

the film, he converses with some relatives and friends. They all agree that they returned to Crimea to live in their homeland and leaving it now is not an option. "I will remain here to the end" he says, and in a strange twist he keeps his promise as he passes away before the end of the documentary.

After his entire family left for Ukraine except for his elderly mother, the middle-aged driver, who was introduced to the audience in the opening scenes of the movie, says "We cannot sleep at night because of the wind." He sits with his mother in their backyard in silence. Later, we see his elderly mother standing against a background of a seemingly endless Crimean steppe and asks "When will this wind stop?" Although the question was asked literally, metaphorically it is understood that the question is about the Russian occupation. As the film title, this question succinctly summarizes the concerns and frustrations of thousands of Crimean Tatars.

The documentary ends when a middle-aged father goes to Kyiv and joins his family on the Maidan. We see him together with a crowd of people waving the Crimean Tatar flag as they light candles and pray to commemorate the dead who lost their lives during and after the 1944 deportation. As people honor their ancestors, the camera goes back and forth between Kyiv and Crimea and once again captures the consequences of forced separation and the silent suffering of the ones who were left behind.

The film serves as a good introduction to the history of Crimea and its current predicament. It can also be useful to those who work in the field of migration research as an illustration of the complexities of forced migration and its effects on everyday lives of families. Typically, films on population movements focus exclusively on the lives of the displaced and explore the anxieties of adjustment of newcomers in new territories. This documentary does the opposite. It does not dwell on lives of those who have left Crimea for Ukraine, but focuses instead on the ones who stayed behind and are refusing to be uprooted from their historical Crimean homeland.

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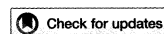
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A Hole in the Head, directed by Robert Kirchhoff. Produced by Hitchhiker Cinema (Slovakia), Czech Television, Slovak Television and atelier.doc (Slovakia). 2016, 90 minutes. Slovak, Czech, German, Polish, French, Serbian, Croatian, Sinti with English subtitles. Contact: Michaela Cajkova, Taskovski Films (London), festivals@taskovskifilms.com. Webpage: <http://www.aholeintheheadfilm.com>. Shown at the ASN 2017 World Convention.

A Hole in the Head, directed by Slovak-independent documentarist Robert Kirchhoff, addresses the issue of the Roma Holocaust, focusing not just on the remembrance of the genocide of European Roma during World War II by the Nazi government and its allies, but also on the present context of the memories: the contemporary status of the Roma, who constitute Europe's largest and most marginalized ethnic group.

Filmed in seven countries (Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Poland, Serbia, and Slovakia), the documentary brings together dozens of testimonies from Holocaust survivors, a small subset of the informants that the film director Kirchhoff met while conducting research for the project. Kirchhoff defines his cinematographic approach as a “documentary essay” in contrast to a classic historic documentary – indeed, it is a partially staged and scripted documentary, without voiceover narration or title screens, without any use of archival footage, photos, or illustrations. The 90-minute-long film is a bricolage of testimonies, songs, and conversations with survivors, family members of victims, activists, experts, and scholars in different European countries. The narratives are juxtaposed with background music and visuals of landscapes and cityscapes, memorial sites, community spaces, and home interiors.

The film addresses the most disturbing aspect of the current discourse on Roma Holocaust, that testifying and remembering survivors may be distrusted or even ridiculed. In a scene shot in Germany, students attend a lesson offered as a part of an awareness raising program “School without Racism” (*Schule ohne Rassismus*), and listen to the testimony of a Holocaust survivor of Sinti origin, Rita Prigmore, who was subjected to a Nazi “twin experiment” as a baby: a doctor attempted to change the color of her eye by using chemical injections. As Ms. Prigmore explains to teenagers how much she suffers from dramatic health consequences of these “medical” experiments, there comes a tongue-in-cheek question from a blond boy: “What’s it like to live with a hole in your head?” – Ms. Prigmore’s audience bursts out laughing when she soberly replies: “It’s not a hole. It’s a scar, darling.”

Today, in the mid-2010s, most of the “available” survivors experienced the Holocaust as children. In a scene in the Czech Republic, Arnošt Vintr, who was born in a Roma family and lives now in an assisted living home, reveals a Swastika-shaped scar on his scalp, claiming that it was “stamped” onto his head in the Auschwitz concentration camp when he was only a three-year-old, by Dr. Mengele himself. In the next scene, shot somewhere else, a descendant of a Roma Holocaust survivor reflects on this story by questioning Mr. Vintr’s credibility: “That’s nonsense. My memory begins at age five and I have a really good memory. [...] You don’t remember anything when you’re three.”

The memories and testimonies of the remaining survivors have a special role and utmost importance in the case of the Roma Holocaust, given that the genocide of the Roma was largely undocumented by the Nazis and their allies during World War II, and remained under-researched ever since due to a lack of resources and/or political circumstances. In a scene in Croatia, social scientist Daniel Vojak and Roma NGO leader Dragoljub Acković are talking about the Jasenovac concentration camp, established and operated by the Nazi-like Ustaša regime, and about estimations of the number of Roma victims killed there and buried in mass graves: “They were not worthy enough to be counted. [...] – How many there were, no one knows. – Certainly not a million but certainly not a few hundred. Many more than that.” In another scene, Jan Hauer, a Roma activist, notes during a walk across the venue of the Lety u Písku concentration camp, which was designated for Roma during Czechoslovakia’s German occupation: “How many died there? Many. The exact figure is unknown because no one unearthed the mass graves.” The film brings attention to a vicious circle: a lack of consolidated knowledge about the Roma Holocaust victims may result in a reinforced distrust towards survivors’ accounts; while the lack of a homeland (a nation-state) or sufficient support from the international community means that resources for a thorough research sufficient to cover the high costs of exhumation projects may not be available. There is, however, a hopeful voice in the film. According to Markus Pape, a German-born journalist and human rights activist

who lives in Prague: “The time will come just like in Srebrenica, Bosnia, or in other places of genocide. The [Czech] government will exhume the mass graves [in Lety u Písku] and we will see how many people are here.”

The film pays attention to the peculiar context of the Roma Holocaust remembrance: the continued persecution of the Roma throughout Europe that is still present today. The film features Raymond Gurême, who was born in a Traveler family in France, and who survived imprisonment in different camps during World War II. The 89-year-old man claims that in September 2014 he was assaulted in his caravan by a French police officer with a baton. As Mr. Gurême concludes: “The French gendarmerie treated us very badly during the war. I think it’s almost the same today.”

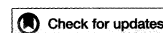
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Let’s Play War, directed by Meelis Muhi. Produced by Oy-In Ruum (Estonia). 2016, 74 minutes. Estonian and Russian with English subtitles. Contact: Meelis Muhi, meelis@in-ruum.ee. Webpage: <https://www.asnconvention.com/lets-play-war>. Shown at the ASN 2017 World Convention.

In April 2017, Western media were abuzz with stories about a Russian Armed Forces re-enactment of the assault of the Reichstag in Berlin in April 1945 in the Patriot Park, outside of Moscow. Journalists were quick to draw parallels with contemporary politics linking it with Vladimir Putin’s political aspirations. The German government expressed its irritation regarding this spectacle.

A photo of a group of re-enactors in Soviet army uniforms in front of the Reichstag concludes Meelis Muhi’s documentary *Let’s Play War*, a film documenting recent re-enactments of World War II battles in several locations in Estonia, Belarus, and Ukraine. The film offers very little background information about the events and historical facts behind the staged re-enactments. In Brest, it is the German attack on the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941; in the case of Kyiv, the 67th anniversary of the victory, presumably 9 May, is mentioned. The film does not go into details of the historical context or contemporary political controversies surrounding commemorations of the war. Instead, it focuses on strictly personal narratives and camera perspectives. Thus, the audience’s attention is directed to the re-enactors, their individual actions and attitudes, as well as their interactions with spectators. Staged war scenes are juxtaposed with the preparations of the plays, the activities of an amateur association called “Front Line” in Tallinn, and brief statements from international participants. The director refrains from any comments, instead he creates a sense of immediate presence for his viewers to help them feel as if they are present on the field of action.

One could argue that such a seemingly neutral perspective glorifies the Red Army or the Nazi regimes and supports increasingly bellicose sentiments of militarism or nationalism. Yet, the fact that the film does not provide an authoritative opinion on these re-enactments and neither condemns nor praises the commemoration of the Red Army or the German units and their collaborators allows one to develop a more complex, multifaceted perspective. A