in Russia and Germany". *Grey Room*, No. 16, 2004. Web.
- Heuss, Herbert. *From "Race Science" to the Camps: the Gypsies During the Second World War*, volume 1. Ed. Donald Kenrick. University of Hertfordshire Press, 1997. Print.
- Fonseca, Isabel. *Bury Me Standing: The Gypsies and Their Journey*. Vintage Departures, 1995. Print.
- Gitelman, Zvi. *Bitter Legacy: Confronting the Holocaust in the USSR*. Indiana University Press, 1997. Print.
- . "Soviet Reactions to the Holocaust, 1945-1991". *The Holocaust and the Soviet Union*. Ed. Dobroszycki & Gurock, 1993: 3-28. Print.
- Genocide of European Roma (Gypsies) 1939-1945*. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Web. September 2, 2014.
- Golovko, Evgeny. "The Current State of Ethnography and Anthropology in Russia". *Forum for Anthropology and Culture*. Ed. Albert Baiburin. No. 2. 2005: 448-489. Web. December 22, 2014.
- Guy, Will. *Between Past and Future: the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*. University Of Hertfordshire Press, 2002. Print.

- Golbert, Rebecca L. "Holocaust Sites in Ukraine: Pechora and the Politics of Memorialization". *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, V. 18 N.2, Fall 2004: 205-233. Web. January 2015.
- Groome, Francis Hindes. *In Gypsy Tents* (1880). Kessinger Publishing, 2009. Print.
- . *Gypsy Folk Tales*. Hurst and Blackett, London. 1899. Print.
- "Gypsy Baron Goes to Heaven". *Vokrugsveta.com*. Web. June 23, 2014.
- Gypsy Lore Society. *Gypsyloresociety.org*. Web. November 12, 2014.
- Hancock, Ian. "A Glossary of Romani Terms". *Gypsy Law: Romani Legal Traditions and Culture*. Ed. Walter O. Weyrauch. University of California Press. 2001. Print.
- . "The Consequences of Anti-Gypsy Racism in Europe". *Other Voices*, v.2, n.1. February 2000. Reprint of a text delivered to the *Joint Seminar on Roma (Gypsies) in Europe*, Warsaw, September 20-23, 1994. Originally published in *The Belgrade Circle*, No.1-2, 1995. Web. October 24, 2014.
- . "Roma in Europe: A Chronology Leading to the Holocaust". The Romani Archives and Documentation Centre, 2008. Web. February 16, 2014.
- . "The Roots of Anti-Gypsism: To the Holocaust and After". *Confronting the Holocaust: A Mandate for the 21st Century*. Ed. G.J. Colijn & Marcia Sachs Littell. University Press of America, Lanham, 1997: 19-49. Print.
- . *We Are the Romani People*. University of Hertfordshire Press 2002. Print.
- "Handicapped: Victims of the Nazi Era, 1933-1945". *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Ushmm.org*. Web. August 19, 2014.
- Hidden Sorrows: Meeting Gypsy (Roma) Survivors of the Holocaust in Romania*. Dir. Michelle Kelso. In the Shadow Productions, 2005. 56:10 min. MP4.
- Holler, Martin. *The National Socialist Genocide of Roma in the German-Occupied Soviet Union*. Report for the Documentary and cultural Center of German Sinti and Roma. Heidelberg 2009. *Sintiundroma.de*. Web. April 4, 2015.
- International Federation of Human Rights. "Discrimination Against Visual Minorities, Roma, Migrants and Indigenous Peoples: Russia's Record Before the United Nations". 14 February 2013. *Refworld.com*. Web. Last accessed June 5, 2014.
- I Skrzypce Przestaly Grac [And the Violins Stopped Playing]*. Dir. Alexander Ramati. Roberts/David Films; Orion Television Distributor, 1988. 116 min. DVD.

- Jersild, Austin. *Orientalism and Empire: North Caucus Mountain Peoples and the Georgian Frontier, 1845-1917*. McGill-Queens University Press, 2003. Print.
- Kalinin, Valdemar and Christina Kalinina. "The Baltics, Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova: Reflections on Life in the Former USSR". *Between Past and Future: the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*. Ed. Will Guy. University of Hertfordshire Press, 2001, pp. 242-252. Print.
- Kanfer, Stefan, *The Eighth Sin*. Stefan Kanfer, 2012. Web. December 7, 2014.
- Kasich, B. "Avati mälestusmärk II maailmasõja ajal mõrvatud mustlastele (Opening of a Memorial to the Murdered Gypsies of World War II)". *Uudised.err.ee*. June 5, 2007. Web. December 9, 2013.
- Kemper, Michael. "Red Oreintalism: Mikhail Pavlovich and Marxist Oriental studies in early Soviet Russia". *Die Welt des Islams*, 50(3-4), 2000: 435-476. Web. December 22, 2014.
- Kenrick, Donald. *In the Shadow of the Swastika: the Gypsies During the Second World War*, volume 2. University of Hertfordshire Press, 1999. Print.
- . *The Destiny of Europe's Gypsies*. Basic Books, 1973. Print.
- Kenrick, Donald and Grattan Puxon. *Gypsies Under the Swastika*. University Of Hertfordshire Press, 1995. Print.
- . *The Romani World*. University of Hertfordshire Press, 2004. Print.
- Knesebeck, Julia von dem. *The Roma Struggle for Compensation in Post-War Germany*. University of Hertfordshire Press, 2011. Print.
- Korkoro [Alone]*. Dir. Tony Gatlif. Production Princes; France 3 Cinema; Rhone-Alpes Cinema, 2009. 111 min. DVD.
- Kotljarchu, Andrej. "Нацистский геноцид цыган на территории оккупированной Украины : роль советского прошлого в современной политике памяти (The Nazi genocide of Roma on the territory of occupied Ukraine: the role of Soviet path dependency in contemporary politics of memory)" in ГОЛОКОСТ І СУЧАСНІСТЬ (Holocaust and Present). Vol. 12, 2014: 24-50. Web. February 27, 2015.
- Lee, Ronald. "The Rom-Vlach Gypsies and the Kris-Romani". *Gypsy Law: Romani Legal Traditions and Culture*. Ed. Walter O. Weyrauch. University of California Press. 2001. Print.

- Leland, Charles Godfrey. *Gypsy Sorcery and Fortune-telling: Illustrated by Numerous Incantations, Specimens of Medical Magic, Anecdotes, and Tales*. T. Fisher Unwin, London. 1891. Print.
- Lemon, Alaina. *Between Two Fires: Gypsy Performance and Romani Memory from Pushkin to Post-Socialism*. Duke University Press, 2000. Print.
- Lewy, Guenter. *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies*. Oxford University Press, 2000. Print.
- “Markel Opens Roma Holocaust Memorial in Berlin”. *BBC News*. October 24, 2012. Web. December 10, 2013.
- Martin, Terry. *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001. Print.
- Matras, Yaron. *I Met A Lucky People*. Penguin Books Ltd. 2014. Print.
- Millar, James R. (Ed.). *Encyclopedia of Russian History*. MacMillan Reference Library, 2003. Print.
- Marushiakova Elena, and Veselin Popov. *Roma Culture in the Past and Present. Paradigma – Minority Studies Society*, Sofia. 2012. Web. December 20, 2014.
- . “Historical and Ethnographic Background: Gypsies, Roma, Sinti”. *Between Past and Future – the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*. Ed. Will Guy. University of Hertfordshire Press, 2001: 33-53. Print.
- . *Ethnic identities and economic strategies of the Gypsies in the countries of the former USSR*. Mitteilungen des SFB 'Differenz und Integration'. 4/1: Nomaden und Sesshafte - Fragen, Methoden, Ergebnisse. – Orientwissenschaftliche Hefte (Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg), 9, 2003: 289-310. Web. December 20, 2014.
- Mastyugina, Tatiana and Lev Perepelkin. *An Ethnic History of Russia: Pre-Revolutionary Times to the Present*. Ed. Vitaly Naumkin and Irina Zviagelskaia. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1996. Print.
- “Memorial to the Jews Murdered at Kalevi-Liiva Dunes”, *The Information Portal of European Sites of Remembrance by the Foundation Memorial of the Murdered Jews of Europe*. *Memorialmuseums.org*. Web. July 12, 2014.
- “Minority Rights International Group World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples - Report on Russian Federation”. *Minorityrights.org*. Published 2005, 2008. Web. June 5, 2014.

- Nazaruk, Maja. "Reflexivity in Anthropological Discourse Analysis". *Anthropological Notebooks*. XVII/1, 2011. Print.
- O'Keeffe, Brigid. "'Backward Gypsies,' Soviet Citizens: The All-Russian Gypsy Union, 1925–28" in *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*. Volume 11, Number 2, Spring 2010: 283-312. Print.
- Platonov, Vladimir. "A Tragedy About a Tragedy". *Zerkalo Nedeli*. No. 39 (156), 1997. Web. December 20, 2014.
- Porraimos: Europe's Gypsies in the Holocaust*. Dir. Alexandra Isles. The Cinema Guild. 2001. DVD.
- Puxon, Grattan. *Rom: Europe's Gypsies*. Minority Rights Group, 1973. Print.
- Ramati, Alexander. *I skrzypce przestly grac [And the Violins Stopped Playing]*. Hodder & Stoughton, 1985. Print.
- Rohdewald, Stefan. "Post-Soviet Remembrance of the Holocaust and National Memories of the Second World War in Russia, Ukraine and Lithuania". *Forum for Modern Language Studies*. Vol. 44 No. 2. Oxford University Press for the Court of the University of St. Andrews. 2008. Web. January 12, 2015.
- Rose, Romani. *Roma and Sinti: Human Rights for Europe's Largest Minority*. 2005. Print.
- . *Sinti und Roma Im Dritten Reich Das Programm Der Vernichtung Durch Arbeit*. Lamuv, 1991. Print.
- Rosenberg, Otto. *A Gypsy In Auschwitz* (as told to Ulrich Enzensberger). London House, 1999. Print.
- Reshetov, Alexandr. "The Current State of Ethnography and Anthropology in Russia". *Forum for Anthropology and Culture*. Ed. Albert Baiburin. No. 2 (pp. 448-489). 2005. Web. March 11, 2014.
- Roucek, Joseph Slabey. *Contemporary Political Ideologies*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1961. Web. March 11, 2014.
- Schensul, Stephen, Jean Schensul and Margaret LaCompte. *Essential Ethnographic Methods: Observations, Interviews, and Questionnaires*. AltaMira Press, 1999 (Revised 2012). Print.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. *The Primacy of the Ethical: Propositions for a Militant Anthropology*. *Current Anthropology*. Vol 36, No. 3. June 1995. Web. March 11, 2014.

- Slee, Yvonne. *Torn Away Forever*. Amber Press, 2005. Web.
- Sokolovskiy, Sergey. "Writing the History of Russian Anthropology". *Russian Cultural Anthropology after the Collapse of Communism*. Ed. Albert Baiburin, Catriona Kelly, and Nikolai Vakhtin. Routledge, 2012. Print.
- Sonneman, Toby. *Shared Sorrows: A Gypsy Family Remembers the Holocaust*. University Of Hertfordshire Press 2002. Print.
- Stalin, Joseph. *The History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) – Short Course*. Greenwood Press, London. Facsimile of 1936 edition (March 1976). Print.
- Stanyukovich, Maria. "The Current State of Ethnography and Anthropology in Russia". *Forum for Anthropology and Culture*. Ed. Albert Baiburin. No. 2, 2005: 448-489. Web. November 20, 2014.
- State Statistics Committee of Ukraine. "First All-Ukrainian Population Census 2001: Historical, Methodological, Social, Economic and Ethnic Aspects". *2001.ukrcensus.gov.au*. Web. June 4, 2014.
- Stewart, Michael. "Gypsies and the Work Ethic Under Socialism". *Socialism: Ideals, Ideologies and Local Practice*. Ed. C. Hann. New York & London Routledge, 1993: 187-203. Web. February 22, 2015.
- . "The Development of Communist Policy Towards Gypsies and Roma 1945-1989: A Case Study". *Between Past and Future: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*. Ed. Will Guy. Hatfield University of Hertfordshire Press, 2001. Print.
- . "Underclass, Race and 'the Roma' in Post-communist eastern Europe". *Postsocialism: Ideas, Ideologies and Practices in Europe and Asia*. Ed. C. Hann. London Routledge, 2002: 133-155. Print.
- Stojka, Ceija. *We Live in Seclusion: The Memories of a Romani [Wir leben im Verborgenen. Erinnerungen einer Rom-Zigeunerin]*. Picus Verlag, 1988. Web.
- Stoletneva, Yudmila. "Moscow Duma Proposes Memorial for Gypsy Holocaust Victims". *Moscow Duma Press Centre*. 2002. Web. February 25, 2015.
- Tebbutt, Susan. *The Role of Romanies: Image and Counter Image*. Liverpool University Press, 2004. Print.
- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "Oral History Interview Guidelines". *Ushmm.org*. 1998; Revised 2007. Web. February 20, 2014.
- Vadik and Nadya. Personal Interview. St. Petersburg, Russia. July 2012.

Van Maanen, John. *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1998. Print.

Vogelsang Peter and Brian B. M. Larsen. *The Murder of Soviet Jews*. The Danish Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. 2002. Web. June 14, 2015.

Walter, Winter, *Winter Time: Memoirs of a German Sinto who Survived Auschwitz*. translated by Struan Robertson University of Hertfordshire Press, 2004 (original German print 1999). Print.

Yevtoukh, Volodymyr. "Roma in Ukraine: Ethnodemographical and Sociocultural Contexts". *Social Sciences Eastern Europe*. No. 2. 2009: 57-61 Web. August 20, 2014.

Yours, Jan. *Crossings: A Journal of Survival and Resistance during the WWII*. Simon and Schuster, 1971. Print.

---. *The Gypsies*. Simon and Schuster, New York 1967. Print.

Appendix A: Films About The *Porraimos*

A People Uncounted. Dir. Aaron Yeger. Urbinder Films, 2011. 99 min. DVD.

A People Uncounted offers an introduction to the history and culture of the Romani, as well as an emphasis on their plight during the Holocaust. Filmed throughout eleven European countries, Yeger interviews historians, activists, theater performers, musicians, and Holocaust survivors on various topics pertaining to the contemporary problems faced by the Romani in around the world.

Broken Silence. Dir. Bob Entorp and Orhan Galjus. Entorp & Dezwart Films, 2012. MP4.

Broken Silence follows Sinti radio-reporter Orhan Galjus as he travels throughout Europe to speak with survivors, eyewitnesses, and historians about *Porraimos* experiences. During his travels, Galjus meets individuals that have either grown distant and unaware of their Holocaust experiences, or continue to be emotionally tormented by this history.

This film ends with a series of questions in which Galjus speculates about the future *Porraimos* remembrance and the steps that must be taken in order to preserve and memorialize it for future generations.

Hidden Sorrows: Meeting Gypsy (Roma) Survivors of the Holocaust in Romania. Dir. Michelle Kelso. In the Shadow Productions, 2005. 56:10 min (Out of print).

Director's synopsis:

The idea for a documentary came to me while transcribing my first interviews. When Roma tell stories, their entire bodies become instruments of communication. Arm gestures replace action words and facial expressions convey emotion. Also, I wanted my students to see what I saw, so that they could transform the facts and figures of the Holocaust into faces and names.

Survivors' accounts carry the film. Mirica tells of eating grass to survive. Juberina recounts witnessing her father being shot by guards because he was too sick to work. Crai remembers waking up each morning to find that family and friends had died during the night, and those with a little strength left had to bury them. So many died that during harsh winters, and when the ground froze over, burials were no longer possible. Berbec recalls with pain that his mother's corpse was devoured by a dog. Even though liberation came in 1944, death had yet to retreat. Anuta, orphaned, cries while remembering having to leave her older sister, ill with typhus, on the side of road because she could no longer be carried.

The film has been shown at cultural institutions and in several high schools across Romania and in the United States. It will be duplicated and sent to every Romanian high school to serve as an educational tool for teaching about the Holocaust and for

discussion in civic education classes on topics such as xenophobia, racism, and discrimination. My hope for both my academic work and the film is to start a much-needed dialogue about the place of Roma in both Romanian and Holocaust history.

I Skrzypce Przestaly Grac [And the Violins Stopped Playing]. Dir. Alexander Ramati. Roberts/David Films; Orion Television Distributor, 1988. 116 min. DVD.

Filmed a year after the release of Ramati's novel of the same title, this film tells of the Nazi persecution of the Romani during World War II. The narrative focuses on a group of Polish Roma, who are forced to flee from a newly occupied Poland and to seek asylum in Hungary. Along the way they encounter other Romani groups who too are on the run, as well as burial sites for Romani groups that had been murdered by the Nazi SS. The Mirga family, a sedentary Roma family and the protagonists of this film, join a *kumpania* of travelling Roma after having been warned of the dangers at hand. In addition to depicting the Nazi persecution of the Roma, this film provides a glimpse into Romani life by portraying traditional marriage practices, inner governing structures, as well as the relationships between Roma and non-Roma.

Korkoro [Alone]. Dir. Tony Gatlif. Production Princes; France 3 Cinema; Rhone-Alpes Cinema, 2009. 111 min. DVD.

Korkoro presents the experiences Claude, a nine-year-old French boy who had escaped from an orphanage and was adopted by a Romani *kumpania*. The film spans a number of years, starting from Claude's early years with the *kumpania*, and ends with the deportation of both Claude and the Romani group to various concentration camps. In this film, Gatlif presents an insight into the cultural traditions of the Romani, as well as their experiences of persecution during World War II.

Gatlif, himself of Romani descent, employed a number of Transylvanian Romani individuals in the film, and presented much of the film's dialogue in the French-Romany dialect.

Porraimos: Europe's Gypsies in the Holocaust. Dir. Alexandra Isles. Chalice Well Productions, 2001. 56:05 min. DVD.

This film presents the oral testimonies of five Roma and Sinti survivors, as well as one Jewish survivors' account of her camp experience with the Romani. Isles contextualizes these interviews along side archival film footage and photography of Romani groups in Germany prior to and during the war. Interwoven with this footage, the six narratives are spliced together to present a chronological narrative of the *Porraimos*, in which the individual narratives produce a representation of a unified Romani experience.

Appendix B: Literature about The Porraimos

Cooper, Caroline. *The Forgotten Holocaust: A Gypsy's Journey from Auschwitz to Freedom (as told by Gil Webb)*. Australian Self Publishing Group, 2012 (out of print).

Publisher's description:

Auschwitz prisoner Gil Webb suffers the unremitting brutal terror of the purpose-built Gypsy Camp, the Zigeunerlager, where thousands of his fellow Romanies are indiscriminately annihilated in World War II.

Rescued at the end of the war and returned to his English homeland to recuperate, Gil and his new wife sail to a fresh life overseas, hoping to escape his past memories and the depression of post-war Europe.

On disembarking, Gil is convinced he sees his Auschwitz captor Obersturmführer Oskar Krauss ahead of him in the crowds, disappearing into the city streets. His nightmare has travelled on the ship with him. Worse is to come when his granddaughter, Lily, unaware of her Romani heritage, falls in love with a young man, until she learns the truth of his family.

Eliot, Janna, *Settela's Last Road*. Trafford Publishing, 2008 (out of print).

Publisher's description:

This novel is an imaginative interpretation based on historical characters and events, set in 1994 in wartime Holland. Nine year-old Settela, a Dutch Sinti girl, tries to make sense of what is happening, with no one to tell her the truth. One day, SS military raid Settela's encampment, sending Settela and her family to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Struggling to understand her fate, Settela dreams of rescuing her people and leading them to safety.

Fonseca, Isabela, *Bury Me Standing: The Gypsies and their Journey*. Vintage, 2011.

This account presents the four years that Fonseca spent with Roma communities throughout western and central Europe, in which she learned about their cultural histories, traditions, languages, and taboos, while befriending their matriarchs, activists, and child prostitutes. Through a self-reflexing framework, Fonseca's text provides insights into the experiences of the Roma individuals that she met with, as well as her own experiences in gathering this information.

Chapter Seven, titled *The Devouring*, provides a brief introduction to the history of the Nazi persecution of Gypsies, as well a few quotes from interviews with survivors Drina of Romania (243), Karoly Lendvai of Hungary (252), and Mieczysław Janka of Poland (266).

Overall, this text provides an insightful look into the history, culture, and current socio-political status of the Romani in Europe, but does not seek to provide an in depth presentation of *Porraimos* history.

Kanfer, Stefan, *The Eighth Sin*. Stefan Kanfer, 2012 (out of print).

Publisher's description:

A searing, unforgettable first-person novel about a Gypsy survivor of the Nazi death camps, brought to New York City by Jews who try to understand and repair the damage done to his soul.

Kenrick, Donald and Grattan Puxon, *Gypsies Under the Swastika*. University of Hertfordshire Press, 1995.

Gypsies Under the Swastika was first published as *The Destiny of Europe's Gypsies* in 1972, with an original intent of recounting only the story of the Nazi persecution of the Gypsies. This book looks at the early history of persecution against the Romani in Europe, Nazi policy towards Aryans and non-Aryans, the various state-mandated policies against the Romani during WWII, and ends with a general statistical overview of Gypsy life in labor and concentration camps.

Kenrick and Puxon did much of their research by consulting material found in the collections of the Wiener Library in London. Using the gathered data, they present a historically chronological account of the events that lead to the persecution of the Romani in Germany and other Nazi Socialist occupied nations.

Ramati, Alexander, *And the Violins Stopped Playing*. Franklin Watts, 1986.

This narrative tells of the persecution of Romani by the Nazis during World War II by depicting a group of Polish Roma who are forced to flee and seek asylum in Hungary. Along the way, they encounter other Romani groups, who have either been murdered by travelling Nazi SS, or are too avoiding per suction. The Mirga family, a non-nomadic Roma family and the protagonists of this story, join a *kumpania* of travelling Roma after having warned them of the dangers at hand. In addition to depicting the Nazi persecution of the Roma, this narrative provides a glimpse into Romani life by portraying traditional marriage practices, the inner Roma governing practices, as well as the relationships between Roma and non-Roma.

The text is based on historiographical research and data, as well as interviews, collected by Ramati to create a narrative that depicts the experiences of a small group of Roma.

Rosenberg, Otto, *A Gypsy in Auschwitz*. Allison & Busby, 2000.

This memoir tells of the experience of Otto Rosenberg, a German Sinto, prior to and during the Holocaust. Rosenberg was raised by his grandmother in Berlin, while his parents travelled throughout Germany trading horses. This account chronicles Rosenberg's life as a Sinti child living in a permanent Gypsy camp, and his subsequent deportation to Auschwitz-Birkenau. In the camps, Rosenberg manages to avoid death by establishing himself as a well-liked prisoner and by doing favours for various camp officials. At liberation, Rosenberg learns that his grandmother and sisters have died of typhoid, leaving Rosenberg with an overwhelming sense of survivor's guilt.

Although this memoir presents Rosenberg's wartime in great detail, the narrative's abrupt end at liberation left me questioning as to whether Rosenberg's postwar experiences had been left out or not learned of, and to what extent the Eizenbergs interviews with Rosenberg developed.

Slee, Yvonne. *Torn Away Forever*. Amber Press, 2005 (Out of print).

Publisher's description:

This historical fiction novel revolves around August, a full-blooded Gypsy, who was torn away from his real parents and his daughter, Elsa. It tells of the suffering and hardships they and their families were put through during two world wars and the periods in between, as well as the racism they had to contend with.

Sonneman, Toby. *Shared Sorrows: A Gypsy Family Remembers the Holocaust*. University Of Hertfordshire Press, 2002.

The memoir contains a collection of oral testimonies shared by the Mettbach and Hollenreiner families, a group of Sinti Gypsies who have lived throughout Germany and Austria with roots stemming five hundred years back. Sonneman, along with Reili Mettbach, a Sinti Holocaust survivor now living in the United States, travels to Germany in the fall of 1992 in order to meet Rosa Mettbach, a distant cousin of Reili's, who too survived the Holocaust. Through Rosa and Reili, Sonneman is able to interview a variety of other family members who too had been victims of the *Porraimos*. The work presents itself as a historical account as well as an oral historiography of the two families. Throughout this text, Sonneman speaks of her own experiences with Holocaust memory as experienced through her father.

One of this work's strong points is Sonneman's ability to translate the recorded oral testimonies into writing, in a way that stays integral to these testimonies' *moods*. Sonneman also speaks of the difficulties she experienced in gathering her information, such as the responsibility she felt in preserving and presenting the experiences that were share with her.

Sonneman insight into the relationships that are formed between an interviewer and interviewee, the hurdles in gathering interviews, and the educational and cathartic power that oral testimony holds.

Stojka, Ceija. *We Live in Seclusion: The Memories of a Romani [Wir leben im Verborgenen. Erinnerungen einer Rom-Zigeunerin]*. Picus Verlag, 1988.

Publisher's Description:

"First published in 1988, Ceija narrates her childhood experiences of life in Auschwitz, Ravensbrück, and Bergen-Belsen. For the second part of the book she tells in an interview with Karin Berger also on the time when she was still with her family traveled through Austria, as well as about her life after 1945, as today feels like a Gypsy woman and how they and their memories alive."

Winter, Walter. *Winter Time: Memoirs of a German Sinti Who Survived Auschwitz*. University Of Hertfordshire Press, 2004.

Publisher's Description:

"This rare account from a survivor of Gypsy concentration camps during World War II relates how German Sinti Walter Winter was discharged from the German navy in 1943 on racial grounds and was deported to Auschwitz with his brother and sister. The atrocities he witnessed, including the death of his wife and unborn child, are told in stark, unflinching detail. As well as reporting horrific persecutions, Winter recalls moments of personal bravery in which he beat up an SS guard and confronted the notorious Dr. Mengele to request extra rations for starving Sinti children on his block. As the Gypsy culture is generally predisposed not to dwell on the past, this memoir tells a rare story infused with a quiet hopefulness that suggests Winter retained his spirit, courage, and sense of fairness in the face of unspeakable cruelty."

Yoors, Jan. *Crossings: A Journey of Survival and Resistance in World War II*. Simon and Schuster, 1971.

The account chronicles the various experiences of Yoors, a non-Romani Belgian adolescent, and the Roma *kumpania* that he was raised by, as they seek asylum from Nazi persecution during World War II. After series of events, Yoors manages to escape to France, where he is put up with a convent of nuns, after loosing contact with the *kumpania*. Yoors avoids returning home because of his ties to a Roma *kumpania*, fearing persecution by the Nazi regime due to his 'asocial' activities. By the end of the war, Yoors has lost contact with the *kumpania*, fearing that they had been found and deported by Nazi officials.

Although this memoir primarily shares of Yoors' personal wartime experiences, his insights on to life as an 'asocial' (due to his relationship with a Roma *kumpania*) provides a unique perspective into the experiences of the Romani under Nazi persecution.

Appendix C: Invitation to Participate

Re-Remembering Porraimos – Second Generation Roma Holocaust Survivors in Ukraine & Russia

You are invited to participate in a study entitled “*Re-Remembering Porraimos – Second Generation Roma Holocaust Survivors in Ukraine & Russia*” that is being conducted by Maria Konstantinov.

I am a MA Candidate in the department of Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Victoria and you may contact me if you have further questions by way of email, mail or telephone. As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. It is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Margot Wilson. You may contact my supervisor at 250-472-5403.

The purpose of this research project is to learn of and analyze the ways in which Holocaust narratives and post-memory are shared and inscribed within Ukrainian and Russian Roma cultures. The objective is to collect and record oral, sung and written history through the testimony of the descendants of Roma Holocaust survivors in western Russia and Ukraine.

You are being invited to participate in this study because your familial, cultural and individual experiences of the Holocaust are worthy of being shared and studied to gain a stronger understanding of the Romani Holocaust experience.

Would you be willing to meet with me in order to further discuss participating within this research project? The following would be required of you, based on voluntary consent:

1. Devoting time to meeting with the researcher (Maria Konstantinov) – this may range from 1 to 4 hours, depending on the time that you are willing to allow for the interview process.
2. Giving a non-formal interview, telling of your individual, familial and cultural experiences of the Romani Holocaust.
3. Allowing for the researcher (Maria Konstantinov) to spend time with you, your family and with your immediate community of friends and peers.

If you would at all be interested in acting as a direct participant, please let me know by approaching me in person or contacting me via:

Telephone: 1-250-920-8197

E-Mail: mariak@uvic.ca

I would appreciate any involvement and help that you are willing to provide.

Sincerely, Maria Konstantinov

Appendix D: Themes and Questions for Interviewing

A. CAMP EXPERIENCES AND LIBERATION

1. What type of camp were your relatives in (concentration, labour, etc.)?
2. What were their roles within the camp?
3. Were there differences/similarities in treatment between Romani and Jewish prisoners?
4. What was their personal relationship with Nazi perpetrators?
5. What was their relationship with fellow inmates?
6. Possible knowledge of impending liberation?
7. Liberators – who were they?
8. What was the experience of liberation like?

B. LIFE AFTER LIBERATION

1. Immediate experiences of liberation
2. Immigration/Emigration
3. Finding family and friends
4. Immediate experiences of trauma

C. LIFE IN MODERN-DAY RUSSIA

1. Life as a member of a Russian minority
2. Life as a Roma citizen
3. Experiences of discrimination, stigmatization, and oppression
4. Relationship with the Roma community
5. Relationship with non-Roma individuals and communities

D. EFFECTS OF GENOCIDE MEMORY ON FAMILY/COMMUNITY

1. How have memories of genocide affected family?
2. How have genocide experiences affected community?
3. How does Russia treat and perceive the Holocaust as a whole?
4. How are memories shared within community?