

## Impact case study (REF3)

<b>Institution:</b> University of Liverpool		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 26 Modern Languages and Linguistics		
<b>Title of case study:</b> The Romani Holocaust: enhancing public awareness of the past, changing lives for the future		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2000-2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Eve Rosenhaft	Professor	1981-2020
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2014-2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>		
<p>The genocidal persecution of Romani groups remains a relatively unknown aspect of the Holocaust, and historical failures to acknowledge it underlie their continuing exclusion all over Europe. Eve Rosenhaft's research explores the nature of that persecution. Through attention to the implication of non-Roma actors in its everyday dimensions, she has made visible the connections between the genocide and practices of 'othering' that persist today. Her work has had impacts in Britain, Europe, the United States and East Asia. These include direct contributions to changing the practice of museum professionals, educators and public policy practitioners in the field, and also the raising of awareness through her own exhibition work. Outcomes have been enhanced public understanding and commemoration, prompting members of the majority communities to reflect on their own histories and attitudes and envisage action for change and contributing to the empowerment of members of the Romani survivor communities.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b>		
<p>Rosenhaft's research was prompted by her discovery of photographs of German Sinti/Roma families in the Liverpool University Library. The photographs were taken between 1935 and 1939 by a non-Sinto photo-journalist, Hanns Weltzel. The holdings also include manuscript material providing insight into the circumstances of the persecution, into Weltzel's attitudes and into the ethical dilemma he faced as an ethnographer when he knew his subjects to be suffering persecution but felt unable to help. Rosenhaft located the remainder of Weltzel's photographs and papers and acquired them for the University Library and undertook further research on both Weltzel and his subjects in the context of the Romani genocide and wider Holocaust histories. Reflecting on the forms of discrimination that 'Gypsies' suffered even before the Nazi takeover, this research elucidated the relationship between everyday racism and National Socialist policies and contributed to a new understanding of the dynamics of the 'racial state'. In its dual focus on the victims and the photographer, it offered new insights into the 'grey zones' in which possibilities of mutual betrayal opened up, and contributed to a critical understanding of the role of social scientists in the persecution (3.1, 3.2, 3.3). Between 2001 and 2020 this research resulted in 7 book chapters and 8 journal articles, all single-authored.</p> <p>Since May 2019, Rosenhaft has led the Liverpool contribution to a HERA-funded consortium project in Romani history (3.4). Although the project's focus is the pre-Holocaust period, an early finding of significance has been evidence of visits to the UK by German families who would later suffer in the genocide - traces of spatial and temporal continuity in a pan-European Romani experience.</p>		

Between 2016 and 2018, Rosenhaft collaborated with Jana Müller, a public historian and memory activist based in Hanns Weltzel's home town Dessau-Roßlau, on developing a travelling exhibition (3.5). The exhibition brings the Liverpool material together with the contextualising documentation from other archives to present the persecution and post-war histories of interrelated families of German Sinti and Roma, framed by their relationship with the photographer Hanns Weltzel. The exhibition comprises 50 large banners and relates the experiences of 9 families. In its depth and detail it represents a substantial research achievement, involving extensive archival and oral history work - supplementing the investigations each curator had carried out before - to trace the biographical details of 80 interrelated individuals, as well as intensive cross-analysis of evidence from different sources. The findings provide new evidence on the variety of persecution experiences and the role of local (non-Nazi) agents in the persecution. They also constitute a uniquely coherent dataset that enables a refined understanding about the gender and family dimensions of the Holocaust and post-war Sinti/Roma experience.

A second exhibition was mounted in Seoul, South Korea, in January 2019 (3.6). Developed in collaboration with Professor Jie-Hyun Lim and artist-curators Kim Yisook and Ja Woonyung during Rosenhaft's first year as Visiting Research Professor at the Critical Global Studies Institute, Sogang University, this was the first outcome of a collaborative research project exploring the political implications of globalised memories of war and genocide under the rubric 'mnemonic solidarity'. It incorporated research material from the travelling exhibition to juxtapose the European persecution with photographic material inviting contemporary Korean viewers to reflect on their attitudes to foreign workers and refugees today. An experiment in 'applied memory studies', it aimed to test the possibilities of making the Holocaust history relevant to Korean audiences.

### 3. References to the research

3.1 Eve Rosenhaft, 'Wissenschaft als Herrschaftsakt: Die Forschungspraxis der Ritterschen Forschungsstelle und das Wissen über "Zigeuner"', in Michael Zimmermann (ed.), *Zwischen Erziehung und Vernichtung. Zigeunerforschung und Zigeunerpolitik im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Stuttgart: Steiner, 2007 (**book chapter**) [available from the University on request]

3.2 Eve Rosenhaft, 'Exchanging glances: ambivalence in twentieth-century photographs of German Sinti', *Third Text* 22 (2008), 311-24 (**journal article**) DOI 10.1080/09528820802204300 [or from University on request]

3.3 Eve Rosenhaft, 'Blacks and Gypsies in Nazi Germany: The Limits of the "Racial State"', *History Workshop Journal* 72 (Autumn 2011), 161-71 (**journal article**). DOI 10.1093/hwj/dbr023 [or from University on request]

3.4 HERA research consortium **grant**: *Beyond Stereotypes: Cultural Exchanges and the Romani Contribution to European Public Spaces (BESTROM)* (collaboration with the University of Seville, Jagiellonian University Krakow, University of Helsinki, May 2019-February 2022). The award acknowledges the quality of Rosenhaft's previous research. The Liverpool contribution (Eve Rosenhaft PI) explores the role of Romanies in horse fairs and other market contexts in Britain and Germany, ca 1880-1940. The project's first published output is a **co-edited volume** which showcases the initial research outcomes cited in section 2: Eve Rosenhaft and María Sierra (eds.), *European Roma – Lives Beyond Stereotypes* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2021) [Available from the University on request]

3.5 **Exhibition** (travelling): '...don't forget the photos, it's very important...' - *The National Socialist Persecution of Central German Sinti and Roma* / '...vergiss die Fotos nicht, es ist sehr wichtig...' *Die Verfolgung mitteldeutscher Sinti und Roma im Nationalsozialismus*. Production of the full exhibition was majority funded by the German Foreign Ministry with a grant of EUR10,000 on the strength of the supporting research and its public education potential. The exhibition website at <https://dontforgetthephotos.wordpress.com/> includes details of both this and the Seoul exhibition.

3.6 **Exhibition** (installation): *Unwelcome Neighbors: Portraits of "Gypsy" Victims of the Holocaust and Others*, funded by the National Research Foundation of Korea through the Critical Global Studies Center, Sogang University. The research project which provided the context for the

exhibition is showcased in a **co-edited volume**: Jie-Hyun Lim and Eve Rosenhaft (eds.), *Mnemonic Solidarity – Global Intervention* [see REF2]

#### 4. Details of the impact

Rosenhaft's research has had impacts in Britain, Europe the United States and East Asia. Through collaboration and public engagement work, she has directly influenced the practice of museum professionals, educators and public policy practitioners in the field, improving professional understanding and commemoration of the Romani Holocaust. The impacts that these collaborations will have on wider public knowledge and attitudes in the future are anticipated in the responses of audiences to her own exhibitions, which have prompted individuals in the majority communities to reflect on their own histories and think about the kinds of action for change that they might take, and contributed to the empowerment of the survivor and wider Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities.

Rosenhaft has **supported professionals and organisations in adapting** to changing evaluations of Holocaust history and shaping a more inclusive picture of the past. Impacts on **museum practice** followed collaborations with the Imperial War Museum London (IWM) and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). In 2021 the IWM will complete the GBP30,500,000 [overhaul](#) of its World War II galleries, incorporating new Holocaust Galleries. The Museum's interest in integrating Romani history, its commitment to combating stereotypes, its strategic [decision](#) to 'draw heavily upon ... unique personal stories' and the relative unfamiliarity of IWM staff with the specifics of the Romani genocide made Rosenhaft's research particularly relevant. Between November 2017 and March 2020 Rosenhaft had face-to-face meetings, extended telephone calls and e-mail exchanges with IWM staff. She advised on the historical events, the state of current scholarship, terminology and the like, and both the materials and the approach used in her exhibition have informed the museum's portrayal of the lives of Sinti and Roma before and during the Holocaust. The Curator of the Holocaust Galleries writes: 'Your own academic research and our lengthy discussions have influenced our presentation of Roma experiences of the Holocaust, ensuring it is not only accurate but also sensitive ... The team feels confident that your assistance will impact visitor understanding ...' (5.1)

In 2018 Rosenhaft co-led the Hess Seminar for HE teachers at the USHMM, which in that year focused on the persecution of Sinti and Roma. The seminar reflected the Museum's internal project of 'improving the visibility of and user access to resources on the Romani Holocaust and revising the Permanent Exhibition to take account of that history'. (5.2) A core event was a set of conversations with museum curators about the representation of the Romani genocide in the galleries, which prompted continuing discussions among curators about both gallery presentations and event programming. (5.3)

Engagement with the USHMM also led to changes to teaching content and practice. Hess Seminar participants characterised it as 'a wonderful addition to my teaching'; 'It was outstanding. Enriching. Important ... [T]he seminar changed me ... changed and improved my teaching skills'; 'one of the most useful professional experiences I have had as a scholar'. (5.4) Participants have since reported specific changes to curricula and syllabi at HEIs in Maryland, North Carolina and South Dakota (where the Romani case is being deployed in teaching to Native American students and about the Native American experience). Ethnomusicologist Dr Siv Lie (U Maryland) comments on how Rosenhaft's 'wealth of knowledge and experience with teaching this subject helped us to develop effective approaches to pedagogy and awareness raising'. She writes of her own new module in Romani music: 'Dr Rosenhaft's research ... shaped my approach to this unit and helped guide some very difficult but productive discussions.' (5.5)

In the UK, Rosenhaft has used the travelling exhibition '*...don't forget the photos...*' as a platform to engage with **public service professionals and practitioners**, including those working with Romani communities. One health professional who took part in an invited event commented: 'I have been impassioned by the stories and spoken to many colleagues and friends', another (of Roma descent) 'It has changed me.' (5.6) Cheshire West and Chester Council, which serves a

large Traveller community, has used the exhibition in public and training events for council members and staff and police officers on 3 occasions. Housing Officer Dawn Taylor testifies to the positive impact on their cultural sensitivity and professional practice: '[M]any of our colleagues spoke about reviewing their delivery [of social services] to ensure this is as accessible as possible for Gypsy and Traveller families.' (5.7)

Finally, the exhibitions co-curated by Rosenhaft and based on her research have had direct impact on the **memory and commemoration of the Romani Holocaust and on the lives and attitudes of visitors**. Between September 2017 and July 2020, '*...don't forget the photos...*' was shown on 18 occasions, including in Prague, in 7 German cities, at the International Youth Meeting Centre in Auschwitz, and at 6 sites in the UK. It has often been hosted by civic and faith groups in the context of Holocaust memorial events. Reports from the principal venues, including Liverpool Central Library and Liverpool Cathedral which attract a large tourist footfall (5.8), suggest that at least 10,000 (and very likely more) viewers have seen the exhibition and/or attended accompanying events. In Germany, the exhibition has been covered by local and national media, and inspired a [radio documentary](#) which focused on one of the individual victim stories to highlight the exhibition's power to challenge resurgent racist violence.

Exhibition visitors represent a cross-section of ages from mainly educated majority ethnic groups. These visitors report changes in attitudes and readiness to take new initiatives: Asked what action they might take after viewing the exhibition, British visitors responded: 'be more critically aware of groups becoming "other"'; 'be more compassionate towards all'; 'read more on this history'; 'be more tolerant'; 'think about stereotypes'; 'learn more'; 'continue to fight for human rights'; 'read more about Roma people and look at the articles/comments I hear in a different light'. (5.6) In Dessau-Roßlau, the exhibition had particular resonance because it portrayed events in the town itself; local residents were prompted to recall a forgotten 'Gypsy' presence and its disappearance; citizens reflected on links between the city's Nazi past and the current wave of right-wing violence in the region. (5.6) In South Korea, the exhibition *Unwelcome Neighbors* attracted 3812 visitors during the 5 weeks it was on display. Visitors took up the challenge to reflect on the racism in their own society: 'As an ordinary citizen who is neither victimiser nor victim, the issue is not far from us'; 'Koreans have stereotypes and prejudice. We are silent bystanders'; '[I think of] Vietnamese women who were fooled by Korean soldiers'; 'People like Korean-Chinese are discriminated because of their ethnicity in this country'; 'Korean nationalism is relatively strong and has a tendency to exclude others'. (5.9)

A significant impact of the research and the development of the exhibition has been the empowerment of members of the survivor families, with some of whom Rosenhaft has been in correspondence since the beginning of her research, some of whom advised on the development of '*...don't forget the photos*', and some of whom first came into contact through learning about the exhibition. Raffaella Laubinger, daughter of one of the exhibition subjects, stands for the impact on these families of the access the exhibition provides to knowledge about their own histories and images of their past: 'These pictures are very, very valuable for me ... And I'm also grateful that this exhibition exists – simply because we are a people who have been forgotten by history.' (5.10) She has since joined other members of the German survivor families in a growing circle of GRT who take an active part in the exhibition on site as speakers and docents (see exhibition website).

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

5.1 Letter from the Curator of the Holocaust Galleries, Imperial War Museum London, corroborating the impact of Rosenhaft's research on curatorial practice and anticipated impact on visitors

5.2 Confidential statement (e-mail) from the Acting Director, USHMM, corroborating the relevance of the Hess Seminar to plans for revising the PE

5.3 Statement (e-mail) from the Director of the USHMM Hess Seminar, corroborating outcomes of the Hess Seminar for the museum as well as seminar participants

- 5.4 Copy of the summary report on the Hess Seminar at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, corroborating the direct impact on teacher participants / subsequent statements about actual changes made to syllabi etc.
- 5.5 Letter from an ethnomusicologist about curriculum development following Hess Seminar, corroborating the impact on the thinking and practice of a university teacher and her students
- 5.6 Feedback questionnaire transcripts and e-mail comment from Liverpool and Dessau-Roßlau, corroborating impacts on attitudes of exhibition visitors
- 5.7 Testimonial from Cheshire West and Chester Council Housing Officer, corroborating impact of the exhibition on public policy practitioners (social services, police)
- 5.8 E-mails corroborating visitor numbers for Liverpool exhibitions
- 5.9 Kyu Dong Lee, *Mnemonic Negotiations of the Holocaust in South Korea: Remembering the Romani Holocaust* in the Exhibition 'Unwelcome Neighbors: Portraits of "Gypsy" Victims of the Holocaust and Others', MA thesis, Sogang University, 2019. This includes a detailed analysis of feedback from visitors to the Seoul exhibition, corroborating its impact on their attitudes.
- 5.10 Deutsche Welle broadcast of 16 October 2019 featuring Raffaella Laubinger's response to the exhibition [PDF including full text of the video of broadcast viewable at <https://www.dw.com/de/erinnerung-an-ermordete-sinti-und-roma/a-50844286>], corroborating empowerment of Sinti survivor families