

The Attempted Genocide and Ethnocide of the Roma

Canadian visitors to Europe often see dark-skinned people begging on the streets of large cities, clustered in parks or waiting around food distribution centers. Dejected men, women in long skirts and bandanas and children of all ages—families on the move—fleeing from there and unwanted here. They might look like Native people to Canadian tourists, but they are not. They are Roma, the victims of apartheid, hatred, and rising fascism—the dispossessed of Europe.

A historical overview

The Roma,¹ or “Gypsies,” originated as composite groups of Hindu *Kshatriya* recruited from vassal states in northwestern India by the Ghaznavid Muslim invaders under Mahmud Ghazni in the early eleventh century.² Thousands of Indians considered useful were forcibly or voluntarily removed to Ghaza in what is now Afghanistan during this period. The Roma, descended from those Hindu troops called *ghulam*,³ and their supporting camp followers, wives, and children⁴ were sent to Khurasan in eastern Persia (Iran) as ethnic contingents of the multi-ethnic army serving as occupation and garrison troops.

In 1040, the Ghaznavids were defeated by the Seljuk Turks at the three-day Battle of Dandanqan in Khurasan, and the surviving Indian troops and camp followers fled westward to Armenia.⁵ From there, they were forced to relocate to Cilicia in western Byzantium after the Battle of Ani in 1064 when the Armenians were defeated by the Seljuks in their expansion westward. A large number of Armenians, accompanied by Hindu troops and camp followers, fled to a new homeland in Cilicia provided by their fellow Christian Greeks of the Byzantine Empire. In 1071, the Byzantines in turn were massively defeated by the Seljuk Turks at the Battle of Manzikirt, and the Roma then came under the rule of the Sultanate of Roum (or Rum), also called Iconium.

In Anatolia, the former Indians gradually evolved into a composite people speaking the common Sanskrit-based military koïné with additions of Persian words used by Hindu troops in the Ghaznavid service.⁶ This became the only native language of the ancestral Romani group in Anatolia and was subject to input from Greek, Armenian, and other languages of the region.

A new people, the *Romiti* (or Roma), evolved from the Hindu refugees from Khurasan and a new language developed from their military koïné.

Over time, groups of Roma drifted from Anatolia into the Balkans on their own westward migration, or they arrived accompanying the invading Ottoman Turks as auxiliaries⁷ beginning by the twelfth century. By the early fifteenth century bands of Romanies began to appear all over Christian Europe. According to written records of the period,⁸ these bands consisted of a hundred or more people under the leadership of men who termed themselves “counts” or “dukes” of Little Egypt. Artist Jacques Callot left illustrations of one such band with which he travelled from France to Italy in the early seventeenth century. His illustrations show richly dressed leaders on fine horses accompanied by followers consisting of mounted men armed with the latest weaponry of the period, including wick fire muskets, and with horse-drawn carts and women and children on foot. This was the period of the religious wars in western Europe, and what Callot is probably showing is a band of Roma armed for self-defence and possibly heading to join the army of some military leader.⁹

By this period Roma had entered European history albeit misidentified as “Egyptians,” most likely based on the practice of some of these early groups of Roma in Europe to claim they were Egyptian Christians on a pilgrimage of atonement for having denied Christ in order to escape death by the Muslim invaders of Egypt.¹⁰

At first the Catholic states of Europe believed their story, which was backed up by the fact that many Roma told them they had come from Little Egypt (*Kleine Aegipter* in German) in the Middle East, which was then part of the empire of the Muslim Mamluk rulers of Egypt.¹¹ Free conduct passes were issued by popes and rulers of various countries, alms were forthcoming and, for a short time, Roma were treated like members of a sovereign nation referred to as “Egyptians.” Their “dukes” and “counts” were entertained by kings and noblemen, but this idyllic state was not to continue for long. As the Catholic hegemony of Europe disintegrated with the Protestant Reformation and the Renaissance, nation-states in central and western Europe evolved. Roma were now seen as undesirable interlopers, non-productive members of society, potential criminals, heathens, and sorcerers.¹² In most European countries, both Catholic and Protestant, Roma were condemned as “pagans” and “non-believers.”

Local priests spread the false story that the Roma had been “blacksmiths” in Palestine and had forged the nails used in the Crucifixion. They accused the Roma as being co-murderers of Christ along with Jewish accomplices. At this

date, the ancestors of the Roma had not left India. The Roma, in turn, came up with a now widely known counter-legend about a Romani blacksmith who stole the fourth nail thus sparing Jesus a little extra agony and, for this, Christ blessed them and gave them the right to steal to earn their living.

To the Church, white was good and Christian and black was evil and satanic. The dark-skinned Roma were seen as “imps of Satan.” They professed to be Christians but they never attended Mass or paid tithes to the Church. They (we) were also accused of cannibalism.¹³ The mere thought of cannibalism to a Romani person is ludicrous. Outsiders or non-Roma to traditional Roma (which we all probably were back then) are seen as sources of contamination. For a Romani person to eat a non-Romani person would be like a Brahmin eating a Shudra in India.¹⁴

What was totally unknown to the outside world was that Romanies actually followed a non-crafted folk religion that had its roots in Hinduism with overtones of other belief systems, somewhat like voodoo or Santeria. Unlike crafted religions—which have unalterable dogmas, doctrines, appointed priests or ministers, holy books, and established places of worship—folk religions require little, with only a belief system and simple ceremonies followed by the community as a whole. Among Vlach-Romani speakers, this is referred to as the *Romaniya* or *Pochitayimos-Rromano* and among other Romani groups as *Romanipen/Romanipe*.¹⁵ This lack of visible religious paraphernalia and ignorance of the Romani culture and spiritual beliefs has caused centuries of persecution and human suffering throughout Europe by zealous fanatics dedicated to forcing us to conform to their belief systems. While outsiders knew the Roma spoke an unintelligible language, samples of which were occasionally recorded,¹⁶ writers constantly stated that what we spoke was not a legitimate language but some made-up gibberish or even the local non-Romani thieves’ jargons called *argot* in France, *germania* in Spain, and cant or the Vulgar Tongue in England.¹⁷ Thus, we were denied even our own language. As late as the twentieth century, many non-linguist politicians during the communist era declared Romani not to be a viable language worthy of development and preservation.¹⁸ Even today, Romani still has to be recognized as a legitimate minority language by all the countries of the EU. The Canadian government does not list Romani as a minority language, we are the missing patch from the quilt of the multicultural mosaic and are totally absent from Canadian history books.¹⁹ Hundreds of thousands of Roma have lost their language. For the estimated three to four million who have retained it, in Europe and in the Americas, Romani has now become a threatened language after surviving for a thousand years in spite of all attempts to obliterate it along with its speakers.

By the seventeenth century, Roma gradually began to lose their earlier status as a distinct people or members of a legitimate nation and were reduced to the level of vagabonds and undesirable elements of the local populations like the indigenous Masterless Men and other non-Romani itinerants. The persecution of the Romani people was now well underway.²⁰ Banishments, executions, pogroms, whippings, mutilations, and shipment to the colonies of the maritime countries of Spain and Portugal, later France and Britain, were all methods designed to drive the unwanted “Egyptians” and the later Other-defined “gypsies” from their boundaries into neighbouring states.²¹ These then applied their own inhuman methods to drive them somewhere else where they were equally unwelcome. Many Roma managed to escape the pogroms and persecution thanks to the poor communication methods, the greed of local officials who could often be bribed, and the existence of wilderness and uninhabited regions of forests and mountains. Roma would also escape by travelling at night and by living near borders that gave easy access to two or more jurisdictions.²²

The Roma were thus forced to adopt a culture of survival that took many forms in different countries: commercial nomadism in the emerging nation-states to avoid settling and becoming targets for the rulers, and settlements around castles or villages in the feudal countries of central/eastern Europe, often under the protection of the nobility. Here they became sedentary artisans, entertainers, and agricultural workers. Others were nomadic entertainers, artisans, or horse traders; they would apply any work stratagem that enabled them to survive. In the vassal states of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania (now Romania) Roma were enslaved until the *Slobuzheniya* or Emancipation in 1855 to 1856.²³

Slavery in the Romanian Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia had been until then a national institution—slaves bought and sold like cattle, families separated, young women sexually exploited by their owners, and severe punishments inflicted for minor infractions administered by the owners. Enslavement of Roma also existed in a non-institutionalized way in some other countries like Czarist Russia, Austria-Hungary, Spain, and even Scotland. Roma convicts were sent to the galleys of France and Spain, and the English shipped Romani bond slaves to the thirteen colonies, Barbados, and Jamaica. During this period and later, Roma in western Europe were never very numerous compared to the vast concentration of Roma in the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans, in Czarist Russia, and in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.²⁴ Thus the greater part of the Romani nation escaped the persecutions of the western European nation-states and German petty kingdoms.

By the eighteenth century, these persecutions gradually subsided and were replaced by harassment, laws limiting commercial nomadism, fines, imprisonment, registration of nomads, and other forms of growing state control, except in some of the German states where pogroms and “Gypsy hunting”²⁵ by noblemen were common, even in the so-called Age of Reason.

In the sprawling empires of feudal Europe, Roma were tolerated, allowed to exist, but never accepted as a legitimate people with an ancestral language and culture. In some countries, aristocrats, orientalist, and wealthy dilettantes saw Romanies as curiosities and studied our language and lore in a racist, paternalistic attempt to capture this Gypsy Lore for posterity. This began with Heinrich Grellman in 1783²⁶ and continued with his successors through the British-based *Gypsy Lore Society*²⁷ to the modern academic neolorists of the twenty-first century.

This toleration continued in some countries²⁸ until the Nazi Genocide of the Second World War,²⁹ which was followed by communist ethnocide in the attempted total assimilation of Roma into the general proletariat. The self-contained free-market economy of the Roma was declared “reactionary,” and our traditional trades, skills, and economic base were destroyed in one generation. Nomadism was outlawed and the self-supporting commercial itinerant element among the Roma was forced to settle.

For those already sedentary in their own settlements, they and the former itinerants were provided with menial jobs in factories, agriculture, or some other menial job in the system. They were provided with all the rights and benefits of any other citizen and their standard of living improved as they were being de-cultured and assimilated. This resulted in their children becoming an urbanized sub-proletariat unable to fend for themselves when communism collapsed and the new democracies emerged.

Unable to resume their now forgotten self-sustaining, self-generated economy, most Roma then became the victims of a massive welfare culture in the former Soviet Bloc countries. The communist laws protecting them from persecution disappeared and skinheads, neo-nationalists, and fascists emerged from the woodwork to create new scapegoats out of the Roma to replace the pre-war Jews who had been decimated by their Nazi forerunners during the Holocaust.

Little interest has been shown in this ongoing crime of cultural ethnocide perpetrated against us by rulers, national governments, and institutions since our appearance in Christian Europe in the fifteenth century.³⁰ Whether one uses a gas chamber to commit genocide or commits ethnocide or cultural

genocide by sending the children of the ethnic minority to a boarding school to be educated by strangers in a language and culture not their own, the result is the same. The language, culture, and self-identity of the group ceases to exist and the ethnic group is left alive but obliterated as a culture.

Beginning with the Byzantines who misnamed us *Athinganoi/Atsinganoi* after an earlier group of Persian refugee mystics—which gave rise to terms like *tsigani*, *cigani*, and as on—we have been misnamed and misidentified from the beginning. One ploy used by rulers was to simply order Roma out of the country under threat of pain of death as in France under the Edict of 1612, the German states, the Netherlands, Britain, and elsewhere or to declare us a non-people by legislating *gitanos* out of existence in Spain³¹ or renaming us *Ujmagyar* (New Hungarians) in Hungary³² and ordering us to settle and become ethnic Spanish or ethnic Hungarians. We were often forbidden to marry one another and, at the same time, forbidden to marry the local population.³³ Our language, culture, and native dress were outlawed almost everywhere. In Austria-Hungary under Empress Maria Theresa, Romani children were kidnapped by her royally empowered kidnapers to be brought up as good Christian Hungarians. This did not work out as planned but it had a destructive effect on the language and culture of Hungarian Roma. Her son Joseph II extended her policy throughout the empire, but his successors did not pursue the kidnapping policies with the same vigour, so the policy lapsed.³⁴

But the Empress set the pattern for the forcible taking of Romani children, which has continued throughout Europe ever since in one form or another. According to oral histories, in Britain and other countries of western Europe children were often taken from destitute Romani families by local authorities and placed in orphanages run by religious organizations. One state-sponsored child-snatching organization was in Switzerland. From 1926 until 1973 the Catholic Swiss agency *Pro Juventute* ran a program called “Operation Children of the Road.” Unknown numbers of Romani and children of non-Romani itinerant groups were placed in Catholic orphanages or with Swiss families. Even after the closure of this organization, it was reported that about one hundred of these children still remained incarcerated in clinics and institutions as late as 1988.³⁵ In communist Czechoslovakia, children were also taken from their families and placed in state orphanages and boarding schools.³⁶

History Repeating – The Present State

When I visited Romani refugee camps around Rome in 2001, Roma in the camps and Italian activists, such as photojournalist Stefano Montesi and American journalist Kate Carlisle of European Roma Rights Centre in

Budapest, informed me that when Romani women with their children were arrested for begging, the police often took the better-looking and healthier children and placed them for adoption by Italian families.³⁷ When Czech and Hungarian Romani refugees arrived in Toronto and the surrounding area from 1997 onward, our Roma Community Centre volunteers discovered that Romani children were taken by the Ontario Catholic Children's Aid Society in Hamilton and placed in foster homes. This usually happened when the fathers were detained or arrested as suspects in some petty crime or immigration problem and the mother was unable to obtain enough welfare to feed herself and the children and was then arrested for shoplifting food. No attempt was made by the Catholic Children's Aid to place these children in Romani foster homes nor did they feel the need to do this so as not to destroy the cultural heritage of these children. Instead, these children were railroaded into the general foster care system.

In July 2006, I received a telephone call from a Canadian-born Romani mother in Toronto who almost lost her children to the Toronto Catholic Children's Aid Society when a school principal notified them that the children's mother was operating a psychic-advisor parlour on Bloor Street. The Children's Aid people were ready to remove the children because they felt they were being exposed to Satanism and witchcraft. I advised the mother to see a civil rights lawyer at the University of Toronto Law Clinic where she eventually received the necessary legal assistance to prevent the removal of her children.

On 8 March 2010, Premier of Slovakia Robert Fico announced his intention to create a program that would "gradually put as many Roma children as possible into boarding schools and gradually separate them from their life they live in the settlements."³⁸ His stated reasoning was that this would prevent the next generation from being unable to "integrate." He failed to mention that his plan goes against the United Nation's *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which guarantees rights to culture and language. Based on the tragic experience with Native children sent to boarding schools in Canada, this will in all probability destroy the Romani culture and language in Slovakia if it becomes law. It will also ensure that these de-cultured Roma of the future will still be hated and persecuted by white Slovaks as their parents and for the same reason—the color of their skin and the Romaphobia of Slovaks in general. This cannot be legislated out of existence.

The solution should be to work constructively to empower the Roma themselves, which will allow them to have an equal say in their future as citizens and to improve the settlements, currently these are worse

than the shantytowns in Third World countries.³⁹ Svinia is typical of the hundreds of similar settlements in Slovakia built under communism with ersatz materials and shoddy labour and left to decay after 1990. Members of Canadian Native groups who saw a film on this at private educational showings have commented that the conditions of the Roma in Svinia, one of hundreds of such settlements, were much worse than those on any Native reserve in Canada. The Slovak proposal has come under criticism from Amnesty International and other agencies in Europe, including the European Commission on Human Rights. EU membership includes a declaration by member states that they will uphold the United Nation's *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*.⁴⁰

Despite the fact that Roma and Sinti,⁴¹ like Jews, were singled out as victims of the Nazi Holocaust on racial grounds and that an estimated one and a half million were murdered,⁴² we have vanished from the Holocaust according to the US Holocaust Memorial Council. The Council currently does not have a single presidential-appointed Romani member since the presidency of Jimmy Carter, who had appointed Dr. Ian Hancock who followed William A. Duna who was appointed by Ronald Reagan.⁴³ We have been conveniently vaporized among "the others," reduced to anonymous background spear carriers in this tragic Nazi opera of mass murder.

Roma have also vanished from the educational systems worldwide. Romani schoolchildren are unable to learn anything about their own history and culture and are becoming assimilated as they pass through the assimilating school system and its Other-required prerequisites. Romani slavery in the former principalities has been flushed down the memory tube of Romanian history. Roma simply do not exist in school textbooks anywhere until university level, where some courses are beginning to be offered on Romani studies to now-assimilated Romani students.

What children do read are kindergarten versions of the adult fantasy literature. This adult pabulum began in the form of novels beginning with Cervantes,⁴⁴ through Victor Hugo⁴⁵ to George Borrow⁴⁶ and a host of asinine armchair imitators to D.H. Lawrence⁴⁷ and Erich von Stroheim⁴⁸ to Canada's Robertson Davies⁴⁹ and Charles de Lint.⁵⁰ These misinformed authors have written an endless series of novels romanticizing and fictionalizing the "Gypsies" they had never met. Collectively, they have created a generic mythological "Gypsy" that feeds on itself like the generic African "native" or North-American "Indian" of novels and Hollywood films. The advent of the celluloid Moguls has also served as the *coup de grâce* of the reality of the Roma, and this has been ably followed by television prime-time

fantasy, popular songs like *Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves* by Cher, and other manufactured mass-culture trash like the plastic Esmeralda doll with her plastic caravan and plastic dancing bear, nicely packaged as part of the massive commoditization of a money-making mythical “Gypsy” culture.

Recent documentaries like *The Gypsy Child Thieves*, which aired on CBC’s *The Passionate Eye* on 25 October 2010, showed only one of the symptoms of the much greater problem: the Romani history of slavery in what is now Romania, historical persecution, the Nazi Holocaust, communist assimilation policies in central/eastern Europe, past and current unacceptable high rates of unemployment for Roma that result in high poverty levels, imposition of state welfare cultures, discrimination in education and in the housing market, and the general undeclared state of apartheid during this EU Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005–2015). The halfway point shows this to be more of the Decade of Roma Exclusion. Rather than choosing to air one of the many existing documentaries that might show something of the problem facing the Roma and our history, the CBC chose to go for a sensational tabloid shocker portrayal of one of the major symptoms affecting Roma from Romania worthy of Randolph Hearst’s yellow journalism, but failed to point out that these criminal gangs are a minority and not representative of all Roma in all countries in or outside the EU, including native-born Roma in the Americas. Targeting such a symptom is the equivalent of exposing a headache when the problem is an historical brain tumour resulting from European xenophobia, the Nazi Holocaust, communist assimilation policies, and a welfare culture imposed on Roma in the so-called new democracies.

Compounding this type of media irresponsibility and negativity is the decision of President Sarkozy of France to deport Roma refugees living in France, mainly from Romania and Bulgaria, because of an incident in a Romani camp in France that resulted in violence. The violence was mainly committed by itinerant workers who were French citizens and not foreign Roma. All Roma living in France who are members of EU states but are not French citizens were also included in this deportation order, which only offered a small stipend to the deportees.⁵¹ This resulted in the deportation of over a thousand Roma, mainly from Bulgaria and Romania, and the destruction of 128 camps. A French court blocked the deportation of seven Roma claiming that they were not a threat to public order.⁵² After condemnation from members of the French cabinet and government, Brussels, and the Vatican, Sarkozy agreed to follow the directives of EU membership and, in return, France was allowed to exercise control over its own immigration policies.

In the village of Ostrovanya in Eastern Slovakia, a wall has been erected around the Romani settlement on the outskirts of the village to separate the Roma from the non-Romani villagers. The wall, partially financed by the villagers themselves, now prevents Roma from easy access from their settlement into the village shopping area, medical services, and the local school. The wall has aroused criticism, including Prime Minister Iveta Radicova who stated that the wall would not solve anything.⁵³

The end result of all this is that the average person anywhere in the world sees “Gypsies” either as thieves just waiting to “gyp” you or as romantic creatures of fiction, semi-mythological beings, or just anybody who abandons the moral restraints of law-abiding “people like us” and who travels around wearing an earring and playing the fiddle, leading a life of hedonistic abandon. Any one of us can become a “Gypsy.” Books worth reading are not read by general readers, while popular coffee-table books about “Gypsies” are full of mythology and misinformation.

When my Romani Diaspora in Canada course was first offered in 2003 at New College, University of Toronto, an article appeared in *The Varsity* entitled “You Say Roma I say Tomato.” Random questioning of grad students on campus about who Roma were resulted in the students not understanding what was meant by the question beyond the City of Rome and Roma tomatoes. When asked about Gypsies, the answers were “extinct,” “thieves,” “costumes you wear on Halloween” (mainly females), “people who travel around,” and “women who tell fortunes.” Not one student identified either Roma or Gypsies as a valid ethnic group with an origin from India.

After surviving centuries of genocide, an estimated fifteen million people of a nation of worldwide Romani people without a country are now potentially in grave danger of becoming victims of cultural ethnocide.⁵⁴

Notes

- 1 Roma is a plural proper noun in the Romani language common. It cannot be used in the singular in English as in “He/she is a Roma.” The media uses the plural “Romans,” which is also incorrect. The proper adjective is Romani, which can also serve as a noun. He/she is Romani would be correct or he/she is a Romani. Roma generally refers to the Roma of central/eastern Europe and the Americas. Gypsy is in the same category of unacceptable definitions as “Indian,” “Eskimo,” and “Negro”—words created and employed by dominating colonial societies to define what were considered “racial inferiors.”
- 2 Hancock, Ian (2002:7, 10–11). *We are the Romani people: Ame sam e Rromane džene* (first published 1992). Hatfield, UK: University of Hertfordshire Press; Marsh, Adrian (2008:42, 69–70). *No Promised Land: History, Historiography & the Origins of the Gypsies*. Thesis: submitted for consideration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to

- the school of Humanities, University of Greenwich: Istanbul & London; Lee, Ronald (2007:56–57, 63–64). *The Romani Diaspora in Canada* (NEW 343H1: course pack). University of Toronto, Toronto, ON.
- 3 Rishi, W.R. (1974:vi). *Multilingual Romani Dictionary*. Chandigarh, India: Roma Publications, Indian Institute of Romani Studies, University of Chandigarh; Lee, Ronald (2009). *A New Look at Our Romani Origins and Diaspora*. Retrieved 20 January 2011 from: <http://kopachi.com/articles/a-new-look-at-our-romani-origins-and-diaspora-by-ronald-lee/#more-43>
 - 4 Nicolle, David (1996:191). *Medieval Warfare Source Book: Christian Europe and its Neighbours*. London, UK: Brockhampton Press. This was a common structure in Indian and other medieval armies even in Europe in the seventeenth century.
 - 5 Hancock (2002). Not all of the Hindu troops and camp followers in Khurasan would have been at the battle but would have migrated to Armenia when they learned of the Ghaznavid defeat. Hancock theorizes that some Hindu *ghulam* may have been recruited by the victorious Seljuks, but would have ended up with the rest in the Sultanate of Rum eventually.
 - 6 Hancock, Ian (2000:1–13). The Emergence of Romani as a Koïné Outside of India. In T.A. Acton (ed.). *Scholarship and the Gypsy Struggle: Commitment in Romani Studies*. Hatfield, UK: University of Hertfordshire Press (retrieved 9 December 2010 from: http://www.radoc.net/radoc.php?doc=art_b_history_koine&lang=en&articles=true); Hancock (2002:140–41).
 - 7 Marushiakova, Elena and Vesselin Popov (2001:16–24). *Gypsies in the Ottoman Empire: A contribution to the history of the Balkans*. Hatfield, UK: University of Hertfordshire Press.
 - 8 Fraser, Angus (1995:67–71). *The Gypsies*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing; and Crowe, David M. (1994:33). *A History of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.
 - 9 Les Gravures de Jacques Callot (1621), Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris in Fraser (1995:141). German illustrations from the same period show similar groups of armed Roma. There are also many other references to Romani soldiers serving in various European armies during this period and later, suggesting that the *Kshatriya* tradition among these early Roma was not entirely forgotten. Gronemeyer, R. and Georgia. A Rakelmann (1988). *Die Zigeuner: Reisende in Europa*. Köln: DuMont Buchverlag. See illustration by Guler von Weinek (1606).
 - 10 Hancock (2002:29).
 - 11 Hunt, Yvonne (1999:72–73). Yiftos, Tsinganos: A Note on Greek Terminology. *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* Series 5, 9(1):71–78; Soulis, G.C. (1961:148). The Gypsies in the Byzantine Empire and the Balkans in the late Middle Ages. *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 15:141,143–165. Roma were also often confused with other non-Romani itinerants following a similar way of life. For more on this confusion, see Fraser (1995:35).
 - 12 Fraser (1995:67–71).
 - 13 Crowe (1994:39).
 - 14 Lee (2001:203, 208). The Rom-Vlach Gypsies and the Kris-Romani. In W.o. Weyrauch (ed.). *Gypsy Law: Romani Legal Traditions and Culture*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press. Romani cannibalism could never have happened. Our own folk religion would have prevented it. See Lee for description of the *marime* code of the Roma. Also see Fraser (1995:161, 195, 248).
 - 15 Lee (2001:188–230); Hancock (2002:70–76).
 - 16 Boorde, A. ([1542] 1870:217). *The Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge*. M. Barnes, F.J. Furnivall (eds.). London, UK: Early English Text Society, N. Trübner & Co. (retrieved 9 December 2010 from: <http://www.digitalbookindex.org/index.cgi>). The first such recording of Romani was in England by Andrew Boorde where he gives some recorded sentences of “Egypt speche” or Egyptian Speech.

- 17 Grose, F. (1796:F). *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue. The Third Edition, Corrected and Enlarged*. London, UK: Hooper and Wigstead. It was widely believed that this Vulgar Tongue or Thieves' Latin was the actual language of Romanies in Britain. The dictionary itself attributes this jargon to "Gypsies."
- 18 Fraser (1995:161); Crowe (1994:59).
- 19 The US Census Bureau does list Romani as a minority language in the US.
- 20 Hancock, Ian (1987:53–60). *The Pariah Syndrome; An account of Gypsy Slavery and Persecution*. Anne Arbor, MI: Karoma Publishers Inc.
- 21 Fraser (1995:161).
- 22 Hancock, Ian (2004, November 5). Diaspora Populations and the role of Intellectuals, Workshop at the Institute for Diaspora Studies, Northwestern University. Norris University Center, Evanston Campus, Evanston, IL; Fraser (1995:148–154).
- 23 Hancock (1987:11–29, 49–60).
- 24 Because these empires were patchwork quilts of multiple ethnic groups and religions, the Roma were just one more, and nomadic Romani groups could usually travel all over these empires; thus they avoided the persecution they were subjected to in the nation-states of western Europe.
- 25 Hancock (1987:58); Fraser (1995:147).
- 26 Grellmann, H.M.G. (1783). *Ein historischer Versuch über die Lebensart und Verfassung, Sitten und Schicksale dieses Volks in Europa, nebst ihrem Ursprung*. Dessau and Leipzig. (2nd edition, Göttingen, 1787). Trans. by M. Raper (1787). *Dissertation on the Gypsies, being an Historical Enquiry, concerning The Manner of Life, Economy, Customs and conditions of these People in Europe, and their Origin*. 2nd edition, 1807. London, UK: G. Bigg.
- 27 Founded in 1888 in Britain.
- 28 Hancock (1987:58–88). Germany and Switzerland continued their very harsh laws against nomadic Sinti and Roma between the two World Wars.
- 29 While the total number of Romani victims of the Nazis and their puppets will never be known, the original estimate of 500,000 is far too low. Newer estimates suggest as many as well over a million were killed. Records exist only for those killed in the camps who were identified with a "Z" for *Zigeuner*. Untold thousands were murdered in the conquered countries and some of the puppet states. Statistics just do not exist. The late Dr. Sybil Milton, Senior Historian of the US Holocaust Memorial Council (USHMC) estimated the total number at a million and a half. This figure is also the estimate arrived at by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Hancock, I., email letter dated 12 January 2011 posted on Roma_in_Americas list serve at: Roma_in-Americas@yahoo.com
- 30 Lemkin, Raphael (1944:79). *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation – Analysis of Government Proposal for Redress*. Concord, NH: Rumford Press. By ethnocide or cultural genocide, I am using the term to define the destruction of a culture, from Greek *ethnos* and Latin *cide* to mean the destruction of the culture of a people as opposed to genocide, the destruction of the people themselves. Genocide, defined by Raphael Lemkin in 1943, means "the destruction of a nation," and the United Nation's 1951 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defines it as acts committed against "national, ethnical, racial or religious" groups. With this in mind, ethnocide can then be defined as a crime motivated by ethnicity, "Us and Them" or "Us and the Others" syndrome, a dichotomy that contains dangerous and potentially fatal possibilities, from forcibly relocating the group through ethnic cleansing by the State to where they are equally unwanted to violent suppression of language and culture as opposed to genocide that involves the murdering of the members of the ethnic group in questions.
- 31 Fraser (1995:161).
- 32 Fraser (1995:156).
- 33 Fraser (1995:157).

- 34 Crowe (1994:77-78); Fraser (1995:156-157).
- 35 The Swiss Gypsies: the jenisch. From the Switzerland.isyours.com website: <http://isyours.com/e/guide/graubunden/jenisch.html>
- 36 Many of the Romani refugees arriving in Canada that I interviewed and who grew up in these orphanages knew nothing of their Romani ethnicity, were persecuted as Roma in the Czech Republic because of their Romani appearance, and were unable to reconnect with their fellow Roma who retained their culture and language.
- 37 This information also appears in the Canadian documentary *Suspino: A Cry For Roma* (2003). Directed by G.D. Kovanic. Bowen Island, BC. Tamarin Productions. 72 mins. DVD Distr. by Bullfrogfilms.
- 38 Slovakia says Roma kids “must be taken” from homes for “integration.” *World Bulletin*. Retrieved 2 December 2010 from: http://www.worldbulletin.net/news_print.php?id=55199
- 39 *The Gypsies of Svinia* (1998). Directed by J. Paskievich. Ottawa, ON: National Film Board of Canada. 95:31 min., VHS, DVD.
- 40 Goldirova, Renata (2010). Brussels cautions Slovakia over boarding schools for Roma. *euobserver.com* 12.03.2010 @ 18:16 CET. Retrieved 2 December 2010 from: <http://euobserver.com/9/29665>
- 41 The Sinti are the Romani people who migrated to the German-speaking regions of western Europe and are now also located in France, Italy, and elsewhere. The word *Sinti* is probably derived from German *Reisende*, which means “travellers.”
- 42 The sources for this estimate are from the late Dr. Sybil Milton, senior historian of the US Holocaust Memorial Council, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Both references were provided by Dr. Ian Hancock, University of Texas at Austin in a personal email letter dated 14 January 2011.
- 43 US President Obama has not shown any interest to date in appointing a Romani member, again, despite letters urging him to do so.
- 44 Cervantes, Miguel de (1613). *La Gitanilla* (The Little Gypsy Girl). By this date Roma had been living in Spain for barely one hundred years, and *La Gitanilla* seems to be the first novel to feature Romani characters.
- 45 Hugo, Victor (1831). *Notre Dame de Paris* first English translation by Frederic Shoberl (1834) as *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.
- 46 George Borrow was the first Victorian author to really introduce “genuine Gypsies” to the reading public. The following were all devoted to “Gypsies “ and their language: *The Zincali* (1841), *The Bible in Spain* (1843), *Lavengro* (1851), *The Romany Rye* (1857), and *Romano Lavo-lil, word-book of the Romany* (1874). Borrow also introduced the term Romany to English readers.
- 47 Lawrence, D.H. (1930). *The Virgin and the Gypsy*. New York, NY: Knopf.
- 48 Stroheim, Erich von (1935). *Paprika the Gypsy Trollp*. New York, NY: Universal Publishing.
- 49 Davies, Robertson (1981). *The Rebel Angels*. Toronto, ON: MacMillan of Canada.
- 50 De Lint, Charles (1985). *Mulengro A Romany Tale*. New York, NY: Ace Fantasy Books.
- 51 Saltmarsh, M. (2010). Sarkozy toughens on Illegal Roma. *The New York Times Reprints*. Retrieved 6 December 2010 from: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/30/world/europe/30france.html?_r=1&pagewanted=print
- 52 Bloomberg News/International Herald Tribune, September 1, 2010, French court blocks deportation of Roma.
- 53 Slovakian council in Ostrovany funds wall to isolate Roma community. *The Times* [online]. Retrieved 6 December 2010 from: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article7031373.ece>
- 54 Ian Hancock provided the estimate that there is between 10 and 12 million Roma in Europe and the rest of the eastern Hemisphere and between 2 and 3 million in all of north and south America, with more in South America than in North America. Private email letter to the author, 14 January 2011.

