INVITATION

On behalf of the International Gipsy Festival, we kindly invite you for the international conference

THE ROMA BETWEEN PAST AND FUTURE
REFLECTIONS UPON GENOCIDE, RECOGNITION
AND THE RESURGENCE OF EXTREMISM AND ANTI-GYPSYISM

Sunday, 6 May 2012
09.30 – 18.00
De Nieuwe Kerk - Eggertzaal
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Since a few years Romani minorities throughout Europe have been faced with the resurgence of extremism and nationalism. In countries as diverse as Hungary, Italy, Bulgaria, Lithuania and the Czech Republic, Romani citizens have been attacked by their fellow citizens, which led to casualties and increased interethnic tensions. The governments of France, Italy and Germany have sent Romani migrants with and without EU citizenship back to their countries of origin. Anti-Gypsyism and Roma-phobic measures are on the rise and are often met with ambivalence by the politicians and authorities involved. When in 2010 EU commissioner Viviane Reding made an indirect reference to the Second World War, numerous critics stood up to blame her for making what they considered an impossible comparison between the current situation and Nazi deportations.

The conference The Roma between Past and Future reflects upon the comparison between the present-day situation of Romani minorities and what happened to them in the 1930s and 1940s. Is such a comparison possible at all? Why and how could or should such a comparison be made to reflect upon the contemporary situation of the Roma in Europe? Since 1945, various Romani and Sinti groups have been involved in a struggle to get the Nazi genocide of Sinti and Roma officially recognized. How does this struggle and the neglect of this genocide by society at large relate to contemporary public debates on the Roma’s situation in Europe?

This conference aims at bringing Roma, Sinti, scholars, activists, advocates, politicians and policy makers together to discuss these timely topics. Roma from Hungary, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic will present their analyses of the contemporary situation in their countries. A Dutch Sinto who has survived the war will share his experiences with the audience. Scholars will reflect upon the importance of taking into account the circumstances of the 1930s and 1940s, as well as the post-war recognition struggle, for understanding the situation of Romani and Sinti minorities in contemporary Europe.
Conference Program

Morning program

Persecution before and during the war - The postwar struggle for recognition

- The process of exclusion and persecution of Roma and Sinti during the 1930s and 1940s
  Gerhard Baumgartner, University of Applied Sciences Graz, Austria

- The story of a Dutch Sinto survivor
  Zoni Weisz – interviewed by Dieuwertje Blok

- The post-war struggle for the recognition of the Nazi genocide of Sinti and Roma in Germany

Afternoon program

Anti-Gypsyism and Romaphobia in contemporary European societies

- Jarmila Balážová, journalist and director of Association Romea, Prague, Czech Republic

- Michelle Mila van Burik, chair of Foundation Triana, Utrecht, the Netherlands

- Ágnes Dároczí, vice-president of Phralipe Independent Roma Association, Budapest, Hungary

- Roundtable discussion

- Closing Statement
  Mr. Jeroen Schokkenbroek (t.b.c.), Roma issues, Secretary General of the Council of Europe

The conference will be chaired by Huub van Baar, University of Amsterdam

Conference registration (free) is required. Please register via Barbara Boender: b.boender@niod.knaw.nl, before 1 April. After registration, your participation will be confirmed. For further information, please contact Barbara Boender or Jef Helmer: Jef.Helmer@planet.nl

The conference is part of the Requiem for Auschwitz project. On 3 May, the Sinti and Roma Philharmonic Orchestra (Frankfurt) and the Student Choir Amsterdam will perform the Auschwitz Requiem composed by Sinto Roger ‘Moreno’ Rathgeb in De Nieuwe Kerk, Amsterdam. The requiem will be broadcast on Dutch television on 4 May 2012. Other performances of the Requiem are scheduled for 4 May (Tilburg), 1 August (Cracow), 10 October (Bucharest), 24 October (Frankfurt am Main), 4 November (Prague) and 6 November (Budapest). For further information, see: www.RequiemforAuschwitz.eu

The conference is made possible thanks to (financial) support of the ITF, EU-Cultural Program, NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, and the International Gipsy Festival.