

On the Historiography of the Roma and Sinti "Gypsies" and the Holocaust

By Samuel Zinner

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One of the earliest significant contributions to the historiography of the Roma and Sinti "Gypsies" and the Holocaust was Philip Friedman's 1980 essay, "The Extermination of the Gypsies: Nazi Genocide of an Aryan People." The work begins with the ancient history of the so-called "Gypsies" stretching from northern India, to Persia, and finally to Europe via the Balkan peninsula. Friedman claims that by the end of the 18th century all European countries, with the exceptions of Germany and Austria, had completely abrogated their anti-Gypsy legislation. He comments on the two exceptions: "These two countries, always marked by intolerance and rigid bureaucracy, retained on their books numerous detailed and vicious regulations against the Gypsies" (382). The author then examines how the Roma and Sinti were "de-Aryanized" by Nazi ideology. The solution to the problem of the Gypsies was achieved through forced sterilization and forced labor. In a January 9, 1938 memorandum from Portschy, Nazi Gauleiter of Steinmark, to Reichsminister Heinz Lammers, the Roma and Sinti were slandered as "parasites," "a social threat," and as "confirmed criminals" (283). With the beginning of World War II the Nazis became more severe in their policies against "alien elements." 30,000 Gypsies were expelled to Poland in 1940, being persecuted along with Jews, suffering confiscation of property, ghetto life, and murder in the period between 1941 and 1942. In a Slovakian show trial the slander of Gypsy cannibalism was spread. The slander was exploited in the Nazi press, sealing the fate of the Gypsies (384). Life in the Lodz ghetto was an intense suffering for the Roma and Sinti. The ghetto was nightly pillaged by drunken Germans. Typhus broke out, and the

few survivors were sent to the death camp in Chelmno. Friedman stresses that Roma and Sinti did not suffer as severely as Jews in the Holocaust: "Fortunately for the Gypsies, the Germans did not apply their extermination policy to them with the same single-minded consistency that they employed toward the Jews" (385). In addition to this, the Gypsies of ". . . Eastern Galicia were treated liberally." He balances the statement with: "But despite such exceptions, few Gypsies survived the Nazi regime" (385). The author closes the essay with the observation that in the post-war period the Gypsies received no justice from the international community. In 1950 the Württemberg Ministry of the Interior stated that Gypsies were not persecuted on racial grounds but because of their "asocial and criminal record" (386).

In 1985 Yehuda Bauer's essay, "Jews, Gypsies, Slavs: Policies of the Third Reich," appeared. Bauer began this work with researching the pre-Nazi period of German persecution of the Roma and Sinti, noting that Germany's legislation was "typically European," thus apparently contradicting the earlier contention of Philip Friedman. In 1899 an office of Gypsy affairs was established in Bavaria. In 1929 the Munich office became the central bureau of the organization. The Nazi 1935 Nuremberg laws applied to Gypsies as well as to Jews. In 1936 groups of Roma were sent to Dachau as asocials. Under Himmler the persecution of Gypsies as asocials increased, especially in 1937 and 1938. In March 1939 Himmler called for the separation of the "Mischlinge" as well as the "pure" Roma and Sinti from the Germans (81f.). Nazi persecution of the group intensified, and in autumn 1941, 5,007 Austrian Roma were deported to the Lodz ghetto, later being murdered in the Chelmno death camp in 1942 (82f.). Bauer stresses the contradictions between Himmler, who wanted to spare the "pure" Gypsies, and Heydrich, who wanted to deport all without exception. According to Bauer, deportation and death orders were carried out haphazardly, depending on the zeal of the local authorities. Based on these contradictions, Bauer concludes: "Roma were not Jews, therefore, there was no need to murder all of them" (86). In closing, the author argues that the murder of the Gypsies should be labeled "genocide,"

that is, a partial elimination of a group, whereas only Jews suffered a "Holocaust," a complete annihilation under the Nazis (95).

In the same year that Bauer's essay appeared, Ian Hancock's short article, "Gypsies: A People Forgotten," was published. The author, whose father's Roma family members were from Hungary, gave the first Roma view in English language historiography on the question of the group in relation to the Holocaust. Hancock emphasizes that Gypsies were the first group rounded up by the Nazis and segregated into camps. Criteria for classifying one as a Gypsy was "more stringent" than for Jewish classification. Two Gypsy great-grandparents were sufficient, as opposed to two Jewish grandparents. Both Jews and Gypsies lost about 70 percent of their total populations under Hitler, and yet at the Nuremberg trials there was no justice for the Gypsies. Neither were any Roma and Sinti included on the 65 member US Holocaust Memorial Council in 1979 (12). The remainder of the article researches present prejudice and anti-Gypsy laws in the West and the East, in the context of Gypsy history up to the early twentieth century. In stark contradiction to Philip Friedman's 1980 work, Hancock demonstrates that several countries, especially in Eastern Europe, still retain anti-Gypsy laws on their books. The laws are still enforced, and expulsions are still occurring (13f.). The Roma and Sinti face the task of self-preservation amid present prejudice. Even in 1968 a British parliament member called for the "extermination of the impossible Gypsies" (15).

A shift in the historiography on not only the fate of the Gypsies under the Nazis, but also of the Holocaust in general became visible after the publication of Benno Müller-Hill's *Murderous Science: Elimination by Scientific Selection of Jews, Gypsies and Others; Germany 1933-1945*. Covering the sterilization and medical experimentation of Jews, Gypsies, and the handicapped, Müller-Hill interpreted the Holocaust as the continuation or extension, under changed circumstances, of the earlier Nazi euthanasia and medical experimentation program of the 1930s. The author emphasizes that mental

patients were the first victims of the Nazis. The killing program was then later extended to Jewish and Gypsy patients and then these groups en masse during the Holocaust.

With Michael Zimmerman's 1989 work, *Verfolgt, vertrieben, vernichtet: Die nationalsozialistische Vernichtungspolitik gegen Sinti und Roma*, came the first appearance of a solidly archival-based work on the mass murder of the Gypsies under the Nazis. Not only is the work based on important primary sources from several German state archives, 15 pages of relevant documents are reproduced in an appendix. Zimmermann, like Friedman and Bauer, notes the many inconsistencies in the application of Nazi policies in regards to the Roma and Sinti, as well as the intensification of the persecution under Himmler. The deportation to the Lodz ghetto in 1940 is seen as the immediate prelude to the Holocaust of the Gypsies, as mass executions and deportations to Auschwitz followed (chapters 12 and 13). Chapter 11 mirrors the research of Müller-Hill, and details the laws against marriage between Gypsies and forced sterilization. Comparing the Jewish and Roma and Sinti fates, Zimmermann stresses that the plan for the murder of the latter two groups covered a much shorter period of time than applies to the Holocaust of Jews. The destruction of the Roma and Sinti was complicated and to a certain point delayed and hindered on account of the problem of classification. A very involved and complicated process was necessary in order to define a Gypsy as "pure" or as a "Mischlinge." In contrast, the Nuremberg laws laid down precisely who was a Jew and who was not. However, in the death camps, the authorities were not concerned with technical definitions (83). Zimmermann ends his study with noting that estimates for the total number of murdered Roma and Sinti in the Holocaust range between 200,000 and 500,000.

In 1990 a case study of Roma and Sinti in Czechoslovakia during the Holocaust was printed in, *A Mosaic of Victims. Non-Jews Persecuted and Murdered by the Nazis*. The essay, "The Fate of Gypsies in Czechoslovakia under Nazi Domination," by Jiri Lipa, begins with a survey of anti-Gypsy legislation in Czechoslovakia on the eve of the Holocaust. With the dissolution of the Czechoslovak

Republic in 1939, Germany pressured Bohemia and Moravia to persecute its Gypsy population. In the years 1939 to 1941 a series of anti-Gypsy laws were passed in these regions, giving rise to specific classification of Gypsies and establishment of labor camps for Jews and Gypsies, some with over 45 percent Roma inmates. Lipa presents case studies of the camps in Bystre' and Topl'on, complete with available statistics on numbers of inmates. Regarding the mass murder of the Gypsies, the author reveals that in December of 1944, Roma and Sinti were shot in pits in the camp Trencin shortly before the Red Army approached. In the second part of the work, Lipa lists another set of statistics relating to Gypsies in the camp in Hodnin. The essay ends with the observation that in 1943 any "exceptions" in relation to the murder of Gypsies vanished, and ". . . once the murderous machinery was set in motion, nothing mattered; people were destroyed" (215). In general, the essay did not widen the overall state of the historiography on the subject, but this was not the aim of the author, whose chief goal was rather to simply present individual case studies and statistical data on the number of Roma and Sinti camp inmates.

Gabrielle Tyrnauer's essay, "Mastering the Past': Germans and Gypsies," in Frank Chalk, and Kurt Jonassohn's 1990 work, *The History and Sociology of Genocide*, by its very title advanced the historiography on Gypsies and the Holocaust. By using the English term for the German *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, a word commonly known for its association with Judeocentric (the word is not used pejoratively) works on the Holocaust, the author makes the point that Gypsies should be included along with Jews in the literature on the Holocaust. Tyrnauer emphasizes the lack of notice of and justice for the Roma and Sinti in the post-War period. There were no Gypsy witnesses at the Nuremberg trials and no one was accused of their murder. They were "the forgotten victims of the Holocaust" (367).

During the Nazi period, Tyrnauer writes, the 1935 Nuremberg legislation made both Jews and Gypsies *artfremd*. Himmler and Robert Ritter are identified as the main masterminds behind the

Holocaust of the Roma and Sinti. The essay then jumps forward to 1979 when some Sinti gathered at Bergen Belsen, and then in 1980 when they held a hunger strike at Dachau, demanding official recognition of their suffering from the German government. This coming out was largely motivated by the airing of the television series "Holocaust" in Germany. Like Hancock's 1985 essay, Tyrnauer also stresses that anti-Gypsy prejudice is alive and well in Germany, leaving a new generation of Germans and Gypsies with the difficult task of wrestling with the past.

Sybil Milton's groundbreaking 1990 essay, "The Context of the Holocaust," presented a hard-hitting case for the inclusion of Gypsies as victims of genocide in Holocaust scholarship. Milton strongly takes to task the fixation of scholarship on anti-Semitism as the main motive for Nazi genocide. Too often ignored for the author was the earlier euthanasia program, which scholarship generally assumes "had little influence on the decision to kill the Jews" (269). Thus Milton aligned herself with the outlook of Müller-Hill who saw the Holocaust as emerging from and constituting a continuation of the earlier euthanasia program of the 1930s. Milton repeatedly emphasizes a "critical linkage" between euthanasia and the Final Solution. She directly attacks Yehuda Bauer's statement that the Nazis did not intend a complete destruction of the Roma and Sinti, and that they were not persecuted for racial reasons. The author calls on scholarship to "reassess the centrality of anti-Semitism, usually linked to the corollary belief in the uniqueness of the Holocaust" (271). She then takes Raul Hilberg to task for covering Roma and Sinti in only 15 pages of his three volume study of the Holocaust. She then attacks another of Yehuda Bauer's contentions, namely, that there was supposedly a different motivation in the killing of Gypsies, the mentally ill, and Jews (273). The exclusion of Gypsies from Holocaust literature as full victims of Nazi genocide characterized scholarship from the beginning of the post-War period. Among the first generation of Jewish Holocaust scholars, only Raphael Lemkin, Philip Friedman, and Miriam Novitch included Gypsies in the final solution. Attacking Bauer's assertions a third time, Milton stresses that the exemption and inclusion

rules for Gypsies and Jews were the same (275). The essay concludes by emphasizing the importance of the eugenic factor in Nazi genocide, as well as once more criticizing "preoccupation" with anti-Semitism in relation to the Holocaust (276). In another 1990 essay, "Non-Jewish Children in the Camps," Milton only very briefly deals with Gypsy children, ending with the remark: "I hope that these case studies about non-Jewish children open the way for further discussion and research. Nevertheless, it is important to stress that this subject must always be treated in the context of the fate of European Jewish children" (158).

Much of the same argumentation found in "Context of the Holocaust" was reproduced in Milton's 1991 essay, "Gypsies and the Holocaust." The author contends that the "exclusivity of emphasis on Judeocide has excluded Gypsies" from Holocaust studies (375). Moreover, the emphasis on anti-Semitism is an "official Israeli interpretation." In post war Germany the Roma and Sinti were ignored for economic reasons, but traditional prejudice also played a significant role.

Henry Huttenbach's essay, "The Romani Porajmos," which also appeared in 1991, conformed to an emerging trend of including Gypsies in the Holocaust in the fullest sense of the word. The author covers the familiar ground of deportations, sterilization, mass death in Auschwitz-Birkenau, as well as the centuries-long legacy of anti-Gypsy prejudice. Arguing that the murder of the Gypsies definitely should be defined as the crime of genocide as described by the UN Genocide Convention, Huttenbach writes that Eichmann was not charged with this crime in his trial. In contrast, "Jewish scholars of the Holocaust, however, have readily acknowledged the similarity of the Gypsy experience" (46).

In 1993 Romani Rose's preface to, *Memorial Book. The Gypsies at Auschwitz-Birkenau*, was published. Though not strictly speaking an historical essay, the preface will certainly affect future historiographical interpretations. Agreeing with Sybil Milton's estimate, the total loss of the Roma and Sinti in the Holocaust is placed at 500,000, not the 200,000 claimed by the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, a number which continues to deeply offend Roma and Sinti survivors. Romani emphasizes

the continuing sufferings of the Gypsies in the present era. Apparently using phraseology borrowed from what some would call the earlier "Judeocentric" Holocaust literature, though not limited to such, Romani writes that the murder of the Gypsies was committed "in the name of the German people," and that the "Nazi Holocaust [is] an event unprecedented in the history of mankind" (13). As with the Holocaust of Jews, Romani singles out the main culprits and machinery of the Gypsy Holocaust, namely, Himmler, Ritter, gas chambers, and Einsatzgruppen. Not only did Nazi leaders say that the Gypsy problem was as important as the Jewish problem, so did leaders of East European countries during the Holocaust (16). She stresses the fact that many of the "desk murderers" and Einsatzgruppen members were never prosecuted, and some still live in freedom. Romani concludes by noting that, "[t]he history of the persecution of Sintis and Roms is a scenario typical of the relationship between minorities and majorities" (18).

In the tradition of Müller-Hill and Sybil Milton, Henry Friedlander's 1995 study, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide. From Euthanasia to the Final Solution*, is a full-length study of the Holocaust as the continuation of the earlier euthanasia program of the 1930s. Though not ignoring anti-Semitism, it is clear that Friedlander, like Sybil Milton, sees it as more peripheral than central as a motivating factor behind the Holocaust, though, to be sure, none the less murderous. The author reveals that experts from the Reich Ministry of Interior (RMdI) decided between 1933 and 1937 that sterilization was the best way to rid society of inferior and alien races. Friedlander, as almost all authors writing on the subject do, sets this decision in the context of pre-Nazi German anti-Gypsy legislation. A significant contribution of *The Origins of Nazi Genocide* is its detailed investigation of the central figure Robert Ritter. Ritter was chosen by the government to clarify the classification of Gypsies. Ritter concluded that 90 percent of all Gypsies were Mischlinge who should be sterilized, and that the remaining 10 percent should be settled in reservations. Not emphasized in the earlier historiography is the fact that the first Zigeunerlager were established in 1935 as the results of local and not government initiatives.

Only later that same year did the government create camps for Gypsies in Cologne. The camps were only a part of an interim solution which also included forced sterilization. The persecution of the Roma and Sinti intensified in 1939 when the first forced labor camps were set up in Austria, resembling the camps in the East later during the War. At the same time as the interim solutions were being carried out, a final solution was being discussed. In 1938 propagandists and bureaucrats were calling for a final solution to the Gypsy problem. War provided the cover necessary for its implementation.

Friedlander sets Jews and Gypsies side by side in the final chapter titled, "The Final Solution." On December 16, 1942 Himmler ordered the total deportation of the Gypsies of the Reich to Auschwitz. Himmler's orders exempted "racially pure Sinti and Lallerei Gypsies," but the exemptions never became reality. Himmler wanted museum pieces--living Gypsies, and thus the exemption provision cannot be used to argue that not all Gypsies were slated for death. Friedlander emphasizes the linkage between the killing of the handicapped, Jews, and Gypsies: "One cannot explain any one of these Nazi killing operations without explaining the others." All were based on the "determination to cleanse the gene pool of the German nation" (295).

Also in 1995 another major contribution of Sybil Milton appeared as a full length chapter, "Holocaust: The Gypsies," in the volume, *Genocide in the Twentieth Century. Critical Essays and Eyewitness Accounts*, a book on comparative genocide studies. Noting that Gypsies are under-represented in Holocaust studies, in her usual style, Milton openly criticizes the ideas of authors of previous works with which she disagrees. She labels arguments of Yehuda Bauer and Hans-Joachim Döring as "erroneous" and "fallacious" (209). Their contentions that Gypsies were not persecuted for racial reasons are traced back to a legacy of "suspicion, prejudice and stereotypes" in relation to Gypsies. Arguing for the equal inclusion of Gypsies in the Holocaust, Milton writes that the Nazis emphasized Jews more than Gypsies, but only because Roma and Sinti were marginal and fewer in number. As in her earlier publications from 1990 and 1991, Milton criticizes Judeocenteredness in

Holocaust studies, as well as repeating that German bureaucrats in post War Germany encouraged and supported the Israeli emphasis on Jews as the sole victims of Nazi genocide in the fullest sense, because including more victim groups would implicate a larger part of German society in the killings. Post war Gypsies were subjected to humiliation by German courts, which consistently failed to deliver prosecutions against those responsible for the deportations and killing of Gypsies. Thus the Roma and Sinti were denied justice and were subsequently also excluded from a Judeocentered historiography on the Holocaust. Milton writes on this emphasis in the literature that "new analyses have so far been unable to alter older interpretations," and that "the prejudice and the habits of 40 years cannot be reversed over night" (227).

With regard to the question of exemptions for Gypsies from death, Milton notes that German racial laws and theories were never rational or consistent, even in regard to Jews. Gypsies were of lower status, and were thus more easily persecuted than Jews in German society. The entire idea of "exemptions" is spurious, according to Milton: "Various Nazi leaders, including Heinrich Himmler, had their own favorite racial theories, but none ever inhibited the relentless bureaucratic drive toward extermination. The file's of Ritter's agency provide incontrovertible documentary evidence that 'pure' Roma and Sinti were registered and incarcerated, thereafter deported, and eventually killed" (229). Even more hard-hitting than Milton's publications of the 1990s was Ian Hancock's 1996 essay, "Responses to the Porrajomos: The Romani Holocaust," published as chapter 3 of Alan S. Rosenbaum's *Is the Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative Genocide* (with a foreword by the world renowned comparative genocide studies expert Israel W. Charny). The essay begins with the statement that it is "high time" for the inclusion of the Gypsies in Holocaust studies. Hancock notes the high mortality rate suffered by the Roma and Sinti during the Holocaust: only 12 percent of the 1938 German population of Gypsies survived the war. He then criticizes the US Holocaust Memorial Council for under-representing Gypsies. Hancock assails a string of Holocaust scholars for similar

reasons, among them, Wolfgang Wippermann, Carrie Supple, John Roth, Michael Berenbaum, Emil Fackenheim, and Charles S. Maier (40). He then takes to task several historians who are not experts in Romani history for repeating false assumptions with assurance, above all Steven T. Katz and Yehuda Bauer. Next in line for censure is the Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, which mentions the Gypsies in only 3 1/2 pages out of 2,000. Noting that there were exemptions from death for Jews as well as for Gypsies during the Holocaust, he criticizes Yehuda Bauer and Elie Wiesel for promoting ideas to the contrary. Especially taken to task is David M. Luebke's claim that in Nazi Germany "no comprehensive anti-Gypsy law was ever promulgated" (43). Equally untenable for Hancock is Richard Breitman's assertion that "Nazis never spoke of a Final Solution to the Gypsy problem." Hancock counters these statements by noting that already in 1938 and 1939 Johannes Behrendt had called for the extermination of the Gypsies.

Hancock writes positively of Erika Thurner, who advances the claim that the Nazis had planned a complete extermination of the Gypsies. After this praise, the author returns to his criticism of scholars who exclude Gypsies as full victims of total genocide under the Nazis. Like Sybil Milton, Hancock refutes Yehuda Bauer's contention that Roma and Sinti were targeted for social and not for racial reasons, and that "neither was their destruction complete," a claim that has been emphasized especially by Steven T. Katz. Hancock writes that neither was the Jewish Holocaust completed. The author directs his criticism once again towards certain US Holocaust Memorial Council members for making insensitive remarks about Gypsies, including the assertion that "Gypsies may not even be a distinct ethnic people" (46). Over and above this, the US Holocaust Memorial Council has not done enough to educate the public about the Gypsy Holocaust. At the Museum the Gypsy display is "more Hollywood than Holocaust," only a stereotypical wagon, violin etc. Some Holocaust Museum personnel have called Hancock a "troublemaker," and one representative of the council called him a "wild man." According to Hancock, anti-Gypsy prejudice is at an all time high, and he contends that there is an

element of racism in the exclusion of Gypsies in the historiography on the Holocaust, based on the dark skin of the Roma and Sinti. He accuses some members of the US Holocaust Memorial Council for harboring prejudice against the Gypsies because of their dark skin. Furthermore, Hollywood studios decline Gypsy Holocaust stories because they don't deal with Jews (58).

Continuing with a litany of criticism to the end, Hancock criticizes the Encyclopedia of the Third Reich, the Encyclopedia of the Second World War, Who's Who in Nazi Germany, and "most books on the Holocaust" for under-representing the Gypsies. In fact, in the translation of Lucjan Dobroszycki's, *The Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto*, the entire reference in the original to the liquidation of a Gypsy camp was deliberately deleted. This type of editorial deletion applies to other works as well. He also attacks the press and media for an exclusive emphasis on Jewish fate. Criticised in this context are the New York Times, *Schindler's List*, and most of all, *Escape from Sobibor*, in which the word "Gypsy" is mentioned only once, and that only as a dog's name. Thousands of Gypsies were killed in Sobibor. The movie is "cruel and callous" (59). NPR in Washington DC covered the 50th anniversary of Auschwitz-Birkenau on January 26, 1995, never once mentioning Gypsies, despite the fact that they were represented at the memorial service. Gypsies were, however, not allowed to participate in the candle ceremony. They were forced to watch the ceremony from outside the compound, having to endure Elie Wiesel emphasize the "uniqueness" of Jewish suffering in the Holocaust.

Hancock's essay constitutes a significant contribution to the historiography on the Gypsies and the Holocaust. Belonging to this particular victim group, he offers insights into the sufferings, frustrations, and utter helplessness which members of this group still often feel as a result of their under-representation in the Holocaust in historical works as well as in museums. The essay is also important in that while the author freely voices his feelings of outrage, he simultaneously cites convincing evidence to support his claims.

Michael Zimmermann's 1996 monograph, *Rassenutopie und Genozid. Die nationalsozialistische "Lösung der Zigeunerfrage*, will certainly remain the most definitive work on the subject of Gypsies and the Holocaust for a significant time to come. At 574 pages, Zimmermann has availed himself of primary sources throughout Germany in order to examine questions which up till 1996 had never been sufficiently explored from an archival base. Beginning with the statement of Reinhard Heydrich that "[t]he Führer holds the Gypsies for the greatest plague of the peasant population," (14) the author notes that Hitler's anti-Jewish statements were similarly phrased as were his anti-Gypsy remarks. Stating the obvious, Zimmermann writes that "the Gypsies long remained forgotten victims of Nazism" because they were relegated by scholarship to the outer peripheries of the literature on the Holocaust. In this, scholars have followed the pattern established at the Nuremberg trials, namely to ignore Gypsies. As an answer to the question, "How could a group which played such a completely marginal role in the dictatorship have become the objects of genocide?" (16), the author notes that all the various Nazi organizations had their own interests, power politics, ideological conceptions, etc. This state of affairs produced contradictions and rivalries in relation to the Zigeunerpolitik among the relevant Nazi groups. Nevertheless, dominant repressive structures and trajectories can be discerned and reconstructed. Zimmermann also emphasizes the smokescreen character of euphemistic official language, such as "evacuated" or "resettled" instead of the more accurate "murdered." In a comprehensive chapter on the historiography of the question, Zimmermann notes that the book, *Mosaic of Victims*, which claimed to recognize the suffering of other groups than Jews, simultaneously bluntly claimed that Jewish suffering was unique and that only Jews and not Gypsies suffered a Holocaust as opposed to partial genocide, as the book's editor M. Berenbaum asserts. The opposing viewpoint was advanced by Ian Hancock and Henry Huttenbach, whereas Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn's *History and Sociology of Genocide* is contradictory, one author claiming

that Gypsies should be included in the Holocaust, while Jonassohn writes that only Jews should be included.

Zimmermann covers such topics as the role of local police and science in the internment and murder of Gypsies, the Wehrmacht stereotype of "the spying Gypsy", as well as the ban on Gypsy marriage and forced sterilization. The bulk of the book consists of case studies of deportations and camps from Elsass-Lothringen, the protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, Lodz ghetto, Bialystok etc. Zimmermann documents the role of the Einsatzgruppen in the Soviet Union, relying heavily on materials from the Bundesarchiv-Koblenz. Most in-depth is his coverage of Auschwitz-Birkenau. In many respects Zimmermann's results do not significantly revise much of previous scholarship, but they do solidly expand the documentation base. This is very noticeable in his massive array of overall mortality statistics relating to the Gypsies (381-383), though, of course, no definitive mortality statistic is presented; only the figure of between 200,000 to 500,000 is cited.

Zimmermann notes a difference relating to the murder of Gypsies within and without the Reich. In the East, the motive was often the conception of the "traveling Gypsies" who were thought to be spies for the Jewish-Bolshevik world enemy, while in the Reich the criminal and racial research predominated (372).

As in his 1989 work, Zimmermann observes that the period of time of the persecution of Gypsies was shorter than that of Jews. One factor that complicated the swift elimination of Gypsies was the classification problem. While there is no documentation from Hitler regarding the genocide of Gypsies, it is sufficient to note that he never disapproved of Himmler's deportation orders (374). Like Huttenbach, Zimmermann writes that it is clear that the murder of the Gypsies constitutes the crime of genocide according to the UN Genocide Convention definition. In conclusion, Zimmermann calls into question the assertion that Nazi genocide (of Jews and/or of Gypsies) is "unique," "singular," "without precedent," "admitting of no comparison," words which have been used by Jewish and Gypsy authors

in relation to the Holocaust. Zimmermann writes that "every historical event is unique" (378). Furthermore he argues that the "concept of 'singularity' or 'uniqueness' has been up till now neither historically-empirically sound, nor does it lead very far theoretically. Comparative research of genocide and mass crimes in human history has just begun" (378). "Comparison is permissible and scientifically necessary," writes Zimmermann, noting that if one wants to argue that the racially motivated Nazi crimes are unique, one also must admit that the class motivated crimes of Stalin are also unique in their own categories.

In 1997 Wolfgang Wippermann's study, "Wie die Zigeuner." Antisemitismus und Antiziganismus im Vergleich, appeared. The work is more of a sociological study of modern day German prejudices than a history of Gypsies in the Holocaust, but the latter subject is covered, though only in a cursory manner, and based exclusively on secondary sources. The book is not an academic work in the strict sense of the term, but is rather directed at a popular readership. The most important contributions to scholarship in the book is Wippermann's heavy emphasis that the Final Solution applies equally to Jews and Gypsies (164). Though there were differences in their respective persecution by the Nazis, the end result--genocide--was the same. The figure of 200,00 to 500,000 Gypsy casualties is repeated (167). Perhaps the most important development in interpretation in Wippermann's book is his taking to task the assertion that Jewish persecution was motivated by religious factors and Gypsy persecution was motivated by social factors. "Already in the middle ages anti-Semitism was in no way characterized by theology alone (234)." "The first pogroms of 1096 were only to a very limited degree based on the charge of the Christians that Jews had murdered Jesus. The great wave of pogroms in the mid 14th century was not at all religiously motivated (war überhaupt nicht religiös motiviert). . . . In this, social-psychological and simple economic factors and motives played a role" (ibid.). In contrast to this, the religious motivation in the persecution of Gypsies has been

overlooked. Often they were seen as "pagans" or at least "bad Christians," possessing magic powers from the devil (235ff.).

Some of the most recent significant contributions to the historiography on the Gypsies and the Holocaust are two essays by Gilad Margalit of the University of Haifa published in 1997, (a): "Die deutsche Zigeunerpolitik nach 1945," and (b): "The Justice System of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies." Margalit's area of concern is the immediate post-War period and the Gypsy struggle for compensation as victims of racial persecution by the Nazis. According to the German state, racial persecution of Gypsies did not begin until January 29, 1943, the date of Himmler's deportation order of Roma and Sinti to Auschwitz-Birkenau. The order was also used to exonerate figures responsible for the Gypsy Holocaust, such as Robert Ritter and his assistant Eva Justin, for because they formulated their ideas before 1943, so went the legal logic, they therefore did not persecute the Gypsies out of racial motives. Only victims of political, racial, or religious persecution could receive compensation. In 1955 a commentary on the compensation law was published, arguing that Gypsies were persecuted for social reasons, not racial reasons. Kurt May, a Jew, was one of the few Gypsy advocates during that time. It was not until May 23, 1963 that the high court declared that racial persecution of Gypsies began in the 1930s: "Unfortunately, some of those who should have benefited from the revised ruling were no longer alive (b 334)."

Margalit sees a larger trend in post-War Germany which tended to exonerate the accused by using Nazi-era logic and arguments. Some courts judged that crimes committed under Hitler were not committed out of free will, "but rather as actions forced upon the actors by a dictatorship" (ibid.) Ritter was actually exonerated by claiming that he had urged the Nazi leadership that the Roma and Sinti be sterilized, because he knew others wanted them all murdered. Ritter claimed he was trying to secure for them the most merciful fate possible under the given circumstances. He presented himself as the savior of the Gypsies and as an "anti-Nazi fighter" (b 338). All charges were dropped, and the legal file

destroyed. Ritter and Justin both laid the complete blame for the Gypsy Holocaust on Himmler, calling him a fanatic. "In both investigations, the prosecution preferred the evidence of Ritter and Justin, their colleagues in the institute, and the criminal police, over that of the Gypsy victims" (b 340). Margalit's conclusion is that "[i]n the 1950s and 1960s, the justice system of the FRG was an integral part of the civil service that remained from the Nazi regime, and continued to function in the post-Nazi period without many significant changes in personnel" (b 343). Even in the mid 1980s charges were dropped against two of Ritter's colleagues then under investigation, Sophie Ehrhardt and Adolf Würth: "[T]he prosecutor argued that the defendants' participation in Ritter's research was a legitimate scientific activity" (b 344). This entire situation was made possible by a "myth," that "the Nazi upper ranks alone initiated the crimes, and the S. S. hangmen alone performed them" (b *ibid.*). This myth was pushed in order that the guilty could escape punishment. The myth was then transformed "into a collective memory of the German consciousness . . . [and] became entrenched in the next generation" (*ibid.*). Margalit's work is important because it also offers several case studies of anti-Gypsy laws in post-War Germany, including those in Hamburg, Frankfurt am Main and Hannover. These laws forbidding the wandering homeless in public parks and the like usually intentionally targeted Gypsies. He traces these laws up to the 1960s and 1970s when several of them were overturned out of concern over their being identified as having their inspiration in Nazi-era ideology and prejudice. Margalit's conclusion is that the legal status of Gypsies has improved somewhat only because politicians have been forced to act under political pressure, and not out of moral principles or convictions (a 588). Presently the Gypsies have legal equality in Germany, but of course this often remains mere words on paper; widespread prejudice against Roma and Sinti continues.

After surveying some of the most significant trajectories of historiography of the last two decades on the Gypsies and the Holocaust, some general directions of future historiography may perhaps be discernable. Scholarship on the topic will probably develop into two opposing camps. One

group will continue to tenaciously deny that the Gypsy genocide should be labeled a Holocaust. The most extreme version will continue to argue that no other mass murder in history but the Jewish Holocaust should be defined as genocide, the Jewish Holocaust being utterly unique (Steven T. Katz being the foremost example of this opinion). Others, such as Yehuda Bauer, will continue to deny that Gypsies suffered a Holocaust, while simultaneously allowing the term to be used to describe the Armenian genocide. The other camp, composed especially of those belonging to the emerging field of comparative genocide studies, will increasingly argue that all genocides are unique in their own categories, and that any form of ethnocentrism leading to claims of uniqueness in a way that minimizes the suffering of other groups should be avoided.

It would appear that future historians will probably also increasingly concentrate on the immediate post-War period, emphasizing the continuing legacy of Nazi-era ideas on the German legal system of the 1940s to the 1980s. There also seems to be little doubt that further embarrassing biographical information will come to light on exonerated Nazis, bringing perhaps at least some degree of closure and justice for the Roma and Sinti survivors.

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The Holocaust conference on the persecution of the Gypsies. Starting on 3 October 1991, at the Auschwitz State Museum at Auschwitz-Birkenau, an international conference was held on the topic of the persecution of the Gypsies during the Second World War. Vor dem Hintergrund ihrer Verfolgung unter der Nazi Herrschaft [Sinti and Roma in the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp 1943-44. Against the Background of Their Persecution under Nazi Domination]. The position of Holocaust historiography with regard to the matter was summarised by Vlasta Kladivov: "The National Socialist administration of Germany assigned the same fate to the Sinti and Roma as they did to the Jews. Many Sinti and Roma traditionally worked as craftsmen, such as blacksmiths, cobblers, tinkers, horse dealers, and toolmakers. Others were performers such as musicians, circus animal trainers, and dancers. By the 1920s, there was also a small, lower-middle class of shopkeepers and some civil servants, such as Sinti employed in the German postal service. In post WWI Germany, persecution of the Sinti and Roma preceded the Nazi regime. Even though Gypsies enjoyed full and equal rights of citizenship under Article 109 of the Weimar Constitution, they were subject to special, discriminatory laws. Tyrnauer, Gabrielle. Gypsies and the Holocaust: A Bibliography and Introductory Essay (Montreal, 1989).. The "Years of extermination" by Saul Friedlander. First Harper Perennial 2008. The Roma ("Gypsies") of Europe were registered, sterilized, ghettoized, and deported to concentration and death camps by the Nazis in the Holocaust. Though these people were part of several tribes (the largest of which are the Sinti and Roma), the settled peoples called them by a collective name, "Gypsies," which stemmed from the (false) belief that they had come from Egypt. This name carries negative connotations and is today considered an ethnic slur. Nomadic, dark-skinned, non-Christian, speaking a foreign language (Romani), and not tied to the land, the Roma were very different from the settled peoples of Europe. Misunderstandings of Roma culture created suspicions and fears, which in turn led to rampant speculation, stereotypes, and Roma, singular Rom, also called Romany or Gypsies (considered pejorative), an ethnic group of traditionally itinerant people who originated in northern India but live in modern times worldwide, principally in Europe. Most Roma speak some form of Romany, a language closely related to the modern Indo-European languages of northern India, as well as the major language of the country in which they live. Most Roma were still in Europe in the early 21st century, especially in the Slavic-speaking lands of central Europe and the Balkans. Large numbers live in Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, the Czech and Slovak republics, and Hungary.