after the Holocaust, the concept of Romanestan, or a land dedicated to be the home of the Gypsies, remains only an idea, embraced only by the Gypsies (Lee, 1971, 236). They have been striving toward the creation of Romanestan since the 1920s, carried on by the "Gypsy kings," or Kwiek family. In search of a land for the Gypsies, such locations as Namibia, the Ganges River in India, Uganda, Abyssinia, Burgenland (lying between Austria and Hungary), and a village near Paris, France were all considered over time. In 1934, Jozef Kwiek requested approval from the United Nations, but to no avail. Persistently, varying members of the Kwiek family repeatedly searched for support from such countries as Czechoslovakia, England, Italy, and France, but the realization of Romanestan is still a long ways away (Marushiakova & Popov, 2005, 75-78).

Even though Gypsies experienced treatment similar to that of the Jews during the Holocaust, such as the passing of laws to ensure segregation, unwarranted arrests, and deportations, which led to their forced stay in concentration camps, and death camps, Gypsies are usually the forgotten victims (Sonneman, 2002, 33). However, testimonies published by both Jewish and Gypsy survivors share similar stories. Antonia Krokova recalled being gathered up in the middle of the night by the Czech police, who transported her entire family to Lety concentration camp. She was later transported again, this time to Auschwitz, where she was branded with a tattoo, her hair was shaved, and her belongings were burned. She remembers the smell of the fumes from the crematorium, and the fear of being next to die in the gas chambers (Isles, 2002). These conditions are very similar to testimonies heard by Jewish survivors as well, such as Gerda Weissman Klein, who detailed her life during the Holocaust in her memoir, *All But My Life*. Klein shares another similar experience to Gypsy survivor, Rosa Mettbach, in which they were both forced to walk for multiple days in order to escape the Russians. Prisoners who were unable to continue walking were allowed to ride the trucks. Usually, those that rode the trucks however, did not survive (Weissman Klein, 1995, 200 – 210; Sonneman, 2002, 218). The similarities between their stories suggest that Jewish and Gypsy victims received comparable treatment as targeted groups during the Holocaust. Because Gypsies were equally victimized under the Third Reich, their suffering should be acknowledged just as that of the Jews is.

Though Gypsies were indeed victims of the Holocaust, they were easily fogotten by the majority of the world because they held such little political threat (Bauer & Milton, 1992, 516). Unable to invoke interest or concern from the rest of the world due to their dramatically different lifestyles which cast them as outsiders, their common illiteracy, and the anti-Semitic focus of the Holocaust, the Gypsies still to this day fight for recognition as a race and as sufferers of the Holocaust. Because of their untraditional jobs as circus performers, basket weavers, and fortunetellers, they have been continually misunderstood (Isles, 2002; Lee, 1971). Recognized world-wide by their stereotypes, Gypsy persecution under the Third Reich was consequently perceived both nationally and internationally with

indifference (Trumpener, 1992, 856).

Though some researchers agree that more memoirs need to be obtained from Gypsy survivors in order to provoke a greater acceptance and understanding of their involvement in the Holocaust, the issue of Gypsy illiteracy arises. It may be true that more Gypsies need to start sharing their stories, but in order to do so many must do so orally (Sonneman, 2002, 27). However, this only poses more obstacles, including finding someone interested enough in their suffering to interview them, and then to publish their stories. Because of the common negative portrayal of the Gypsies though, some survivors are reluctant to share their stories at all, even to interested listeners. Along with the common struggle of illiteracy amongst Gypsies, Shukar Höllenreiner believes that Gypsies face hindrances going beyond that of their own limitations. As he stated in an interview, "the truth might have a chance at being heard in the United States. In Germany I wouldn't bother…. It goes in one ear and out the other. Half of them don't believe you. They think it is a made-up story. In Germany, they say it's all lies" (Sonneman, 2002, 113). Consequently, whereas some survivors are prevented from spreading awareness of Gypsy victimization due to illiteracy, others choose not to for fear of further persecution.

Though clearly not as well known, the Gypsies were largely affected by the Holocaust. They share similar survival stories to those more largely documented by the surviving Jews. Amongst themselves, they share sentiments of the Holocaust, whether or not the rest of the world listens. However, the lack of published memoirs helps demonstrate the awareness that the Gypsies have of the disapproval they receive from the rest of the world. Despite the fact that they are largely illiterate, many refuse to share their stories anyway, because they know of the stereotypes against them. Partnered with the anti-Semitic stigma of the Holocaust, the victimization of the Gypsies usually gets forgotten.

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