



5.5 'Quotes' Activity, Story 1

Oral History Story 1: Alexandru Silaghi

(Match the following quotes to the main text for more information)

Life in Romania

"We haven't been accepted by society like equals. [...] In their mind they knew we are Gypsies and they are Romanians."

"Ceausescu's forced industrialization came and made brick factories, people were buying bricks from the factories, not from the market [...] People were employed but the worst paid jobs were for the Gypsies [...]. Many people were brought together and forced to do different jobs, for example in agriculture and construction because if in three months' time you couldn't prove you had a job, they would lock you up. This basically tied Gypsies to a place."

Second World War

"I was traumatised... As a child, listening to my grandfather's stories, he was talking about how people were dying as if we were talking about going out to have a dessert."

"He said they were making 'boats out of paper' and they were filling them with thousands of Gypsies, releasing them onto the water, and in time the paper was disintegrating and they were dying, drowned in the sea, in the ocean."

"There was a Gypsy woman, a Moldavian Gypsy woman, [...] the ones with large skirts, and he...as he was so skinny, he hid behind the Gypsy woman, and the guard man believed he was a child, and so he escaped"



Alexandru & Moldavian
Gypsy woman ©Robert Czibi

Coming to the UK

"At first, when I came here I found people 'cold', people seemed to say "Your place is not here"."

"I don't have a parasitic life. I haven't asked for anything from the English state and I haven't come here with the intention to ask for something from the English state. I came here, as much as my health will allow me, to work and to support myself."

Romanipen

"For us, if I promised you something you can be sure 99% that the matter is sorted. For us, it was the word that mattered!"



5.5 'Quotes' Activity, Story 2

Oral History Story 2: Elzbieta Glowacka

(Match the following quotes to the main text for more information)

Life in Poland

"We always had to have very good horses because they were going all day long and they had to pull weight."



Caravan & horse ©Robert Czibi

"We would gather around the fire, talk, sing, joke, dance and eat. We put a big blanket around the fire. On the blanket there was a

tablecloth and we would put on it everything that mum cooked and we would eat together."

"Those shirts were with studs and this was hard to iron, firstly you had to lather cuffs and collars and then scrub them with your hands. It was a really hard job..."

"We never drank from cups, only from glasses. Those glasses never got smashed... We had baskets in the shape of eggs and each glass was wrapped in a cloth, three or four glasses were always wrapped in one cloth, and then my brothers put them in a basket to protect them from being smashed. It was the duty of my brothers to deal with it."

Second World War

"Why do you want to take our lives, because you don't have one? You aren't happy and if you take our lives, how will your life look?"

"When they were running away they thought that the German will shoot them so they kept looking back but he wasn't there. He just left and let them escape and that's it. You know, God wanted it like this..."

Coming to the UK

"I want my grandchildren to speak Romanes at home with their family, so that they remember who they are and where they come from. It's alright to speak English outside, but inside the home they have to speak Romanes."

Romanipen

"For me Romanipen means that Roma shouldn't fool another Roma and it means that Roma should be honest, and that a girl should remain a virgin before getting married. It also means that people should try to act in such a way that other Roma people say: 'Oh, this Roma is a man of his word'."



5.5 'Quotes' Activity, Story 3

Oral History Story 3: Rozalia Glowacka

(Match the following quotes to the main text for more information)

Life in Poland

"I had to guard them from other children who would hit them and call them names. When I stopped going to school, they stopped because they were afraid of the children. I didn't have a teacher or tutor at home, I just learnt on my own. I had girlfriends and we played in the back yard but I didn't go to their houses and they didn't visit us."



Roazalia in church
©Robert Czibi

Second World War

"We came from India. Our roots are in India and you can notice that Indian people are very talented. They can sing and dance beautifully".

Coming to the UK

"My son was already three and a half years old. I wanted a better future for him. I wanted him to have a different life to the one I had. I wanted him to finish school, be educated. I knew that if he stayed in Poland he would not go to school and life would be difficult for him."

"When I found the church, I went to a Holy Mass, again and again. Then, the priest announced that there was going to be a First Communion. I always wanted to take the Holy Communion but I couldn't because in Poland you need to go to school. I asked the priest if I could take my First Communion, I was 22 years old. The priest said I could because age is of no matter so I started to learn. We also got married on the 20th of April and on the 12th or 16th of May I took my First Communion. I looked at my feet to check if I was still walking because I felt as if I was flying in the air; it was a wonderful, wonderful experience."

"At the beginning, when I came to London, I needed a lot of help and support. Without the help I received, I don't know where I would be, somehow, we managed. We had a place to sleep, we had something to eat, there were always people around us who helped us. "

Romanipen

"In my family we stick to the rules. Even my grandson, who is going to be two years old in two months' time, speaks Romanes and Polish. He learnt Polish while watching cartoons on Polish channels and we speak only Romanes at Sunday dinner. Because it is our tradition, our 'Romanipen', we do it and if the children speak in English instead of Romanes we tell them off and ask them to speak Romanes."