

Giving Memory a Future: The Sinti and Roma in Italy and around the World

Biographical Notes

Aleksandr Kuz'menko

Aleksandr Kuz'menko was born on May 3, 1931 in Konotop, in the former Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (now Ukraine), to a long-settled Roma family. His father, Andrei, was a founder of the first *Gypsy kolkhoz*—a Roma collective farm organized in the Soviet Ukraine. The kolkhoz was located in Lozovaya, Kharkiv region.

Aleksandr was eight years old when his family moved to Kyiv. He finished the first grade of secondary school when the country was invaded by Nazi Germany in June 1941. While in Kyiv, his family lived without disclosing their Roma identity. When all Jewish and Roma residents received an order from the occupying authorities to report for “resettlement” to Babi Yar in September, the Kuz'menko family defied the order, posing as non-Roma. Because of Aleksandr's darker complexion, he decided to pass as an Assyrian. Once a local collaborator denounced him to the police and he, misidentified as a Jew, was about to be shot. Aleksandr was not circumcized, and that saved his life. Upon the Soviet troops' approach, all Kyiv inhabitants were ordered to evacuate the city; the Kuz'menko family headed to Belaya Tserkov'. They were liberated by the Soviet armed forces in November 1943.

After the war, Aleksandr completed secondary education, served in the army, and studied to become a welder. He continued withholding his Roma identity, in order to avoid anti-Roma discrimination in the postwar Soviet Union. The interview was conducted in Kyiv, Ukraine on November 3, 1998. The interviewer: Tatyana Chaika, the cameraman: Viktor Shuvalov.

Amilcare Debar

Amilcare Debar was born in Frossasco (Torino), Italy, on June 16, 1927 of Italian Sinti parents, Giovanni Debar and Giuseppina De Colombi. When he was three years old, he became an orphan. He was sent, with his younger sister Elvira, to an institution run by nuns in Canale. When Amilcare was old enough to go to school, he was sent to an orphanage in Racconigi, where he grew up happy, got along with his classmates, and started on the path to professional school.

When the war broke out, Amilcare was protected by the Bergia family, who wanted to help him become fully emancipated from the Sinti lifestyle and offered him a job in their large

family farm. In 1944, members of the Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale (National Liberation Committee) used him as a young partisan courier. He subsequently became part of a detachment (commandant Pompeo Colajanni) of the 48th Garibaldi Dante Di Nanni brigade and took part in many partisan actions in the Langhe area.

After liberation, he began serving in the Racconigi Police headquarters, aspiring to have a career in the police. After a casual meeting with his half-brother, however, he was reunited with his extended family and resumed the nomadic life. At the time of this interview, Amilcare lived with his family in the nomad camp near Cuneo. Amilcare Debar died on December 12, 2010. The interview was conducted in Cuneo, Italy on November 28, 1998. The interviewer: Giovanna Boursier, the cameraman: Pier Milanese.

Anna Zaryn

Anna Zaryn (née Seifert) was born on March 15, 1925 in Lwów, Poland (now L'viv, Ukraine) in a Jewish family. Her father, Wilhelm Seifert, was a successful businessman and he owned a cosmetics factory. When the Soviet army occupied Lwów in September 1939, Wilhelm was forced to surrender the factory to the authorities.

After the German invasion in June 1941, Anna and her parents were forced to move in the Lwów ghetto. They escaped in December and traveled to Przemyśl, to find shelter with family acquaintance. However, in early 1942, they were forced to move in the Przemyśl ghetto. Soon thereafter, both Anna's parents were deported and she lost contact with them. In August 1942, Anna married Adolph Grossman, a lawyer she met in the ghetto. In the winter of 1943/44 Adolph was deported to the Stalowa Wola concentration camp and eventually died of starvation in the Gross-Rosen concentration camp. In January 1944, Anna was deported to the Kraków-Płaszów concentration camp, and in the summer of the same year she was transferred to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau death camp. In Birkenau, she had to clean the *Zigeunerlager*, after it had been cleared at the beginning of August. At the end of 1944, Anna was transferred to Wilischthal concentration camp in Germany, and later, in March 1945, to the Theresienstadt ghetto in Czechoslovakia, where, in May of the same year, she was liberated by the Soviet armed forces.

After liberation Anna went to Prague. Not willing to live under the Soviet military control, she moved to Austria and migrated to Canada, in January of 1948. She settled in Montreal, Quebec, where she started working and went to business school. In 1950 Anna married her second husband, Borys Zaryn. They had two children: Barbara and Bogdan. In 1992 Anna testified in the trial against Joseph Schwammberger, commander of the Przemyśl concentration camp. The interview was conducted in Montreal, Canada on February 28, 1997. The interviewer: Paula Weitzman, the cameraman: Anthony Breier.

Antonio Reinhart

Antonio Reinhart was born in Maranello (Modena), Italy on October 1, 1927. His father, Giuseppe Reinhart, was a Sinti from the German part of Switzerland. His mother, Maria Bassini, was from Northern Italy and had Sinti and German origins. She died of peritonitis in 1940. Antonio had several siblings and stepsiblings. He spent his childhood moving around Italy with his family, in order to avoid being expelled from the country during the Fascist

regime. Giuseppe managed to obtain a permit of stay as a foreigner, however this did not change the family nomadic lifestyle, moving from city to city, as a traveling performance troupe.

During the war the Reinharts, along with other Sinti families, spent two years—from 1940 till 1942—in a cave in the Maiella Mountains in the Abruzzo region of Italy. After 1942, the family kept on moving around the country. Antonio was near Tortona when Italy was liberated in 1945.

After the war he met his lifelong partner, Silvana Gabrielli, a Sinti girl from Udine, at a fair in Gonzaga, near Mantova. They lived in Udine for a while; afterwards Antonio joined a moving circus as a tiger tamer. Sixteen years later, Antonio and Silvana finally settled down in Rimini, where Antonio worked as a carousel operator. They had four children: Diego, Anna, Mirella, and Roberto. The interview was conducted in Rimini, Italy on January 16, 1999. The interviewer: Giovanna Boursier, the cameraman: Pier Milanese.

Edward Kwiatkowski

Edward Kwiatkowski was born to a nomadic Roma family in 1932, in Poland. Part of a nomadic tribe, Edward, his parents, Kazimierz and Julianna, and seven siblings traveled in wagons, across the prewar Poland. Kazimierz was an affluent member of the traveling group and managed conflict resolution in the Roma disputes.

When the war broke out in 1939, Edward and his tribe were in Kielce, in central Poland. After the territory was occupied by the German armed forces, the group hid in the forest. In 1943, betrayed by a local forester, they were discovered by the German police, in Świętokrzyski region. The police ordered all Roma to march to the nearest clearing, where trenches were prepared for mass execution. Edward, his father, and his brother Adam managed to escape, whereas all remaining Roma were killed. The escapees moved to Warsaw and lived in Służewiec, a district of Warsaw, where Roma lived in rental housing, until the territory was liberated by the Soviet armed forces in January 1945.

After the war, Edward, Kazimierz, and Adam resumed nomadic lifestyle. They continued traveling until 1963, when Polish communist government enacted a sedentarization decree. Edward married Eugenia Dytkow in 1965; the couple lived in Grodzisk Mazowiecki and had two children. The interview was conducted in Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Poland on September 19, 1997. The interviewer: Stanislaw Laskowski, the cameraman: Leszek Winnicki.

Ekateryna Barieva

Ekateryna Barieva (née Osman) was born in 1922 in Velyka Lepetykha, in Zaporozh'e region of the former Soviet Union (now Kherson region, Ukraine). Her father, Semen, had a four-grade elementary education and worked as a mechanic in the local workshop. Kateryna had four siblings; her mother, Evdokiia, was a housewife and took care of the children. The family led sedentary lifestyle. Because of financial hardships, Ekateryna was unable to continue attending elementary school after the second grade.

When the war began in 1941, Ekateryna's father was conscripted to the frontline military service; the rest of the family remained on the occupied territory. In order to avoid deportation to forced labor in Germany, Ekateryna married Mykola Bariev; the couple had a son in 1943. During the German occupation of Velyka Lepetykha, Ekateryna was forced to work in military fortification and agriculture. She survived anti-Roma persecution in hiding and posing as a non-Roma.

After the war, Ekateryna and her family moved to Zaozernoie, in Kherson region of Ukraine, where they worked in a collective farm and observed Islam. The interview was conducted on November 1, 1998 in Zaozernoie, Ukraine. The interviewer: Boris Vishevnik, the cameraman: Andrei Neposedov.

Franz Rosenbach

Franz Rosenbach was born to a Sinti family on September 29, 1927 in Horetice, in the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia (now Czech Republic). The youngest son of Cäcilia Rosenbach and Franz Herrmann, he grew up with three sisters and two brothers. From 1938 on, the Rosenbach family lived in Döllersheim, Lower Austria, where Franz attended school.

In summer 1941, Franz moved with his siblings, his mother, and his stepfather, Anton Bernhard, to Mistelbach. In the same year, his stepfather was arrested and deported to Auschwitz, whereupon the remaining family immediately fled to Groß-Siegharts in Upper Austria. There Franz began work as a railway construction worker. In 1943, he and the rest of his family were arrested and deported to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau extermination camp. Two of his sisters were already in Auschwitz, and his older sister died in the camp. Franz was forced to work on channelization until he was transferred to the Buchenwald concentration camp in 1944, where he worked in a quarry. Afterwards, he was taken to the Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp, and subsequently transferred again, to Harzungen, a subsidiary camp of Buchenwald in Saxony. With the approach of the allied troops in April 1945, the inmates were forced to leave the camp on a death march. Franz was able to escape the death march, and, after liberation, went back to Groß-Siegharts. He then moved to Germany where he met his two sisters who survived the Holocaust.

The interview was conducted in Bayreuth, Germany on October 23, 1998. The interviewer: Mariane Bergida, the cameraman: Walter Klotz.

Georgii Radukan

Georgii Radukan was born to a Roma family on April 26, 1928 in Costiceni, in the Bessarabia region of Romania (now Ukraine). Before the World War I, his family lived in a village of Sauca, about 7 km away from Costiceni. The village was founded by, and named after, Georgii's maternal grandfather, Savva. Georgii's father, Vasiliu, was a blacksmith; he and his wife, Evgeniia, had ten children and observed Eastern Orthodox Christianity. In 1917, the family left their village and joined a group of nomadic Roma, migrating in Bessarabia.

When the region was annexed by the USSR in 1940, the Radukan family moved further west and continued traveling within the newly-established borders of Romania. In May 1941, while they were camping in Tansa, Romanian soldiers gathered all Roma families from the

area and—following the German invasion of the Soviet Union—marched them across the border, in summer 1941. The deportees were brought to a village of Vradievka, in the southern Ukraine, and incarcerated in a camp. Several months later, the family was released and relocated to Kantakuzenka. As the Soviet armed forces drew near in spring 1944, Georgii and his family followed the retreating Romanian army. Abandoned by the retreating troops, they were liberated by the Soviet soldiers near Zhashkiv, in the Cherkasy region of Ukraine.

After liberation, the Radukan family moved to Bessarabia, under Soviet administration, and lived in several places in Moldavia and Ukraine, eventually returning to their home village, Sauca. In 1953, the family resumed nomadic life style. When the Decree *On Reconciling Vagrant Roma to Labor* was adopted by the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR in 1956, the family settled in Ataki, Moldavia (now Otaci, Moldova). Georgii married Vokitsa in 1958; at the time of the interview they had six children. The interview was conducted in their home in Otaci on September 11, 1997. The interviewer: Lidiia Teper, the cameraman: Sergei Saruchanu.

Howard Chandler

Howard Chandler was born Chaim Wajchandler in Wierzbnik, Poland on December 5, 1928. He had a father, Leibke Wajchandler, a shop keeper, his mother, Pearl Blima, and three siblings, Gitel, Hersh and Shmuel.

Soon after the German invasion, the family wound up in the Starachowice ghetto, established by the occupying authorities in 1940. Upon the ghetto liquidation in October 1942, Howard was deported to the Starachowice-Julag II concentration with his father and older brother, Hersh. He never saw his mother and two other siblings again. In 1944 the camp was liquidated, and Hersh was transferred to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau death camp. He later found out his father was transferred to the Stutthof concentration camp, where he died. In January 1945, Howard was forced to march 100 miles to Breslau where he was put on an open freight train to the Buchenwald concentration camp. In Buchenwald, Howard reconnected with Hersh. As the allied forces drew near, the brothers were transferred to the Theresienstadt ghetto in Czechoslovakia, where they were liberated by the Soviet army on May 8, 1945.

In August 1945, with the help of the British Red Cross, both Howard and Hersh were taken to the UK, in Windermere. In 1947 Howard, as an underage orphan had the opportunity to move to Canada. He married a fellow holocaust survivor, Elsa Biller, in November 1951. At the time of the interview, they had four children and four grandchildren. The interview was conducted in Toronto, Canada on October 19, 1995. The interviewer: Simon Zelvovitch, the cameraman: Andy Koltai.

Hugo Höllenreiner

Hugo Höllenreiner was born to a Sinti family on September 15, 1933 in Munich, Germany. There he was living with his parents Josef and Sophie and his five siblings—Emma, Manfred, Peter, Rigo and Rosi. His father was serving as a Wehrmacht (German armed forces) soldier; and Hugo and his siblings went to school.

In March 1943, Hugo and his family were arrested by the police and deported to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau extermination camp. There the family was housed in the barracks designated for Roma and Sinti prisoners. In Birkenau, Hugo was forced to work; he and his brother were subjected by camp doctor Josef Mengele to medical experiments, which they survived. In 1944, Hugo's father registered to fight in the war because the Nazis promised to free his family. In the summer, Hugo, his mother and his siblings were first transferred to the Ravensbrück concentration camp, then to the Mauthausen concentration camp, and finally to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. On April 15, 1945 Hugo, his mother and his siblings were liberated in Bergen-Belsen by the British armed forces. His father, who meanwhile was deported to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, survived as well.

After the liberation, Hugo and his family went back to Munich and finally settled in Ingolstadt. The interview was conducted in Ingolstadt, Germany on July 26, 1999. The interviewer: Barbara Spangler, the cameraman: Walter Klotz.

Johann Stojka

Johann Stojka was born to a Roma family on March 20, 1929 in Vienna, Austria. He spent most of his childhood travelling in a trailer with his parents Maria Stojka, Karl Horvath and his five siblings, Katharina, Karl, Margareta, Amalia and Josef. His parents made a living by trading horses.

On Nazi command in 1938 the family settled in Vienna, where Johann went to school until his father was arrested in 1940. In 1943, Johann got arrested and transported to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau extermination camp, where he and his family were housed in the barracks of the *Zigeunerlager* (German: "Gypsy camp")—part of Birkenau designated for Roma and Sinti prisoners. Fourteen years of age, Johann was considered to be fit for work and therefore assigned to compulsory labor. In 1944, he and his brother were first transported to the Buchenwald concentration camp and subsequently transferred to the Flossenbürg concentration camp in 1945. In April of 1945, all inmates of Flossenbürg, including Johann and his brother Karl, were forced to depart the camp under stringent security. Johann and his brother were able to escape the death march and were rescued by American troops on April 24. Johann's parents and sisters survived as well, his youngest brother died in Auschwitz II-Birkenau of a typhus infection. After liberation Johann Stojka returned to Vienna.

The interview was conducted in Vienna, Austria on April 22, 1998. The interviewer: Eva Ribarits, the cameraman: Oskar Goldberger.

Julia Lentini

Julia Lentini was born in a Romani family on April 15, 1926, in Eisern, Germany. Julia's parents, Ludwig and Johanna Bäcker, had fifteen children. Ludwig was a basket weaver, horse trader, and a talented woodworker who built traveling family wagons. After the Bäckers relocated to Biedenkopf, Julia and her sisters worked in a knitting factory and on local farms.

On March 8, 1943, the Bäckers were taken from their home and deported to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau death camp. While in Birkenau, Julia lost both her parents and two of her siblings. In early 1944, Julia was transferred to the Schlieben concentration camp, where she was

liberated by the Soviet armed forces in April 1945. During relocation, Julia snuck into a nearby American camp. Aboard an American military truck, Julia then returned to Biedenkopf, where she was reunited with a few of her siblings.

In Biedenkopf, Julia met Henry Lentini, an American soldier, and they married eight months later. In 1946, Julia and Henry moved to the United States and settled in California. They had two daughters, Cynthia and Rosanne. At the time of the interview, Julia had three grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. The interview was conducted in Hemet, CA, United States on November 12, 1995. The interviewer: Liane Herbst, the cameraman: Rich Walton.

Karl Stojka

Karl Stojka was born to a Roma family on April 20, 1931 in Wampersdorf, Lower Austria. His parents Maria Stojka and Karl Horvath travelled as horse traders with their kids in a trailer. Karl had three sisters, Katharina, Margareta, Amalia, and two brothers, Johann and Josef.

In 1938, the Nazis forced the family Stojka to settle in Vienna. Like his older siblings, Karl went to school until his father was arrested in 1940. From this point on, the anti-Sinti and Roma measures persisted, and in 1943, Karl, his mother and his five siblings were arrested and deported to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau extermination camp. They were housed in the barracks of the *Zigeunerlager* (German: "Gypsy camp")—part of Birkenau designated for Roma and Sinti prisoners. Karl was forced to work in the quarry and in the canteen, where he was able to steal food for himself and his family. In 1944, he and his brother Johann were transported to the Buchenwald concentration camp and later transferred to the Flossenbürg concentration camp. During the evacuation of Flossenbürg in April 1945, thousands of the camp inmates, including Karl and Johann, were forced to march towards Dachau. The two brothers were able to flee during the death march.

After his liberation on April 24, 1945 by American troops, Karl Stojka was living as an artist in the United States of America and in Austria. The interview was conducted in Vienna, Austria on April 15, 1998. The interviewer: Eva Ribarits, the cameraman: Oskar Goldberger.

Kazimierz Wolff-Zdzienicki

Kazimierz 'Kaz' Wolff-Zdzienicki was born in Warsaw, Poland on May 4, 1922. His father, Jan, a successful businessman, provided a comfortable lifestyle for Kaz, his wife, Wanda, and a younger son, André. During 1937-1939, Kaz attended a Jesuit college away from home, in south-east Poland.

When both Jan and Wanda Wolff passed away in 1940, Kaz and his younger brother, André, moved in with their maternal grandmother. Kaz started studying medicine and worked part-time at a local hospital. In 1940, he joined an underground resistance group, *Związek Walki Zbrojnej* (ZWZ, Union of Armed Struggle). Due to his resistance activities Kaz was arrested by the Gestapo in February 1943 and incarcerated in the Pawiak prison, located in the Warsaw ghetto. From there he was deported to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau death camp. In October 1944, he was transferred to the Oranienburg-Heinkelwerke, a subcamp of the

Sachsenhausen concentration camp in Germany. In April 1945, Kaz was put on a death march to evacuate the camp. He was liberated by the American armed forces on May 4, 1945 near Crivitz in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.

After liberation, since he spoke fluent German, Kaz worked as an interpreter in the Dachau war crimes trials. In 1947 he resigned from the U.S. army and moved back to Warsaw, where he worked as a journalist. In 1971 Kaz moved to South Africa to follow his brother who was working for Renault there. In South Africa he met and married Maria Banach. He had two children and seven grandchildren. The interview was conducted in Byrne, South Africa on January 25, 1996. The interviewer: Padigail Meskin, the cameraman: John Queenan.

Leonid Shul'ga

Leonid Shul'ga was born on September 18, 1938 in Novyi Bug, in the former Soviet Union (now Mykolaiv region, Ukraine), in a nomadic Roma family. Leonid had three brothers: Petro, Andrii, and Ivan. In the summertime, the family traveled in Kherson, Mykolaiv, and Odessa regions of Ukraine. During winters, they rented temporary housing. The family observed Eastern Orthodox Christianity.

During the war, aware of the Roma persecution by the occupying authorities, the family hid in Kherson region, sheltered by local residents.

The Shul'gas continued leading nomadic lifestyle after the war. When the Decree *On Reconciling Vagrant Roma to Labor was adopted* by the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR in 1956, they settled in Bol'shaia Aleksandrovka. Leonid married Klavdiia and worked on various jobs in the local collective farm. At the time of the interview, the couple had four children. The interview was conducted on September 17, 1998 in Bol'shaia Aleksandrovka, Kherson region, Ukraine. The interviewer: Boris Vishevnik, the cameraman: Andrei Neposedov.

Lidiia Egorova

Lidiia Egorova (née Krylova) was born to a settled Roma family in Lukinichi, in the Smolensk region of the former Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (now Russian Federation), in 1923. Her parents, Nikita and Klavdiia, worked as agricultural laborers in the local collective farms and had six children. Lidiia enjoyed learning, and finished seven classes in a boarding school in Serebrenka, with the Russian and Romani languages of instruction.

Lidiia received a vocational degree of motor-mechanic and began professional training in Osinovka near Orsha, when Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941. She walked away from the combat zone and reached home 15 days later, only to find out that her family had evacuated east, to Saratov region. During the German occupation, Lidiia worked as an agricultural laborer. On April 22, 1943, a German shooting squad and local police rounded up all Roma in the village and brought them to an execution site. First men had to dig the mass grave, then the shooting started. Lidiia persuaded a local policeman to let her go and was released passing as a non Roma. She fled to a neighboring village of Kiryukovo and lived there until the territory was liberated by the Soviet armed forces in fall 1943.

Lidiia worked in a military hospital and the local kolkhoz, during the post-liberation period. After the war, she continued working in the collective farm, married twice, and had six children. The interview was conducted in Safonovo, Smolensk region, Russia on July 6, 1997. The interviewer: Anna Anfimova, the cameraman: Evgenii Kurbatov.

Lina Jackson

Lina Jackson (née Ruth Steinbach) was born on December 10, 1929 in Papenrode, Germany, in a Romani-German family. Her father, Adolf Steinbach, and two older brothers were arrested and deported to Buchenwald. After that, she moved to Berlin with her mother, Aditlight (Adelaide), and two of her six siblings, Amanda and Kurt. When Lina's mother died of liver cirrhosis in 1939, Lina went to live with her grandparents in Magdeburg.

Lina, Amanda, Kurt and their grandparents were arrested in 1939 and deported to the Auschwitz I concentration camp. Lina's grandparents died in Auschwitz as well as her brother Kurt, who got sick with malaria. Lina and Amanda were transferred to the Wolkenburg subcamp of Flossenbürg. In 1945 Lina was transferred to the Ravensbrück concentration camp and lost contact with Amanda. Later in the same year she was forced on a death march to Dachau. Lina was liberated in the Dachau concentration camp in the spring of 1945 by the American armed forces.

After liberation, Lina found her father, who had survived four years in the Buchenwald concentration camp. Only three of her siblings survived the war. Lina met an American soldier, Richard Jackson, who was stationed in Germany, where they got married in 1952. They later moved to the United States and had eight children. At the time of the interview, Lina had 14 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. The interview was conducted in Wheeler, Texas on December 8, 1997. The interviewer: Toni Binstock, the cameraman: Dale Scarberry.

Liudmila Ivanova-Marants

Liudmila Ivanova-Marants (née Kuz'menko) was born on August 15, 1942 to a settled Roma family in Kyiv, in the former Soviet Union, now Ukraine. Her father, Andrei, founded the first *Gypsy kolkhoz*—a Roma collective farm organized by the Soviet government—before the war. The collective farm was located in Lozovaya, Kharkiv region. Her mother, Polina, became hemiplegic during childbirth; Nadezhda Molchanova, Liudmila's maternal aunt, cared for Liudmila in her infancy, in Nazi-occupied Kyiv. Liudmila had a brother, Aleksandr, 11 years her senior.

The Kuz'menko family survived the occupation living under false identity, posing as non-Roma, until the city was liberated by the Soviet armed forces in November 1943.

Liudmila's first childhood memories are related to the post-liberation period. She remembers German prisoners of war working on reconstruction of Kyiv, destroyed by heavy bombing during the war. Because of the wartime experience and the anti-Roma prejudice in the postwar USSR, Liudmila chose to live as a non-Roma after the war. She posed as a Ukrainian until her enrollment in Kyiv Polytechnic Institute, when her father insisted she should reveal her true identity as she was the first Roma student to be admitted to the school. Liudmila

graduated with a degree in chemical technology and worked in the defense industry. She married Valerii Ivanov in 1967; they had a son, Gennadii, and a daughter, Polina. The interview was conducted in Kyiv, Ukraine on November 12, 1998. The interviewer: Tatyana Chaika, the cameraman: Viktor Shuvalov.

Mar'ia Kozlovskaja

Mar'ia Kozlovskaja (née Grokhol'skaia) was born to a nomadic Roma family in the village of Trostianka, in the Smolensk region of the former Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (now Russian Federation), in 1927. In the summertime, the family travelled in caravans, along with other Roma—usually ranging from five to ten families in a camp—and spent winters in rented housing. They made a living by horse trade and fortune telling.

When the war began in the Soviet Union in June 1941, all men from the family volunteered to the frontline military service. German invasion caught up with the women and children preparing for a winter camp in the Kalinin region, in October 1941. The occupying army established military headquarters in the village, 3 km away from the combat zone, but was unable to hold on to it for long, as the Soviet army kept pushing back. Retreating, the German soldiers rounded up the local population into one house and set the remaining homes on fire. Mar'ia's family was released, while remaining prisoners were marched to another village, Il'yushino, locked up in a barn, and burned alive. The territory was liberated by the Soviet armed forces in December 1941. Meanwhile, Mar'ia and her family were evacuated to Buguruslan, in the Chkalov region, where they lived until the end of the war. Mar'ia's father and brothers were killed on the front.

The family led nomadic life after the war, until the Decree *On Reconciling Vagrant Roma to Labor was adopted* by the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR in 1956. They then settled in *sovkhos*, a state farm, in the Briansk region of Russia, and worked as agricultural workers. In 1947, Mar'ia married Afanasii Kozlovskii; at the time of the interview they had six children. The interview was conducted in Smolensk, Russia on July 7, 1997. The interviewer: Anna Anfimova, the cameraman: Evgenii Kurbatov.

Maria Lisiecka

Maria Lisiecka (née Siwak) was born to a Roma family on July 31, 1921 in Majscowa, Poland. Her parents, Izydor and Anna Siwak, worked as agricultural laborers on local farms. Maria had six brothers and three sisters.

During the German occupation of Poland, in early the 1940s, German soldiers arrested Maria and her parents and transported them to a prison in Jasło. From there, the family was taken to a collection point in Tarnów and subsequently deported to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau death camp. While in Birkenau, Maria and her parents were housed in Block 13, outside of the *Zigeunerlager* (German: "Gypsy camp"). The family members were forced laborers, as a result of which Izydor died. Maria was beaten, subjected to medical experiments, and sterilized. She lost hearing as a result of the brutal treatment. From Birkenau, Maria and her mother were transferred to the Ravensbrück concentration camp in Germany. They were liberated in Ravensbrück by the Soviet armed forces in April 1945.

After liberation, Maria and Anna returned to Majscowa. There they learned that all of Maria's siblings, who had remained in the village, were killed during the war. Affected by the wartime experiences, Anna died soon after the war. The interview was conducted in Wroclaw, Poland on July 9, 1997. The interviewer: Stanislaw Laskowski, the cameraman: Leszek Winnicki.

Maria Szoma

Maria Szoma was born to a settled Roma family in July 16, 1936 in Chyrów, Poland. Maria's father, Andrzej, was a blacksmith; her mother, Stefania, stayed home and took care of Maria and her two sisters, Emilia and Anna.

Soon after the war began in Poland, Andrzej was arrested by German soldiers and, along with other village inhabitants, taken for mass execution. Gravely wounded, he managed to survive and returned home, only to be discovered by a Ukrainian policeman, who shot him to death. He was buried together with his four brothers, who were killed on the same day. Maria, with her mother and sisters, survived the war in hiding, until the territory was liberated by the Soviet armed forces in summer 1944. Stefania died soon after liberation and the Szoma sisters were placed in orphanages, separated from each other.

Maria married another Polish Rom, Andrzej Michalewicz; they had seven children and ten grandchildren. The interview was conducted in Wroclaw, Poland on July 8, 1997. The interviewer: Stanislaw Laskowski, the cameraman: Leszek Winnicki.

Marian Pawlowski

Marian Pawlowski was born on December 10, 1927 in Zabrzeg, Poland. His parents, Ferko Pawlowski and Marianna Ferko, belonged to the Bergitka Roma ethnic sub-group, also known as Carpathian Roma. Ferko earned a living as a craftsman. Marian had three sisters, Franciszka, Gizela, and Irena.

In 1943, Marian and his family were deported to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau death camp and housed in the barracks of the *Zigeunerlager* (German: "Gypsy camp")—part of Birkenau designated for Roma and Sinti prisoners. In Birkenau, Marian was forced to work on the camp barrack construction. In 1944, Marian and Ferko were transferred to the Buchenwald concentration camp in Germany; Marian's mother and sisters remained in Birkenau and did not survive the Holocaust. As the allied armed forces drew near, Marian and his father were transferred from Buchenwald on a forced march, in April 1945. They managed to escape during the march and hid in a nearby forest until the territory was liberated by the American armed forces.

After the war, Marian joined nomadic Roma. He married Elzbieta Majewska in 1952; they had three sons, Adam, Roman, and Josef, and a daughter, Azdona. The interview was conducted in Andrychów, Poland on August 7, 1997. The interviewer: Stanislaw Laskowski, the cameraman: Piotr Augustynek.

Mariia Chebotar'

Mariia Chebotar' (née Radukan) was born to a nomadic Roma family in Grinauti, in the Bessarabia region of Romania (now Moldova) on August 28, 1939. In a caravan of 10-20 Roma families the Radukans migrated across Romania, Bukovina, and Bessarabia. Mariia's father, Vasili, was a blacksmith; her mother, Evgeniia, earned a living by fortune telling. The family had ten children and observed Eastern Orthodox Christianity.

The war caught up with the Radukans in Bessarabia. During the German invasion of the USSR in June 1941, they lost their horses and other belongings to the invaders, were rounded up and marched to the Domanevka concentration camp in Transnistria—a region in the southern Ukraine ceded by Hitler to Romania as a reward for its participation in the war against the Soviet Union. From August 1941 to March 1944 Transnistria was under the control of the Romanian military and civil administration. The family survived harsh conditions in the camp thanks to Vasili's blacksmith skills.

After the territory was liberated by the Soviet armed forces in 1944, Mariia and her family moved to a collective farm in a neighboring village, Vradievka. They did not remain there for long; after having earned enough money for a horse and a wagon, they resumed nomadic life, travelling in the southern and western Ukraine. When the Decree *On Reconciling Vagrant Roma to Labor* was adopted by the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR in 1956, the family settled in Ataki, Moldavia (now Otaci, Moldova). Mariia married Ivan Chebotar'; at the time of the interview they had five children. The interview was conducted in Mogilev-Podol'skii, Ukraine on November 15, 1998. The interviewer: Dmitrii Groisman, the cameraman: Sergey Boiko.

Mariia Maksymova

Mariia Maksymova (née Belous) was born on December 1, 1935, in Nedra, in Baryshivka district of Kyiv region, in the former Soviet Union (now Ukraine). A Roma family, the Belouses observed Orthodox Christianity and lived in the area for generations. Mariia's father, Efim, was a blacksmith; her mother, Oksana, had a parish-school education; both parents worked in the local collective farm. Mariia had a younger brother, Mykola. The family was fond of music—Oksana sang in a church choir, grandmother Ievdokha played tambourine, grandfather Stepan played violin—and often performed at local weddings. Growing up, Mariia inherited the love of music and loved to sing.

Mariia's father was drafted during the first days of Germany's attack on the Soviet Union in summer 1941; he was killed on the front in 1943. During the occupation of Nedra, German soldiers arrested Stepan, Mariia's grandfather, and took him to the killing site. It was due to help of the local villagers and his blacksmith skills that he was left alive. Having lost their home to the occupiers, the Belous family lived in a dugout until the territory was liberated by the Soviet armed forces in fall 1943. During the war, the family maintained contact with local partisans, supplying them with food.

After liberation, Mariia attended a secondary school, graduated from College of Cultural Studies in Kyiv, and worked in performing arts. She married Mykola Sliusar in 1954; they

had two daughters, Tetiana and Natalia. Mykola died of natural causes in 1969; Mariia remarried, to Arkadii Maksymov, in 1974. At the time of the interview, they had four grandchildren. The interview was conducted in Kyiv, Ukraine on March 11, 1998. The interviewer: Tatyana Chayka, the cameraman: Viktor Shuvalov.

Pavel Andreichenko

A descendant of the Servo Roma, Pavel Andreichenko was born to an assimilated family on August 10, 1930 in Dnepropetrovsk, in the former Soviet Union (now Ukraine). Because of his family socioeconomic status—his father, Fedor, was a lieutenant in the Imperial Russian Army, and his mother, Anastasiia, was a daughter of a landowner—Pavel’s parents were subject to political persecution after the establishment of the Soviet Union. Pavel had two brothers, Vladimir and Leonid, and a sister, Liudmila. Before the war, he attended an elementary school in Dnepropetrovsk and was fond of literature and history.

Pavel completed three grades of elementary school when the war began in the Soviet Union in 1941. Listed as Ukrainians in their identification documents, his parents ignored compulsory registration of Roma with the new administration. The family was evicted from their home by the occupying authorities. Denounced by local collaborators, they were deported for forced labor to a Romanian colony in Transnistria. They worked on the fields in the village of Varvarovka, in Odessa region, until November 1943, and then were deported to a forced labor camp in Piatikhatka. When the camp was liberated by the Soviet armed forces in April 1944, Pavel joined the military to fight on the front.

After demobilization, Pavel became a dancer and theater performer, settling down in the capital of Moldova, Kishinev. He mastered the art of dance, appeared in the famous film *Queen of the Gypsies* (Tabor Ukhodit v Nebo), and was awarded the titles of People's Artist of Ukraine and People's Artist of Moldova. A Roma activist proud of his heritage, at the time of the interview Pavel was a President of the Society “Romii Moldovei” (Moldovan Roma). The interview was conducted in Chisinau (formerly known as Kishinev), Moldova on November 12, 1998. The interviewer: Faina Akhinblit, the cameraman: Sergei Saruchanu. Pavel Andreichenko passed away on June 16, 2001.

Piero Terracina

Piero Terracina was born in Rome, Italy on November 13, 1928, the fourth child of Giovanni Terracina and Lidia Anticoli. His observant Jewish family lived in Rome for several generations.

The family’s life changed following the Racial Laws of 1938, Italy’s entrance into the war in 1940, the Armistice on September 8, 1943, and the Nazi occupation of Northern Italy and Rome. After escaping the raid of the Rome ghetto on October 16, 1943 and the subsequent round-ups, Piero’s family was identified by an informer and captured on April 7, 1944. They were all arrested, taken to the Regina Coeli prison, and subsequently deported to the Fossoli concentration camp near Modena. From Fossoli they were transferred to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau death camp, on May 17. Piero’s parents and grandparents were sent to the gas chambers upon arrival. His siblings, Cesare, Leo, and Anna, were transferred to other camps,

where they perished. In January 1945, Piero was forced on a march out of Birkenau but he escaped and went back to the Auschwitz I concentration camp, which had already been evacuated by the Nazis. Piero was liberated by the Soviet armed forces in Auschwitz I on January 27, 1945.

After liberation, Piero needed medical treatment and spent several months in a hospital in Sochi, on the Black Sea. In December 1945 he moved back to Rome after a long journey through Romania. In Rome he reconnected with his maternal aunt and cousins. He was the only member of his immediate family that survived the Holocaust. The interview was conducted in Rome, Italy on March 17, 1998. The interviewer name was Sara Piperno, the cameraman was Giorgio Heller.

Reinhard Florian

Reinhard Florian was born on February 24, 1923 in Matheninken, Germany, to Florentine Florian and Reinhard Habedank. His parents were Sinti and worked as horse traders and migratory workers while Reinhard went to school for eight years. In 1937, Reinhard's parents were not allowed to do their regular work anymore, which was why his father then started to work as a brickmaker and five of his eight siblings were working as agricultural laborers. Reinhard was not allowed to learn a trade; and he found work as agricultural laborer, as well, on a remote farm. Because of the anti-Sinti and Roma measures enacted by the Nazis, he no longer had the opportunity to visit his family.

In February 1941, Reinhard was arrested by the Gestapo and deported to the Mauthausen concentration camp, where he had to work in the quarry. In 1942, he was transferred to the Gusen concentration camp and in June 1943 to the Auschwitz III-Monowitz concentration camp. There he built beds because of his craftsmanship which resulted in more food and ultimately survival. Subsequently, he was transferred to the next concentration camp, Charlottengrube, where he had to work in the coal mine. In January 1945, Reinhard was forced to march to Loslau, from there to the Mauthausen concentration camp, and from there finally to the Melk concentration camp. Because of the harsh conditions, Reinhard's health got radically worse. Briefly before the U.S. troops arrived in Melk, the camp inmates, including Reinhard, were taken to the Ebensee concentration camp. There he was liberated on May 6, 1945 by the U.S. armed forces.

After a brief period of recovery, Reinhard went to Bayreuth, Germany, where he learned that only his father and one brother survived, and finally went to Aschaffenburg. The interview was conducted in Aschaffenburg, Germany on August 20, 1998. The interviewer: Ute Meller, the cameraman: Daniel Kohl.

Stanoski Winter

Stanoski Winter was born to a nomadic Sinti family on June 19, 1919 in Wittmund, Germany. The Winters had nine children and observed Catholicism. Stanoski spent his early childhood traveling with his parents and received his first education on the way. Starting in 1926, he went to school, first in Wittmund and then in Oldenburg. In 1933, he and his brother Erich resumed traveling with their parents, who made their money with horses, trade, and

performing arts. In 1938, Stanoski was drafted to the *Reichsarbeiterdienst* (German: "Reich Labour Service"); he was released one year later.

Shortly after the outbreak of the war, Stanoski and Erich were drafted to the military service. Stanoski served in Wilhelmshaven, trained in the air raid defense. In 1942, due to the anti-Sinti policy in the German armed forces, the brothers were released from the military and worked as truck drivers. In March 1943, the Winters were arrested by the police, transported to Bremen, and deported to the Auschwitz II-Birkenau extermination camp. They were housed in the *Zigeunerlager* (German: "Gypsy camp"), in Block 18. In the camp, Stanoski worked as block clerk until he and his brother were transferred to the Ravensbrück concentration camp in 1944. In February 1945, they were transferred again, to Sachsenburg in Oranienburg, and in March re-drafted to the military. Under surveillance, Stanoski served in Cottbus as a soldier.

In May 1945, Stanoski and his brother deserted from the German army. They returned to Cloppenburg, where they were reunited with their grandmother and father. The interview was conducted in Hamburg, Germany on June 30, 1996. The interviewer: Mischa Roubeni, the cameraman: Oliver Rensch.

Stefan Balasz

Stefan Balasz was born to a Galician Roma family on June 18, 1931 in Kobiór, in the Upper Silesia region of Poland. His father, Franciszek, traded horses; his mother, Karolina, stayed home and took care of their 12 children.

They were living with the extended family in Milówka, in the Sudety Mountains, when the German troops invaded Upper Silesia, in September 1939. In the early 1940s, the Balasz family was arrested and deported to Maciejowice, in Lublin Voivodship, where they were assigned to the former Jewish quarters. In defiance to Nazi orders, the family fled to Czarny Dunajec in the Tatry Mountains and hid with the local Roma. A year later, they moved again and hid in Kowaniec and Opuszna, the suburbs of Nowy Targ. Denounced by local inhabitants, Franciszek was arrested and deported to Auschwitz. On his way to the camp, he managed to send a note to the family—that was Stefan's last contact with his father. The family moved back to Czarny Dunajec and stayed there until the territory was liberated by the Soviet armed forces in January 1945.

After liberation, Karolina, Stefan, and his siblings returned to Milówka, where Karolina managed to receive an apartment from the village administration. In 1948, Stefan married Gertruda Borińska; they had four children. They led a nomadic life and finally settled in Andrychów, where Stefan worked in a textile factory. The interview was conducted in Bielsko-Biala, Poland on August 21, 1997. The interviewer: Joanna Wiszniewicz, the cameraman: Piotr Augustynek.

Stefania Orłowska-Burińska

Stefania Orłowska-Burińska (*née Balasz*) was born on April 6, 1932 in Andrychów, Poland. She and her two brothers, Bronisław and Bolesław, were raised by their mother, Anna

Balasz—a nomadic Roma woman who made a living by fortune telling. Stefania's father, Franciszek Kulpa, died of natural causes before the war.

During the German occupation of Poland, Stefania and her family hid in the forest, in the district of Sucha Beskidzka in Beskidy Mountains. In 1942, discovered in hiding by the German soldiers, they were loaded on trucks and deported, via Stryżów, to the Krakow-Plaszow concentration camp. They were incarcerated in the camp for two weeks and then released. Shortly thereafter, Stefania fell ill with typhoid fever and was treated in a hospital, in Krakow. Upon recovery, she reunited with her family and moved to Nowy Targ, where they lived with Stefania's maternal uncle until the territory was liberated by the Soviet armed forces in January 1945.

After liberation, Stefania and her family returned to Andrychów. She married Josef Orłowski-Burianski in 1950; they led a nomadic life until the early 1960s. When the Polish communist government enacted a Roma sedentarization decree, they stopped travelling and settled in Stefania's hometown. Stefania made a living by fortune telling. The interview was conducted in Andrychów, Poland on August 6, 1997. The interviewer: Stanislaw Laskowski, the cameraman: Piotr Augustynek.

Tulo Reinhart

Tulo Reinhart was born in Ravenna, Italy, on December 4, 1924. His father Giuseppe was a Swiss citizen who had moved to Italy with his family looking for better work opportunities. His grandfather was a carpenter, basketweaver and furniture repairman. Tulo's father built wooden caravans and traded horses. His mother, Maria Bassini, was Italian and often played the guitar and accompanied other musicians.

Because of the measures aimed at foreign migrants, his father was expelled to Yugoslavia several times, whereas the mother and the children, who were all Italian, were allowed to remain in Italy. After Tulo's father made a request to Mussolini, he obtained Italian citizenship and continued his nomadic lifestyle even after the war broke out. At the end of 1942, in Pordenone, after a police inspection of the Sinti, Tulo was arrested for dodging the draft. He was jailed, then sent to an internment camp in the Tremiti islands. In September 1943, after the allied bombings of the Foggia region, he succeeded in escaping from a hospital, and crossed the entire peninsula to find his family.

After liberation, with help from local farmers, the family resumed the ancient trades, and with the proceeds they purchased some small merry-go-rounds. At the time of the interview, Tulo had a family with four children, several grandchildren, and he ran carnival rides for a living. The interview was conducted in Misano Adriatico, Italy on April 30, 1999. The interviewer: Giovanna Boursier, the cameraman: Pier Milanese.

Zinaida Kaplan

Zinaida Kaplan (née Ibragimova) was born to a settled Roma family on August 23, 1934 in Nikolaev, in the former Soviet Union (now Ukraine). Her father, Arzlan, was a blacksmith, carrying on the tradition of his family business; her mother, Izibat, worked as a painter and took care of Zinaida and other children.

Soon after the German invasion of Nikolaev in summer 1941, persecution of Jews and Roma began. At risk of being denounced by local collaborators, the Kaplan family destroyed their original identification papers and bribed the local authorities in order to forge their ethnical record in the replacement documents. Because of their darker complexion, the Kaplans posed as Tatars—one of the ethnic groups inhabiting the local area. The family survived persecution living under false identity until the territory was liberated by the Soviet armed forces in March 1944.

Because of the anti-Roma prejudice, prevalent in the postwar USSR, Zinaida and her family continued living under Tatar identity after the war. Zinaida married Savva Kaplan in 1953; they had three children and eight grandchildren. The interview was conducted in Nikolaev, Ukraine on October 7, 1998. The interviewer: Artur Fredekind, the cameraman: Andrei Neposedov.