Post-Communist Construction of Holocaust Memory: A Case Study of Romanian Roma
Part of IERES’ Faculty Forum

with

Michelle Kelso
Assistant Professor

From 1942-1944 the Romanian regime deported 25,000 Roma to concentration camps in occupied Ukraine, where deportees suffered from starvation, exposure, brutality, and disease. Less than half of the deportees survived the camps, and those who did often faced new persecutions under communism. Decades of imposed silences around the Holocaust meant that today few Romanians know what happened to Jews and Roma in their country during the war. There has been a re-construction of history post-communism where former victim groups have had to carve a place for themselves in the historical narrative, a nearly impossible task for the Roma population which remains disenfranchised and highly discriminated against.

Michelle Kelso is an Assistant Professor of Human Services, Sociology and International Affairs. She came to GW after receiving her doctorate in Sociology from the University of Michigan in 2010. Having worked for over 15 years with Roma communities, Michelle has focused on the Romani persecution during the Holocaust in Romania both inside and outside of academia. From 2005-2010, she was the director of a Romanian non-profit organization, the Association for Dialogue and Civic Education, which had projects on Holocaust education, tolerance promotion, as well as researching the fate of the Romanian Roma during WWII. In 2005, Michelle made a documentary film, Hidden Sorrows: The Persecution of Romanian Gypsies During WWII, which has been screened in seven countries, at numerous film festivals, and aired on three national television channels.

Tuesday, November 8, 2011
4:00-5:00 p.m.
Voesar Conference Room
1957 E Street NW, Suite 412
Please RSVP at http://tinyurl.com/KelsoGWU

This event is on the record