

CHARLES UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
Historical Sociology

Doctoral thesis

2018

Mgr. Douglas Neander Sambati

Charles University
Faculty of humanities

Historical Sociology



**Historical Sociology of the Romani Nationalism: Foundations,
Development and Challenges**

Doctoral thesis

Mgr. Douglas Neander Sambati

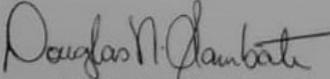
Supervisor: Mgr. Nicolas Maslowski, DEA, Ph.D.

2018

Declaration

Hereby I declare that I have written this doctoral thesis by myself, using solely the references and data cited and presented in this thesis. I declare that I have not been awarded other degree or diploma for thesis or its substantial part. I give approval to make this thesis accessible by Charles University libraries and the electronic Thesis Repository of Charles University, to be utilized for study purposes in accordance with the copyrights.

Prague, August 18th, 2018.


Douglas Neander Sambati

Acknowledgments

Writing down only a few names will always create an situation of injustice. Therefore, I will thank here all those who put (a little bit of) faith on me, even when there was no much reason for.

However, I have to name some.

Father, Mother, Tacila, Andreea, Eva, Nicolas: this would never had happened without your support.

Hand in Hand

I will not be the poet of a caducous world
I will neither sing the future world
I am stranded to life and I watch my comrades.
They are taciturn but hold high hopes
Amidst them, I consider the enormous reality
The present is so great, we must not move away
Let's not go too far from each other, let's go together hand in hand

I will not be the singer of a woman, neither of a story
I will not tell about the sighs at dusk, neither the landscape seen from the window
I will not distribute anesthetics neither suicide letters
I will not flee to the islands nor be abducted by seraphins
Time is my matter, the present time, the present men
The present life.

Carlos Drummond de Andrade¹

¹ Drummond de Andrade, Carlos. 2004. 'De Mãos Dadas'. In *Antologia Poética*, 158. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Record. Author's free translation.

Abstract

This work develops a historical-sociological approach analysing the general practices, the strategies, the actions and the discourses of Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations through the lenses of the theories about *nationalism*. It focuses on the overlapping and the contradictions found among the different actors of the *Romani Nationalism*. This research defines the *Romani Nationalism* as a movement which does not have a clear forerunner and does not have a uniform perspective and inclinations, notwithstanding the common agreement not to aim for the establishment of a Romani state. In order to understand such dynamics, the research questions and chapters were divided in three main areas. In the first part, it is discussed if the framework of the Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations can be seen as nationalist, basing the discussion in authors as Gellner (1983), Smith (2008) and others. The comparison with Hroch's (2000) model of analysis about *nationalism* indicated the existence of a structure which is not (only) a nationalist movement, but also an anti-racist mobilization which employs nationalist tools. The second part analyses the *Roma Nation* along a set of representations which can be analytically divided in *Pan-Romani* and *Social-Political*: the first, enforcing a kinship among all Gypsies/Roma; the second, highlighting shared social, political, and economic challenges. These sets of representations about the Roma Nation started to be internationalized, supported and instrumentalized by the International Romani Union (IRU) to legitimize their (claimed) position as political representatives on behalf of the Romani people. Moreover, after the fall of the Iron Curtain, the representations of Gypsies/Roma as a nation constituted the framework used by the Western Donors to justify their (social) investments in Eastern European countries, consequently being locally applied by the sponsored actors, depending on their context, their needs, their space and time. The final chapter focuses on how the Gypsy/Romani populations are portrayed within museums in Europe and America. It is concluded that the museums usually support essentializations, exoticizations and generalizations about the Gypsy/Romani populations. Such representations about the Romani historiography and culture are results and sources for coherent narratives supporting a *Romani Nationalism*. Therefore, *Romani Nationalism* challenges the 'only one nation fits in one country' mind-set, one of the characteristics of the *principle of nationalities*. It is also possible to say that *Romani Nationalism* is not only an ethnic-cultural movement looking for (some level of) political self-determination, but also represented as a fight for better life for the populations known, called and self-ascribed as Gypsies/Roma throughout the World.

Keywords

Nationalism; Gypsy/Romani people; Representations; Political Representativity, Museums; Romani Holocaust; Memory; Modernization

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	8
1 The Roma social movements as one kind of nationalism.....	15
1.1 An Historical Perspective through the lenses of theories about nationalism.....	16
1.2 Understandings about the concept Roma upon, within and around the Romani social movements.....	32
1.3 Understandings about the concept of Nation upon, within and around the Romani Social Movements.....	43
1.4 Understandings about the concept of State upon, within and round the Romani Social Movements.....	49
1.5 Contradictions of this nationalism.....	58
2 The Roma Nation: From intellectually internationalized representations to local pragmatic instrumentalization.....	64
2.1 The Roma Nation representations subdivided: the Pan-Romani and the Social-Political representational registers.....	66
2.2 The unfolding and the legitimation of the Roma Nation representations.....	74
2.2.1 <i>The Pan-Romani and the Social-Political representations in a nationalist scheme.....</i>	75
2.2.2 <i>WRC/IRU as a positive environment for the representations on Roma Nation.....</i>	78
2.2.3 <i>The international legitimized positioning of the Pan-Romani and the Social-Political representations.....</i>	85
2.3 The local pragmatic instrumentalization of the Roma Nation representations and its contradictions.....	93
2.3.1 <i>Debating the role of the Western Donors within the Romani social movements.....</i>	94
2.3.2 <i>Social, economic and political influences in the Romani Nationalism.....</i>	104
2.3.3 <i>Debating the memory of the Holocaust and the Romani Nationalism.....</i>	110
3 Museums and the Legitimation of a Broad Rhetoric.....	116
3.1 The narrative about ethno-cultural characteristics and the Indian Origins.....	117
3.2 The Holocaust in evidence.....	148
3.3 Contradictions of the Memory.....	153
Final Considerations.....	162
References.....	171
List of Images.....	182
List of Tables.....	183
Annex 1.....	184

Introduction

From this point onwards this work aims to develop a historical-sociological approach which contemplates and analyses the strategies, the actions and the rhetoric of Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations through the lenses of the theories about *nationalism*. The following pages will seek to debate upon the general mind-set of the organizations, focusing mainly in the overlapping and contradictions found among the different actors of the *Romani Nationalism*.

Nationalism herein must not be misunderstood as the beliefs of the far-right parties and groups which are growing frighteningly fast around Europe and in other parts of the World. What will be debated within the next pages is the process of *nation-building* previously described by scholars as Miroslav Hroch, Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson, Otto Bauer, Rudolf Rocker and so forth. Nevertheless, the focus will not be only in understanding *nationalism* as a phenomenon closed in itself, connected only with nationalist groups. This research believes that it is relevant to have a large and historiographic overview on the event, focusing in its material surroundings and immaterial context. As Árnason and Maslowski (2015: 7) affirm:

It is now often argue, on good grounds, that an idealizing vision of the nation-state inspired the notion of society used by early modernization theorists. Conversely, modernization theory served to support simplistic ideas of “nation-building”, and they could – as recent experiences shows – be put to dubious political use. A corrective against these trends, gradually assimilated into broader debates, is to be found in the work of historians (and to some extent historical sociologists) who have tried to understand nations as historical phenomena and focused, more or less explicitly, on process of nation formation. [...]. An important corollary of this historical perspective on the world of nations is that any study of national phenomena must pay attention to their international and transnational contexts. The latter aspects are now often emphasized as alternative foci to be set against traditional fixation on the nation-state, but the real task is to grasp the changing interrelations of the different levels, always important but not to be construed in any supra-national terms.

Therefore, here will be analysed the historiography, the targets, the strategies and the challenges of a group of people who – invested (by themselves and by others) as individuals belonging the Romani ethnicity – decided to work on narratives, practices of representations and representations of practices which might enable the recognition of the whole populations known, called or self-ascribed as Gypsies, Roma, Sinti (and other denominations) as a *Roma Nation*.

It is important highlight that such practices are not new, nor are they characteristic of the Gypsy/Romani population of Europe alone. Ernest Gellner (1983) debated about nationalism and analysed similar national-building procedures through Europe in the past. One of the most important characteristics of Gellner's thought is that, to him, the *nation* it is built by *nationalist movements*, and not the other way around. In other words, the existence of a *nationalist movement* is necessary to support the sprouting of a nation. The *nationalist feeling*, in its turn, is later developed by the created state bureaucracy, aiming to keep the order and the stability of the government. In Hroch's (2000) book *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, the author discusses process of nation-building, focusing in what he called the *small nations*² of Europe. Hroch understands that some groups have not fought for their national recognition against the old feudal structures, but against modern nation-states where they were – in different levels – considered full citizens. These discussions are included here in the first chapter, which is entitled *The Roma social movements as one kind of nationalism*. This part of the work might be seen as the most theoretical of the whole paper, due to its focus mainly in the discussion of concepts. If the first subpart aims to debate why *Romani social movements* might be sociologically and historically seen as nationalist movements, the following subdivisions discuss the concept of *Roma* present within the *Romani Nationalism*, as much as the concepts of *Nation* and *State*. Closing the chapter, a discussion about why it would be a good strategy to apply the concept of *Nation* to such plural populations as the Gypsies/Roma.

The second chapter is titled *The Roma Nation: From intellectually internationalized representations to local practical instrumentalization*. This branch debates how the present research sees the *Romani Nationalism* not as a cohesive and close-knit political movement, with clear actors and with strategies planned together as a group. Rather, it is believed that the *Romani Nationalism* is a set of representations of

² The idea of *small* and *big* nations can lead to misinterpretations. It must not be understood as a matter of hierarchy, but as the fact that the *small nations* to Hroch were those one who did not have a written consistent historiography (in comparison with the *big nations*) back in the time of the arising of the nationalist movement. Also, the nations described by Hroch were smaller in number of population and geographic area than the ones which he considered *the big ones*. Particularly, this research is discontent in applying, even more when talking about the Gypsies/Roma. That is for two reasons: 1. the Gypsy/Romani population in Europe frequently face racist rhetoric which seeks to diminish their relevance within the European landscape and attached them to the adjective *small* it is of little help against such practices and, 2. The Gypsy/Romani population in Europe is higher than almost all nations with which Hroch worked (the number of Gypsies/Roma in Europe is acknowledged as not less than 10 million of people). Nevertheless, it is believed that Hroch's model can be used as a valid inspiration in debating the characteristics of the *Romani Nationalism*.

practices and practices of representations, continuously constructed in an international level and instrumentalized locally. As will be further discussed, this research understands *Romani Nationalism* as a moving cloud which is appropriated by Romani and Romani-Friendly local NGOs, governments and other organizations adapting the *Roma Nation* to their needs and, in exchange, endlessly changing the set of representations over and over, on and on. Therefore, this chapter starts its discussions in the 1960s, during the internationalization of the *Romani Nationalism*, debates upon the construction of the legitimacy of the bodies which claimed (some of them claiming to this day) to politically represent the whole Romani population in Europe – and why not, around the World. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, there was a change in the paradigm of the *Romani Nationalism*, with the arrival of the Western Donors. This research puts in perspective the outcomes of this arrival in the appearance and in the everyday work of local NGOs which deal with Gypsy/Romani communities.

The third chapter might be understood as the less theoretical and more pragmatic. Within its subchapters, it is discussed the role of *lieux de memoire* in the support of a broad rhetoric which, by its turn, is a support of the *Romani Nationalism*. Nine museums have been chosen – two located in America, four in Eastern Europe and three in Western Europe – to possibly build an overall debate about their representations. It is concluded that these museums support a rhetoric of generalization, essentialization and exoticization of the Gypsy/Romani populations. It is important to highlight that such conclusions shall not lead to the understanding that the museums are telling lies or, even worse, deliberately trying to misrepresent the Gypsies/Roma. Rather, these museums are both the outcome and supporters of the *Romani Nationalism* developed since the 1960s, its reproducing the practices of representations and the representations of practices, aiming to create a space where Gypsy/Romani history can be safeguarded.

Concerning the methodological construction of the debates present in this work, it is believed that neither historiographic nor sociological methods would be enough to embrace the complexity which the discussions require. Therefore, a critical interdisciplinary approach described by Leis (2000: 110) is applied as follows:

[...] the so-called critical interdisciplinarity is genealogically linked to the critical theory of the Frankfurt School. This perspective questions not only the disciplinary knowledge but also the values associated with this way of analysing reality, thus criticizing sociological and educational aspects of the disciplinary process of knowledge and teaching. An important aspect of this is its claim of bringing knowledge from the popular sectors of society to the process of interdisciplinary knowledgeⁱ.

Therefore – as will be seen in the development of the text ahead – there is an attempt to deconstruct hierarchy among the knowledge built within and without the academia. Also, rather than a clear disciplinary approach, based on pre-established methodologies, this work believes that it is necessary to blur the borders between departments and find academic value in the capacity to innovate and to contradict the settled epistemological approaches (Leis 2000). In other words, instead of using methodological settings as a starting point, this work understands *methodology* as a set of tools used to create a link between the researched data, the subjectivity of the researcher and the person of the reader. This whole process takes place through the representations of the results in the single possible dimensionality of this text.

The question of the shortcuts of schematic representations of knowledge in texts was brought up, even if not directly, by Flussér (2002). Discussing how images are an outcome of the dimensions of space-time in a plan, he also debates about the process of writing:

The practice of writing is based on the new ability to codify planes in straight lines and abstract all dimensions, except for one: the conceptualization, which allows encoding texts and then deciphering them. This shows that conceptual thinking is more abstract than imaginative thinking, because it preserves only one of the four dimensions of space-time. In inventing writing, man moved further from the concrete world when he actually intended to draw closer to it. Writing comes from a step away from the images and not from a step towards the world. Texts do not mean the world directly, but through mangled imagesⁱⁱ.

The reflectivity of Flussér is important to discuss the overall belief that academic investigation aims to bring out the truth found in the research. Plenty are the barriers which a researcher must face, and attributing to the final text of a complex scholarship the burden of carrying the *reality* it is not fair neither with the academics nor with their object of research. This last one, in the case of the present paper, it is even more sensitive due the fact that Gypsies/Roma are, after all, more than an ethnic category of

analysis but people. Therefore, it is a commitment with sincerity and not with the truth which will be found onwards.

In order to construct this sincere relationship between researcher and reader, a few of these obstacles must be listed. The linguistic one, for instance, cannot be glossed over. It was impossible to embrace beyond texts in the most common Latin languages (as Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian and Romanian) and English,. The lack of opportunity to read in Romani language also hampered the discussions, as it is the *official* language of the *Romani Nationalism*. The position of the researcher as a non-Gypsy/Rom might also be seen as a barrier, nevertheless it is a two-edged sword: if on one side it might have hindered the access to some sources, on the other hand it also clarified the importance of self-reflection in the development of the research. Yet, the researcher's experience in Brazilian academia might be understood as a breath of fresh air within the European academic milieu, in the European groups of research upon process of modernizations and nationalism, and finally, in *Romani Studies* – a field with a great majority of Europeans. Therefore, it is possible to say that this academic experience aimed to go not only beyond disciplinary borders, but was organically transcontinental.

However, none of the aforementioned barriers must be seen as an impediment for the construction of a relevant debate in the pages to come. In the elaboration of the present work, it were consulted reports of the European Union, Council of Europe, International Romani Union, European Roma and Travellers Forum, and other related institutions which deal with Gypsies/Roma intelligentsia, activists and communities in an everyday basis. The scholars consulted and studied henceforth must not be seen as mere inspiration in the elaboration of the writing, but also as sources which were analysed. That is because, as it will be seen below, it is believed that *Romani Nationalism* is both analysed and constructed by the very same people, in a continuous process of reflection and relabelling. When necessary, the technique of discourse analysis from Régine Robin was applied, mostly to clarify the discussions about the Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations rhetoric and the museum exhibitions.

The theoreticians used as main references and inspirations to this dissertation were the aforementioned Gellner, Hroch, Bauer and others, but there are others. Without the previous work of Thomas Acton, Peter Veermesch, Elena Marushiakova and Veselin Popov, Ian Hancock and David Mayall, and others, it would not have been possible to develop the reflection and to try, if not to take the discussion to deeper levels

– which could be too daring – to contribute with a different point of view. The data gathered through social media (mostly Facebook) is another highlight which enabled to connect the thoughts present in academia to the everyday life of activists. Hatef (2018), presenting her work-in-process dissertation, highlighted that one of the interviewees cited Facebook as one possible new ‘territory’ for Romani activism. Social Media can no longer reside outside the borders of academic research.

Yet, a field research trip was organized in September/2016. During 15 days, the researcher visited the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Macedonia, conducting interviews with activists and scholars. Notwithstanding, visits to Strasbourg and London were also made to contact the European Roma and Travellers Forum and scholars. It was decided not to reveal the identity of those interviewed, due to a belief that it would not affect the interpretations and the discussions. Therefore, for a better understanding, it is necessary to keep in mind the following table to identify the positionality of the interviewees:

Nickname	Description
B	Bulgarian activist/academic of Gypsy/Roma background
B1	Bulgarian activist/academic of Gypsy/Roma background
C	Czech activist/academic of Gypsy/Roma background
H	Hungarian activist/scholar of Gypsy/Roma background
M	Macedonian activist of Gypsy/Roma background
R	Romanian activist/scholar of Gypsy/Roma background
R1	Romanian organization ³ of Gypsy/Roma background
R2	Romanian activist/academic of Gypsy/Roma background
S	Serbian academic
Sk	Slovakian activist of Gypsy/Roma background

How to nominate the Gypsy/Romani population was also a sensible question in the making of this thesis. It seems that enforcing the denomination of Gypsies upon these populations is not correct, not only because the Gypsy/Romani intelligentsia and activists asked for the change from the word Gypsy to the word Roma in the 1970s, but also because there are plenty of records showing communities which use the word Roma as self-denomination. However, there is also a big number which use the term Gypsy (in its local version as *cigano*, *gitano* and etc). Both cases are the result of historical processes, some of them violent, which make the question very complex. This research – almost arbitrarily – decided to use the combination *Gypsy/Roma* (and similarities) when referring to the general population which used to be called Gypsies

³ In this case, the interview was made with two representatives of the organization.

by the non-Gypsies/Roma. In this way, the combination *Gypsy/Roma* can be understood as *non-Gadže*. The concept of *Roma* by its turn, it is used when referring to the population which the *Romani Nationalism* aims to be part of the *Roma Nation*.

At last, it seems relevant to highlight that this work was previously discussed and presented in more than three congresses, as well as with peers, colleagues and professors at Charles University, during one year of *Visiting Scholar* position at the *Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture* in Gießen/Germany, as a lecturer in the *Center for French Studies (Centre de Civilisation Française)* and at the Summer School in *Romani Identities and Antigypsyism* promoted by the *Central European University*, in Budapest/Hungary.

ⁱ In the original: “[...] a chamada interdisciplinaridade crítica está genealogicamente ligada a teoria crítica da Escola de Frankfurt. Essa perspectiva questiona não apenas o conhecimento disciplinar mas, também, os valores associados a essa forma de pensar a realidade, criticando assim aspectos sociológicos e educativos do processo disciplinar de conhecimento e ensino. Um aspecto importante dessa vertente é sua pretensão de trazer os saberes dos setores populares da sociedade para o processo de conhecimento interdisciplinar”. Author’s free translation.

ⁱⁱ In the original: “A escrita funda-se sobre a nova capacidade de codificar planos em retas e abstrair todas as dimensões, com exceção de uma: a da *conceituação*, que permite codificar textos e decifrá-los. Isto mostra que o pensamento conceitual é mais abstrato que o pensamento imaginativo, pois preserva apenas uma das dimensões do espaço-tempo. Ao inventar a escrita, o homem se afastou ainda mais do mundo concreto quando, efetivamente, pretendia dele se aproximar. A escrita surge de um passo para quem das imagens e não de um passo em direção ao mundo. Os textos não significam o mundo diretamente, mas através de imagens rasgadas”. Author’s free translation.

1. The Roma social movements as one kind of nationalism

This part of the thesis aims to analyse the Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations – although plural in their approaches, beliefs and actions – as a set of strategies and operations framing the so-called Gypsy/Roma ethnic groups in a nationalist framework. Therefore, the first part of this chapter debates on the appearance of Gypsy/Romani organizations prior to the Second World War in the region of the Balkans. This geographical area of Europe was for a long time under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, and had a favourable approach concerning the rights of Gypsy/Romani populations to express their ethnic identity. After the Second World War, in this very same region was installed the planned-economy of the so-called socialist regimes. There, Gypsies/Roma were not allowed to express their ethnicity, however, thanks to policies which aimed to avoid poorness or exclusion, big part of those called Gypsies could reach high levels of formal education. Both historical contexts enable the creation of an intelligentsia in the Eastern European countries which, through the lenses of Hroch's model of analysis of nationalism, started the international *Romani Nationalism* in the 1960s/1970s.

The subsequent three subchapters have a similar approach, debating key-concepts of a nationalist movement: self-denomination – in this case Roma –, the concept of Nation and the concept of State. To fulfil this task, the *Declaration of a Roma Nation* (issued in 2001), academic production concerning and produced by Gypsies/Roma, reports from different organizations, and interviews with Romani activists/scholars are analysed, among other sources. The word Roma was chosen by the attendees of the World Romani Congress, in 1971, and it was believed to be a better term to replace the exonym *Gypsy* and its synonyms in different languages. Meaning *man* or *husband* in Romani language, Roma was chosen by the Romani intelligentsia/activists as an umbrella term, bringing together a group with cultural and historical ties. However, when faced with everyday evidences, it might be said that pragmatically Roma are those who suffer a particular mode of racism, the *Antigypsyism*. The concept of Nation seems to also be adapted to the reality of the plural Gypsies/Roma populations, that encompasses different religions, languages, costumes, and cultural practices. Finally, *Romani Nationalism* distinguishes itself from other kinds of nationalist movements for its lack of will to establish a territorial *state*. Nevertheless, it will be debated that the concept of state might not be well seen among the Romani

intelligentsia/activists due the lack of support that these groups received from national-states in the past, however the *Romani Nationalism* aims for a certain level of self-determination and a bureaucratic apparatus to enforce their rights.

The last subchapter is named *Contradictions of this nationalism*. In this part, bringing to dialogue scholars and activists about nationalism, it is possible to say that *Romani Nationalism* carries its contradictions if compared with ‘traditional’ nationalist movements, but that it is unfruitful to try to dismiss it as such. Rather, it is interesting to analyse how the Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations see the symbolic power of the concept of *Nation* as a tool in the fight against discrimination.

It might be interesting to point out from the beginning that this paper does not see the *Roma Nation* ideal as a movement in a more traditional way, with cohesive groups sitting together and developing strategies towards the breeding of the national feeling. The *Romani Nationalism* is not an orthodox nationalist movement, with clear leaders, but as a general and broad rhetoric which appears here and there in reports, interviews, newspapers, fulfilling different purposes around the globe.

Thus, it is relevant to highlight that even though the Declaration is marked here as a notable point for the development of Roma movements in its nationalist approach, this research does not affirm that said document has been widely spread and was (and still it is) a social influencer. Rather, the Declaration is seen as an important source, although not much more than a material outcome coming of a group which was involved both as activists and academics. In this way, the words of the Declaration might be understood as a statement of a small group, but also as a product of the relation between Gypsies/Roma and the majority societies of the countries where they live and as a mirror of the general feeling of the Romani intelligentsia during the first years of the 21st century.

1.1 An Historical Perspective through the lenses of theories about nationalism

The scholar Miroslav Hroch discusses the emergence of the *small nations* in Europe. Hroch calls *small nations* those groups which did not organize their nationalist process against the old feudal structures back in the transitional time toward capitalism, and instead organized themselves in national patterns within the consolidated nation-states. In his words:

The small nations, on the other hand, were in a situation made much more complex by the fact that although they too had risen up against feudal ideology and the old society in their national movement, they came into conflict with the new ruling nation (Hroch 2000: 5).

In the case of nations established against feudal nobility, the belief of a national belonging was created on a one-way road, being clearer to the activists (patriots, in Hroch's words) which national rhetoric they should embrace and against whom would be the struggle aiming sovereignty. Asymmetrically, in Hroch's analyses, the population of the small nations had a less evident choice to make at some point in their lives. They were a population educated and, at certain level, incorporated (or integrated, or assimilated) within the dominant culture of the countries and/or empires where they used to live but, at same time, they had ties with the values and costumes of a group somehow excluded from mainstream society. Thus, the borders between these two cultures seemed very oblique, being stronger in some moments and almost invisible in others. Therefore, there was a possibility and, at one point, a necessity of choosing which one of these two national identities to embrace and support: whether the one which was enforced and accepted by the overall society, or the other.

It is possible to use Hroch's model to analyse the Roma social movements as a kind of nationalism, as the Roma are a population which might be politically, socially and economically attached to a nation-state, meanwhile their cultural and ethnic-national affiliation is more blurred and complex. Throughout Europe and other regions where the people known as Gypsies live, the Gypsy/Romani culture is usually seen as not being part of the 'authentic' set of cultural practices of the country. In fact, even though sometimes living in that area for centuries, they are understood and pictured as outsiders. Concerning their citizenship, in the sense of legal rights and duties, and political loyalty, is usually (but not always) a bit more clear given the area, country or region where they were born and/or live. All over the Balkan region, for instance, it is possible to see the population taken as Gypsies embracing and supporting such denomination in the cultural level at the same time that they show commitment with their political bureaucratic state-owner institutions. As *B* (2016) says about the Bulgarian region:

We wanted to be in the mainstream of this society [...]. So, the first organizations... if you read their programs, you [will] see these priorities: “we want to be equal part of this society, we want our contribution be recognized, we want to be in the mainstream of the society, we want to contribute actively for the democratic development of Bulgaria”.

[...] Many of us live with Bulgarians in the same way... we are part of this society, we watch TV, we listen radio, we send children to school in the same way [...].

However, at same time that Gypsies/Roma seem to wish to be part of the societies of their countries of origin in an effective way, it is possible see in *B*'s words a claim over their own cultural settings or ethnicity. Such mild – but almost always present – willingness is present all around Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations and, therefore, it is possible say that their mind-sets, targets and strategies carry nationalistic traits.

While Ian Hancock (2005) points out Roma organizations around Europe since the late 15th century (Table 02), scholars such as Elena Marushiakova and Veselin Popov, among others, place the beginning of organized Gypsy movements in the Balkan region around the end of the 19th century. There are divergent conceptualizations of the Balkans, or Balkan Peninsula. However, generally, the Balkans have their northwest limits in Italy, Hungary to the north, Moldova and Ukraine to the north/northeast and the Aegean Sea to the south (Crampton and Danforth 2015). The map (Image 01) can draw a better idea of the localization of the region where the first Gypsy/Roma organizations started to gather together.



Image 01 – Balkans (Crampton and Danforth 2015)

Marushiakova and Popov (2004; 2015) provide the names of organizations in this period in that area (Table 01).

Table 01 – First Gypsy/Romani Associations in the Balkan Region before 1950

	Year	Name	Local
01	1905	Unknown name targeting the right to vote to Gypsy/Romani people ⁴	Bulgaria
02	1906	Unnamed movement led by <i>Ramadan Ali</i> demanding equal rights to Romani people ⁵	Bulgaria
03	1910	<i>Ustav na Egiptyanskata narodnost v gr. Vidin</i> (Statute of the Egyptian Nation in the Town of Vidin)	Vidin ⁵ /Bulgaria
04	1913	Tribute to Mihail Kogălniceanu ⁶	Piatra Neamț ⁷ /Romania
05	1919	Bulgarian Communist Party among Gypsies ^{*8}	Bulgaria

⁴ All the movements marked with an circle (•) were found in the work of Hancock (2005).

⁵ Vidin is a city in northern Bulgaria, approximately 190 kilometres from Sofia, around the current border with Romania.

⁶ Mihail Kogălniceanu (born Sept. 6, 1817, Iași, Moldavia [currently Romania] – died July 1, 1891, Paris, France) was, according to the Encyclopædia Britannica (2010), a “Romanian statesman and reformer, one of the founders of modern Romanian historiography, who became the first premier of Romania, formed by the union of the Danubian principalities Moldavia and Walachia”. He was also a supporter of the abolition of slavery of Romani people.

⁷ Piatra Neamț is located approximately 345 kilometres north of Bucharest.

⁸ All the Bulgarian organizations with an asterisk (*) counted with the participation of Mr. Shakir Mahmudov Pashov. Mr. Pashov was born on “[...] 20 October 1898 in the village of Gorna Bania [Горна баня] (today a neighbourhood of Sofia). His whole, often turbulent, life was dedicated to the Roma movement” (Marushiakova and Popov 2015: 196).

06	1919	Gypsy Committee*	Bulgaria
07	1919	<i>Sofiyskata obshto myusulmansko prosvetno-kulturno vzaimospomagatelna organizacia "Istikbal-Badeshte"</i> (Sofia's Common Moslem Educational and Cultural Mutual Aid Organisation " <i>Istikbal-Future</i> ")* ⁹	Sofia/Bulgaria
08	1926	The Association of Roma*	Clabour ¹⁰ /Romania
09	1926	<i>Infrateria Neorustica</i> led by Lazăr Năftănăilă ¹¹	Romania
10	1927	<i>Romano alav</i> (Roma World) - newspaper ¹²	Bulgaria
11	1927	<i>Prva srpsko-ciganska zadruga za uzajmno pomaganje u bolesti i smrti</i> (The First Serbian-Gypsy Association for Mutual Assistance in Sickness and Death)	Yugoslavia
12	1930	<i>Obsht mohamedano-tsiganski natsionalen kulurno-prosveten i vzaimospomagatelen sayuz v Balgaria</i> (Common Mohammedan-Gypsy National, Cultural, Educational and Mutual Aid Union in Bulgaria)* ¹³	Bulgaria
13	1930's	O Rom (Roma) – newspaper	Romania
14	1930's	<i>Glasul Romilor</i> (Voice of the Roma) – newspaper	Romania
15	1930's	<i>Neamul Ţiganesc</i> ¹⁴ (Gypsy People) – newspaper	Romania
16	1930's	<i>Timpul</i> (Times) – newspaper	Romania
17	1930	<i>Romano lil/Ciganske novine</i> (Roma Newspaper/Gypsy Newspaper) – newspaper	Yugoslavia
18	1933	<i>Izvestiya na tsiganskata evangelska missiya</i> (Reports on the Gypsy Evangelical Mission) – newspaper ¹⁵	Bulgaria
19	1933	<i>Terbie</i> (Education) – newspaper* ¹⁶	Bulgaria
20	1933	School for illiterate Muslim Roma ¹⁷	Bulgaria
21	1933	<i>Asociatia Generala a Tiganilor din Rumania</i> (General Association of the Gypsies in Rumania)	Romania
22	1933 ¹⁸	<i>Uniunii Generale a Romilor din Rumania</i>	Romania

⁹ "However, in the 1919 statute, the words "Gypsy" or "Gypsies" do not appear once in connection with the *Istikbal*. From this statute it is clear that the Roma of Sofia (majority Muslim at that time) intended to use this organisation to acquire control of the mosque and *waqf* (Islamic religious endowment) properties in the capital city, manoeuvres which the local Islamic leaders resisted" (Marushiakova and Popov 2015: 198).

¹⁰ It was not possible for the author to find where the city of Clabour is located.

¹¹ According to Barany (2002: 101) Năftănăilă was "[...] a wealthy peasant with Gypsy origin".

¹² Connected with the evangelical Church ran by the Pastor Petar Punchev.

¹³ Mr. Pashov claims in his diary to have founded *Istikbal* in 1929, although the statute is from 1919. In 1930, after absorbing several Roma associations, they assume the name Common Mohammedan-Gypsy National, Cultural, Educational and Mutual Aid Union in Bulgaria. Right after that, however, Mr. Pashov changed the name to *Istikbal* again, to avoid the Islamic highlight of the name (Marushiakova and Popov 2015: 199).

¹⁴ According to Hancock (2005), this newspaper was established by Lazăr Năftănăilă.

¹⁵ Connected with the evangelical Church ran by the Pastor Petar Minkov.

¹⁶ Issued by *Istikbal* association.

¹⁷ Connected with the evangelical Church ran by the Pastor Petar Minkov.

¹⁸ Hancock (2005) disagrees with Marushiakova and Popov and dates the foundation of this organization back in the 1920s.

		(General Union of the Roma in Rumania)	
23	1934	Informal Roma club – <i>By Keva</i> *	Bulgaria
24	1935	<i>Udruženja Beogradskih cigana slavara Tetkice Bibije</i> (Association of Belgrade Gypsies for the Celebration of Aunt Bibia)	Yugoslavia
25	1939	<i>Panhellenios Syllogos Ellinon Athinganon</i> (Pan Hellenic Cultural Association of the Greek Gypsies)	Greece
26	1939	<i>Prosvetni klub Jugosavske ciganske omladine</i> (The Educational Club of Yugoslavian Gypsy Youth)	Yugoslavia
27	1939 ¹⁹	<i>Omladina Jugoslavo-ciganska</i> (Yugoslavian-Gypsy Youth)	Yugoslavia
28	1945	United General Cultural Organisation of Gypsy Minorities “ <i>Ekhipe</i> ” (Unity)* ²⁰	Bulgaria
29	1946	<i>Romano esi</i> (<i>Roma Voice</i>)*	Bulgaria
30	1947	“First Gypsy School”*	Sofia/Bulgaria
31	1947	Central Gypsy Musical Artistic Roma Theatre*	Bulgaria
32	1949	<i>Nevo Drom</i> * ²¹	Bulgaria

Table 02 – Roma Organizations around the World before 1950

	Year	Name	Local
01	15 th century	Unknown name	Switzerland
02	1722	Unknown name organization aiming (without success) the freedom of Roma people in the region	German States
03	1879	Unknown name	Kisfalud ²² /Hungary
04	1908	Serbian Romani Adams (Adamović) family	Washington d.C./USA
05	1926	Pan-Russian Gypsy Union – Funded by Aleksander Germanov	USSR
06	1928	The Red Dress Gypsies’ led by Steve Kaslov	USA
07	1931	the <i>Romen</i> Theatre (<i>Moskovskii muzykal’no-dramaticheskii teatr “Romen”</i>)	Moscow/USSR

¹⁹ There is no specific date of creation of this organization, but it was a development of the “The Educational Club of Yugoslavian Gypsy Youth”.

²⁰ Other names used by *Ekhipe* were “All Gypsy Cultural Organization” and Common Organization of the Gypsy Minority for Combating Fascism and Racism”.

²¹ Newspaper which replaced *Romano esi*.

²² I could find a city called Kisfalud in Hungary, located approximately 172 kilometres east of Budapest and 41 kilometres of the border with Austria.

Marushiakova and Popov offer possible reasons for the emergence of these institutions and organizations in the Balkan area firstly then in other regions around the world:

The reasons for the rapid development of the Roma movement in southeastern Europe during this period, which has no analogue in other parts of the world, should be sought in the Roma's specific social position and in the specific history of the region. The Roma had lived in the region since Ottoman times and were an integral part of wider society, which is why they strove for equal participation in the political life of their countries. At the same time, they also wished to preserve their ethnic distinction. In other words, the Roma have always existed in at least two dimensions, or on two coordinate planes: both as a separate ethnic community (or, more exactly, communities) and as part of a society, as an ethnically-based group integral to the nation-state of which the Roma are residents and citizens (Marushiakova and Popov 2015: 219/220).

It is possible to conclude from the quotation that the Gypsies/Roma in the Balkan area filled a criteria established by Hroch. They were an ethnically separated group in which a few of their subjects were inserted in some levels in the majority society, experiencing the choice to assimilate within the national-state culture or struggle for the recognition of their socio-political rights and their own (alleged) set of cultural practices. To Hroch, populations with such characteristics can go through three phases in their process of national recognition:

Table 03 – Hroch's Three Phases Model

Phase A	A small group of intellectuals, who were educated in the culture recognized by the state that rules the nation, meets and begins to “rescue” and give a new status to the culture of the dominated ethnic group. In this very first moment, the range of the movements/activists is small, because it rarely spreads beyond the intellectual meetings upon the minority culture
Phase B	There is a growth of this movement, but still circumscribed to an intellectual elite. It starts up a struggle for recognition of the language and culture as relevant patterns which might characterize a given ethnic group
Phase C	The movement becomes a mass-movement and, sometimes, it is strong enough to achieve the creation of a Nation-State

Hroch insists that not every nationalist movement fulfils this model of interpretation in the same way, at the same time and with the same characteristics and results. It is possible to say that in the case of the Gypsies/Roma, they did not engage a nationalist agitation at the time of the passage from feudalism to capitalism, forging

their national identity within the political borders and cultural influence of the countries where they live in the European territory and overseas.

The reasons why a national identity was not put together among the populations usually call as Gypsies at the same time that the nations studied by Hroch – Czechs, Slovaks and so forth – are blurred and out of the scope of this work. However, some details can be brought to light in order to try to better understand the situation. Two different works expose divergent data about the arrival of the Gypsies/Roma in Europe. While Hancock (2005) believes they probably arrived in Europe during the last years of the 13th century, at same time of the taking over of the Byzantine Empire by the Turks, for Fraser (1996) the people called as Gypsies arrived in Europe around the 10th century and spread around the European territory. Both authors, however, agree in two points: 1. That Gypsies/Roma did not enter Europe as a cohesive bloc, migrating in diverse waves; 2. Some of these populations used a strategy (willingly or otherwise) of calling themselves pilgrims, wandering from one area to another using travel permits issued by local princes and different authorities. Economically and socially they apparently developed a role in European society, being a population charged with the role as the contact between the historically settled groups and such activity may not have helped the Gypsies/Romani populations to develop a community based on a circumscribed territory. In other words, the context which they faced in feudal Europe might have helped them develop towards a suppositional nomadism – either by choice of those so-called Gypsies or otherwise²³.

Still, an apparent lack of a will to return to a ‘mother land’, the absence of a common religion, and a presumptive cultural plurality among those people – all characteristics resulted of their historical need to adaptation to different contexts – were fertile soil for the development of a situation in which, when in the late 19th century a few cultural/ethnic groups succeed in develop a nationalist rhetoric cultural and territorial based, the Gypsies were spread around, culturally plural and without a strong rhetoric of territorial belonging. Such discursive practices were put in perspective only later on as noted in Table 01. The early 20th century saw, though, the growing of an intellectual elite or intelligentsia that tried to rethink Gypsy/Romani culture and

²³ This behaviour must not be misinterpreted as a tendency to nomadism. There are no evidences to suggest that nomadism is part of the Gypsy/Romani culture. Rather, it is more a question of a quest for survival and adaptation to the socio-economic environment.

historiography. About this process, it is possible develop a correlation with Hroch's three-phase model.

The Gypsy/Romani social movements reached some level of unity in 1971, issuing in that year the birth certificate of the *International Romani Social Movements* and, by consequence, the internationalizations of the representations about *Romani Nationalism*. In that year, a group of Roma managed to promote a meeting in London, the 1st World Romani Congress. There are different estimates of how many people attend the conference, but Acton and Klimová (2001) affirm that there were people from fourteen different countries discussing the challenges and targets of a Roma intelligentsia. Since then, efforts have been made towards a readjustment of the narratives and feelings related with all the populations that are nominated Gypsies by the non-Gypsies. In other words, relabel²⁴ a number of features which this nationalist group supports as their culture and history, removing the marginalized status from the so-called Gypsy culture.

At this point a comparison is possible with Hroch's Phase B: a group – intellectual elite – sparing no efforts to organize a cohesive discourse about the history, the culture and the challenges of a claimed people to establish a dialogue with this population and make them aware of their nationality. In the words of Kapralski (2012: 65):

Using Miroslav Hroch's processual concept of national movement, we may therefore say that Romani intellectuals and activists are now in transition from 'Phase A', which is characterised by 'scholarly inquiry into and propagation of an awareness of the linguistic, cultural, social, economic and historical attributes of the non-dominant ethnic group', to 'Phase B', where the task of the activists is 'to win over as many of their ethnic group as possible to the project of creating a modern nation' in order to create a mass movement, the emergence of which characterises 'Phase C'.

²⁴ In Portuguese, the verb *requalificar* (re + qualificar. The prefix 're' brings the idea that something is being made again, meanwhile the verb 'qualificar' might be translated as 'to qualify', 'to describe' or 'to designate') is used when discussing about the rethinking and the rewriting on historiographic knowledge aiming to develop a different status to a given subject. In studies about Cultural Heritage such concept is borrowed from the architecture with current meanings related with changes in an area and/or property, giving a different status to the place, without erasing the previous diverse uses of the site. In plain words, while the idea of *renovation* brings some aesthetical understandings upon the space, *requalificar* corresponds to the political, social and economic interests related to the whole process (Bezerra and Chaves 2014). This research understands that the better word to characterize the work on the Romani culture, history, identity and so forth would be *requalificar*, and the closest translation to English of this concept would be the word *relabel*.

Nevertheless, taking in account the thought of Kapralski, it is important to look on each of the four types of national movement development, also drawn by Hroch. Even though the three-phase model can be used to understand the movement as a whole, apparently none of the Hroch's four types of development can be totally applied to the Romani case. In order to understand Hroch's types of national development, it is necessary a look on the table 04:

Table 04 - Acronyms of Hroch's Four Types of Nationalist Development

Acronyms	Meaning
AB	Transition from Phase A to Phase B
BC	Transition from phase B to Phase C
FN	Completion of the formation of the modern nation
BR	Bourgeois revolution
IR	Industrial revolution in its opening phase
WCM	Coming of the organized working-class movement

Hrochs's first type of development can be represented by the following two formulas:

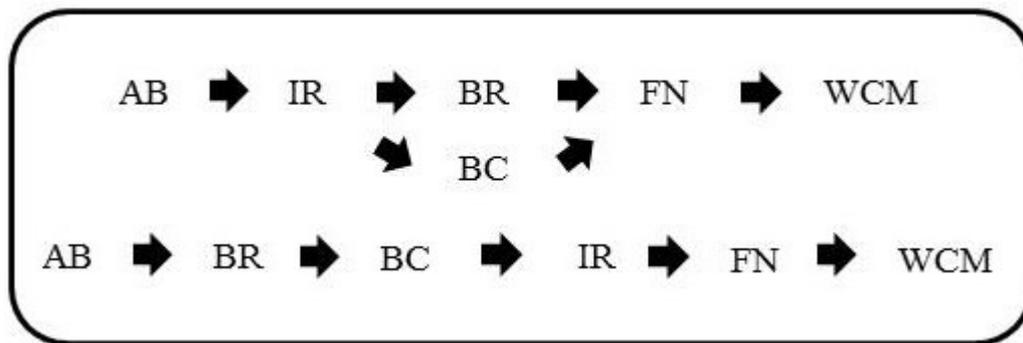


Image 02 – Hroch's Integrated Type (Hroch 2000:27)

In this model of development, called by him as the *Integrated Type*, the passage from Phase A to Phase B happens before either the Industrial or Bourgeois Revolutions. In both scenarios, the foundation of the nation happens right before the organizations of the working-class movement. The second type, Hroch called the *Belated Type*:

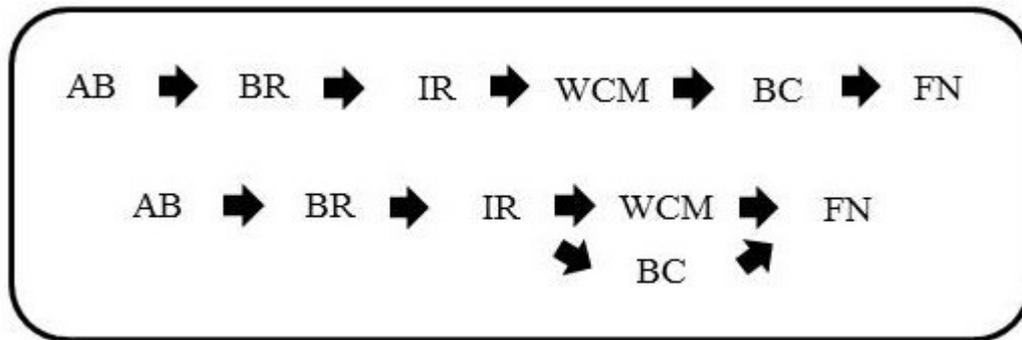


Image 03 – Hroch’s Belated Type (Hroch 2000:28)

The main difference to this model can be seen in the late formation of the nation, after the formation of the working-class movement. However, all the steps of the three phases model are still present. As the next model, Hroch offers the *Insurrectional Type*:

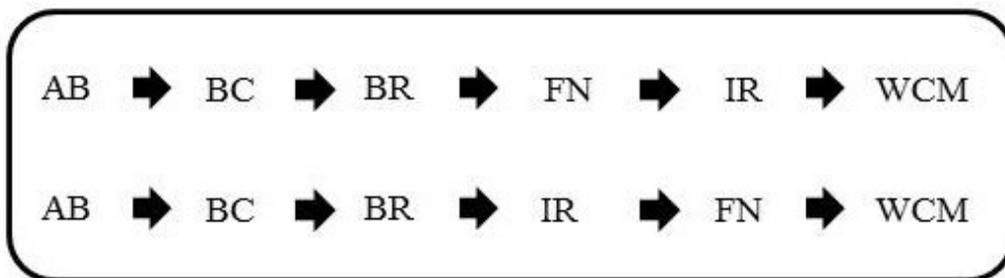


Image 04 – Hroch’s Insurrectional Type (Hroch 2000:28)

In this third type, one can see that the formation of the nation itself gains strength before the Bourgeois Revolution, with the formation and development of the national movement taking place so still under feudal structures.

None of those three aforementioned types of development can fit with the *Romani Nationalism*. Firstly, because all of them reach the creation of a state, which did not happen with the Roma – and it is claimed to not even be a target of the movement. Secondly, because Hroch’s ideas suppose a population concentrated in a geographic area, which can be affected by the Bourgeois Revolution and/or the Industrial Revolution in a similar manner. Plus, his research led to an understanding that the most industrial places of the nations which he studies were more affected by a nationalist feeling than others. It is possible that the Gypsies/Roma were and are spread too much around the World to have been exposed to a similar level of the Bourgeois or Industrial Revolutions, weakening the chance of their nationalist development to be seriously shaped by such contexts.

However, the last type, the *Disintegrated Type* – despite the fact that it also does not fit with the Romani movement – can help establish an analytical overview on the nationalist movement which it is being studied here:

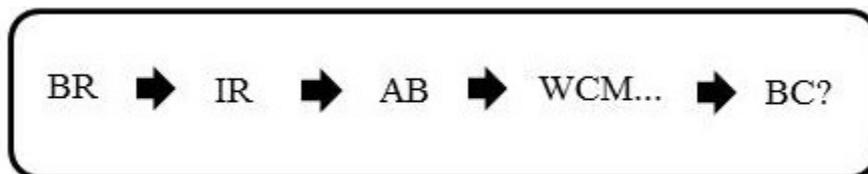


Image 05 – Hroch’s Integrated Type (Hroch 2000:28)

Hroch explains that in this *Disintegrated Type* the beginning of the nationalist feeling takes place after both Bourgeois and Industrial Revolution. Plus, the passage from Phase B to the Phase C, if it happens at all, would occur after the organization of the working-class movement. It was stated above that the political/social context of the Eastern regions of Europe in late 19th and early 20th centuries favoured the formation of an ethnic awareness. The importance of this region to the Roma movements is not only in its genesis, but also in its empowerment. It is from the countries which lived under the so-called Socialism of Soviet influence where a sizable part of the most influential scholars and activists related to the Roma movement come from. Much of this because, as attested some authors (Marushiakova and Popov 2013a; Vermeersch 2006), it was during the so-called Communist times that the Gypsies/Roma managed to reach higher levels of formal education. The Socialist approach provided the opportunity for Gypsies/Roma to study, the right to work and equal civil rights, however this process also led to a distancing from their communities, somehow reflected in twistedness concerning their ethnic identity (Horvatová 2013).

After the rise of Stalin to power in the USSR in 1922, a spread of his beliefs about nationalism took place around the Soviet Republics and their satellites – in different levels and manners. As is expressed by Stalin (2012: 11):

A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.

In the same book, Stalin affirms that if one of these elements is lacking in the composition of a group, they cannot be considered a nation. From the point of view of Stalin and, by consequence, the Soviet institutions, Gypsies/Roma were not considered a nation and should not keep promoting their particularities, instead focusing in their

role as proletarians. All of them should settle, work and contribute to the Soviet or satellite states. To be able to work and contribute with the industrialized state, Gypsies/Roma were taken to school and, as racism was institutionally forbidden, they managed to grow inside the educational system climbing to higher positions in comparison with non-Socialist countries. These highly-educated people would be those who had the socio-political skill to form the *Romani Nationalism* during the so-called Communist times, but even more after the fall of the Iron Curtain.

It is possible to trace some similarities between the process of development of nationalism among Gypsies/Roma within the Communist Regimes and the fourth type of nationalist development of Hroch. Even though Radek (1921) strongly contested the claims from the Mensheviks about the working-class becoming a tool in the hands of the Russian Bourgeoisie after the Revolution, Buick (2009) brings the vision of Julius Martov on the topic. The latter truly believed that the characteristics of the Bolshevik government were very similar to any Bourgeoisie Revolution. In fact, is not the point of this work proving if the Russian Revolution was led or won by the Bourgeoisie or by the Proletarians. Rather, to bring up that the arrival of the so-called socialist policies to power in Russia might have played the role of a powerful social/economic change in society. Such modifications, in turn, may have affected the Gypsies/Roma in a similar way that Hroch believes that a Bourgeois Revolution touch upon the reality of the small nations in Europe.

It is fair to assume that almost all Soviet or Socialist countries were pursuing a strong industrialization. Even though the modern industrialization in the region where today is Russia had started around the decade of 1890, and with a notable expansion of the war industry during the First World War, it was the massive industrial growth in the interwar period which allowed the USSR to rise up as a worldwide great power as soon as the reconstruction after the Second World War was complete (Wheatcroft, Davies, and Cooper 1986). It can be argued that the Russian Revolution spread after the Second World War (in different levels and approaches) to almost all the Eastern territories of Europe, it was the movement which played a similar role to an Industrial Revolution in Hroch's fourth type, pushing the Gypsy/Roma population into an industrialized context which enabled them to elaborate their already incipient ethnic awareness. An awareness which was already somehow sown in that region for the context of the Ottoman Empire, as discussed by Marushiakova and Popov (2015) above.

Adapting Hroch's *Disintegrated Type* of nationalist development to the Roma case, it is possible to propose a 'Romani Type':

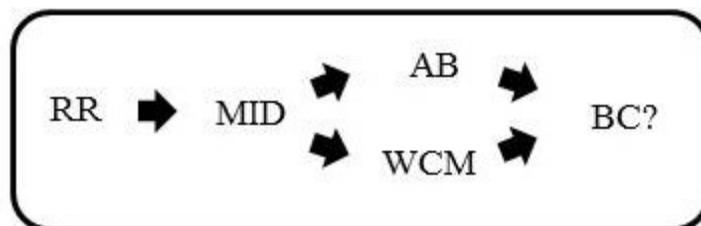


Image 06 - Romani Type

In this adaptation, two different acronyms appear. *RR* symbolizes the *Russian Revolution*, meanwhile *MID* represents *Massive Industrial Development*. The development of the industry led the Gypsies/Roma who lived within the borders of the so-called planned economy to settle and assume a proletarian life.

Later on, when the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc were over, all the other groups of formally well-educated Gypsies/Roma from socialist countries had contact with the Western peoples, and could contribute strongly with the development of the movement²⁵. The possibility to advance within a formal educational system, even though if initially meant certain alienation from their Gypsy/Romani identity due to Stalinist policies, turned the Eastern European Roma into the leading names within the Roma movement (Marushiakova and Popov 2004; 2013a). Because of the flow into the movement of people from the Eastern European countries, it might be said that the period between 1989 and 2001 was somehow the blossoming of the Romani social movements and, by consequence, of the *Romani Nationalism*. All these people, full of hope, seeing in the recent political and economic changes a chance to alter their own realities, similarity of what *B* (2016) claims that happened in Bulgaria: "So there were two big waves²⁶ of expectations, of optimism: the first wave was 1990, the democracy... so 'Bulgaria join the democratic world' so on and so forth [...]." This participation

²⁵ While these processes were unfolding in the East, there were movements happening in the Western part of Europe. Even though taking place in an area far from the strict control and influence of Stalinist thought, these Western movements were less free of the Eastern guidance that one can suppose. That is because since 1978, at the 2nd International Romani Union Congress, the participation of Roma from Yugoslavia was allowed, and this group had undergone a similar process of other countries with planned economy. It was thanks to the complicated relationship between Josip Broz Tito and the Soviet Union that the Yugoslavian Roma were allowed to come to the West and express their ethnicity. Even in a personal level, among the prominent names of the Western Romani organization, the big majority of them had familiar ties with Eastern Europe.

²⁶ *B* numerated as the second wave the process of Bulgaria entering the European Union.

resulted in meetings and achievements to the Gypsy/Roma intellectual elite, as it is possible to see in the Table 05:

Table 05 – Main international events related with Romani issues from 1990 to 2000

Year	Organization	Description
1990	International Romani Union Congress	4 th IRU Congress in Serock ²⁷ /Poland
1991	European Commission	First reference to Roma in the United Nations combat to Racism
1992	United Nations	UN Human Rights Commission in Resolution 1992/65, “Protection of Roma (gypsies)”
1993	Council of Europe	Gypsies of Europe - Parliamentary Assembly
1993	United Nations	International Romani Union acquired special consultative status
1999	Hungarian Government	Hungary National Gypsy Self-Government
2000	International Romani Union Congress	5 th IRU Congress in Prague/Czech Republic
2000	European Roma Right Centre/Central European University	Panel discussion entitled “The Romani Movement: What Shape, What Direction?”

Developed during the Congress in Prague, but released in 2001, the Declarations of a Roma Nation (Table 06) can be seen as the outcome of the maturation process which was born thirty years earlier, in London.

Table 06 – The Declaration of a Roma Nation

<p>We, the Roma Nation</p> <p>Individuals belonging to the Roma Nation call for a representation²⁸ of their Nation, which does not want to become a State. We ask for being recognized as a Nation, for the sake of Roma and of non-Roma individuals, who share the need to deal with the nowadays new challenges. We, a Nation of which over half a million persons were exterminated in a forgotten Holocaust, a Nation of individuals too often discriminated, marginalized, victim of intolerance and persecutions, we have a dream, and we are engaged in fulfilling it. We are a Nation, we share the same tradition, the same culture, the same origin, the same language; we are a Nation. We have never looked for creating a Roma State. And we do not want a State today, when the new society and the new economy are concretely and progressively crossing-over the importance and the adequacy of the State as the way how individuals organize themselves.</p> <p>The will to consubstantiate the concept of a Nation and the one of a State has led and is still leading to tragedies and wars, disasters and massacres. The history of the Roma</p>

²⁷ Serock is located approximately 40 kilometres north from Warsaw, capital city of Poland.

²⁸ The word ‘representation’ used in the Declarations means political representation. It might be interesting to call attention to that because this work uses the concept of *representations* (in the sense of imageries, rhetoric, discursive practices and so on) in different moments, and such similarity among the words/concepts can cause confusion.

Nation cuts through such a coincidence, which is evidently not anymore adequate to the needs of individuals. We, the Roma Nation, offer to the individuals belonging to the other Nations our adequacy to the new world.

We have a dream, the political concrete dream of the rule of law being the rule for each and everybody, in the frame and thanks to a juridical system able to assure democracy, freedom, liberty to each and everybody, being adequate to the changing world, the changing society, the changing economy. We have a dream, the one of the rule of law being a method, and not a value. A pragmatic, concrete, way how individuals agree on rules, institutions, juridical norms, adequate to the new needs. A transnational Nation as the Roma one needs a transnational rule of law: this is evident; we do believe that such a need is shared by any individual, independently of the Nation he or she belongs to.

We do know that a shy debate regarding the adequacy of the State to the changing needs of the global society—a global society which should not be organized exclusively from above—is involving prominent personalities in Europe and in the entire UN Community.

We are also convinced that the request itself of a representation for the Roma Nation is a great help to find an answer to the crucial question regarding the needed reforms of the existing international institutions and rules. Our dream is therefore of great actuality and it is very concrete. It is what we offer the entire world community. The Roma Nation, each and every individual belonging to it look for and need a world where the international Charters on Human Rights are Laws, are peremptory rules, providing exigible rights. Such a will is a need for the Roma; is it so only for Roma?

We are aware that the main characteristic of the Roma Nation, the one of being a Nation without searching for the establishment of a State, is today a great, adequate resource of freedom and legality for each individual, and of the successful functioning for the world community.

We have a dream, and we are engaged in the implementation of it: we offer to the humanity a request, the one of having a representation as a Nation, the Nation we are. Giving an answer to such a request would let the entire humanity make a substantial step forward.

We know democracy and freedom to equal the rule of law, which can be assured only through the creation of institutions and juridical rules adequate and constantly adjusted to the necessarily changing needs of individuals.

We are to offer our culture, our tradition, the resource which is in our historic refusal of searching for a state: the most adequate resource of awareness to the nowadays world. That's why we look for a representation, and new ways of representing individuals apart from their belonging to one or to another nation. Nowadays politics is not adequate to the nowadays needs of individuals in a changing world; and to the needs of all those persons still suffering starvation and violations of their fundamental human rights. And we offer, we propose a question, while proposing and offering a path, a concrete, possible, needed path, on which to start walking together.

We, the Roma Nation, have something to share, right by asking for a representation, respect, implementation of the existing International Charter on Human Rights, so that each individual can look at them as at existing, concrete warranties for her or his today and future.

Source: Acton and Klimová (2001: 216/217)

In this statement, the IRU and part of the Roma organizations which were connected with it, declared with full words that the Roma were a *Nation*, a population which should be recognized as equal before all the others around the world – especially in Europe. From now on the Declaration and other activists’ productions will be confronted with the definition of *Roma*, *Nation* and *State* of different scholars, in the way to understand better the meanings of these concepts.

1.2 Understandings about the concept Roma upon, within and around the Romani social movements

In the early days of the month of April, in 1971, was held in London the 1st World Romani Congress (WRC), having as main organizer the Paris-based organization *Comité International Rom* (CIR). As Acton and Klímová (2001) call attention, there is some kind of diffuse information orally spread upon this encounter, establishing a feeling that the International Romani Union was created at this very first meeting. For this reason the 1st WRC has being called – at least informally – as the 1st Congress of the International Romani Union. This research used to commit this mistake and it was never corrected by any Roma scholar or activist. This fact per se can lead to some clues about how the International Romani Union likes to introduce itself as the main political representative of the Roma people around the world.

What it is relevant for this discussion is the fact that this meeting agreed to establish an “unity among Gypsies” (Mayall 2004: 204), deciding to call themselves as Roma instead of the variety of denominations scattered around the world, whether self-denominated or not. Plus, a flag (Image 07), an anthem and a slogan – *Opré Roma* (Arise Roma) – were chosen to symbolize the Romani people.



Image 07 – Romani flag (Ryšavý 2015)

As appointed by Mayall (2004: 205):

All Roma were declared brothers [*sic*] and a secretariat and executive body were established. In short, the Congress provided the necessary organisational structure, language, symbols and objectives for the development of an ethnic group identity.

The strategy of calling all the groups known as Gypsies around the world by one name, *Roma*, must not be seen as an objective decision. It is necessary, as Orlandi (2000) points out, to stop the illusion that what is said is systematized in the only viable way and does not essentialize the relation between the object of discussion and the word used to represent such an object. One shall not believe that a choice – in this case picking a broad name for the whole population and the election of the word *Roma* in itself – is an objective non-political decision based in pristine historical facts. The word *Rom* means man, married male or husband in the Romani language (Gheorghe 1991). From the beginning, the election of a word which represents masculine traces of the culture might be seen as a reflection of a lack of political representativity – at least among the high spheres of the participants – of women in the World Conference. Ryšavý (2015) nominated only men as the main characters of the Conference: Slobodan Berberski, Ján Cibul'a, Juan de Dios Ramirez Heredia, Grattan Puxon and Vanko Rouda²⁹, the same names which are brought up by Cioabă (2013). Also, in the most

²⁹ Following at Table 07 a short biography of these activists. Unfortunately, no available biography of Vanko Rouda was found.

famous pictures of the Congress only masculine figures can be seen (Acton and Klímová 2001: 159), although the picture is credited to a woman, Eva Davidová.

Table 07 – Main names of the 1st World Romani Congress

Name	Short biography
Slobodan Berberski	Born in 20 th October, 1919 – Zrenjanin (Зрењанин), approximately 82 kilometres north of the Serbian Capital City, Belgrade. He was a writer, having his poetry translated to Romani, French, Russian, Hungarian, Romanian, Albanian and Slovenian. In 1967 he was the responsible for the formation of the Yugoslavian Roma Action (<i>Akcije Jugoslovenskih Roma</i>) and, in 1971, was elected the first president of the World Roma Organization. He died in Belgrade in the year of 1989 ('Slobodan Berberski' 2017).
Ján Cibul'a	Born in 7 th January, 1932 – Klenovec, approximately 260 kilometres east of the Slovakian Capital City, Bratislava. "Ján Cibul'a began working to improve the position of Roma people during the start of his career in Slovakia (Czechoslovakia), where he graduated in 1957 from the Medical Faculty of Komenský University in Bratislava. In 1968 he was a co-founder of the Union of Gypsies-Roma (<i>Svaz Cikánů-Romů</i>) in Slovakia (Czechoslovakia)" (Ryšavý 2013). In 1968 he moved to Switzerland where he died in 18 th August, 2013.
Juan de Dios Ramirez Heredia	Born in 29 th June, 1942 – Puerto Real, approximately 590 kilometres south of the Spanish Capital City, Madrid. He is a lawyer with a PhD in Information Science. He was elected, in 1977, the first Gypsy deputy by the city of Barcelona (<i>Público</i> 2008).
Grattan Puxon	According to the website FreeRoma: "After fleeing to Dublin in 1960 to escape military conscription, I travelled with wagon and horses, facing many evictions until families came to occupy Cherry Orchard Camp. Joined Paris-based Comite International Rom, returned to Britain in 1966 to form Gypsy Council which in 1971 hosted the 1st World Romani Congress, at which I was elected general-secretary, holding that post for three Congresses up to 1981. Published with Dr Donald Kenrick history of the Nazi genocide and translated this work into Romanes as Bersa Bibahtale, wrote novel Freeborn Traveller (2004) now working on 50-year history of the movement from a personal view point. Last large action was resist eviction of the Dale Farm estate (2011), which many families continue to occupy" ('Grattan Puxon' 2017).
Eva Davidová	Born in 1932, Davidová is a Czech sociologist, ethnographer, art historian and photographer. She is also one of pioneers on the study of Roma people in Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia ('Eva Davidová' 2017).

Despite the fact that the congress took place right after the 1960s – the decade when the sexual revolution started –, it is understandable that men took the main position at the conference. Even today, more than forty years after the 1st WRC, women still struggle for equality, participation and recognition. That said, it is not being implied here any deliberated sexist aspect from the side of the participants of the meeting; instead I highlight how discourse and discursive practices are a material outcome from the context in which they are elaborated, and not a reliable representation of the truth³⁰.

Nevertheless, what would be interesting to bring up to debate is the attempt to summarize all the populations which used to be (and still are in different regions) named as Gypsies – mostly by non-Gypsies/Roma, but by Gypsies/Roma alike – as a discursive practice which intends to support a broad rhetoric upon these populations. A new discourse and denomination that could leave behind all the bad and often racist connotation which the word Gypsy (and its relatives in other languages as *Cigano*³¹ (Portuguese), *Gitano*³² (Spanish), *Cikán*³³ (Czech), *Țigan*³⁴ (Romanian) and so forth carried out along history. Such a strategy might be better discussed if put under the light of Anderson's (1991) work. Anderson argues that nationalism cannot be understood as a partner of racism, as the latter tries to summarize the human being to its non-cultural characteristics. To him:

A word like 'slant', for example, abbreviated from 'slant-eyed', does not simply express an ordinary political enmity. It erases nation-ness by reducing the adversary to his biological physiognomy. It denies, by substituting for, 'Vietnamese', just as *raton* denies, by substituting for, 'Algerian'. At the same time, it stirs 'Vietnamese' into a nameless sludge along with 'Korean', 'Chinese', 'Filipino', and so on. The character of this vocabulary may become still more evident if it is contrasted with other Vietnam-War-period words like 'Charlie' and 'V.C.', or from an earlier era, 'Boches', 'Hunts', 'Japs' and 'Frogs', all of which apply only to *one* specific nationality, and thus concede, in hatred, the adversary's membership in a league of nations (Anderson 1991: 148).

Although the word Gypsy is not a biological characteristic in itself, it was used as a discursive practice through the past millennium, charged with pejorative meanings

³⁰ Gender relations are not the main point of this discussion, although it plays a role in currently challenges of the Romani movements.

³¹ Phonetically: European Portuguese: *sig 'ɐnu*. Brazilian Portuguese: *sig 'ənu*.

³² Phonetically: European Spanish: *xi 'tano*.

³³ Phonetically: *tsika:n*.

³⁴ Phonetically: *tsi'gan*.

towards these populations, reducing them on the rhetorical level to a biological behaviour. As pointed by Lemon (2002: 59):

A retired judge, in a 1992 interview with me, transposed the metaphor into a scientific register this way: "It's in their genes.... God found [Gypsies] useful, so they have a right to live. But their life is difficult, and their genes make them unable to work".

It is possible to see how the judge represents their belief, in which the behaviour of the Gypsies/Roma is modulated by their genes before of their historical/cultural contextual development. Liegeois and Gheorghe (1995: 12) also recognize the goals of institutions to diminish or even erase any cultural aspect connected to Gypsies:

As a rule the representations constructed in connection with this goal tend to blur all cultural characteristics in order to reveal a 'social problem'. This is clearly illustrated in official modes of designation. Roma/Gypsies are defined through an arbitrary process which fixes upon a term and strips it of any ethnic or cultural connotations with which it may be associated: for example in 1967 the High Court in London defined a 'Gypsy' as 'a person leading a nomadic life, with no fixed employment and with no fixed abode'. [...]. Along the same lines, familiar terms are no longer used in official contexts in a number of states, having been replaced by euphemisms and acronyms, all devoid of cultural connotations: for example, in France 'persons of nomadic origin', 'citizens of Gypsy origin' in the former Czechoslovakia, 'itinerants' in Ireland and 'HWAÖ' *häufig wechselnder Aufenthaltsort* – 'person of frequently changing residence' in Germany.

It can be said, therefore, that there is a continuous practice coming from the non-Gypsy/Romani population to reduce them and their practices as outcomes of their genetic material. This is a practice of racialization, of denial of history and the culture of these populations and such approach might find some parallel with End (2013: 143) discussions:

The first important element of the antigypsyist structure of meanings is typically expressed like so: "Gypsies don't have a stable identity. On the contrary, their characteristic is the non-identity, the ambivalence". The antigypsyist structure of meanings is always a dual structure because it tells something about the majority society as well. In today's antigypsyism, the "we-group" is always formed nationally, so for this example I will choose the "Germans", although it could be any other European nationality as well: "Germans have a stable, rooted, fixed and undivided identity." The previous two sentences may sound extremely abstract at first, but they express a part of the core sense of antigypsyism.

End believes that the prejudice against Gypsies/Roma is installed primarily in the negation of cultural aspects to the group. Denying that them, as Gypsies, hold a set of attitudes based in their diverse cultural context, automatically attaching to their biological condition the explanations of their behaviour, dehumanizing them. As said Orlandi (2000: 43):

Everything that we say has, therefore, an ideological attribute in relation to other ideological attributes. And this it is not in the essence of words but within the discursiveness, which means the way in which ideology produces its effects, materializing within the discourseⁱⁱⁱ.

Casting together the thoughts of Anderson, End and Orlandi, it is possible to say that although *Gypsy* is not biological term, it was historically positioned as word which would symbolize the Gypsy ahistorical and acultural behaviour. Plus, it is usually a word used to explain the actions of a group, being this group self-identified as Gypsies/Roma or not, based in their performance and manners of living or relating with different groups. In other words, Gypsies, through the eyes of the non-Gypsy population, *were and are like 'this'* (and *'this'* can be anything, depending on the context) because they are Gypsies and they will always be. This feeling was so strong that, within the countries under the so-called communist regime, they were usually forbidden to 'act like Gypsies' or even faced forced sterilization of the women (Brealey 2001).

The new³⁵ name, *Roma*, was supposed to change this situation. To leave behind all the racial connotations which were embodied in the concept of Gypsies and develop an ethnic understanding relative to this group:

The fact of the matter is that nationalism thinks in terms of historical destinies, while racism dreams of eternal contaminations, transmitted from the origins of time through an endless sequence of loathsome copulations: outside history (Anderson 1991: 148).

Calling themselves *Roma* is an attempt to undermine the racial construction related with the image on these people known as Gypsies in a claimed historical and ethnic one. In this sense, the community of the people which is known as Gypsies should see themselves as siblings through the name *Roma*. A community alleged

³⁵ By 'new', in this sentence, this research means the political strategy to attach to the whole population known, nominated and/or self-ascribed as Gypsies the name of Roma. It is not the focus of this work to prove or disprove if it is a nomenclature which comes from centuries, but to think about its political application.

historically connected, with a live culture which can base their actions and beliefs, a set of cultural practices which enable them to create a picture and imagine themselves as a nation. Imagine, because, as attested Anderson (1991) it is impossible for all Roma of the world to know each other and compare their characteristics, their background and even their views of the future. However, they can imagine themselves under the name of Roma and under some patterns of ethnic (or national) identification. Therefore, the next question could be who are the Roma to be depicted by this ethnic rhetoric?

Actually, the definition brought up for the Declaration itself does not specify clearly who would be the people who are the *Roma*, at least not in a straight way. There is a claim of all Roma being part of the same nation, however there is no clear definition of the characteristic which a person must have or follow to be a Roma. The Declaration claims that all the Roma have the same origin and share a culture, without making it clear which is this ancestry and what are the features of the common practices and perceptions. The clearest moment when the Declaration tries to define Roma, appears in the first paragraph

We, a Nation of which over half a million persons were exterminated in a forgotten (*sic*) Holocaust, a Nation of individuals too often discriminated, marginalized, victim of intolerance (*sic*) and persecutions [...].

It is interesting realize how the Declaration focus in the socioeconomic aspect of exclusion and in the prejudice against Gypsies/Roma during the Second World War to define who are Roma, even though not in a straight and – maybe – intentional way. It is possible to understand that back in 2001, after 30 years of discussions, these were the features which could link a significant part of these populations known as Gypsies, more than any other cultural aspect, even though the main nationalist rhetoric idea is the shared culture. Nevertheless, even in 2017, the general understanding about the concept is shallow. According to the index *Alexa's Traffic Ranks*, an internet service linked with the *Amazon Group* which measures the behaviour of people in the international internet search, *Wikipedia* is among the top five websites visited in the world ('Alexa Top 500 Global Sites' 2017). For this reason, it might be interesting to understand the definition of Roma people that easily reach the average population:

The Romani (also spelled Romany; /'rouməni/, /'rɒ-/), or Roma, are a traditionally nomadic ethnic group, living mostly in Europe and the Americas and originating from the northern regions of the Indian subcontinent, apparently from the region that is currently occupied by the Indian states of Rajasthan, Haryana, and Punjab ('Romani People' 2017)³⁶.

Through this definition two main features define the Roma people: the traditional nomadism of the group and the origin in the northern area of the region where today is India. Still trying to gathering together the definition more in hand of the average population, the question “who are the Roma?” was searched at Google at 1st June, 2017. The first websites were – besides *Wikipedia* – the *New Internationalist Blog* and the *Euronews*. In the first, Brown (2013) characterized Roma as a European minority, acknowledges the use of the term Roma since 1971 and pointed out that Roma is a “[...] pragmatic term to describe a diverse range of communities, tribes and clans”. In its turn, *Euronews* (Kearney 2012) does not dare to affirm what are the characteristics of Roma, focusing in what is mistakenly attached to this population.

In a broad view, it is possible to see that these three definitions which are easily reached by an online search, do not bring a single and sharply accepted definition upon the concept of Roma. While to one source the Indian origin attached to nomadism is the main claim, others focus in a highly broad definition, and the third one rather centres in not affirming anything. However, when in contact with some activists, it seems that the general idea is that Roma is those who suffer Antigypsyism. In September 2016, during an interview in the building of a Romani organization in Skopje³⁷ M (the head of the NGO) affirmed:

³⁶ It is hyperlinked with this definition the following works: Hancock, Ian F. (2005); K. Meira Goldberg; Ninotchka Devorah Bennahum; Michelle Heffner Hayes (2015) and Simon Broughton; Mark Ellingham; Richard Trillo (1999).

³⁷ Skopje is the Capital City of Macedonia.

Researcher: I would be wrong if I say that in certain level the Roma identity is being built on the Antigypsyist feeling?

M: Yes. You are completely right.

Researcher: But do you think that build an identity on Antigypsyism can help to overcome the Antigypsyism?

M: Yes.

Researcher: How?

M: Well... you know... we are facing with a lot of pressure to assimilate... the Roma culture, identity, from the majority of the community [...]. So, if we bring this out as a problem, because... you know... the general community is not familized with the Roma identity, Roma culture... you know... we have just those Antigypsyism stuff: Roma... you know... dirty, beggars, thieves, etc.. you know? (M 2016).

M recognize that the ‘general community’ (which in her can be understood as the majority population of Macedonia) are not aware about the existence of a Gypsy/Romani culture and identity, only keeping in mind the imagery of the Gypsies as a dirty and workshy people.

Also during the course of a talk with *BI* (2016), a Bulgarian Romani scholar and activist, for two moments it was brought up the feeling that the Roma identity – at least in the level of this Romani rhetoric which is sponsored by the Roma social movements engaged in a nationalist discourse – is being forged hand in hand with Antigypsyism and, in both times, she clearly agreed. However, when asked straight to her what makes a person part of the Roma, she promptly named the language as the main trace – even though she recognized that there are several dialects and that several groups of Roma people do not speak Romani nowadays. This scenario is also found in Macedonia, according to *M* (2016) and in Romania (*R* 2016).

In his turn, Hancock (2005) opens the first chapter of his book with a quotation of Ben Ames Williams “No nation knows itself until it knows its past”. It can be argued that he is implying the need of all the Roma to know their history in order to understand who they are. He starts the chapter with his own words and writes:

Romanies first arrived in Europe at the end of the thirteenth century, at a time when the Ottoman Turks were taking over the Christian Byzantine Empire in order to spread the Muslim religion and extend their political influence (Hancock 2005: 01).

Interesting how he, in a single sentence, brings the information that Roma were not Turks, were not Muslims, were not Europeans, or Christians. Later in the same work, he starts a categorization about the Roma, claiming that they are a people who

share an origin, a language (or a core language with variants), and genetic material. However, even though he opens with a statement about the relevance of the history to the conception of a nation, he ends up his argumentation with a very a-historic point: Roma are those who are not *gadže* or, in other words, Roma are those who are not non-Roma.

The paradox is the following: the concept of *Nation* that is fostered in general among the pro-Roma scholars, activists and that is present in the Declaration, bring strongly a cultural legitimation for a national group – as it will be discussed below. However, when there is an attempt to characterize the Roma people under cultural aspects, it is difficult and usually there is not a precise definition. When *R1* was asked about how to characterize the Roma people who are supported by their everyday work, the answers ran around highlighting who the Roma are not and less about who they are. The fact that early marriage is not a Roma characteristic (even though it is true that it happens among some Roma communities), that they are not listeners of *manele*³⁸ music, that Roma families also hang pictures and not carpets on the wall and so forth appeared. When asked directly what makes a person Roma, the answer was “It`s different for each every person” (R1 2016).

Yet, *R2*, when questioned about what makes a person Roma, answered that it is the Romani way of being. Again, the conceptualizing is very broad and subjective, bringing a certain level of romanticism to the answer (R2 2016). He made certain to point out that he did not mean that it was something in the blood, but something that was taught by the parents, passed down through generations, an idea which has a close parallel with the assertion of *B* (2016), during a discussion about the use of the terms Gypsy or Roma:

³⁸ *Manele* is a musical rhythm popular in Romania and, usually, associated to Gypsies/Roma. Among famous singers can be named Florin Salam, Adrian Minune and Nicolae Guță. According to Haliliuc (2015: 295) "Manele carry in their rhythm traces from the Ottoman Empire that maintained suzerainty over territories inhabited by Romanians since the 15th century. While local rulers of these territories fought against the Ottomans since the 14th century, only in 1878 was the Romanian Kingdom internationally recognized as independent from the Ottoman rule. During the almost half millennia of Ottoman suzerainty, a rich transfer of goods, people, and culture took place between Romanian territories and the heart of the empire. Manele are traces of this history. [...] This suggests to Garfias that Roma musicians who entertained Ottoman appointees to Romanian territories may have brought Manele from the streets of Istanbul into the high courts of the Romanian provinces. Due to this history, Manele carry both the hybrid traces of the Ottoman Empire and the memory of its oppressive rule."

B: We know that we are Gypsies, this is the first thing.

Researcher: How do you know?

B: Because of my father, of my grandfather, that's why. I told you... Those who don't have clear roots they have this problem, we don't, we are Gypsies. We don't need this discussion. We started after this, you know? For us this is like... let's say, you have one, two, three, four, five points, you know? So, first point is "Are you Gypsy? Yes, I am".

It would be relevant to stress how the broad concept of Roma is not a characteristic which happens only within the lines of the Declaration, but it is also spread around the activists. It is a result of an effort to put together, under the same denomination, a plural group which in their contact with different people during their presence in Europe developed diverse cultural strategies. Nonetheless, there is one element which characterizes Romani people which appears over and over in reports, interviews and academic production which is the hate against Gypsies/Roma: "[...] people don't like Roma" (R2 2016).

During the talk with *R*, it is relevant to note that he started his explanation about the Roma situation with an historical contextualization, emphasizing the period of the slavery of Gypsies/Roma in the lands of Moldavia and Wallachia, today North-East and South of Romania. In some level, he characterizes the Roma based in this sad historical moment and develops a thought keeping this frame as one of the most relevant facts to understand Roma within Romania today (R 2016). In *R1*, it was also highlighted the need to make it clear to the Romani people in Romania this specific part of their history which is unknown, in their opinion (R1 2016). Such situation is even clearer in the words of *B1*. During our conversation about the cultural plurality and the difficulties to bring all Gypsies/Roma together, she says:

B1: Yes... But when the Skinheads come then all Roma are like one. Then they forget for... the differences in the dialect, in the habits, in the rituals, in the groups, you know? [...] the troubles, the difficulties and the bad treatment make them...

[...]

Researcher: So, this fit in a lot of what I'm listening around: "ok... we are a lot of different countries but we suffer together, so we are a group".

B1: Yes!

The argument here developed is that the concept of Roma which can be seen at the Declaration and around different activists does not necessarily carry the same meaning but, in general, although aiming to describe a cultural group, it ends up

circumscribing a population which has been put aside of society – for classist, racist and xenophobic reasons. In a pragmatic sense, it can be said that a replacement of the word *Gypsy* is happening for the word *Roma*, without material changes. In this sense, Stewart (2017: 136) says:

What I am suggesting is that the discourse of many of the activists and NGOs in this field tends to take over the homogenising baggage of the category ‘Cigány/Gypsy’ while verbally replacing it with a positively marked term, Roma. The underlying conceptual move of replacing ‘Cigány’ by ‘Roma’ is not, however, sufficiently critiqued. By importing the conceptual baggage of the ‘Gypsy’ category, ‘Roma’ in the new discourse stands for a series of problems (lack of housing, education, employment, health), just as ‘Cigány’ did for the Communists. ‘Roma’ live in a disaster zone as it were and so, as a result the discourse that emerges out of the activist-mobilising tradition produces historical accounts organised around a series of cataclysmic persecutions.

What Stewart supports is that the activists are not being critical enough about their actions, mostly concerning the efforts to attach the whole population who used to be known as Gypsies by the non-Gypsy-Roma to the concept of *Roma*.

What the *Romani Nationalism* rhetoric appears to successfully develop is an arrangement around the narratives concerning a plural population scattered around the world, erecting a linear common historiography and a coherent cultural set of characteristics to all of them – stressing and, sometimes, exaggerating the common points at same time that they blur the differences – to bring together these populations in a fight against racism and exclusion. It seems that in Stewart’s point of view this process did not manage, so far, to change paradigms, but mostly support an elitist change in the use of the word *Roma* instead of *Gypsy*. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the word *Roma*, in the political replacement of *Gypsy*, is broad, far-reaching and volatile.

1.3 Understandings about the concept of Nation upon, within and around the Romani Social Movements

Together with claiming to be called Roma, the Declaration goes further and reclaims the concept of *Nation*: such a strategy is used in its very title. In the whole text, the word *Roma* is used 14 times (1,79% of the words in the text) and the word *Nation* 22 times (2,82% of the words in the text). The fact that there are more occurrences of *Nation* than *Roma* itself, might indicate the need to promote the mindset of Roma

belonging to a nation. Yet, '*Nation, as the Roma*' and '*the nation we are*' occurs one time each. The ideal of "*we are a nation*" is clearly seen in 4 moments and the straight connection between the terms *Roma* and *Nation* takes place 8 times. It is possible to say that there is a strong argument throughout the text advocating for an overall understanding that the Roma populations must be seen as a national group.

However, Chiaramonte (2003) affirms that the concept of *Nation* is a very tricky one. It has been used by several scholars and activists, not always with the same meanings. In some moments, for instance, two contrasting uses of the term coexisted in different areas. Back in the 17th century, in the regions where today is Spain, the ideal of *Nation* used to indicate a people with a same (alleged) ethnic origin. Nevertheless, the element which could give any character to a population was the fact to be under a single government. In other words, different nations could live under a same government and the latter would actually frame the status of the whole population, and not the local national affiliation or self-ascription. The notion of a raw correlation between the ideals of *Nation* and *State* was not present until the 18th century, when the first was attached to the second, decreasing the strength of the ethnic component within the concept of *Nation* (Chiaramonte 2003). It is interesting to make a break in Chiaramonte's thought to emphasize how the ideals of Nation and State are so fastened to each other even after three centuries far from this likeness process. In the very beginning of the Declaration, it was thought necessary to express clearly that even though they consider themselves as a *Nation*, they did not have the intention to create a *State*: the antonym needed reinforcement.

From the 18th and 19th centuries onwards, mainly in the Western part of Europe and in the American Colonies, the concept of *Nation* developed in a way in which *People*, *Nation* and *State* mixed very close to a synonym (Chiaramonte 2003). Yet, the concept of Nation without any political aspects was present and had application. The term developed a political intrinsic aura only after the arising of the Principle of the Nationalities, defined by Bauer (2000: 144) as the frame in which "[...] each nation should form a state, and each state should encompass one nation alone". The line of Chiaramonte's thought about the historicity of the *Nation* concept would be:

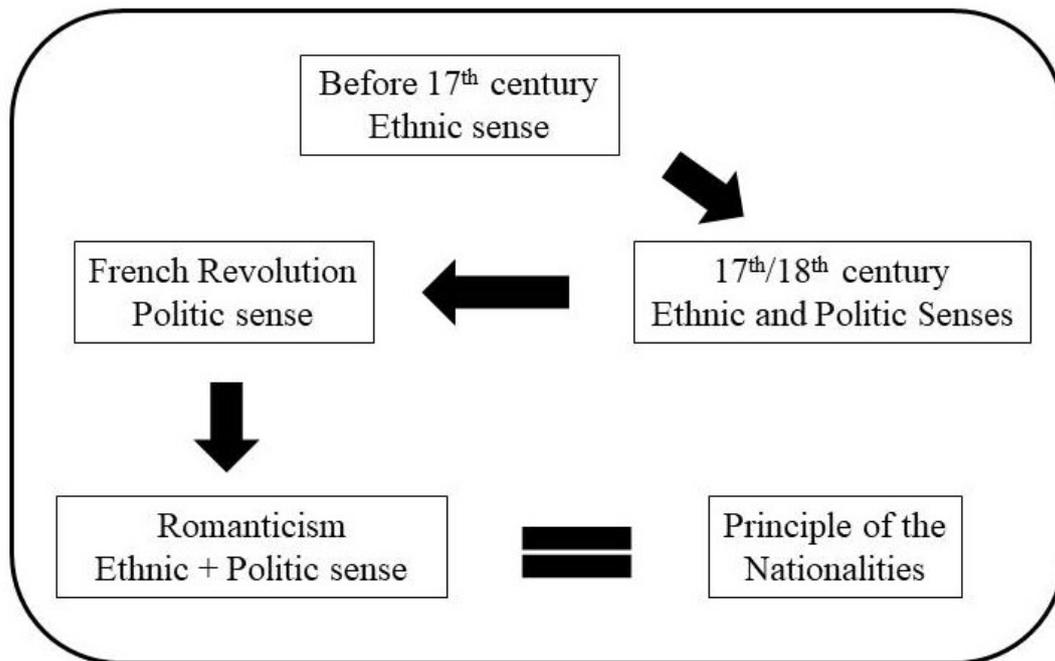


Image 08 - Scheme about Chiaramonte's thought

What might be seen in the previous paragraphs and in the scheme is how concepts as *Nation* and *State* were merged, mixed, and used in different aspects and to different aims depending the context in which they were applied. The idea of the *Nation* – with little ethnic meaning – being a synonym of with *State* was very much interesting to the American colonies in the time to fight for their political independency, because they were formed by several waves of migration, with diverse cultures and languages within the geographical space which was being claimed. A similar situation was found in the European countries which had a strong absolutist history, where the borders were somewhat granted, and it was necessary to make the people within that geographical space feel as kinfolk.

However, in different regions, the idea of a nation closer in meaning to an ethnic group kept its strength. In these areas, together with the spread of the Romanticism, ethnic-nations passed directly through the process of assimilation within a *State* straight to the engagement in the Principle of Nationalities. Such process led some groups within “forgotten” cultures to believe that they had the right to fight for their own political State organization. That is, generally speaking, the process studied by Hroch.

Still, this research shall agree with Chiaramonte (2003: 82) when he stresses that the difficulties to understand the concept of *Nation* do not come

[...] only from the problematic, [...], of whether the concept of nation can be applied either to the peoples of Contemporary States, or to the subjects of a Medieval Monarchy or to those of Absolute Monarchies. This complication is the effect of a previous difficulty, which is not a new development: the diversity of meanings with which the term Nation has been used by historians and other specialists, often rendering any coherent discussion impossible. It seems to us, therefore, that it is not the job of historians to ask what they can define as a nation, but rather to question the human beings of every moment and place who used the concept and to ask them why and how they did it and to what kind of realities they used to apply.^{iv}

In different words, Chiaramonte believes that it is unfruitful, in several levels, to spend efforts trying to create a whole model to explain which groups are nations and which are not. To him, it would be wiser to develop some analysis to understand why a particular group decides to call themselves or others by this name, giving the economic, political, social and historical context in which all the elements are starring. From this point on, it is relevant to stress that there is no attempt to discuss if the Gypsy/Romani groups are a single nation or not, but to try to understand why the Romani intelligentsia thought – and still thinks – that such a concept could suit their reality. In the words of the Declaration “We are a Nation, we share the same tradition, the same culture, the same origin, the same language; we are a Nation” (Acton and Klímová 2001: 216).

The Declaration claims that Roma are a nation because they share some elements, enumerated in sequence as tradition, culture, origin and language. Even though these four concepts overlap in many aspects, it is possible to divide them in two spheres: a cultural one, in which it is possible to put language and traditions, and a geographical/historical one that encompasses the origins. As seen above, the first ideal of Nation might be understood as bringing these four concepts together, but it seems quite anachronistic to believe that the Roma intelligentsia simply brought up that idea from the 17th century to the current times straight away. It is even dangerous, since some racist rhetoric against Gypsies/Roma are based in the enunciation of a supposedly backwardness. It is more likely to believe that the Romani intelligentsia, who are never detached of the non-Roma intellectual elite, shared similar sources and literature.

In this sense, the concept of *Nation* shaped by Ernest Gellner when discussing the formation of the nations in the late 19th century might make sense into the *Romani Nationalism* context and targets:

- 1) Two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture, where culture in turns means a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating.
- 2) Two men are of the same nation if and only if they *recognize* each other as belonging to the same nation. In other words, *nations maketh man*; nations are the artefacts of men's convictions and loyalties and solidarities (Gellner 1983: 07, italics in the original).

In Gellner's definition it is possible to find everything that was necessary to develop a discursive practice attaching to the populations known as Gypsies the concept of Nation: the alleged shared culture and the bilateral recognition, based in the mutual solidarity. Withal, all the Roma should be brothers (Mayall 2004) and brotherhood means to endure together and help each other. Even though in different approaches on the study of nationalism, the definition forged by Anthony Smith also seems to fulfil the needs of the Roma intelligentsia and activists. To Smith (2008: 19, italics in original) *Nation* is

[...] *a named and self-defined human community whose members cultivate shared myths, memories, symbols, values, and traditions, reside in and identify with a historic homeland, create and disseminate a distinctive public culture, and observe shared customs and common laws.*

In Smith's work it is possible to find even more aspects in which a parallel can be drawn with the Roma Declaration and the Roma social movements in general. Since 1971 they named their own community, they highlight an anthem and a flag, identified a historical homeland in India, and claim to share common customs and laws, even with the launch, in 2001, of the book *Gypsy Law* (Weyrauch 2001). Also, celebrations, as the Festival Khamoro in Prague and *lieux de memoire*³⁹, spread around Europe and America, attesting a cultural shared characteristic.

The problems, however, started when a characteristic of *Nation* is highlighted, which is incidentally present in the concept of the two aforementioned authors, but is materially stressed in the work of Hroch: the question of territory. To this scholar, a *Nation* is

³⁹ The role of *lieux de memoire* within the Roma Nationalist Movement will be discussed in Chapter 3.

[...] a large social group characterized by a combination of several kinds of relation (economic, *territorial*, political, religious, cultural, linguistic and so on) which arise on the one hand from the solution found to the fundamental antagonism between man and nature on a *specific compact land-area*, and on the other hand from the reflection of these relations in the consciousness of the people (Hroch 2000: 04, mine italics).

The first half of Hroch's definition fits the Gellner's and Smith's and, in this way, with the *Romani Nationalism* needs and rhetoric. However, the groups which the *Romani Nationalism* are trying to put together under the label of *Roma Nation* are not attached to any specific land-area, whether compact or not. This is because Gypsies/Roma do not live only in Europe, even though the great majority are within this continent. As affirmed by Hancock (2005), it is possible to find Roma everywhere: Singapore, China, Australia, Africa and the Americas.

At this point, is possible to draw the concept of *Nation* which is obliquely forged in the Declaration and, in a way or another, smoothly walks around and within Roma organizations and activists: *Nation is a group with a nuclear, basic and broad shared culture, a communal historical past expressed in a remote origin, though not necessarily attached to a specific clearly demarked land in current times*. In this level, it seems that they claim a concept indeed very similar with the earliest national ideals, however, it is possible to see attached to it a political aspect when, in the Declaration, there is a call for political representativity. Nevertheless of said political representative aspect – which can be understood in a political sense because it is connected with democratic thoughts and is materially placed near the word *State* in the Declaration – this is not strong enough to approximate the Romani concept of Nation to the Principle of the Nationalities, because there is a clear statement not to have a State. As reproduced in Table 05, the Declaration starts with

Individuals belonging to the Roma Nation call for a representation of their Nation, which does not want to become a State (Acton and Klímová 2001: 216).

Therefore, it is relevant to understand what meanings the word *State* carries to the *Romani Nationalism*. Such a topic will be discussed in the next subchapter.

1.4 Understandings about the concept of State upon, within and round the Romani Social Movements

One of the most famous definitions of State was written by Weber (1946: 3, italics in the original)

[...] a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory. Note that ‘territory’ is one of the characteristics of the state. Specifically, at the present time, the right to use physical force is ascribed to other institutions or to individuals only to the extent to which the state permits it. The state is considered the sole source of the ‘right’ to use violence. Hence, ‘politics’ for us means striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power, either among states or among groups within a state.

From Weber’s point of view, the use of a legitimized force within an ascribed territory is the most important peculiarity of a State. However, the claim present in the Declaration talks about intent to create a transteritorial nation, without any demarcated territory in which the Roma would live and consider of their own. This idea is widespread: “Our state is everywhere where there are Roma, because Romanestán is in our hearts” (Lieglois 1994 *apud* Marushiakova and Popov 2004: 78). Nevertheless, the concept of *physical force* proposed by Weber, if compared with the ideal of state from Ernest Gellner can bring further considerations. To Gellner (1983: 04, italics in the original) the

[...] “state” is that institution or set of institutions specifically concerned with the enforcement of order (whatever else they may also be concerned with). The state exists where specialized order-enforcing agencies, such as police forces and courts, have separated out from the rest of social life. They *are* the state.

When Weber addresses the notion of *physical force* it is possible to understand it as some sort of rigid control and/or violent oppression from a given institution – the state itself of some group authorized by it – on a determined people. Gellner, in his turn, even though he disseminates a similar thought, uses different words: *enforcement of order*. Plus, it brings the fact that this enforcement is inflicted upon the population through the entities separated of the social life. That is because to Gellner the state must be clearly separated from the general population, in a way that can be visualized and felt, but not close enough to all people be part of it. Although Gellner seems to walk close to Weber in his conceptualization, he does not see the need to appoint a territorial

characteristic to the state in his conceptualization. Due either to having taken for granted such characteristic or for other reason, it is possible to argue that the *Romani Nationalism*, aiming to develop an institution able to become the political representative of all Roma around the world⁴⁰, transferred the legitimacy of its *enforcement of order* from a territorial aspect to one much more blurred, a claimed ethnic/cultural/historical aspect.

It is relevant to remember that such legitimized use of a *physical force* or *enforcement of order* must not be understood at any time as only a violent force, only law wise or police repression of diversity within a population⁴¹. Actually, to Bakunin, such administration of the social structures must not be always violent or repressive:

The State is force, and for it, first of all, is the right of force, the triumphant argument of the needle-gun, of the chassepot. But man is so singularly constituted that this argument, wholly eloquent as it may appear, is not sufficient in the long run. Some moral sanction or other is absolutely necessary to enforce his respect. Further, this sanction must be at once so simple and so plain that it may convince the masses, who, after having been reduced by the power of the State must also be induced to morally recognise its right (Bakunin 1916: 41).

In Bakunin's ideas, the State cannot afford to keep its sovereignty upon a particular population only based on the coercion and brutality. Instead, the moral of the State is widespread through two main channels, the religion⁴² and the school (Corrêa 2014). Also Goldman, when discussing the Modern School in USA, argues that the school system can serve as a place of "compulsory feeding" (Goldman 1998: 141), maintained through the enforcement of uniformity and discipline. Thus, it is fair to say that through education it is possible to enforce and drive the frame of mind of a singular group, administering some order in a more subtle way which is no less physical. Rodrigues (2001: 235) says:

⁴⁰ In the context of the Declaration, released in 2001, the international institutions which was (self) invested in this position was the International Romani Union. The historiographic development of these international and institutional bodies claiming to be the representative of Gypsies/Roma will be debated in chapter 2.

⁴¹ It is important to frame that this research is not suggesting that the authors were thinking as these two aspects only in this way, but that we shall not forget different ways of physical enforcement of order.

⁴² There are studies about the role of religion in the construction of a Roma identity. For further information: Thurffjell, David, and Adrian Marsh. 2014. *Romani Pentecostalism: Gypsies and Charismatic Christianity*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

In line with what has been reaffirmed about the aims of education, it is possible to recognize that the educational action is a regular process developed in all human societies, whose purpose it is to prepare growing individuals (children and adolescents) to assume social roles related to collective life, to the reproduction of conditions of existence (work), to the right behaviour within public life plus the adequate and responsible use of knowledge and skills available in the time and in the spaces where the life of the individuals is realized. Around these aspects unfolds the set of educational actions to be performed by the educator subjects, among them the school^v.

It is interesting to bring the educational system into the discussion because it is attested in the Declaration that it is the aim of the movements take into their own hands the historiographic development over their own nation. On the other hand, parts of the movements believe that the educational system in which the Roma children would be part of must be developed and controlled by the Roma themselves and not by any other State within which they live (Martí, García, and Alexiu 2013; Hancock 2013).

Even if not in such a developed aspect – a full control of the educational system – there are attempts to include in formal education of the countries where the Gypsies/Roma live the study of the Romani language, historiography and culture, increasing not only the awareness of the Romani children, but also of the majority about these groups.

In contemporary Europe the antigypsyism starts to be taught at kindergarten and goes through school and University. Particularly in East European countries the forms of racism and discrimination are so huge that the people are not aware of them. It is “natural” that in school textbooks does not exist any information about Roma and their commitment to the world history and culture. It is “natural” that Romani language is not taught at schools although there is a European Charter of Minority Languages and the Human Rights Declaration of UN which say that the minority children have the right to study their mother tongue from a kindergarten level. Most of the Ministries will not implement any of those recommendations, because “The Roma do not speak one language”, “Romani is not a real language”, “there are no teaches in Romani” at the same time the Ministries of Education will not do anything to open University programs, which prepare kindergarten of primary/secondary school teachers (Kyuchokov, 2013: 9).

The situation which is narrated by Kyuchokov is also stressed in different regions. In Romania, *RI* is working to put in schools books more information about the history of Gypsies/Roma. According to *RI* (2016), children have access to a minimum text which discusses the situation of Roma people during the Second World War and

almost no information about the time in which Roma were enslaved in the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia.

Meanwhile, there is in Bulgaria and Czech Republic a strong movement to close definitively all schools which receive only Romani children (*B* 2016; *BI* 2016; Cviklová 2011). In the steps to overcome this type of segregated schools, it might be necessary overcome a gap created by the different quality of instruction which is offered to Gypsies/Roma and to non-Roma. *BI*, for instance, works at a governmental centre dealing with education in Bulgaria. According to her, back in 1992, Bulgaria was one of the first countries to start a program to teach Romani language at school (*BI* 2016).

Still about the education issue, the researcher met *H* in Budapest. He was at the time of the interview a monitor at an organization which deals with education, for longer than 10 years. One of the main targets of the institutions where he works is shrinking the chasm of the education offered to Roma and to non-Roma in Europe. During our talk he stressed his belief in the Brazilian scholar Paulo Freire, manifested mainly in the work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*⁴³, where Freire highlights that education must serve to free people, make them active citizens:

Now [in] our days I, our friends, we have kind of an exclusion from this, so... whatever is produced now in the academia by Roma is tried to be put it aside, saying that... does not meet the rigor, requirements, and academic standards and so forth. And [...] among the non-Roma academics, they try not have an open debate about such a thing. How Roma can take in their own hands their fate and their future? [...]. So, emancipation process might start with the new paradigms, new set of values, with putting together these and by trying to disseminate these, or some political structures like Community-led local development, get efficient, visibility, sufficient power and articulate some messages that the masses will come. Or, another think, and by the way this is an answer to your question, is to have community education. I do believe in Paulo Freire (*H* 2016).

At this quote, *H* is discussing the vicious cycle which maintains Gypsies/Roma outside the places which could empower them to debate their own culture and historiography. In his point of view, if there are no Gypsies/Roma well-prepared since the early ages to reach high levels of education and research in equal basis to a non-Roma, the studies on Roma will remain in the hands of non-Roma only. So, it would be their work to improve the education of Roma children to make them prepared for the future. However, as *H* stresses: without any kind of proselytism. To him, schools are not

⁴³ More information: Freire, Paulo, Myra Bergman Ramos, and Donaldo P. Macedo. 2000. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. 30th anniversary edition. New York: Continuum.

a space to deflagrate a *Romani nationalist* rhetoric, but to get children to prepare to be full citizens of the countries where they live.

It is interesting to see how using words like *citizenship*, *emancipation* and *political structures*, he denies any political engagement in their work. That might be an outcome of the fact that the organization is working in common national schools, institutions which have as parallel outcome the creation of nationals to the countries in which they are inserted. And if *H* and his organization arrived at these environments with strong pro-Romani rhetoric, they would probably be expelled, as he himself recognizes. He also admits that this work of empowerment through schooling might result in an empowered Romani social movement, eventually. This research points out that that even though the political denial of *H* is understandable, all actions are political and the very fact that they are in the schools to consider Roma children is an approach which might be seen in a nationalist way. Showing to children a historiography attached to their ethnicity is very similar to the action of the intelligentsia in Hroch's *Phase B*.

In this sense, it is understandable from the Declaration, with lines as “[...] we do not want a State today [...]” or “We are aware that the main characteristic of the Roma Nation, the one of being a Nation without searching for the establishment of a State” (Acton and Klímová 2001: 216), that there is no will for these people who claim to be – or politically represent – the Roma people to have one institution which can enforce the order at any place and at any moment, as in the Gellner and Weber frame. It is possible to say that to the Roma Movements, *State* is seen as an institutional government attached with a demarcated territory, and what they claim is to decide upon their political future without such organization. Furthermore, it is a strong characteristic of the nationalism of the contemporary times to have their political aspirations closely connected with the challenges of Globalization (Guibernau 1999).

It is possible to bring up the high-speed virtual exchange of information which makes people from different parts of the globe more closely connected than neighbours nowadays, and the growing and strengthening of trans-border entities, whether political or economic, such as NAFTA, Mercosur and the European Union. The Romani Declaration goes in the same direction when affirming that it seeks “A pragmatic, concrete, way how individuals agree on rules, institutions, juridical norms, adequate to the new needs”, but it goes even further. The Declaration affirms that “The will to consubstantiate the concept of a Nation and the one of a State has led and is still leading to tragedies and wars, disasters and massacres” (Acton and Klímová 2001: 216/217), it

is possible to see a criticism to the institution of the traditional idea of State itself. Guibernau (1999: 06) also remembers that “A considerable number of these nationalisms claim the right to freely develop their nation’s specificity within a framework of respect and tolerance and, in so doing, they challenge the nation-state by questioning its legitimacy”.

Such critics might be understood under the light of one of the three forms of legitimized dominion of Weber (1946): the ‘legality’. The legitimation of the modern state lays on the legality of its existence and its dominions on the basis of obedience for legal understandings (Weber 1946: 04). The Gypsies/Roma never created such a traditional State for their own, and the states in which they were and are living never managed to either legally protect them or construct an environment and/or a discourse of inclusion and belonging. Therefore, differently of the concept of *Nation*, it is understandable a lack of faith of the *Romani Nationalism* that reaching the construction of a state-owned territory would bring some positive aspect. However, through self-government – or at least some levels of self-determination –, they would manage to stay united and be able to construct a better world for themselves.

We ask for being recognized as a Nation, for the sake of Roma and of non-Roma individuals, who share the need to deal with the nowadays new challenges. [...]. We have never looked for creating a Roma State. And we do not want a State today, when the new society and the new economy are concretely and progressively crossing-over the importance and the adequacy of the State as the way how individuals organize themselves (Acton and Klímová 2001: 216).

This seems to find a parallel not only with the aforementioned concept from Guibernau, but also with Otto Bauer’s (2000) idea of *Community of Fate*. For this scholar “The nation is the totality of human beings bound together by a community of fate into a community of character” (Bauer 2000: 117). Bauer argues that nations are less the result of communities bound by a feeling of a common past and more a group of people which are put together and can see and draw from a shared destiny. In other words, the most important is that these groups are not only united under a belief that they have the same culture and origin, but under a shared project towards a similar future, be a *Community of Fate*. Thus, this group, united by a belief in a future, once they are living together, develops several attributes which make them a *Community of Character*:

The nation is a relative community of character; it is a community of character because, in any given era, a range of corresponding characteristics can be observed among the great majority of the nation's members, and because, although all nations share a number of characteristics by virtue of their humanity, there is nevertheless a range of characteristics that are peculiar to each nation and distinguish it from other nations (Bauer 2000: 22).

However, assuming that the Roma intelligentsia and activism is leading a movement which is developing one discourse about Gypsies/Roma as a *Community of Fate* that might result in a *Community of Character*, this is not supposed to use the machinery of the State, according to the Declaration. As it was highlighted before, the Declaration and the activism see with little sympathy the idea of creating a Romani state, either because the concept of State has never been friendly with them or because it would be very difficult to claim a particular land without creating a major conflict. At the same time, there is a claim for political representativity and empowerment. Such a profile might find parallel in the model of self-government developed by the activist Abdullah Öcalan (2011). Based on the ideas of the historian and political theorist Murray Bookchin of *Libertarian Municipalism*⁴⁴, Öcalan developed the concept of *Democratic Confederalism*.

Similarly to the contents of the Declaration, Öcalan did not have a good overview about the ideal of *State*. To him – based in his experience as an ethnic Kurd – the state machinery aims to destroy plurality in a way that either leads to the assimilation of different cultures within the border of the country or to a genocide (Öcalan 2011). Among the principles of the *Democratic Confederalism* numbered by Öcalan in his work, the third one has some aspects which might be interesting to draw a comparison with the Roma movement:

Democratic confederalism is based on grass-roots participation. Its decision-making processes lie with the communities. Higher levels only serve the coordination and implementation of the will of the communities that send their delegates to the general assemblies. For limited space of time they are both mouthpiece and executive institutions. However, the basic power of decision rests with the local grass-roots institutions (Öcalan 2011: 33).

That might remind the overall structure of the 1st WRC: people from different countries coming together to discuss the problems found in their everyday life and find solutions to all the newborn Roma people. Foremost, the model of Öcalan aims to avoid

⁴⁴ More information in Murray Bookchin (1991).

the process of monopolization of the social processes, which in his opinion would lead to the creation of a single acceptable culture within a given border, resulting in the assimilation of the others. One might bring up the option of recognition as a *National Minority*, though according to Bauer this ideal also has strong problems. To him, independently of being recognized as a minority, a not majoritarian group within a conventional State would be always in the hands of the hegemonic group, because the channels to reach some power of decision would be conditioned to the will of the majority (Bauer 2000). In other words, even if the minority could manage to be treated less as a second class group within the country, they would still depend of the will of the majoritarian group and their wishes and rights would be always relatively connected with the plans of the legitimized “owners” of the State.

Similarly to Öcalan – but almost one century before –, Bauer proposes what he called the *Personality Principle*. Rather than eliminate the State

In its pure form, the aim of the personality principle is to constitute the nation not as a territorial corporation, but as an association of persons. The national bodies regulated by public law would thus constitute territorial bodies only insofar as their efficacy could not extend, of course, beyond the borders of the empire. Within the state, however, power would not be given to the Germans in one region and the Czechs in another; rather, each nation, wherever its members resided, would form a body that independently administered its own affairs. It would very often be the case that two or more nations would construct their own national administrative bodies within the one city, erect national educational institutions side by side, but undisturbed by one another — in exactly the same way as Catholics, Protestants, and Jews independently attend to their religious affairs side by side within the one city (Bauer 2000: 281).

To Bauer, would be possible to develop a way of organization in which one and all ethnicities within the country would be able to afford self-government, taking care of their citizens, even concerning taxes. The State would work only to warrant that such a system works.

Either in the *Democratic Confederalism* or in the *Personality Principle* models, the participation in the decisions related with the groups are taken in the low sphere, near to the communities, and are not top-down. However, from now onwards starts a series of complications paralleling Öcalan’s and Bauer’s thought with the Romani case. The decisions taken about the life of the people which are being relabeled as Roma, are not being taken in the communitarian level, as is possible to understand based on the testimony of NGOs located in the Southeast of Europe: in none of the cities which the

researcher visited the activists, scholars or organizations highlighted any closed connection between their everyday job in the communities with any International Body concerned with Roma people. The only organization which was much discussed it was the *Open Society Foundation*, belonging to George Soros⁴⁵. For instance, *M* (2016) said:

M: We know that... as [the] International Union [are] supposed to include us, somehow, as a local organization in their discussion, in... but you know, somehow, none of those International organizations are reliable for us at the moment. Except the Open Society Institute, which mandate is not exactly to do what they are doing, but they are doing because we are grantees of the program for many years and this, somehow, fill the need that they need to support us in showing our local need, problems at the European level.

Researcher: And do you think... so... You are saying that there is a gap between you and these International bodies. But and the discourse of this International Organizations have about the Roma transnational nation and so on. This reaches the community in some level or not?

M: No. If you ask me, I am hearing this also for the first time.

So, it is possible to say that there are some bodies organized by the Roma intelligentsia and activists which are developing policies and trying to take their ideas and apply them among the Gypsy/Romani population. There is an apparent gap between what the Roma intelligentsia believe that the population wants and needs, and what the local population and NGOs work with in their everyday life.

Summarizing, it seems that the concept of *State* found within *Romani Nationalism* is very similar with the one found by Weber, Gellner, Öcalan and Bauer and, for this reason, they claim not to want to form one. However it does not mean that there is not a will to organize the re-elaborated discourse on Gypsies/Roma through certain entities and organizations. Bakunin's conceptualization of State is less based in a territorial base and more related with the process of domination (Corrêa 2014). Domination that can be understood in a Machiavellian sense, but also can be read as a group trying to exercise the power of choice about their own history, on a people that they claim to be part of. In this sense, when the activists/intelligentsia want to influence in the educational process, in the formation of a language and in the future of the whole Gypsies/Roma people, they might not be using the name of State, but they are in a certain level aiming to control a state-like machinery.

⁴⁵ How this Open Society Foundation, within the role as a sponsor to Romani activists/intelligentsia, is related with the Romani Nationalist Movement will be discuss in the next section.

1.5 Contradictions of this nationalism

The Declaration, written by the International Romani Union, is composed under the belief that the *Roma are a Nation*. Therefore, it deserves to be recognized. In the way in which the claims circulated around the intelligentsia and activists and are constructed in the Declaration, it is possible to understand that its supporters see the cultural/identity aspect of the Roma people as something that survived in Europe through generations and must be, now, recognized. However, in the view of Rudolf Rocker, *Nations* are creations of the state machinery, and not the other way around.

The old opinion which ascribes the creation of the nationalist state to the awakened national consciousness of the people is but a fairy tale, very serviceable to the supporters of the idea of the national state, but false, none the less. The nation is not the cause, but the result, of the state. It is the state which creates the nation, not the nation the state. Indeed; from this point of view there exists between people and nation the same distinction as between society and the state (Rocker 1997: 129).

It would be the State, as a legitimized doer of force and order, which constructs the feeling of belonging within a population. This process had – and has – a practical aspect closely related with the organization of a people in order to pursue economic efficiency. Through formal and informal education, the institution disseminates a discourse among the population which and, due to the force of such pressure, this people start to feel themselves as part of the same group. All this effort is made in order to favour the economy of the country and make the population easily productive. A parallel can be made with Gellner, when he said

But nationalism is *not* the awakening of an old, latent, dormant force, though that is how it does indeed present itself. It is in reality the consequence of a new form of social organization, based on deeply internalized, education-dependent high cultures, each protected by its own state. It uses some of the pre-existent cultures, generally transforming them in the process, but it cannot possibly use them all (Gellner 1983: 48).

In order to be functional, modern industrial societies must have a literate population. Thus, the compulsory school attendance was instituted and, more importantly, had to be carried out in a systematic and standardized manner in a single language. Sokol (2010) goes along with such way of thinking when affirming that modern political societies call for a linguistic community. This organization of an

educated population through school formality is what Gellner calls *high culture*. The creation of this *high culture* in a written language leads, according to Gellner, to the formation of two different nationalist sentiments. The first is the nationalism of those whose language matches the language officially used in formal education. Second is the nationalism of those whose language is denied this primacy. And it is precisely these two different sorts of nationalisms that shape and form what is now a modern Nation-State. One can say that historically the people known as Gypsies are among those to whom the possibility of study in their own language was denied – indeed, in most cases, studying in any language was not a possibility to these people.

Nevertheless, it cannot be forgotten that throughout history there are several cases of nations emerging within the borders of a State. Could it be the cases in which states were not strong enough to disseminate their ideology within the population? Such idea by itself also lies on the assumption that there had been such a feeling which put this people together before. What, therefore, manages to create a link within a certain population in a precise moment? Rocker goes further in his analysis and refutes language as a connective. To him, no language was a product of a particular people, and all languages around the world are full of foreignisms, created from the contact between groups. Plus, Anderson (1991) highlights that it is not possible to take much emphasis in the language as a characteristic of a nation, but instead, remember that the language is the media through which nations imagine themselves.

To explain this willingness to be recognized as a nation, this organized need of a people who live within a demarcated territory and under an administration to mark an alleged cultural difference, we could appeal to Ernest Gellner. To him

Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent. Nationalism as a sentiment, or as a movement, can best be defined in terms of this principle. Nationalist *sentiment* is the feeling or anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment. A nationalist *movement* is one actuated by a sentiment of this kind (Gellner 1983: 01).

In Gellner's point of view, the nationalist feeling is an outcome of a feeling of injustice and this can be seen in the Declaration:

We, a Nation of which over half a million persons were exterminated in a forgotten Holocaust, a Nation of individuals too often discriminated, marginalized, victim of intolerance and persecutions, we have a dream, and we are engaged in fulfilling it (Acton and Klímová 2001: 216).

Thus, the question of why to narrate the people generally known as Gypsies as a *Roma Nation* might find an answer along to the thought of Fredy Perlman. This author reminds that even though the concept of *Nation* brings this cultural aspect, common origin and so forth, usually States are not singular in their culture. Plus, very often in History, kingdoms, empires and states tried to expand their dominion outside their borders, embracing lands which were not part of any historical space and different people which did not have a similar set of cultural practices. As examples he brings the Napoleonic wars and cultural diversity within the USA:

The reader might be trying to apply a definition of a nation as an organized territory consisting of people who share a common language, religion and customs, or at least one of the three. Such a definition, clear, pat and static, is not a description of the phenomenon but an apology for it, a justification. The phenomenon was not a static definition but a dynamic process. The common language, religion and customs, like the white blood of the American colonizers, were mere pretexts, instruments for mobilizing armies (Perlman 1984: 9).

Pearlman has a straightforward and raw style of writing, however this does not lessen the interest of how he points that the national discourse is not a phenomenon connected with a past or a culture, but a dynamic process looking for legitimate political aspirations. In other words, to Pearlman, the alleged shared culture, language and so forth are not the reason for the national discourse, but the legitimation that a group invests in itself and in a given population to help in their own targets. In the case of the Gypsies/Roma, one can say that this main target would be fighting for a better quality of life and political representativity.

Situations in which Gypsies/Roma are threatened, even today, happen disturbingly often around Europe. Dias (2017) described how Gypsy populations of the city of *Santo Aleixo da Restauração*⁴⁶ have been harassed by the majority population more than one time since September 2016. And such situations are not a localized aspect, as Šakaja and Šlezak (2013: 391) remind that

⁴⁶ Santo Aleixo da Restauração is located approximately 220 kilometres east of Lisbon, close to the border with Spain.

From 2008 the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) registered forty eight violent attacks on the Romani in Hungary, nineteen in the Czech Republic and ten in Slovakia – with a total of eleven fatal outcomes.

As it is possible to see in the image 09 below, there are Roma living in a situation of poverty around Europe – in this case in the city of Jarovnice⁴⁷ – but not only⁴⁸. Strickland (2017) brings information about the reality of that community in Slovakia, which finds parallels with other Roma communities around the continent. According to him, there is an overall feeling that racist attitudes against Roma are becoming less rare, mostly after 2008. A material sign of it can be the eight segregation walls built to separate Gypsies/Roma from non-Gypsies/Roma in the city of Košice – 50 kilometres Southeast of Jarovnice. Plus, these actions against the Gypsy/Romani populations are not only coming from far-right parties with little (for now) political strength, but also throughout different governmental and non-governmental bodies which are places of enforcement of institutional racism. It seems that the forces of the *Romani Nationalism* believe that such disadvantages can be defeated if Gypsies/Roma have a place of strong political representativity. That might be a reason to bring the ideal of *Nation* to the everyday struggle of Gypsies/Roma, the legitimated aura that the concept implies. In plain words, the concept of *Nation*, since the *principle of nationalities* carries an authority which is, usually, respected by others. In the common sense, *Nations* are a coherent group of *valuable* culture.

⁴⁷ Jarovnice is located 383 kilometres east of the Slovakian Capital City, Bratislava.

⁴⁸ For information about the situation in Brazil, see ‘Comunidade Cigana Brasileira Sofre Com Preconceitos E Restrição de Direitos, Diz Relatora Da ONU’. 2016. *ONU Brasil*. March 29. <https://nacoesunidas.org/comunidade-cigana-brasileira-sofre-com-preconceitos-e-restricao-de-direitos-diz-relatora-da-onu/>.



Image 09 - Situation of disadvantage of Roma people in Slovakia (Strickland 2017)

Summarizing, the International Romani Union declaration of 2001 is a mark in a movement that find parallels with the definition of *Nation*, *State* and so forth from some authors, as Bauer, Gellner, Guibernau, Rucker and Smith. However, given the differences within the movements and among the scholars, it can be unfruitful to make an orthodox discussion whether *Romani Nationalism* has or not a suitable nationalist approach. What seems to be more interesting is understanding why the Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations believe that following some patterns of nationalist organizations from the past can bring them some positive aspects. It is possible to say that the Roma social movements are borrowing some concepts – mainly the symbolic power of these key-words – and adapting them to their need and targets.

This research shall avoid here the trap which was stressed by Markus End earlier in this chapter. It is not stated here that these groups do not have their own customs, language and any other cultural aspect. What is being debated is that the *Roma*, as a conceptual nationalist discursive practice, was born in the early 1970s and it has been developed since then in a way to put all these different groups together under an umbrella, building a common-sense about ideal that they all share the same language – and if not, it is because the majority of society did not allow them to –, the same origin and a similar history. All those paths and strategies are likely to be compared with the nationalist movements of the aforementioned scholar, with the exception of the claimed lack of will to construct a *State*, which, somehow can be understood as a new transnational approach, developing the State bureaucratic machinery, without the

territory. Nevertheless, as will be discussed in the next chapter, all these organizations and institutions do not work together, in the same pace and with exactly the same planning. In other words, *Romani Nationalism* can be interpreted more as a fight against Antigypsyism and less as a coherent group aiming at a cultural standardization process and political self-government. In a certain sense, *Romani Nationalism is not (only) a nationalist movement, it is an anti-racist movement using old nationalist tools.*

ⁱⁱⁱ In the original: “Tudo que dizemos tem, pois, um traço ideológico em relação a outros traços ideológicos. E isto não está na essência das palavras mas na discursividade, isto é, na maneira como, no discurso, a ideologia produz seus efeitos, materializando-se nele”. Author’s free translation.

^{iv} In the original: [...] apenas do problema, [...], de saber se o conceito de nação pode ser aplicado, não apenas aos povos dos Estados contemporâneos, mas também aos súditos de uma monarquia medieval ou aos das monarquias absolutas. Essa complicação é efeito de uma dificuldade prévia, que não é nenhuma descoberta: a diversidade de sentidos com os quais o termo *nação* é utilizado por historiadores e outros especialistas, o que torna com frequência incoerente qualquer discussão possível. Por isso parece-nos que o que cabe ao historiador não é perguntar-se sobre o que pode definir como nação, e sim interrogar os seres humanos de cada momento e lugar que empregavam o conceito e indagar por que e como o faziam e a que realidades o aplicavam”. Author’s free translation.

^v In the original: “Na esteira do que foi reafirmado sobre os fins da educação, podemos reconhecer que a ação educativa é um processo regular desenvolvido em todas as sociedades humanas, que tem por objetivos preparar os indivíduos em crescimento (crianças e adolescentes) para assumirem papéis sociais relacionados à vida coletiva, à reprodução das condições de existência (trabalho), ao comportamento justo na vida pública e ao uso adequado e responsável de conhecimentos e habilidades disponíveis no tempo e nos espaços onde a vida dos indivíduos se realiza. Ao redor desses aspectos se desdobra o conjunto das ações educativas a serem desempenhadas pelos sujeitos educadores, entre eles a escola”. Author’s free translation.

2. The *Roma Nation*: From intellectually internationalized representations to local pragmatic instrumentalization

The previous chapter discussed key concepts related with nationalism: the concept of *Nation* and the concept of *State*. Plus, it examined how the word which represents the ethnic/national group can be developed, in this case the concept of *Roma*. Mingling these concepts together, and confronting with the Romani and Romani-Friendly organization actions and strategies – which are the environment of *Romani Nationalism* – it is possible to characterize this nationalist feeling as a whole set of representations whose rhetoric, imageries and practices are employed by activists, intelligentsia, local and international organizations accordingly to their context, needs and strategies. The *Romani Nationalism* understands *Roma* as a population (supposedly) connected with a distant past in India, who are (usually) not accepted by the existent states as their ethnic national base and that – not all of them, not always and not in the same way – are suffering on contexts of economic, social and political disadvantage. In summarizing, to understand the *Romani Nationalism*, it is necessary to look through political, cultural and social aspects, altogether. That is because *Romani Nationalism* cannot be summed up as the work of one international organization, or of NGOs, so on and so forth. The ideal of a *Roma Nation* might be forged by all these aforementioned actors, but at the same time these groups live within this ideal, without clearly realizing its characteristics, shapes and borders. Therefore, it might be clarifying to analyse *Romani Nationalism* as sets of *representations*. As Chartier (1990: 17) says, the representations of the social world:

[...] although aspiring to the universality of a diagnosis founded on reason, they are always determined by the interests of the group which forged them. Hence, for each case, it is mandatory to relate the speeches delivered with the position of those who profess them. Social perceptions are by no means neutral discourses: they produce strategies (social, academic, political) that tend to impose an authority at the expense of others, whom they disdain, to legitimize a reforming project or to justify, to the individuals themselves, their choices and behaviours. For this reason, this investigation of representations assumes them as having always been placed in a field of rivalry and competitions whose challenges are enunciated in terms of power and domination. The fights of representations are as important as the economic struggles to understand the mechanisms by which a group imposes, or tries to impose, their conceptions of the social world, the values that are their own, and their domain^{vi}.

Bringing Chartier's thought to the Gypsy/Romani case, the concept of *Roma Nation* might be seen as lying on a nest of supposedly objective arguments, such as clear historical and cultural ties. Also, it presents itself as an idea disconnected from the actors which avow it, as if it was an impartial and solid idea. However, this sturdiness and neutrality is nothing but a misinterpretation. The *Roma Nation* is consistently created and re-created in the conflict and coexistence of those who enforce and those who dismiss such ideal, in a never-ending game in which one group is trying to impose its view and its understanding over the other. Reciprocally, this fickle structure reveals the mind-set, the strategies and the values of each of these groups involved in the communicational and power struggle.

Vermeersch (2006) in his work about the Romani political and ethnic mobilization in Central Europe stresses his belief that the Romani social movements could not be seen as a bloc, working together in a cohesive form. If the organizations in which the Roma people are under debate do not have a close-knit relation, neither can the concept of *Roma Nation* which springs from these organizations be understood as solid. Therefore, the processual analysis of this chapter is divided in three subparts. The first one is titled *The Roma Nation representations subdivided: the Pan-Romani and the Social-Political representational registers*; followed by *The unfolding and the legitimation of the Roma Nation representations*; and the last one called *The local instrumentalization of the Roma Nation representations and its contradictions*.

The first subchapter divides the *Roma Nation* representations in two registers, named *Pan-Romani* and *Social-Political* representations. Then, it displays and discusses how these two registers are present in the discursive practices of local and international organizations. Based on Régine Robin's (1977) techniques of discourse analysis, an examination on the *assumptions* and *arguments* present in the rhetoric of these organizations is developed, revealing practices of glossing over differences and enforcing similarities among Gypsy/Roma groups in their cultural and social-political realities.

In the subdivision *The unfolding and the legitimation of the Roma Nation representations*, an interpretation of the process of internationalizations is developed, and the international legitimation of the *Pan-Romani* and *Social-Political* representations back in the 1970s, from the circumstances of the World Romani Congress (WRC) in 1971, the foundation of the International Romani Union (IRU), in

1978 and its political position until 1989. The rhetoric of the WRC/IRU⁴⁹ group is examined, along with their partners and the context which allowed a recognition of them by the CoE and by the UN as interlocutors of the Gypsies/Roma. In plain words, there is an analysis concerning the settlement of the *Roma Nation* representations within the WRC/IRU grouping. Consequently, a discussion about how they based their (self)investment as (claimed) political representatives on behalf of Gypsies/Roma through their international support of *Roma Nation* representations.

The last subpart highlights the local application of the *Roma Nation* representations. After the end of the communism, there was an outburst of local NGOs in the Eastern part of Europe, dealing with the Gypsy/Romani issue and financially supported by Western donors. Based on interviews carried out in September 2016 with Romani and non-Romani activists and academics⁵⁰, this subpart discusses the appearance of the Western donors, the practices of the donors, the strategies and mindset of the local NGOs and the contradictions of their discursive practice in the conceptualizing the *Roma Nation*. Such discrepancies appear when, despite the denial (or lack of questioning) about being agents of *Romani Nationalism*, these local actors enforce nationalist patterns and *Roma Nation* representations. Plus, it stresses how, amidst the Gypsy/Romani plurality, everyday antigypsyism and its historical blowout, the Holocaust during the Second World War, work as a main aggregator discourse.

2.1 The Roma Nation representations subdivided: the Pan-Romani and the Social-Political representational registers

From now onwards, there will be a division of the representations of the *Roma Nation* in two separated representations (which certainly can be deconstructed into several others):

1. The *Pan-Romani*;
2. The *Social-Political*;

From the very beginning it is important to highlight that this division is only academic and aims to clarify the discussions, but neither of the implications and

⁴⁹ From the point of view of this analysis, in some moments the framework of the WRC and the IRU can be seen either as similar or a continuity. Therefore, when the discussion refers broadly to the group that was present at the WRC and developed the IRU, the acronym WRC/IRU will be used.

⁵⁰ The ten interviews were conducted during a fifteen-day field research trip which embraced Brno (Czech Republic), Bratislava (Slovakia), Budapest (Hungary), Belgrade (Serbia), Bucharest (Romania), Sofia (Bulgaria) and Skopje (Macedonia).

characteristics which made this research classified these discourses simply exist by themselves, without any overlapping and, sometimes, mutual enforcement.

The *Pan-Romani* representations are formed by the discursive practices and the materiality which support the idea that all Gypsies/Roma subjects around the world are bound together. It is a paradigm architected in a way where the populations known, ascribed as or self-nominated as Gypsies and/or Roma are denoted as a group with (clear) historical and cultural boundaries. Thus, the form in which Gypsies/Roma are represented and the way in which these representations are organized, led to the understanding of Gypsies/Roma groups in a *Pan-Romani* approach, glossing over differences and highlighting similarities. Such practices find parallel with Gellner's (1983) theory, in which a nationalist discourse must be broad: a nationalist narrative is supposed to make sense to a big group and, to this end, it stresses the widespread features which encompass said big group, while trying to relax the differences. According to Gellner, this is a pattern reiterated by nationalist movements since the mid-19th century, and – as discussed in Chapter 01 – found among Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations.

Such an appeal, focusing on the universal and relaxing on the particulars, might be seen on three of the most known outcomes of that meeting in 1971: firstly, the decision to call all people known as, ascribed as or self-defined as Gypsies in the world under the name of Roma; secondly, the choice of a flag to depict these people; thirdly, the selection of a song as the Romani anthem. The current expressions of the *Pan-Romani* representations can be seen, for instance, in the Facebook profile, *The Roma Nation Movement* (TRNM), which attests as mission:

Our mission is unite the Roma globally with democratic transition approach to reach democracy and unity in Romani nation. Our goal is to reach freedom, equality and justice for Romani nation (The Roma Nation Movement 2018).

In order to examine in depth the representations about the Roma present in the lines above, it might be interesting to use Robin's (1977) technique on the analysis of statements. To Robin, sentences are formed by two kind of information: the idea expressed by those who propose the communication as *arguments*, i.e. something that must convince the listeners, and the idea which is granted and, therefore, is communicated as an *assumption*. In other words, in a sentence it is possible to find opinions which mean to persuade the receivers of their importance (*arguments*), and

also concepts which are positioned as taken for granted – as common knowledge (*assumptions*).

In the aforementioned *mission* of TRNM it is possible to find *arguments* and *assumptions*. Deconstructing the text⁵¹, it is possible to see the following table:

Table 08 – Analysis of TRNM statement

Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Roma are not [politically]⁵² globally united; • Democratic transition approach is the way to unite and lead the Romani Nation to democracy; • Romani nation does not enjoy freedom, equality and justice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nation of the Roma

The *assumption* of the existence of the nation of the Roma is constructed in the fact that the concept itself is not discussed during the discursive practice. Such representations are even strengthened when the text implies that, even though they are not a united people, there is still a *Roma Nation*. It is important to highlight that it is not a problem when someone or a group makes a statement with *assumptions*, in fact, it is virtually impossible to communicate without it. In the act of communication the interlocutor is looking to illustrate their ideals in a code which is supposed to be understood by the listener. In this process, the people speaking externalize a set of signs which carry meanings to themselves and which, hopefully, will also mean something to the receiver of the message – preferably both will share the same meanings. Therefore, through the *assumptions* it is possible to understand the mind-set of the interlocutor. What the speaker is trying to argue says a lot about them, therefore it is interesting to observe those concepts which are externalized and which, in the mind-set of the speaker, do not need be explained at all. Plus, the certainties coming from the interlocutor also have the power to create representations in those who are listening. A sentence which does not bring questionings about some elements might have the effect of conceiving certainties within the audience. In applying to the discussed case, the

⁵¹ In this example and in those that follow it might be possible to find *arguments* and *assumptions* beyond the ones highlighted here. For a purpose of clarity and reading ease, this work will stress the ones concerning the discussions.

⁵² Given the context of the sentence, is possible to reach the conclusion that *The Roma National Movement* means that Roma are not *politically* united. Therefore, the word *politically* was introduced for a better understanding.

concept of Roma is taken for granted, as clear and stable. That feeling is strengthened by another sentence present in TRNM’s Facebook profile:

We are independent network of Roma brothers and sisters around the world (The Roma Nation Movement 2018).

The words chosen to suggest the degree of closeness among Romani subjects are the same ones used in a family level. Therefore, there is a structuring of all the Gypsies/Roma as belonging to a closed group, which shares strong levels of history and complicity – as a family does. These representations are found in similar manner in different web pages of other organizations. The *Positive Romani Stories* (PRS), a Facebook profile with over 2000 followers, for instance, claims that:

Roma are perceived by the majority society with many negative prejudices and stereotypes, and they are also idealizing by romantic clichés. With this page we would like to demonstrate you, how varied Roma really are: warm, friendly, smart and open armed hospitable people (Positive Romani Stories 2018).

It is possible to highlight the following table:

Table 09 – Analysis of PRS statement

Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roma are perceived by stereotypes; • Roma are in fact warm, friendly, smart and open armed hospitable people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dichotomy between <i>Roma</i> and <i>majority society</i>; • The nation of the Roma

In a way similar to the TRNM, the text presented by the PRS argues in favour of aspects which are understood as more relevant. For example, the existence of negative prejudices and stereotypes through which the majority society perceives the Roma population and, in order to overcome this scenario, they assert the Roma people carrying out positive characteristics. However the concept of *Roma Nation* itself is an *assumption*. In the PRS discursive practice a dichotomy between *Roma* and the named *majority society* is *assumed*. Therefore, the only characterization of *Roma*, in this case, is presented as the opposite of what is *majority society* but not as a matter worthy of discussion. Even without a clear definition about what means Roma and majority society, these concepts are portrayed as two definitely separate categories. Actually, the lack of discussion about these concepts might even reinforce the obviousness of the discursive dissociation, enabling to fit within *Roma* all those who are not *majority society*.

The *Pan-Romani* representations are also present in the website of the International Romani Union. Currently it is possible to find two organizations raising the name of IRU, one in Macedonia and another one in Latvia⁵³. As the IRU/Macedonia mission, for instance, it is possible to see the following statement:

We as [political] representatives of the Roma people make efforts to protect the Roma population and our future generations from all negative occurrences in the past, in the present and in the future, in all forms of discrimination, hate speech, segregation, intolerance, violence, genocide, and at the same time we are deeply believe in respect of the human fundamental rights, equality between all genders, creation of favorable climate for respect of the rights, respect of the basic democratic principles of freedom, and the life standard, as well as the elimination of all of the irregularities, in collaboration with the international institutions which are obliged for that. ('Vision and Mission' 2018).

Amongst the *arguments* and *assumptions* present in the quotation:

Table 10 – Analysis of IRU/Macedonia statement

Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IRU is the [political] representative of the Roma; • The IRU must make efforts to protect the Roma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Roma people who need [political] representativity;

IRU/Macedonia, therefore, indicates their belief in the factuality of the existence of an objective Roma people, which is a grouping of people who need political representativity to fight for their rights. IRU/Latvia offers a similar approach:

[...] it's a self-evident truth that it is the right time to present the Roma people to the world not as an uncontrollable gang, but as a nation ready to take part in the process of world's development. ('IRU News' 2015).

Table 11 – Analysis of IRU/Latvia statement

Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the right time to present the Roma not as an uncontrollable gang; • It is the right time to present the Roma as a nation to take part in the process of world's development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Roma people; • The Roma people as a nation;

⁵³ During the 2010s, the International Romani Unions underwent some internal political crises and, while this research was being developed, there were two different IRUs, both claiming their position as rightful Roma representatives. After January of 2018, these two organizations decided to unite and work together.

As in the previous examples, the concept of *Roma* is delineated within the text mildly, without any underlining and might even go unnoticed. However, that is precisely the core of the question. All the aforementioned texts express the fact that these organizations seem to see the concept of *Roma* as shaped, clear and sealed. Thus, this clear-cut way which is suggested in the text helps the listener of the message to compose a similar understanding.

Therefore, the choice of the words and/or ideals which will be the *assumptions* on any given sentence, paragraph or text it is never a choice driven by the urgency to better represent the reality, but instead it is reality itself for the interlocutor. In other words, the construction of the aforementioned quotations signalize that those responsible for these messages understand that all the populations which are known as Gypsies can be framed within the name of *Roma*. Plus, their production is part of a system of significations which will help to construct a broad sense among the listeners that all the populations known as Gypsies, are in fact *Roma*. To enforce the cultural bond, in the first article of the IRU/Macedonia Statute, it is possible to find the following two points:

1. To develop all the qualities favorable Romani cultural traditions, customs and language.
[...]
5. To cooperate in solving the social, economic, educational, cultural and humanitarian problems of the Romani people ('International Romani Union. Statute of the Organization' 2000: 2).

From the excerpt, it is possible extract the *arguments* and the *assumptions*:

Table 12 – Analysis of IRU/Macedonia statement

Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the purpose of IRU to develop all the qualities favorable Romani cultural traditions, customs and language; • It is the purpose of IRU solve the social, economic, educational, cultural and humanitarian problems of the Romani people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romani cultural traditions, customs and language; • Romani social, economic, educational cultural and humanitarian problems.

In this part of the IRU/Macedonia rhetoric, it is not the fact of Gypsies/Roma being a defined grouping which is implied (even though it is also present, as inseparable from the very choice of using the concept *Roma*), but the culture, tradition, customs and language which belong to the discursively granted *Roma* people. Also, it attaches to the (claimed) Romani people a whole set of social-political negative contexts. That

approach can be also seen in the European Romani Institute of Arts and Culture’s (ERIAC) website:

ERIAC exists to increase the self-esteem of Roma and to decrease negative prejudice of the majority population towards the Roma by means of arts, culture, history, and media (‘About ERIAC’2018).

It is possible to see that the ERIAC target is improving the way in which Gypsies/Roma are perceived in society through a promotion of their (claimed) set of cultural practices and their historiography through work on media. In other words, the ERIAC aims – if not to control – to be an effective part in the management of the representations about Gypsies/Roma in the eyes of the non-Gypsy/Roma society. They, actually, have this dichotomy *assumed* in a different excerpt:

The main long-term aims of ERIAC are:
 – To educate and inform the non-Roma population about Roma arts and culture and to help for creating understanding, tolerance and mutual respect between Roma and non-Roma communities (‘About ERIAC’ 2018).

Therefore:

Table 13 – Analysis of ERIAC statement

Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Roma population must be informed about Roma arts and culture; • Such information will help for creating understanding, tolerance and mutual respect between Roma and non-Roma communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cultural set of Roma arts and culture; • The (clear-cut) dichotomy between Roma and non-Roma; • The Roma people.

The ERIAC is an organization from 2016, created with the support of European governmental and non-governmental organizations and also the Open Society Foundations (OSF). The last one is involved on Gypsy/Roma issues since the end of the so-called Socialism in Eastern Europe through sponsored local organizations. Generally speaking, the NGOs associated with OSF focus on improving the socio-economic and political conditions of Gypsies/Roma. Thus, *Social-Political* representations assume the Roma as a close-knit group, but also add social, economic and political characteristics to this group and manage these features in the identity characterizations of the *Roma Nation*. It is possible to see this approach in the section *About Us* of the Roma Educational Fund (REF), which claims that:

Its mission and ultimate goal is to close the gap in educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma. In order to achieve this goal, the organization supports policies and programs which ensure quality education for Roma, including the desegregation of education systems.

Disassembling the text in *assumptions* and *arguments*, it is possible to see:

Table 14 – Analysis of REF statement

Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is necessary close the educational gap between Roma and non-Roma; • In order to achieve this goal, REF have to support policies and programs which ensure quality education for Roma, including the desegregation of education systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The (clear-cut) dichotomy Roma and non-Roma; • The category of Roma; • The educational gap between Roma and non-Roma.

The very first *assumption* from the text of REF is the (clear-cut) dichotomy between Roma and non-Roma: one way to compose the Roma as a national group, with culture, traditions and language is portraying the (claimed) Romani culture isolated from the non-Gypsy/Roma inhabitants of the countries where they live. Notwithstanding, there is also the *assumption* of the educational gap between Roma and non-Roma: what is being argued in the text is who has the right to work in the fulfilment of the educational gap, and not the existence of the educational gap itself.

However, it is not the case to simplify the understanding here and enforce the feeling in which simply a few organizations started to use a specific language and, thus, *Roma Nation* representations were formed and being informed. It is important to keep in mind that the dynamics of the representations are always created in a two-ways game, of which both interlocutor and listener are part, neither of them in a passive way. The context in which the rhetoric is inserted must favour the compliance between those who claim and those who support the claiming. In other words, it is not enough that a group rhetorically implies that Roma are a cohesive ethnic group, or suggests any characteristic to this group, if the receivers of the message in the process do not understand the information. In this case, it is possible to say that the listeners of the previously-analysed messages might have anchored their meanings because of the employment of nationalist characteristics and definitions, which are very common in everyday life. In other words, this way to explain the *Roma as Nation* found ground to be signified and re-signified by the groups engaged in the communicational process

constantly. Therefore, the researcher must not only look in how many times, or how the rhetoric is constructed, but understand the context in which it is applied in order to build the analysis. As Chartier (1990: 51) says:

[...] The sociological temptation here consists in considering words, ideas, thoughts and representations as mere objects to be enumerated, in order to reconstitute their unequal distribution. What it means to deprive the subject (individual or collective) of the analysis and to deny to them any importance to the relation (personal or social) that maintains the social agents with the cultural objects or the contents of the thought. [...] In the very same way in which the modalities of practices, the tastes and the opinions are more distinctive than these works, the ways in which an individual or group appropriates an intellectual motif or a cultural form are more important than statistical distribution of that motive or in this way^{vii}.

The *Pan-Romani* and the *Social-Political* rhetoric have no clear birth certificate, and they walked hand-in-hand through the history of the Romani social movements since the late 19th century, at least. However, both representations became stronger after the internationalization of the *Romani Nationalism*, through Romani and Romani-Friendly international organization in the 1960s, hitting the 1st World Romani Congress, in 1971. While they coexisted and supported each other, it is not true that they were equivalent at all times and in all organizations which claimed to politically represent and enforce discursive and imaginary practices concerning Gypsies/Roma. Thus, it is relevant to discuss the development, the legitimation process and the rooting of the discourses which are part of the *Pan-Romani* and the *Social-Political* representations.

2.2 *The unfolding and the legitimation of the Roma Nation representations*

As mentioned, it would be shallow to take the prior analysis as ultimate and granted. There are two main situations to which a depthless understanding of the earlier scrutiny may lead: 1. The belief that the use of the concept of *Roma* is (only) a political strategy promote on the average population (Gypsies/Roma or non-Gypsies/Roma) the nationalist ideal of a *Roma Nation*⁵⁴; 2. That the receptor of the rhetoric simply absorbs the information to which they have access, and then passes it onwards. It is necessary to keep in mind that representations are not positioned within a game of truth or lies, but, for those who are involved with these representational codes, the rhetoric, discourses or

⁵⁴ By its turn, this mistake might lead to the understanding that Roma as a group *no dot exist* which is a rough and dangerous simplification of the matter.

images are the truth itself. However, representations are a live construct, which never stops in time. The representations are incorporated both by the interlocutor and by the listener who, together, accordingly, rebuild daily the meaning of such representations. It is possible to say that there is a daily reconstruction of the meaning of the truth. Chartier (2009: 51), says:

The representations are not mere images, true or false, of a reality that would be external to them; they have their own energy that leads one to believe that the world or the past is, in effect, what they say it is. In this sense, the representations produce the breaches that break societies and also incorporate them to the individuals^{viii}.

In summarizing, it is not the focus of this research to define if the *Pan-Romani* or the *Social-Political* representations which serve as basis for the *Romani Nationalism* are true or false, but to understand how these two representations are formed, dialogued, rebuilt daily and used politically. And, in order to be instrumentalized and listened, discourses must be legitimized. The legitimation process of the *Romani Nationalism* started in the 1960s but, grew internationally during the 1970s with the spring of the 1st World Romani Congress (WRC) and, thereafter, the International Romani Union. The WRC was the first gathering of Gypsy/Romani activists and scholars in an international level, which counted with the support of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Indian Government, and which managed to be heard and recognized by big international organizations such as the Council of Europe (CoE) and the United Nations (UN).

2.2.1 The Pan-Romani and the Social-Political representations in a nationalist scheme

It is possible to say that the WRC/IRU perspective and framework enforced the two aforementioned representations: the whole population known as Gypsies/Roma as being siblings, and that these groups of people share a similar culture and face analogous social problems. The ultimate target of these discursive practices nurtured by the WRC/IRU would be the political awakening of the Gypsy/Roma population to the fact that they are the *Roma Nation*.

The nationalist face of the international Gypsy/Romani social movements disclosed by the WRC in 1971 can find its roots in the interwar period. In 1933, during the conference *United Gypsies of Europe*, for instance, a flag to represent all Gypsies was chosen (Hancock 2005). That act per se might seem irrelevant, however flags are the usual symbol to symbolize nations and countries around the world. Nevertheless – it

might not be clear whether it was a conscious theoretical pillar or not –, it was the organizations which appeared after the Second World War who showed a stronger nationalist framework. From 1945 onwards, there is a distinct attempt to assemble and secure a national unity (which can be understood as ethnic unity in this case) with a political one. In other words, there was a smooth but constant discursive practice among and throughout the Gypsy/Roma and Gypsy/Roma-Friendly social movements supporting the general idea in which all the Gypsies/Roma were a close-knit group, which should reach the right to their own political representativity. As examples to be cited are the case of Queen Zora, who wanted to unite the Roma people and negotiate on their behalf with different governments (Klímová-Alexander 2006: 601); or Slovakian academics, Romani intellectuals and sympathizers who asked for Romani nationalization and autonomy in the 1950s (Klímová-Alexander 2006: 609) or the strategies of Ionel Rutaru issuing Romani passports (Klímová-Alexander 2007: 630) are examples⁵⁵ of a core which mesh the national/ethnic existence with the political organization. That idea finds parallel with Gellner's thought: "Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent" (Gellner 1983: 01).

At the WRC itself, it is possible to detect an environment where nationalist rhetoric would enforce both the *Pan-Romani* and *Social-Political* representations. For instance, Kenrick's unofficial report about the WRC brings the ten-point programme, proposed by Juan de Dios Ramirez, and adopted by the attendees. In the last of the ten points, it is said:

(x) In view of the love and brotherhood which have been the evident sign of unity between the Gypsies of different countries [politically] represented here, we make public recognition of the spirit of a united people which inspires us all, strengthening us in the knowledge that we are one Rom people who consider the suffering and joys of each of our brother as our own suffering and joy (Kenrick 1971: 106).

From this excerpt it is possible to see the *Pan-Romani* representations. First, the ideal of a *brotherhood* which unites all Gypsies; second, the reaffirmation of this tie when suggesting the oneness between Gypsies, even though they might be living in different countries; third and last, the straight affirmation that they are all *one Rom people*. It is interesting to highlight that the *Pan-Romani* representations do not necessarily bring the word *Roma* together. Kenrick supports an ideal when all the

⁵⁵ Other examples of such strategies can be found in the work of Klímová-Alexander (2006, 2007, 2010).

Gypsies/Roma are bound using the word Gypsy, and similar situations happen even today in Spain, Portugal and Brazil: even the intellectual elite and the activists who are connected with the international rhetoric use the concept *Gypsy*⁵⁶ and *Roma* interchangeably (even though not always and not with everybody).

The *Pan-Romani* representations establish their presence throughout Kenrick's report. In his text, there are no notes regarding any cultural diversity among the Gypsy/Romani population but the linguistic. However, even this issue is minimized, as to him "[...] it was also found that the different dialects of Romani could be understood after one had got used to the differences between them" (Kenrick 1971: 101). Plus, in Acton's report about the *Meetings of the Social and War Crimes Commissions of the World Romani Congress* there are statements reinforcing the rhetoric of Gypsy/Roma as a unitary group. For example, Acton (1972: 98;100) describes the call from Jim Penfold for unity among the Romani people from different countries at same time that the Cultural Commission keeps encouraging the recording of so-called Gypsy Music. While the first declaration states that there are different countries but only one *Romani nation* living inside their borders, the second implies the absence of any differences among so-called Gypsy musicians throughout the world.

Accordingly, there were discursive practices related with worries about the life condition of Gypsies/Roma⁵⁷. Two of the five commissions created during the WRC had social concerns: the *War Crimes* and the *Social Affairs* commissions. While the first was supposed to look at the crimes committed against Gypsies/Roma during the World War II, the second aimed to discuss housing, education, employment and discrimination. Therefore, the WRC/IRU group not only brought up and internationalized the discourses about the Gypsies/Roma as being a unity who share a culture and face similar social problems. They also stepped ahead and invested themselves in the role of those characters who were supposed to do something about the social-economic situations of Gypsies/Roma. Part of these actions and strategies taken by the Romani activists, intelligentsia, and sympathizers also find parallels in the aforementioned Hroch's (2000) work.

⁵⁶ In Portuguese-speaking countries the equivalent is *Cigano*, meanwhile the word *Gitano* is used in Spanish speaking countries.

⁵⁷ In order to contextualize the overall Gypsy/Romani situation in Europe, the rate of infant mortality among Gypsies/Roma was 118 per 1000 births, while in average for the population it was 38 per 1000, in Hungary at the 1970s. Regarding life expectancy, while the average Slovakian man expected to live for 67 years, the Gypsy/Roma reached only 55 years of age (Ringold, Orenstein, and Wilkens 2005).

In Hroch's model, the first step of the aforesaid elite towards the enforcement of their non-mainstream ethnic nationality would be alluding to the cultural elements of such ethnic affiliation through the rescue of the language, poems and music, while also enforcing their social-political disadvantages as minorities. The pattern observed by Hroch in the 19th century might resonate with the WRC/IRU group. According to Kenrick (1971), out of the WRC there was the agreement to standardize the Romani language and start a journal that would discuss the language itself, also printing poems and stories. Besides that, "[...] regular festivals of Gypsy music and dance" (Kenrick 1971: 103) should be encouraged.

The WRC/IRU – embedded in the *Roma Nation* representations requests the recognition of the so-called Gypsy population as a *Roma Nation* – invested themselves in what might be considered the forefront of their own (claimed) ethnicity towards the worldwide ethnic-national recognition and a better life. This action of self-establishment in the leading edge of the group can also find parallel in Hroch's model, as to him it was intelligentsia who had lead the nationalist awakening. In other words, the WRC/IRU was the place where the *Pan-Romani* and *Social-Political* representations were politically instrumentalized and internationally reverbed.

2.2.2 WRC/IRU as a positive environment for the representations on Roma Nation

To debate the political interface of the WRC/IRU character, Chomsky's thoughts might be useful. When discussing strategies in which the labour class could organize themselves and fight for improvement of their quality of working and living conditions, Chomsky (2004) uses the notion of avant-garde parties. Keeping in mind the differences between the two realities – labour unions/parties and the Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations – it is possible to draw a parallel between the behaviour of the group which were part of WRC/IRU and the elements of Chomsky's thought. Chomsky calls avant-garde parties those which aim to take the control of the labour class from a central committee, with promises to make wonderful things on their behalf and to their benefit. Such strategy of political parties might be applied to any group that claims, at any kind of level, to politically represent and to fight in the name of a broad population with some goal – whether clear or otherwise. Thus, in an ideal scenario of avant-garde groups, they would be formed by elites (which can be economic, intellectual or prestigious) within a given group. These elites have the character of being an outcome

of former privileges, as well as profiting and developing different privileges once (self-) invested with their role as political representatives. In the case of the Romani elite, as aforesaid, it is possible to affirm they were an intellectualized group.

It is not unusual for intellectualized people to face the challenge of placing themselves as the enactors of social, economic or political changes. Therefore, there are discussions on the role of the intellectual in society, with different standing points. Such tension might be seen in eleventh thesis by Marx on Feuerbach: “The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it (Marx 1969: 15)”.

Chomsky also wrote his reflection on the subject:

Intellectuals are in a position to expose the lies of governments, to analyse actions according to their causes and motives and often hidden intentions. In the Western world, at least, they have the power that comes from political liberty, from access to information and freedom of expression. For a privileged minority, Western democracy provides the leisure, the facilities, and the training to seek the truth lying hidden behind the veil of distortion and misrepresentation, ideology and class interest, through which the events of current history are presented to us (Chomsky 1967).

In other words, Chomsky provides a general idea in which it is expected from intellectuals to fight for the truth and against any kind of lie or misunderstanding. Thus, intellectualized people would be in the forefront of changes and, exploring the metaphor of armies and battles, the avant-garde would be those who put themselves on the front line of the strife for certain values, which are (supposedly) those of the rest of the population who they politically represent. That might be seen in the WRC/IRU context through the words of Slobodan Berberski:

The goal of this congress is to unite Romanies throughout the world, and move them to action; to bring about emancipation as we see it, and according to our own ideals; to advance at our own speed (Hancock 2005: 121).

The most famous picture of the WRC portrays those in the forefront of the Romani cause:



Image 10 - Picture taken by Eva Davidová during the WRC (Blake 2016)

In Image 10, we can observe some of the participants of the 1st WRC singing and waving the recently chosen Romani flag. This picture must be interpreted as more than a simple record from the meeting, it must be understood as itself a statement. According to Flusser's (2002) thoughts, images are the outcome of the efforts to print in two dimensions the four dimensions of reality, to represent something which is beyond in space and in time. There is a usual belief that photos capture a moment and make it eternal. However, that thought is not accurate. What you see in a picture is not what happened, but a piece of what happened, reproduced within the limits of the techniques available, through the lenses of the photographer and reconstructed by the eyes of the observer.

From Image 10, it is possible to build an analogy with two different famous images to highlight the nationalist framework present in the WRC picture. As the soldiers of the United States army in Iwo Jima⁵⁸ (Image 11), the photo of 1971 shows a group which just won a battle against adversities, and as the Americans who fought in the Pacific Ocean, they raise the Romani flag to mark their victory. This act symbolizes not only the externalization of the Romani existence, but the fact that it was these

⁵⁸ Iwo Jima is a small island with less than 26 square kilometres of extension. The island was an important headquarters for Japan during the 2nd World War, conquered by the United States army in February, 23rd, 1945 after an intense battle. That very day Joe Rosenthal took the picture present in Image 11 (Sommerville 2017).

people who were in the vanguard of the whole process. Still, to reinforce the avant-garde frame, the picture can find a parallel with the painting of Eugène Delacroix *La Liberté guidant le peuple*⁵⁹ (Image 11). They (the Roma activists and intelligentsia), proudly holding the flag, are those who are opening the way to bring their people to the future, to bring the Romani people to a better life.



Image 11 - US Marines Raise a Second Flag atop Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima [left - Rosenthal (1945)] and *La Liberté guidant le peuple* [right - Delacroix (1830)]

This perspective observed on image 10 matches the third paragraph of the ten-points program proposed by Juan de Dios Ramirez, and adopted by the WRC:

(iii) The International Gypsy Committee should conduct a vast campaign to spread its ideas (a) among the Gypsies themselves so that they should see in this Committee the best organization to unite their strength and defend their rights; and (b) among the Gajo population of all countries so that, realizing the force and objectives of the Committee, it should respect and consider them (Kenrick 1971: 106).

From this excerpt, it is possible to deconstruct and analyse:

⁵⁹ According to Želazko (2017) the “Liberty Leading the People oil painting (1830) by French artist Eugène Delacroix, commemorating the July Revolution in Paris that removed Charles X, the restored Bourbon king, from the throne. The extravagantly heroic scene of rebellion was initially received with mixed reviews, but it became one of Delacroix’s most popular paintings, an emblem of the July Revolution and of justified revolt.”

Table 15 – Analysis of point III of Juan de Dios Ramirez’s ten points program at 1st WRC statement

Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The International Gypsy Committee should conduct a vast campaign to spread its ideas among the Gypsies themselves; • Gypsies should see in this Committee the best organization to unite their strength and defend their rights; • The International Gypsy Committee should conduct a vast campaign to spread its ideas among the Gajo population; • The International Gypsy Committee has force and objectives; • The force and objectives of the International Gypsy Committee should be respect by the Gajo. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strength of Gypsies; • The rights of Gypsies; • The dichotomy between Gypsies and Gajo population.

Therefore, it is relevant to see how those who invest themselves in the role of leaders of the Romani population represent – in the rhetorical and imaginary level – these populations. That can be seen mostly given the *assumptions*: 1. *Gypsies are strong*, which enforces their unity not only with the use of one name to symbolize the whole population, but also the strength of this connection; 2. *Gypsies have rights*, which enforces their unity as a group when equates the fact the Gypsies/Roma have the same right to have rights as any other recognized group; and, for last, the dichotomy which emphasize the prior *assumptions* and also notes a clear-cut between Gypsies and Gadzho population. The second WRC, in 1978, follows similar steps. According to Liegeois and Gheorghe (1995), the recognition of the *specificity* of the Romani Culture, the right to have their own political representative bodies and the standardization of the language was among the main targets of that meeting in Geneva.

This approach of the WRC/IRU, bringing themselves forward as the leaders, organizers and protectors of the Roma population, found parallels with the approach of the World Council of Churches and the Indian Government. The representations about Roma which were enforced by the WRC/IRU found anchorage in these two organizations and, therefore, it was possible to establish a partnership which, in turn, helped in the enforcement of the rhetoric and discourses that are part, mostly, of the *Social-Political* representations.

The 1st World Romani Congress was funded by the World Council of Churches and by the Government of India ('History of the International Romani Union' 2017; Hancock 2005). It is neither surprising nor accidental that these partnerships surfaced in 1971. Klímová-Alexander (2007) reveals that the IRC had ties with clerical organizations – specifically with the Gypsy Evangelical Church – back on the 1960s. The principal goal of this alliance was financial reparations for war crimes, which could be managed either by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) or by the Indian Government.

Their frame as a group fighting for the benefit of others might be seen not only among those at the WRC, but also in their supporters. Regarding the Indian Government, for instance, beyond the common-sense role of a governmental organization, since 1947 – year in which India became independent from the British Empire –, the Indian Government assumed a responsibility to fight for human rights.

Under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru and his Indian National Congress party, the Indian state's legitimacy was tied to discourses about self-reliance, economic development, protecting individual rights, internationalism, responsible governance and democratic accountability (Chacko 2015: 330).

Even though Chacko affirms that after 1966 there was a change in the way in which the Government of India used to work, the fight against social disadvantages still maintained its space in the official rhetoric. Chacko (2015) highlights how Prime Minister Indira Gandhi⁶⁰ had a key role in the development of the document called the New International Economic Order (NIEO) in 1974. The NIEO required, among other things, the compensation of colonial and racial domination and multilateral international cooperation. Beyond the increasing discourse generally supported by the WRC/IRU about a common origin to all Roma in the Indian Continent, the mind-set of the Indian Government matched the aims of the WRC/IRU and, mainly due to the humanist approach, with the rhetoric of the World Council of Churches as well.

The WCC sustained, back in the 1970s, a rhetoric of protecting basic Human Rights. From 1966 to 1972, the general secretary of the WCC was an American minister called Eugene Carson Blake. His time working as secretary matches a moment in the

⁶⁰ Indira Gandhi served as Indian Prime-Minister from 1966 until 1977 and from 1980 until 1984 ('Indira Gandhi: Prime Minister of India' 2017).

history of the WCC in which Orthodox churches were adhering to the Council⁶¹ ('History' 2017). That seems to be an outcome of the fusion between International Missionary Council and the WCC, in 1961, which brought, according to their website, an "enlarged agenda in world mission and evangelism" ('History' 2017). At the last assembly of the WCC before the WRC, which took place in Uppsala⁶²/1968, there were sections like "Towards justice and peace in international affairs." Right after, at the Assembly in Nairobi⁶³/1975, panels on "Seeking community," "Education for liberation and community," "Structures of injustice and struggles for liberation," and "Human development" appeared ('Timeline' 2017). Yet, since the early years of the 1960s, the WCC had a program aiming to fight racism⁶⁴ ('History' 2017). In the activities of the WCC, a discourse of handing out assistance might be recognized.

It is possible to highlight the fact that the WCR/IRU, WCC and Indian Government are three parties claiming to politically represent a given group and engaged in activities in the name of said group. It is not the intention of this paper to demonstrate whether those organizations were doing beneficial work in relation to a population (considered by those actors as they were) in need of aid. The intention is to draw a parallel to emphasize that what they saw in each other was recognizable within their own structures, which then influenced these two organizations to sponsor and support the 1971 event. In summarizing, the WRC was working and functioning similarly to an international organization such as the WCC and, furthermore, using a framework recognizable by a national governmental organization.

Thus, the encounter of these institutions has at least two levels of intersections: the project to help a population (which they considered) in need and the mutual exchange of approval. The first level appears, mainly, when looking closer into the structures of the mentioned organizations: they were groups which saw themselves – and each other – as taking the lead as political representatives of a larger population; i.e. three (supposedly) analogous agencies. The second level highlights a shared set of goals. Each organization reinforces its position as defender of human rights, stressing its

⁶¹ Not coincidentally the very same geographic area which concentrates a significant part of the people defined or self-ascribed as Gypsies/Roma

⁶² Uppsala is a city located approximately 72 kilometres northwest of the Swedish capital city, Stockholm.

⁶³ Nairobi is the Kenyan capital city, with over 3,138 million inhabitants.

⁶⁴ Interesting to note an overlapping: In 1961 the 3rd Assembly of the WCC was organized in New Delhi/India, between November 19th and December 5th.

partnership with an agency with a similar objective. In this specific case, the process was highly relevant for the WRC as a new organization.

2.2.3 The international legitimized positioning of the Pan-Romani and the Social-Political representations

Establishing contact and receiving recognition and legitimation from stronger international organizations might have also been helpful in a process of international legitimation of the position and the legitimization of the discursive practices about the *Roma Nation* and, not less important, those who were in charge – at least in the international level – of such rhetoric. To David Beetham there are different dimensions of legitimacy. In his words:

Power can be said to be legitimate to the extent that:

- i) it conforms to established rules
- ii) the rules can be justified by reference to beliefs shared by both dominant and subordinate, and
- iii) there is evidence of consent by the subordinate to the particular power relation (Beetham 1991: 16).

For Beetham, these three levels do not exclude each other. All of them contribute to the legitimation of a position of power and, the most relevant: it is the historical and socio-political context which will define the balance of the three in a given situation of legitimacy. This work opens the discussion about the rise of the WRC/IRU as the legitimate political representative of all Roma from Beetham's third point, the consent by the subordinated.

The first step consists in determining which organization would be the subordinated and which would be the dominant in a certain relationship that has the WRC/IRU as one of its parts. If, at one level, the WRC/IRU claimed to be the political representative of the Gypsies/Roma – e. g., not to be an authority over the Romani population but instead their arms and voices in a struggle for less inequality –, on the other side, the (claimed) political representatives were the ones who chose the flag, the anthem and the name which should be used by the Gypsies/Roma (Hancock 2005). In this sense, there was a relation of authority between the WRC/IRU and the population which they claimed to represent in political level. So, appropriating Beetham's model, it was necessary to build a relation of consent between the (supposed) political

representatives – the IRU board and associates – and the (supposed) politically represented – the overall Gypsy/Romani population.

One way to build a consensual relationship would have been through direct elections. However, such a straight democratic electoral process never took place among the targeted population. Elections are a strategy still currently in the process of development by the IRU/Macedonia, which is trying to make it viable by 2020, under the efforts of Grattan Puxon (Puxon and Muarem 2016; Puxon and Muarem 2016a). In the absence of such a tool, what the people gathered in 1971 had on hands was their own privileged position as intellectuals and so forth within the society to legitimise the WRC as a political representative of all Gypsies/Roma. In other words: this group, profiting from the political, social and economic advantages which they enjoyed in their everyday life, declared themselves as part of the *Roma Nation* and, subsequently, translated their prior privileges into a position of being *prestigious Roma*, at least in the eyes of the non-Gypsy/Romani political, social and economic society. Thus, through the public act of the World Romani Congress, they enabled themselves – or attempted to – to fulfil a position of mediation power between the Romani population and non-Romani authorities. The points VII and VIII of the ten-point programme adopted by the WRC are requests for a Romani political representative within the CoE and UNESCO, as well as sending the conclusion of the WRC to different governments via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Beetham (1991: 19) recognized the practice of allocating to illustrious members of a given group the force to legitimize a choice made in behalf of the full people, when the great majority of the population cannot be consulted:

What is common to legitimate power everywhere, however, is the need to ‘bind in’ at least the most significant members among the subordinate, through actions or ceremonies publicly expressive of consent, so as to establish or reinforce their obligation to a superior authority, and to demonstrate to a wider audience the legitimacy of the power.

However, Beetham still highlights that one can only talk about legitimacy when there is public consent, and not when the legitimation is the outcome of propaganda and/or campaigns already defined by those in power. In the case of WRC, those ‘significant members’, the ones to be legitimized and the ones to play as legitimators were the same people, which might make the whole process precarious. Nonetheless, Beetham classified as the opposite of this process of *legitimation through public*

consent, a process of the *withdrawing of the public acquiescence*, which can be materialized as *non-cooperation* and/or *passive resistance*⁶⁵ from the subordinated group against the dominant one. However, until the emergence of the Roma National Congress, in the 1990s, Niremburg (2009) affirms that there were no international group which challenged the monopolistic self-positioning of the WRC/IRU. Moreover, in a national level, while in Western Europe Niremburg emphasizes a low number of activists and organized communities, in the East, even with a bigger number of militants, they had to fight not only in favour of Gypsy/Roma, but also against the closed borders of their countries and the strength of authoritarian regimes. The outburst of international Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations would occur only after the fall of the so-called Iron Curtain in Eastern European Countries (Vermeersch 2006). In summarizing, the lack of organized international Gypsy/Romani social movements groups which might complain and publicly withdraw assent from the WRC/IRU's position of power is one of the pillars in which they based their legitimacy.

If there was no institution or group which could put itself in opposition to the claim that the IRU was a legitimate political representative, the second step would be recognition from stronger institutions. Thus, to stand with Beetham's model and develop a parallel with his second level of legitimacy, it is pertinent to change the balance between dominant and subordinate used in the prior paragraphs: no longer considering WRC/IRU as the dominant, but as the subordinate in the equation: WRC/IRU is the new and unsteady group and the dominant are first the Council of Europe and later the United Nations.

The CoE is an outcome of the horrible times which the European continent experienced during the Second World War. Among CoE founders⁶⁶ it is possible to find political representatives of the strongest European states which took part in the conflict, with exception of Stalinist USSR – which was not seen as much of an ally for Western governments and politicians. According to the CoE website, those were “men of dialogue [...], pioneers of an Europe of peace founded on the values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law” (‘Founding Fathers’ 2017). Plus, as current values they stress their care for “[...] freedom of expression and of the media, freedom of assembly, equality, and the protection of minorities” (‘Values’ 2017).

⁶⁵ All the words in italic in this paragraph are concepts borrowed from Beetham's work.

⁶⁶ Winton Churchill, Konrad Adenauer, Robert Schuman, Paul-Henri Spaak, Alcide de Gasperi and Ernest Bevin.

In this sense, the rhetoric spread by the WRC/IRU and supported by the WCC and the Indian Government is easily connectable with the values and philosophy – at least on the rhetoric level – of the Council of Europe. It is possible to see here a tendency among groups which perceive themselves as invested in a mission to find support in each other. Even more if this union is around a speech of Human Rights, as it is rare for someone or some group to identify against it after the Second World War. The actions of the Nazi regime during the conflict brought a status of undeniability to the importance of keeping eyes on the violation of life, which has as its main symbol the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, signed in December 10th, 1948. The word *Universal* itself, present in the name of the declaration, insinuates how these are values which are and must be supported by all and any person, group or state around the world. Supposing that the broad rhetoric on human rights would not be enough to bring the WRC/IRU and CoE together, there are more topics that might have served as a bridge between both institutions. If the CoE came to be with the goal of avoiding a new war and likewise avoiding such a thing as a new Holocaust in European land, the WRC/IRU had the interest of widely recognizing the fact that there had been a Romani Holocaust⁶⁷ (Acton and Klímová 2001). That goal is clear in Kenrick's report:

The WRC and CIT⁶⁸ would continue efforts to help individual Gypsies who had claims for reparations and also press for a general reparations payment by Germany to the Gypsy people through the United Nations.

A memorial would be set up in Europe to commemorate the Gypsies who had died in the Nazi period. When the place and nature of this memorial had been decided, an appeal for money to build it would be made (Kenrick 1971: 103).

Regarding the United Nations, the situation is not much different. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was announced during a United Nations General Assembly in Paris ('Universal Declaration of Human Rights' 2015). In this way, the UN is the floor in which the Human Rights rhetoric is based, at least at its official level:

⁶⁷ During the conflict there had been a series of murders justified by the Nazi authorities by the fact that the victims were asocial. That character was invested, mainly, on the population of Gypsies/Roma. Such narratives are defied by some Romani scholars as Ian Hancock and it will be further discussed in this work. For more information consult Mayall (2004) and Hancock (2004, 2015, 2013).

⁶⁸ Comité International Tsigane.

The term “human rights” was mentioned seven times in the UN's founding Charter, making the promotion and protection of human rights a key purpose and guiding principle of the Organization. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights brought human rights into the realm of international law. Since then, the Organization has diligently protected human rights through legal instruments and on-the-ground activities (‘Protect Human Rights’ 2014).

It is also important to keep in mind that the roots of the UN are still during the Second World War, in 1942, when a group of political representatives of 26 nations stated their will and compromise to fight against the Nazi-Fascist forces, the promoters of the Holocaust which the IRU wanted to bring to light. In this sense, we can see that there were shared beliefs between the organization aiming for recognition and the two institutions which held strong political power. But not only the belief in human rights in general, nor a feeling that the wounds of the Holocaust should be recognized, healed and avoided, might be seen as the ultimate bond between UN, CoE and WRC/IRU. Also relevant is their belief in political representativity as a valuable tool and strategy. All three groups involved had the symmetry of being an association of people who carried some level of social, political and/or economic privilege who assume or affirm as theirs the role of politically representing and speaking on behalf of a mass of people. All of them shared a belief on the efficiency of the political representativity to benefit a population.

This topic leads to the Beetham's first point, which is conformity with established rules. In his work, he deals with a strict conceptualization about this point, treating it in a legal sphere: power is legitimate if played within established rules, the rules of power. If this is not the case, then power is illegitimate. As Beetham (1991: 16) says:

i) The first and foremost first level of legitimacy is that of rules, corresponding to the legal definition already discussed. Power can be said to be legitimate in the first instance if it is acquired and exercised in accordance with established rules. For convenience I shall call the rules governing the acquisition and exercise of power the ‘rules of power’. These rules may be unwritten, as informal conventions, or they may be formalised in legal codes or judgements.

This work suggests that, to understand the construction of WRC/IRU's legitimacy before the CoE and UN, it is relevant to review the question of ‘rules of power’ in two ways: 1. Understanding what rules the WRC/IRU was obeying; 2. Understanding the ‘rules of power’ slightly as ‘rules of a game of power’. In the first

case, the World Romani Congress and International Romani Union – starting from its nomenclature –, is not claiming to politically represent one people within the borders of any specific country. Therefore, related to its general goals, there was no constitution or rulebook to rigidly follow⁶⁹. Back in 1971, the closest thing to the ideal of a worldwide law would be the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* which, as mentioned, strongly coincides with the WRC/IRU's general goals. It is possible to say that the WRC/IRU was obeying the rules of power that were universally accepted, which were the enforcement and protection of human rights.

The second scenario is slightly more treacherous and complex. It is not a question of obeying clear and established rules of power, but a question of knowing how to manage the rules of the game of power, and inserting oneself within the scheme. In other words: if, to be recognized by other countries, the WRC/IRU needed to be recognized by the CoE and the UN, the Romani organization must learn and deal with the rules of the games of power in which those international institutions were (and are) inserted. Both the CoE and the UN deal with nations and states, so the Gypsies/Roma around the globe must be one nation. And nations have flags, anthems, official languages (even though in practice this is sometimes not so) and a body of political representatives for their people.

For this last characteristic, it is possible to allude to the preceding discussion about the lack of massive (or any) participation of the people known or invested as Gypsies/Roma in the election of the WRC/IRU members. However, the method of selection through which the political representatives of each nation within the UN board had to follow, for instance, must also not be strictly under a democratic (i.e. participatory and inclusive) logic. It is difficult to say that the political representatives of each country at the UN were known and directly chosen by the populations which they (claim to) represent politically. That is because the USSR and China were part of the United Nations and had doubtful extensive electoral participatory methods during the 1970s. Plus, even in countries where so-called democratic practices were and are highly recognized by the common sense, there are doubts and discussions about the strength of the participation of the average person in the construction of their governments (Bakunin 1972; Schweber 2016). In the CoE, the concern about democratic practices seemed to be stronger at the time, since Portugal and Spain only

⁶⁹ It is understandable that specific strategies would be submitted to the legislation of any country in which they were applied, but not the broad rhetorical goals.

joined the organization after the death of their dictators⁷⁰. Nevertheless, the similarities on the discourse level might have been strong enough for the CoE to recognize the IRU formation process.

The WRC/IRU played by the UN and CoE rules, and that was the important detail to enforce their international recognition. Both entities advocated – and still do – a human rights rhetoric which matches the WRC/IRU discourse. Yet, all of them – particularly the UN – had similar issues in their democratic mechanism which would prevent them from criticizing and refusing the process of organizational formation of the WRC/IRU. If political representativity has its limits, which are based on material, economic, social and political issues, the CoE and the UN are formed by representatives of the political representatives. In other words, the same criticism which might be raised against democracy within the WRC/IRU could be applied to the UN and the CoE. They all acted as groups fighting for a greater good which declare themselves and recognize each other as legitimate, and the acknowledgment from one group strengthens the other and vice-versa. In that sense, they were all playing by the same ‘rules of power’.

Although it was important for the WRC/IRU be recognized by the CoE and the UN, this is not a question of a simple top-down or bottom-up relation. When the WRC/IRU is recognized by the WCC, for instance, prior altruistic works by the WCC legitimate the WRC/IRU as a humanitarian organization, as well as increasing the WCC’s legitimacy regarding democratic openness. Similarly, when the UN and the CoE recognize the WRC/IRU as a political representative of all Roma, it means that democracy and human rights are key topics in their eyes. Furthermore, it allows these two international organizations to advance their propaganda about their openness to promote universal ethnic diversity. In other words, it is a circular exchange of legitimation based on a broad notion of Human Rights and political representative democracy.

The IRU enforced this position as the legitimized interlocutor and official source of rhetoric on the Gypsies/Roma alone up to the end of the 1980s. Such mind-set of being entitled to speak on behalf of the whole Gypsy/Romani population can be seen in a letter written by Rajko Đurić in November of 1990. In this letter Đurić, as president of the IRU, assumes the position of the one in charge to communicate to different international organizations, such as the UN, the CoE and the Commission of the

⁷⁰ Respectively, António de Oliveira Salazar and Francisco Franco.

European Communities the problems which the Roma and Sinti face throughout Europe:

This people does [the Roma people] not enjoy the protection of its national liberties nor its collective rights in any state, a situation in flagrant contradiction of international acts and documents. For this reason the Romani Union has repeatedly addressed itself to the United Nations, as well as the Council of Europe and the Commission of the European Communities, asking them to implement an initiative and to find ways and means of protecting the elementary collective rights of Roma and Sinti. Any further delay in the defence and protection of Roma and Sinti will entail grave consequences for the men, women and children of our people (Liegeois and Gheorghie 1995: 19).

The “our people” in Đurić’s letter is the *Roma Nation*, which is being politically represented by the IRU. That frame might indicate that the *Roma Nation* representations might have been strengthened within this group but, as pointed out by Niremberg (2009), at the same time they lacked practical outcomes connected with the everyday people, which weakened the IRU’s position as political representative. Yet, even in face of the CoE and the European Union, the IRU position and its discursive practices were accepted and recognized but did not evolve. That scenario is framed by Simhandl (2009), when she stresses that up to mid-1990s, the main understanding of Gypsies/Roma within European bureaucracy were their supposed nomadism and how to deal with this ‘problem’.

In summarizing, the WRC/IRU was a grouping which appeared during the internationalization of the Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations. These previous organizations supported in their everyday work the fact that Gypsies/Roma were all brothers and that they had similar social, political and economic challenges to face. These are the milestones for the *Pan-Romani* and *Social-Political* representations which are the bases of the *Roma Nation* ideal. These set of practices of representations and representations of practices were, therefore, echoed, enlarged and settled within the WRC/IRU. Being internally established the *existence* of a *Roma Nation*, the WRC/IRU invested themselves in the role to be the political representative of the Roma and the interlocutor in behalf of this people, in order to make them internationally recognized: in other words, it settled the *Roma Nation* representations throughout the international community. Paradoxically, while there was an acceptance among some circles – academia and governmental high levels – of the *Roma Nation* representations, the average communities of Gypsies/Roma roughly embraced these discourses. Plus, the IRU’s role as political representative of the Gypsies/Roma never really strengthened. It

is after the entrance of the Western donors in Eastern Europe that the *Roma Nation* representations will reach the Gypsy/Romani communities through local activists and intelligentsia.

2.3 The local pragmatic instrumentalization of the Roma Nation representations and its contradictions

From its origin up to the early years of the decade of 1990, the approach, rhetoric and representations supported by the International Romani Union had little – if any – concurrency in the international level. However, after the end of the so-called Communist regimes in the Eastern Europe, there was an interesting change concerning the landscape of the Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations, which brought wider plurality of views and a different reality in the relations between local and international rhetoric and practices. After 1989, Western international organizations – whether national, international or non-governmental – saw a marketing opportunity in the East, not only regarding business but also in the sphere of social-economic assistance. Therefore, those Western donors brought to the East the capital from the West, and supported local NGOs which, after 1989, exploded throughout this region.

The *Roma National Congress* (RNC) was born local and with Western financial support, grew little by little outside its own borders. The RNC, formed in Germany by Rudko Kawczynski, handled firstly with the situation of Gypsy/Roma migrants within the German country – with economic support of Open Society Foundations – but, later on, start to embrace different organizations and behave as an umbrella organization which evolved sustaining critics about the IRU and its supposedly lack of actual activities.

The RNC capitalized on the inaction of the IRU, and a sense of disappointment amongst Roma that, at the international level, there was nothing more functional. Holding frequent meeting with Open Society Institute's logistical and financial assistance, the RNC had a short-lived burst of activity in the late 1990s. It was overly critical of the IRU and a rivalry emerged between these two organizations. RNC members were typically more active in community organizing, petitions and advocacy than the IRU. Still, the organization had much in common with its competitor (Niremberg 2009: 101).

Notwithstanding, Niremberg (2009) also affirm that up to the end of the 1990s and beginning of the 21st century, both IRU and RNC had lost their power to negotiate with governments, which rather talk straight with local NGOs in order to discuss about

Gypsy/Romani local issues. During the 5th World Romani Congress, held between July 24th and 28th of 2000, there was the creation of a Romani Parliament which was an attempt to bring together the members of RNC and IRU (Hancock 2005). Actually, this approximation materialized in the early years of the 2000s, when in a joint effort with the Council of Europe the *European Roma and Travellers Forum* (ERFT) was created, in 2005. According to Niremburg (2009), the format of the ERFT was, theoretically, designed to bring all Romani activists closer to discuss Gypsy/Romani issues together with the CoE. In fact, the ERFT itself might be considered an achievement of both IRU and RNC which, afterwards, ended up consolidating the position of interlocutor for the Roma before the European Union and the Council of Europe. It is not wrong to say that, concerning European bureaucracy, the ERFT overcame in relevance both IRU and RNC. Facing some sort of competition in its political space within the European context the RNC faded out and, from 2013 onwards, the IRU saw itself immersed in political struggles and divisions. During the time of development of this research, there were two organized groups claiming to be the International Romani Union, and a former self-titled president, Mr. Dorin Cioabă⁷¹.

Nevertheless, the ERFT itself, which was active from 2005 up to 2015 suffered a backlash in the end of 2016. From that point onwards, the CoE thought better to relocate its support on Gypsy/Romani issues from ERFT to the newly created and Berlin-based European Roma Institute of Arts and Culture (ERIAC).

2.3.1 Debating the role of the Western Donors within the Romani social movements

Given the geographical range in which International Roma and Roma-Friendly organizations work it is difficult to list one single reason for it, but there is certainly a gap between the International organization – whether the IRU, RNC and/or ERFT – and the local organizations and the Gypsy/Romani communities. Throughout interviews gathered during the field research trip in Eastern European countries, it was possible to listen repeatedly about this distance and, sometimes, even unfamiliarity with the international bodies. For instance, *B* (2016) when questioned about the role of

⁷¹ Attempts of contact were made with all of them. Initially (October 7th, 2016) there was feedback from an International Romani Union which is based in Macedonia, from the person of Mister Zoran Dimov. However, later contact attempts obtained no answer (July 4th, 2017; July 19th, 2017). A different IRU is presided by Dr. Normunds Rudevičs and it is based on Riga, Latvia. After attempts of communications (July 4th, 2017; July 19th, 2017), there was no answer. Attempts to contact Mr. Cioabă were never answered.

International Romani Union in Bulgaria during the 1990s answered “No, they were not working here”. Yet, while discussing about the process of expulsion of Gypsies/Roma from France in 2011, *B* (2016) affirmed:

Even after it became clear that all these attack against us, from the government [...], and the prosecutors’ offices didn’t find anything against Roma... that is illegal or something... they, the International Roma Institutions didn’t say a word... our friends of international, so-called movement. So... what I’m saying is that these organizations are, unfortunately, far from the reality! This discussion, what they have, is not grounded in the real problems in the countries.

This gap is found in discourses in Romania, Hungary, Serbia, Czech Republic and Macedonia. Back in the time of the interviews, the International Romani Union was still divided and none of these interviewees, which were everyday workers within Romani social movements, could answer anything about the IRU. The case of Macedonia is illustrative when the interviewee affirmed:

For example, now, there is a... IRU, International Roma Union, I mean it is an institution, organization, settled from 71... and, sincerely, I’m not familiar with what they are doing, except annual meetings (*M* 2016).

It is possible to highlight this distance between the local and international practices when the interviewee had the personal contact of Mr. Zoran Dimov, but had no information about what the IRU was planning or doing.

This mismatch between the international and local organizations might have been one of the reasons of the influential entrance of the Western donors in the scenario of Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations. As aforementioned, the core of the Romani mobilizations and the international *Romani Nationalism* was based⁷² – at least intellectually – in the Eastern countries of Europe. Therefore, those agents were subjected to the policies of the so-called socialist countries which, in great majority, were following a Stalinist approach upon Gypsies/Roma, enforcing them as proletarians and not an ethno-national group, as afore discussed. According to Marushiakova and Popov (2003) it is not uncommon to hear from Soviet Gypsies/Roma that the government of Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev (1964 – 1982) was a golden age. Mostly because within the economic context of the Soviet Union the Gypsy/Roma population managed

⁷² Certainly there were activists from Western Europe. However, the great majority of these Western actors had close connections with Eastern European people – in personal and family levels.

to have jobs, both in the legal and illegal sphere. Given this context, there was a development of a Gypsy/Romani intelligentsia within URSS:

Although we cannot really speak of a strict government policy for the development of the Gypsy community, the existing conditions favoured equality of Gypsy participation in social life, a high level of education for everyone and the establishment of a civic awareness. This is in stark contrast to Gypsies world-wide. Today in Russia and the new independent states there are hundreds - even thousands of Gypsies - with a relatively good education. Quite a few have respectable professions – they are teachers, doctors, lawyers, members of the military, artists and scholars (Marushiakova and Popov 2003: 15).

However, it would be a mistake to believe that all the Eastern European countries under the so-called Socialist regime had the same way to deal with their Gypsy/Roma population. Actually, both the state-controlled organizations and the free ones, together with the outcome of the – several times violent – policies to integration of Gypsies/Roma into the communist society were the ground floor for the Romani social, cultural and political mobilization which exploded after 1989 (Barany 2000). About the communist times, Barany (2000: 436) summarizes:

Aside from a few isolated examples, the Roma were not permitted to pursue mobilization activities. Thus, their political marginality in this period was rooted in exogenous political causes (e.g. obstacles posed by the state to mobilization). Nevertheless, state-controlled Gypsy organizations and the policy to integrate the Roma into state and party hierarchies served as something of an unintended training ground for the Gypsy activists of the future. As Ivan Vesely, a Slovak Rom who became a prominent Gypsy activist in the Czech Republic, asked me: “Do you think I would be sitting here arguing about Marx and Weber if it were not for the communists? I would be in the ghetto in eastern Slovakia!” Paradoxically, through their social (especially educational) policies the socialist regimes contributed to the development of what they feared most: Romani identity formation and activism.

This ambiguity is quite interesting to observe: the state policies towards Gypsies/Roma, striving to assimilate them within the majority society, were also the context which allowed a majority of those seen, treated or self-ascribed as Gypsy and/or Roma to achieve higher ranks of formal education and, as a result, to head the process of relabelling the Roma identity post-Socialism. Therefore, the Gypsy/Romani scenery before the fall of the Communist regimes were, generally speaking, a people which had the basic living needs respected, even though facing levels of violence in a state-led process of assimilation (Hungary and Yugoslavia had a particular different process which, however, does not change the overall landscape). Due to these assimilation

policies, a few among those Gypsies/Roma managed to be in contact with Romani social movements, whether state-led or free. These activists/intelligentsia were in place to, after 1989, receive the training and money coming from the Western sponsors. About the way in which these donors acted in their arrival in Bulgaria from 1989 onwards, *B* (2016) says that they approach was “[...] up to bottom, absolutely”.

Such approach is stressed not only by both Bulgarian activists who were interviewed for this work, but also in Hungary and Macedonia. The latter deserves a further comment, because the interviewee affirmed a freedom to work, despite the capital coming from the donors. However, when questioned about the methodology to work with the community, she confirmed that it is standard and came from the donors’ headquarters. This is interesting given the fact that *B* stated several times that the problem of the Western donors approach was exactly the will to try to impose methodologies which supposedly work in different contexts all around the world, but which were never tested in projects related with Gypsy/Romani populations. According to *B*, most approaches were (and still are) enforcing the Gypsies/Roma as victims within the society where they live, which *B*, *B1* and *R2* granted is not only inaccurate, but also prejudicial.

Concerning this approach of the international organizations towards the Gypsy/Romani issues, Simhandl (2009) offers a model of analysis where she affirms a change of the tide concerning their attitude. To her, in the mid-1990s it was common to talk about Gypsies/Roma without having them as subjects of the discussion, rather only as the objects. However, after the enlargement of the European Union, there was an incipient attempt to embrace the Gypsy/Roma themselves in the discussions and planning. The change noted by Simhandl might explain the different perspective between *B* and *M*. *B1* still affirms, categorically, that sometimes she wishes that Open Society Foundations, for instance, would leave the Gypsy/Romani issues behind. Mostly because they give financial support, in a top-bottom approach, and afterward do not assess the outcomes.

The Western donors arrived in Eastern Europe enforcing representations about a *Roma Nation*, as they arrived aiming to deal with the *Roma* issue. As observed in the OSF website: “The Open Society Foundations have spearheaded an unprecedented effort, working with Roma communities to secure Roma’s rightful position in European society” (‘The Roma and Open Society’ 2013). Yet, for instance, the OSF annual report points out the support to “Roma newspaper and magazine” in Bulgaria and awards to

“Romani students” in Czech Republic, among other references (‘Open Society Foundations Annual Report’ 1999: 27; 30). It is one discourse focused on helping a universal description of Gypsies/Roma, which enforces both *Pan-Romani* and *Social-Political* representations and, consequently, supports *Romani Nationalism*.

It is essential to keep in mind that the donors from West arrived in Central and Eastern parts of Europe with more than money. They also brought expertise, ideals and their own representations about how the social world is organized. Such understandings are based on the interpretation of their own context, where the characterization of groupings of people in the sense of ethnic-national groups it is not only accepted, but usually seen as organic. Therefore, when the Western Donors arrived at the new ‘market’ to deal with the so-called *Roma issue*, they dealt with Gypsies/Roma by enforcing the same conceptual and lexical frameworks which they were used to. *B* (2016) illustrates the case:

For example the Dutch Donors. [...] I forgot the name... we had a few discussions with him. And he was very harsh imposing... [...] ‘It works in Holland...’ It was a huge discussion. And I told him ‘look... maybe it works in Holland, with the Marroquin immigrants...’, but I told him ‘look... first of all we are not Marroquin. We are Gypsies. Second of all, we are not immigrants, we live here seven centuries.

Here it can be seen the frame of mind when this Dutch organization arrived in Bulgaria. They were dealing with the named *Roma issue* in a national level, national here understood as a category of analysis, usually enforced without much reflection. Wimmer and Schiller (2003) discuss the concept of *methodological nationalism* defining it as the “[...] naturalization of the nation-state by the social sciences (Wimmer and Schiller 2003: 576).” The authors divide the methodological nationalism in three variants: 1. The disregard of relevance of nationalism in the modern societies; 2. The fact of taking for granted the boundaries between states; and 3. Confining the interpretation of a phenomenon to the borders of a country. In this work the debate on *methodological nationalism* will be inspired by the ideal present in the first variant. To them:

Ignoring is the dominant modus of methodological nationalism in grand theory; naturalization of “normal” empirical social science; territorial limitation of the study of nationalism and state building. In the first variant of methodological nationalism, ignoring, the power of nationalism and the prevalence of the nation-state model as the universal form of political organization are neither problematized nor made objects of study in their own right (Wimmer and Schiller 2003: 578).

It is necessary to keep in mind that Wimmer and Schiller are discussing the academic world, however it seems that the ideal of not reflecting upon the strength of the concept of nation/nation-state in the formulation of understanding about the world is usual not only in the academia. The Western Donors seem to apply their mind-set of social borders based in a national understanding to the former socialist countries and, mostly, when addressing the population known as Gypsies/Roma. Therefore, to them the populations which were not the majority populations were part of a different nation within the country, even reflecting the kind of actions which they believe to be necessary to take in order to solve ‘the problems’.

This approach seems to have intellectually fitted with the mind-set of the formally well-educated Gypsies/Roma within the borders of the so-called Socialist countries. That is because the understanding of the world in a nationalist framework was also present, as previously discussed. The outcome of this meeting is the formation of one activist/intellectual elite which enforces and applies to the plural population known as Gypsies and/or Roma national patterns, even though sometimes having to gloss over certain evidences. In other words, the *methodological nationalism* might have been supported by the sponsors, by academia and activists, for lack of reflection on the concept of *Nation* itself, mostly because it seems to perfectly fit the context, given the overall acceptance to work on groupings through the lenses of ethnic-national arrangement. According to B (2016) – expressing a high level of self-criticism: “As I told you, we accepted them as professors in the democracy, ‘they know how it is... they are the professors, we are the students’, many of us did!”. The process created an environment which shared similar understanding and where one enforces the other in during the process of work, as in the scheme below:

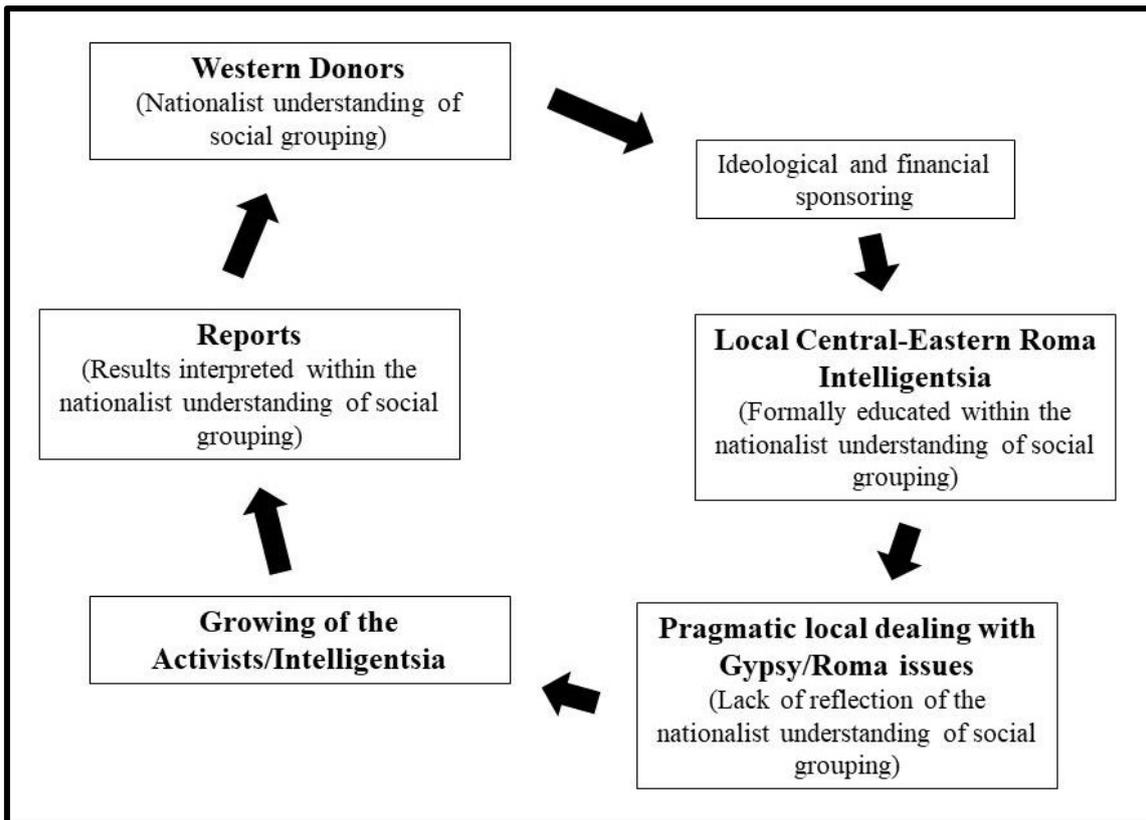


Image 12 - Scheme discussing the Western Donors in the *Romani Nationalism*

Among the Western Donors, it is undeniable how Open Society Foundations and George Soros stand under the spotlight. Not only because of the amount of money that the OSF invested in the Roma in Central-Eastern Europe, but also because it is one of the few which remain connected with the topic since the early years of the 1990s up to nowadays. One of the biggest geographically spread action connected with the OSF was the Decade of the Roma Inclusion (2005 – 2015). According to Brüggemann and Friedman (2017: 2)

The formal decision to establish the Decade was taken at the 2003 conference “Roma in an Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future,” which was held in Budapest. The conference was initiated by the World Bank, co-chaired by World Bank president James Wolfensohn and George Soros, the founder of the Open Society Foundations (OSF). A central motive for the Decade was the perceived need to coordinate sporadic efforts toward the integration of Roma on the part of a great diversity of international and national actors. The 2003 conference was attended by over 500 participants, including nine government leaders and many high-level government officials, as well as [political] representatives of international organizations, Roma activists and members of NGOs.

Therefore, the Decade of Roma Inclusion was an attempt to engage a coordinated international set of measures aiming to improve the social, economic and political situations of Gypsies/Roma in the countries that used to have a planned economy. Nevertheless, Brüggemann and Friedman discussed how, in 2015, at the end of the project, there was an overall understanding that the programs failed to change the lives of Gypsy/Romani communities. *B* (2016) has the following understanding about the Decade:

[...] many people don't know what the Decade of the Roma Inclusion is about... It was not understood clearly from the governments, because George Soros brought the... not the European Union as a partner but the World Bank, and the World Bank means money. And Soros means money, generally. Of course the governments expected somehow that these two financial institutions will pay them to integrate the Gypsies... of course it didn't happen. Because Soros told them 'look... you pay for this, I give you only the expertise... I have here the good expertise, the good projects... I will give you prepared people, I'll give you expertise, experts...`.

From this excerpt it is possible to picture the landscape of influence of the Western Donors in the *Romani Nationalism*. It is important to keep in mind that the connection between local NGOs and activists and the sponsors it is not only monetary. That interpretation can lead to the misunderstanding that local NGOs and activists behave in the way which the sponsors want – and as main actor it is possible to highlight George Soros – *only* in order to financially profit. That might be the case in some occasions, as money is involved in the process. But as seen in the Decade of Roma Inclusion, that is not the only way. Expertise is also a level of influence in the local pragmatic action. In other words, local NGOs behave in a certain way not because they ultimately aim the money coming from the sponsors, but because they were taught by the sponsors and, therefore, their strategies and beliefs are similar.

Moreover, it is necessary to highlight a different arm of OSF on the *Romani Nationalism*, which is the Central European University. Right after the fall of the Iron Curtain a group of people – intellectuals and wealthy businessmen – decided that it would be interesting to have an academic environment to help in the transition from the totalitarian regimes to the (allegedly) democratic system. George Soros was among those people and from this effort, in 1991 the Central European University (CEU) was born ('History' 2018). Stewart (2017) attested that the CEU has been working for almost two decades offering two postgraduate courses with *Romani issues* in the centre of the discussion. Further, CEU also provides Summer School, among them one

connected with Romani studies. From 1998 up to 2010 were nine summer courses, with over 300 participants ('CEU Summer University (SUN)' 2011). In the year of 2018 there was a Summer School on Romani Studies at CEU on *Romani Identities and Antigypsyism*, which this researcher attended.

The question raised by the existence of CEU is that the institution itself can serve as a space of propagation of the nationalist mind-set on the Gypsy/Romani population. Stewart (2017) points out that lately, intellectuals and scholars connected with CEU have assumed a rhetoric of renovation of the *Romani Studies* field, naming themselves as a *critical Romani studies*. The movement aims to overcome, among other things, the lack of Gypsy/Roma people in high levels of the academic sphere:

So, today, the situation we confront is that an older generation of Romani Studies researchers have provoked a wave of reaction among activist Romani intellectuals that demand 'Roma studies' taught by Roma, that suggests research agendas should be controlled by 'the Roma' or whoever claims to [politically] represent them, and PhD projects in which there is always one Romani supervisor. 'Nothing about us, without us!', we hear with increasing urgency. 'Who speaks for whom?', the activist-intellectuals demand to know (Stewart 2017: 127).

Stewart's discussion can bring to the spotlight the question of who is the *us*? It might be said that the '*us*' in the equations are all the Gypsies/Roma spread around the world. That approach is an outcome and a feeder of the nationalist mind-set previously discussed. It is a methodological approach to understand the plural Gypsy/Romani populations within the framework and set of concepts attached to nationalism. In other words, to have postgraduate courses, conferences and summer courses dedicated to the *Romani issue*, even though if somehow discussion the Gypsy/Romani plurality serves to the enforcement of the discursive elaboration of *Roma Nation* representations.

The Open Society Foundations itself leads to another symbolical match, which lies a bit ahead of the sponsorship which is its founder, Mr. George Soros. Soros was born in Budapest, in 1930, with a Jewish family background. After surviving the Holocaust by using fake personal papers, he moved to London in 1947 and later New York, where he made his fortune. In the 1970s he started the Soros Fund and since then he sponsored several programs around the world (Kellner 2018). Still in the 1970s he gave scholarships to black students in South Africa and, in the 1980s his foundation helped provide photocopies of banished texts behind the Iron Curtain. According to his personal website:

George Soros is one of the world's foremost philanthropists, having given away over \$12 billion to date. His funding has supported individuals and organizations across the globe fighting for freedom of expression, transparency, accountable government, and societies that promote justice and equality.

This giving has often focused on those who face discrimination purely for who they are. He has supported groups [politically] representing Europe's Roma people, and others pushed to the margins of mainstream society, such as drug users, sex workers, and LGBTI people ('The Life of George Soros' 2018).

Far from putting in perspective the nobility or not of Soros' acts, it is interesting to see how a wealthy Jewish man positioned himself personally to fight in the name of "Europe's Roma people". First, it is interesting to note that his website personifies the work and projects of OSF in himself. In the construction of the sentence, it is not OSF which supports the needs of Roma, but George Soros in person. On the other side, it is noticeable how there is an open acceptance by the side of the Gypsy/Roma intelligentsia for Soros aid.

In the case of OSF, it is not only the case of financial help and methodological guidelines which seems to play a role within the *Romani Nationalism*, but also the symbolic legitimation which pose side-by-side with him and OSF – and the symbolical weight that the academic mind-set sponsored by him has. Working with someone who has the historical background legitimizes local organizations to deal and communicate not only with local authorities, but also with the community. Therefore, a cycle of legitimation is formed, similarly with the one previously discussed involving the WRC/IRU and its partners. That said, it means that the OSF also profits from this relationship, as it is – consciously or not – framed as being a non-Roma altruist (outside) interlocutor on behalf (and not in the place) of the Roma.

Ultimately, it is possible to say that this proximity with a Jew who survived the Holocaust also increases the chance to approximate the Gypsy/Roma narratives about the *Porrajmos* with the Jewish narratives which are, in turn, worldwide accepted as a genocide while the Gypsy/Romani killing during the Second World War is not so known and broadly discussed as having a social character. Such relabelling process will be discussed further at the end of this chapter and in *Chapter 3*.

Through its ideological, strategical and financial sponsorship, the Western donors created a bridge between the international activist/intelligentsia rhetoric to the Gypsy/Romani communities and, also, symbolically legitimated the local Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations. Notwithstanding, as the scenarios from these groups

were (and are) different of those working in the international level, the characteristics of the representations changed as well.

2.3.2 *Social, economic and political influences in the Romani Nationalism*

The lack of presence of the IRU, RNC and/or ERTF might be one of the reasons why local NGOs and other organizations have never actually managed to work as a bloc and develop common goals. This diagnosis is made by *R*, concerning Romania, and by *S*. According to *S* (2016), the different spheres and groups of the Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations in Serbia misuse a significant part of the time due to being divided and fighting for the same national and international resources, rather than planning some collective action. *Sk* (2016), during a conversation in Bratislava, stressed several times that the talk about recognition of the Romani nationality exists only in the head of the intelligentsia. According to her, it is not possible to talk about identity problems or cultural practices with people who are starving and lacking minimum health standards. Notwithstanding, *H* acknowledges a plurality of needs, actions, strategies and targets but does not believe that this is necessarily a bad thing. According to him, all societies have differences, Gypsy/Romani society is no different, and that plurality might even be beneficial. However, even though the strategies might not be united, a belief and efforts towards improving the quality of the education to which Gypsies/Roma have access is seen everywhere. Thereby, Gypsies/Roma are included in the society where they live, developing an ethnic awareness and empowering these populations. To *H* (2016), the aim of the educational program⁷³ in which he was part is

[...] to enable them to be citizen, to access and to indulge the full citizen rights, including the right to self-determination, to political thinking. Because an educated person it might be capable to reflect on the other things, an educated person will be active contributor to the taxes system, an educated person might vote very consciously on a political platform or on the ethno-cultural believes ... So, we try to enable and to make sure that our Roma is receiving the same quality of education like their peers. Our mandate is close the educational gap between Roma and non-Roma. So... with our mechanisms, with our projects, Roma that is in a school should perform comparable and should... we try to eliminate the barrier that the Roma children would use their potential in such school, Romanian, Hungarian, Czech, and German, whatever.

⁷³ *H* was part of an important organization dealing with Gypsy/Romani education in the Eastern European countries.

The belief that education is a pattern for life improvement of Gypsies/Roma throughout Europe is also found in Romania, Macedonia and Bulgaria. *B* worked on a pilot project in its later implementation aiming to end segregated schools in Bulgaria, and *BI* also works in the educational field. *BI* worked, for instance, teaching the Romani language to Romani children in Bulgarian schools. In Macedonia and in Romania, beyond this elementary level of education, it was possible to find local programs which aim to open a way for the Gypsy/Roma population to reach high levels of formal education.

The Bucharest-based *Agenția Împreună*⁷⁴, for instance, developed a project called *What do you want to be When you grow up* which has as its main target making the average Gypsy/Roma population aware of the fact that they can reach professions which, given their social and ethnic challenges, they usually see as unreachable (Chirițoiu and Ivasiuc 2013). One of the outcomes of the project is a book, in which Gypsies/Roma who are doctors, scholars, priests and so forth, share their experiences. Summing up, there are twenty stories whose aim Gelu Dumincă, Executive Manager of *Agenția Împreună*, summarizes:

Our goal [with this book] is not, by any means, to show exceptions in the Roma world. Those who were willing to share their life story with the readers of this book are just some of the Roma who are extremely well included in the society and proud to be Roma (Dumincă 2013: 7).

The extremely well-done inclusiveness, in Dumincă's point of view, can be reached through education. It is interesting to notice how the construction of meaning of Dumincă provides a solid conceptualization of the *Roma*, even enforcing a substantiation when illustrating the existence of a 'Roma World'. It is possible to see here a concrete discursive construction, expressing to the reader a feeling of stability toward the concept of Roma. However, the interviewees express an indirect discursive denial concerning the construction or fortification of a *Roma Nation*. *H* categorically affirms that their work has no proselytism. He also says that there is no willingness – from him or from the program – to overcome the educational rhetoric present in the schools of the countries where they work, even though their work might be forming an intelligentsia ready to advocate in the name of the Romani population. Therefore, in his opinion, there is no attempt to reinforce *Roma Nation* representations in their work.

⁷⁴ The Romanian word *Împreună* means “together”. Author's free translation.

Also in Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Slovakia there were statements assuring that there is no attempt within their everyday work with the Gypsy/Romani communities to elaborate a feeling of belonging to a *Roma Nation*, mostly because – according with the interviewees – it is not possible to talk about nationalism with people who do not have their basic needs fulfilled.

Nevertheless, nationalistic practices and discursive practices are present in all around their rhetoric and their representations. As an example, it is possible to mention a CD, produced by *Agenția Împreună* and distributed to school children. The songs bring messages which aim to bring to the everyday life of the Romanian Gypsies/Roma some level of reflection on their social behaviour perceived by the communities as the *traditional* and/or right one – and in several times, as the only possible one. Among these practices are early marriage and refraining to send Gypsy/Romani kids to school. Duminică undersigns in the back cover of the CD:

This audio material is dedicated to them [he refers to his parents]! To them and to all the parents who put the well-being of their children first! [...]. To them and all parents who know that a child need to go to school and that said child should find a mate, but has the right to pick him or her himself (Duminică, n.d.).

Duminică's text describes the worry about the social-economic situation of the Gypsies/Roma who live in Romania and who face difficulties to overcome certain patterns of behaviour and beliefs. The songs, aiming at children, might bring some debate to the interior of the household and, therefore, improve that situation. The chorus of the song *A father's advice* might be an example:

I did not know which way to go
But only now I understand
I am not an educated man, therefore I lost
Now, if I could, I would like
To start over again
So many things I would change (Fantezie, n.d.).

In the lyrics is possible to note the main idea of one person being disoriented because in the past he did not attend school and, therefore, he does not have a good education. However, to this present work, the inside of the CD cover draws attention, where the lyrics of the song are displayed in Romanian, English and Romani language. The decision to publish the material with lyrics translated to Romani language can be understood as a way to reach all those Gypsy/Roma who speak only this language. However, it also works as a channel to make people who are seen, self-scribed of called

Gypsies and do not speak Romani language anymore – either to avoid violence in the past or for other reasons – to have contact and even learn the language. Somehow, it is possible to make a parallel with the efforts of the nationalists of the small nations of the 19th century, discussed by Hroch (2000), and their efforts to either recreate or fortify their language. The decision of *Agencia Împreună* reveals a wish to keep alive the linguistic aspect of what they believe is the Roma culture. Although there is a questioning about a few cultural practices of the populations called Gypsies/Roma, portrayed as harmful to the life of the youngsters, the language as a cultural practice is supported and sponsored.

Romani CRISS, another Bucharest based organization, also supports the right of Gypsies/Roma to learn in Romani language. Established in 1993, one of the points of their mission is established as supporting

Activities to improve Roma children’s access to education, including projects that targets pre-school children (center for early childhood development), primary and middle school children (catching up activities, intercultural activities, summer camps for children, after school centers), teenagers (training and empowerment courses, assistance in implementing community development projects, debates) (‘Short Presentation of Romani CRISS’ 2018).

As with the previous quotations, it is possible to see an engagement with the concept of *Roma* which has little – if any – space for plurality: the group is rhetorically constructed as a bloc. About their work on schools, a report from 2011 remarks:

The opportunity of learning Romani language in the schools of Romania is a right that the Roma minority has earned after 1990 and considered a key element to preserving and developing their cultural identity. Our research shows that this right is not actually fulfilled in many establishments (Surdu, Magyari-Vincze, and Wamsiedel 2011: 43).

It is possible to affirm that the learning and use of the Romani language among those seen, taken and self-ascribed as Roma is an important matter to Romanian organizations. This cultural trace is seen as a tool of empowerment of the Gypsy/Romani population in the fight against their socio-political disadvantages. Nevertheless, the focus on teaching (or remembering or re-teaching) of Romani language to the communities also works as an element which gives power to the organizations themselves. Sokol (2010) reminds that the relevance of language to the organization of hierarchy in societies developed during the Absolutism. Before this time, nobles were the intermediates between the ruler and the communities. The nobility

was replaced then by local officials in the collection of taxes and other different duties. The homogenization of the language little by little undermined the relevance of the intermediates between population and the rulers. Notwithstanding, the enforcement of the Romani language might sustain a position of intermediates to the Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations by, if not replacing governmental national institutes, investing themselves in a position of privilege. In plain words, the enforcement of the Romani language is a nationalistic trace, however not necessarily a denial of any connections with their national official citizenship based on place of birth. Such enforcement might strengthen both the empowerment of the Gypsy/Romani population and the growth in political importance of the Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations. Such relational and relative game of State citizenship, national feeling, political representativity and exchange of meaning related to their social, political and cultural perpetual construction is also seen in Bulgaria.

Throughout the conversation with *B*, he repeatedly stresses the proximity between those called Gypsies and Bulgarians – he affirmed that there is no gap between Bulgarian and Gypsy/Romani cultures. However, a dichotomy is present during the interview. He repeats extensively that they are Gypsies; they know it and do not need to think about it:

So, first point is “Are you Gypsy?” “Yes, I am”. And then, go to the second point. These people are still in the first point... “are you Gypsy”, “what is Gypsy what is not”, [...]. We are Gypsies and let’s go to the second point. [...] For us this is not an issue, it is not... we are Gypsies.

Even though the concept of Roma is not applied by *B*, it might be seen a close circle around the concept of *Gypsy* distancing them from the majority of Bulgarian society. When asked what constitutes a Gypsy/Roma, he answered in an abstract form, appealing to tradition and some immemorial time. Similar to *R2*, who said that what makes a Roma can be found

From inside. It’s from our culture, you know? I mean... There are some things that define you like Roma. If you know Romani language it is very good, but if you don’t know... I don’t know how to explain this, but there is a way of feeling like Romanes or acting Romanes...

A bit more materialist, *B1* points out that language is what characterizes a Gypsy/Roma. In the interviews in Romania, Bulgaria and Macedonia, it was always attested by the interviewees that there is a common language which unites all the

Gypsies/Roma around the world. However, this is almost always followed by the caveat that not all Roma speak Romani language and that, in truth, it might create some complications when speaking with people from different countries, because those who speak the Romani language might bring influences of the majoritarian language. It is not the intent of this work to prove or disprove such information, however it is interesting to put in perspective and think how a Romani language is being employed as a bond for such plural populations, and the incongruities are somehow glossed over to benefit the broader narrative. The complexity of this situation might be illustrated with the case narrated by *M*:

[...] we have also a group of Roma in... as I said, those who are not speaking the Romani language have also a barriers with identify themselves in Roma. For example, we have a lot of students who are coming from those places to study in Skopje, and they are living in Šuto Orizari and they have... they have different names from the standard Romani names. And they have faced discrimination within their community, you know? The general Roma population is refusing them as Roma members, because they have different names. But they have the right to declare, to feel as they are Roma.

Therefore, plurality among the Gypsies/Roma is perceived by these academics and/or activists/intelligentsia not only in Macedonia, but in Serbia and Romania as well. Notwithstanding, as in a nationalist approach already afore discussed, these differences are glossed over to benefit the broader rhetoric and the *Roma Nation* representations.

Among all the pluralities or abstract definitions which might be raised about what it means to be a Gypsy/Roma, there is a continuity in antigypsyism. Mainly, the role of the antigypsyism in the elaboration of the Romani identity. As *B1* states:

The difficulties to make unit all Roma also appears from the fact that there are different groups. And any group consider being the real one. The others are [...] [laughs]... you know? Still there are no fine criteria which unite them, and the only one which I saw is the hate of the others.

Such approach is also seen in Romania, Macedonia and Hungary. The violence which people known, considered or self-ascribed as Gypsies/Roma suffer is one important aggregator discourse to unite all the Gypsy/Roma, either as a common experience that brings them closer or as something against which to fight together. To Hancock (2005: 53), antigypsyism can be conceptualized as

[...] the treatment of Romanies as less than equals, and seeking to deny them the same freedoms in society that one wishes for oneself. This can be institutionalized, that is to say supported by law, or it can be personal.

Certainly, such perspective is grounded in reality, as 41% of Gypsies/Roma within nine countries which belong to the European Union⁷⁵ felt that they suffered discrimination because of their Gypsy/Romani background in the past five years ('Roma – Selected Finding' 2018). Data from 2015 already brought up the information that in Germany 42% of the population has negative impressions towards Gypsies/Roma, meanwhile in Denmark this number reaches 72% (Dahlgreen 2015).

It is imperative to affirm that this work has no intention to diminish the Gypsy/Romani culture and affirm that the only connection among these populations are social disadvantages and prejudice. The cultural aspects of the Gypsy/Romani culture are unquestionably perceived throughout Europe in music, dance, theatre, and the collaboration of people (considered or self-ascribed) with Gypsy/Roma background to science and academia. However, it is noticed through an analysis which uses the models of a nationalist approach, that given the difficulties to draw a common cultural sphere to encompass all the Gypsy/Romani populations spread everywhere in the continents, that the social, economic and political disadvantages which these populations face in their everyday life works as a glue which puts all of them in contact. It seems to be the only clear and strong tie which all these populations known as Gypsies and/or Roma can share. In other words, whenever they do not share the same language, for socio-historical reasons, they might rely on the fact of being placed as second-class citizens and undesirable neighbours to find a shared 'vocabulary'.

2.3.3 Debating the memory of the Holocaust and the Romani Nationalism

Concerning antigypsyism, even though it is a current problem this does not mean that it has no roots in the past. Hancock (2005) dates the beginning of institutionalized racism against Gypsies/Roma in the 15th century, with the enslavement of these populations in the Principalities of Moldova and Walachia⁷⁶ and with the antigypsy legislations in Western Europe. The same author (Hancock 2005: 58) provides a

⁷⁵ Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Spain, Croatia, Hungary, Portugal, Romania and Slovakia

⁷⁶ Today Northeast and South of Romania, respectively.

reproduction of a Dutch placard from 1726 ordering the killing of Gypsies/Romani who dared to enter the Dutch territory and an image of a public torture of Gypsy/Roma in Gießen/Germany, during the year of 1727 (Hancock 2005: 60).

Hancock (2005) considers the sources of antigypsy feelings the understanding of Gypsies/Roma as non-Christians intruders, their physical appearance, some cultural patterns which exclude those who are not seen as from within the Gypsy/Romani community, and the Gypsy/Romani way of life. These elements favour a context in which the non-Gypsy/Roma population projects onto Gypsies/Roma all their own bad values, and places those perceived as Gypsies/Roma as scapegoats of any social imbalance in their common society. In other words, the majority society has problems to deal with the differences (cultural, economic, politic and so on) of those seen as Gypsies/Roma and projects on the 'outsiders' their worse behaviours and incriminates them for any problem which might happen in their coexistence. Undisputedly, a particularly painful register of antigypsyism in Gypsy/Romani history is the Holocaust during the Second World War.

The Nazi pseudo-scientists developed rules to racially evaluate the Gypsies and, after looking back three generations of the persons of these populations (in comparison with two to Jews), they divided them into pure Gypsy or partially Gypsy (Fraser 1996). But such bureaucratic distinction had little practical difference in the life of the Gypsies/Roma within areas invaded or under influence of the Nazi ideology. According to Fraser (1996), those who were considered *Zigeuner* could hardly escape violence or death:

In any case, local criminal police seldom had time for nice distinctions when they say the opportunity of making their area ‘Gypsy free’, and in the end no Gypsy could be considered safe from the concentration and death camps. Of these, Auschwitz has acquired immense symbolic significance. It was but one among many, but it had the biggest population of Gypsies, from all over Nazi-occupied Europe, and a special enclave of 40 wooden barrack blocks where they were kept in family groups in an attempt to avoid trouble until the final moment came. It was also one of those where experimentation on the inmates was rife, in a perversion of medical science. Soon after the German Gypsies arrived, a new camp doctor, Dr Josef Mengele, took over and was indefatigable in the exercise of his functions, whether making life-or-death ‘selection’ among the daily new convoys of detainees or subjecting Jews and Gypsies to barbaric suffering. The Gypsy camp at Auschwitz-Birkenau existed for 17 months. Of the 23,000 people squashed in there 20,078 died; the rest were transferred to other camps. The deaths were caused by starvation, overwork, medical abuse, disease of gas. On 3 August 1944, the Gypsy camp, usually noisy, lay at last silent and deserted: 2,897 women, children and men (including former soldiers of the Wehrmacht) had been driven into the gas chambers during the one night, and there were no Gypsies left (Fraser 1996: 264).

Therefore, like the Jewish European population, the Gypsies/Roma also faced methodological killings in an attempt to enforce a *Final Solution* to clean Europe from their existence (Hancock 2005). However, after the War the fate of the Gypsy/Romani people was “forgotten” – in an international level – until the 1970s when Donald Kenrick and Grattan Puxon published a study about the Romani Holocaust entitled *The Destiny of Europe’s Gypsies*. The reasons for this oblivion might be several, however two characteristics of the persecution of Gypsies/Roma are stressed here as relevant: the different strategies aiming to kill these populations and the lack of recognition of the Nazi attitudes as an ethnic attack – both from the losers and winners of the war.

From the first point, it is possible bring up the examples of Romania, Poland and Czechoslovakia. While in the lands that today are part of the Czech Republic, the populations taken as *Zigeuner* were captured and moved to Concentrations Camps – *Lety* and *Hodonín u Kunštátu* – and later to Extermination Camps – mainly Auschwitz-Birkenau II –, in Poland there were Nazi raids which used to chase the Gypsy/Romani populations and kill them right where they were found. In Romania, a state ruled by Ion Antonescu – a soldier acquainted with Nazi-Fascist ideals – the Gypsies/Roma were transported to the region of Transnistria, where those who were not killed died of cold and starvation. The different strategies of killing might have made it more difficult to meld the narratives as a single persecution. However, the non-recognition of the

affliction against *Zigeuner* as of having an ethnic kind certainly played an important role.

That is because the process of elaboration of the Romani identity in its aspect overlapping the antigypsyism – specifically concerning the violence during the Second World War – supports that there was an ethnic persecution, and that Nazis wanted to liquidate the Gypsies/Romani population in a similar way to the Jewish case. However, Nazi pseudo-scientists supported the idea of an Indian origin for all the *Zigeuners*. All the racist policies supported by the Nazi government, were based on the supremacy of the Aryan race, an ideology which appeared in mid-19th century. This ideology was mostly based on the writings of Joseph Arthur de Gobineau⁷⁷ and his tutee, Houston Stewart Chamberlain⁷⁸. The Aryans, in their understanding, were a group who conquered ancient India and heavily influenced the language, the religion and the local culture in general. Chamberlain developed the idea that the concept of *Aryan* was a synonym of *white race*, being then superior to the other races around the world [Encyclopædia Britannica 2015].

Doctor Robert Ritter⁷⁹, under the services of the Nazi government, attested that all the Gypsies/Roma had originated in the Indian subcontinent, being in this way Aryans as much as the Germans. The problem, according to him, was that during the migration waves from ancient India to Europe the Gypsies failed in keeping the purity of their race. Under this theory, the mixtures with other races made them a degenerated group of thieves, burglars and robbers. Mayall (2004: 14) affirms:

The story of the Nazi persecution of Gypsies both resembles and differs from their treatment of the Jews. [...]. Both also were the subjects of detailed investigations and reports into genealogy in an attempt to trace ancestry and identify the bloodlines of members of the group. Where the stories differ is in the explanations provided for the campaign against the Gypsies, both at the time and subsequently, and the repercussions of these in the post-war years. Inevitably the issue revolves around definitions and identities. While there is no disagreement that the persecution and execution of the Jews had clear racial origins and motives, the experience of the Gypsies is more complex. The argument put forward by the Nazis, and repeated and reinforced by latter commentators, was that Gypsies were persecuted because of their alleged asocial and criminal activities. In other words, their treatment at the hands of the Nazis had a socio-political and not a racial basis.

⁷⁷ Born in Ville-d'Avray (France), July 14th, 1816 and deceased in Turin (Italy), October 13th, 1882.

⁷⁸ Born in Portsmouth (England), September 9th 1855 and deceased in Bayreuth (Germany), January 9th 1927

⁷⁹ Born in Aachen (Germany), May 14th 1901 and deceased in April 15th 1951.

However, there are disagreements on this point of view. To Hancock, it does not matter the manner in which the Nazis legitimated their project of murdering Gypsies. In his understanding, both groups, Gypsies and Jews, were put side by side, in an attempt to clean from the surface of the Earth the ‘races’ that were considered a danger to the purity of the so-called Aryan race.

On 8 December, Himmler signed a further order based upon the findings of Ritter’s Office of Racial Hygiene, which had determined that Romani blood was “very dangerous” to Aryan purity. The final resolution, as formulated by Himmler in that “Decree for Basic Regulations to Resolve the Gypsy Question as Required by the Nature of Race” meant that preparations were to begin for the complete extermination of the Sinti and Roma throughout Nazi-occupied Europe (Hancock 2013: 108).

So, in Hancock’s view, Gypsies were also part of what the German policies called the *Final Solution*. This solution consisted of the killing of all the Jews, Gypsies and other groups – such as homosexuals and politic dissidents. Though tragic – actually, there are not enough words to describe the horrors of the Nazi regime – it is interesting to understand the reorganization of the memories in the elaboration of representations about the Holocaust. The motivation to assassinate the population seen as Gypsies by the Nazi regime might have been, as pointed out by Mayall, the belief that these populations no longer corresponded to a circumscribed ethnicity-nationality. However, since the 1970s, it is a rhetoric which supplies representations about the Gypsies suffering for being an ethnic-national group which is being instrumentalized as one of the legs to support the *Romani Nationalism*. Such elaborations and re-elaborations of the memory are part of the live process of development of the *Roma Nation* representations, and these discourses, imageries and practices find a legitimated support in the *lieux de memoire* which (claim to) portray Gypsy/Romani historiography.

^{vi} In the original: “[...] embora aspirem à universalidade de um diagnóstico fundado na razão, são sempre determinadas pelos interesses de grupo que as forjam. Daí, para cada caso, o necessário relacionamento dos discursos proferidos com a posição de quem os utiliza.

As percepções do social não são de forma alguma discursos neutros: produzem estratégias e práticas (sociais, escolares, políticas) que tendem a impor uma autoridade à custa de outros, por elas menosprezados, a legitimar um projecto reformador ou a justificar, para os próprios indivíduos, as suas escolhas e condutas. Por isso esta investigação sobre as representações supõe-as como estando sempre colocadas num campo de concorrências e de competições cujos desafios se enunciam em termos de poder e de dominação. As lutas de representações têm tanta importância como as lutas económicas para compreender os mecanismos pelos quais um grupo impõe, ou tenta impor, a sua concepção do mundo social, os valores que são os seus, e o seu domínio”. Author’s free translation.

^{vii} In the original: “[...] A tentação sociológica consiste, aqui, em considerar as palavras, as ideias, os pensamentos e as representações como simples objectos a enumerar, a fim de reconstituir a sua distribuição desigual. O que significa privar o sujeito (individual ou colectivo) da análise e negar qualquer importância à relação (pessoal ou social) que mantêm os agentes sociais com os objectos culturais ou os conteúdos do pensamento. [...] Do mesmo modo que as modalidades das práticas, dos gostos e das opiniões são mais distintas do que essas obras, as maneiras como um indivíduo ou um grupo se apropria de um motivo intelectual ou de uma forma cultural são mais importantes do que a distribuição estatística desse motivo ou dessa forma.” Author’s free translation.

^{viii} In the original: “As representações não são simples imagens, verdadeiras ou falsas, de uma realidade que lhes seria externa; elas possuem uma energia própria que leva a crer que o mundo ou o passado é, efetivamente, o que dizem que é. Nesse sentido, *produzem* as brechas que rompem às sociedades e as incorporam nos indivíduos”. Author’s free translation.

3. Museums and the legitimation of a broad rhetoric

This chapter analyses how museums – namely the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum (Oświęcim/Poland), the Gordon Boswell Romany Museum (Clay Lake/United Kingdom), the Gypsy Woman Ethnological Museum (Granada/Spain), the *Museu Cigano Itinerante* (Brazil), the *Muzej Romské Kulture* (Belgrade/Serbia), the *Muzeum Romské Kultury* (Brno/Czech Republic), the Roma Ethnografic Museum in Tárnow (Tárnow/Poland), the *Tikno Musée Tsigane* (France) and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Washington D.C./USA) – can be considered as part of the *Romani Nationalism*. The aforementioned institutions were not chosen by chance. The aim was to gather together museums of different kinds and regions within Europe and the Americas, where a major part of Gypsies/Roma in the world are settled and, accordingly, where it might be said that the Roma intellectual elite is more active. Therefore, this research divides the following narrative in three parts.

The first subdivision is called *The narrative about ethno-cultural element and the Indian Origins*. In this section occasions are highlighted in which the aforementioned museums – by means of their exhibitions, websites, events or other any kind of official production – support sets of representations which allow a formation of an umbrella rhetoric about the group known, taken and self-ascribed as Gypsies and/or Roma. This discourse, then, is able to shelter all different groups within this population in a holistic manner, based on a narrative formed by essentializations, exoticizations and generalizations. These strategies, however, claim for a legitimation which can lay in a *founding myth* – a concept coined by Brazilian philosopher Marilena Chauí – of their Indian Origins.

The second part is called *The suffering under the Holocaust*. This segment discusses an appropriation of memories of the Holocaust – called *Porrajmos* by part of the Gypsy/Romani intelligentsia – and the narratives about the policies and crimes committed by the Nazis against the Gypsies/Roma as an aggregator rhetoric embracing all non-Gadzhé groups. The process also manages the forgetfulness about the differences and relabels the Nazi belief and prejudice as a common bond for the Gypsy/Romani population. As final considerations the subchapter *Contradictions of the Memory* was developed, where possible discrepancies between the narratives about Romani history, memory and culture and the research of scholars are debated.

This work understands throughout that the concept of Roma is generalized in an attempt to rewrite and relabel Gypsy memory as a Roma history. The present discussions and questionings rely on the theories of museology and sociomuseology, and the theory of representations – both practices of representations and representations of practices.

3.1 The narrative upon an ethno-cultural bond and the Indian Origins

In this subsection the main objective is to demonstrate how museum institutions support a broad narrative upon Gypsy/Romani history and culture, though not working together in an organized grouping. It is assembled here the differences in rhetoric which can be found within and around museums – not only in the exhibitions, but mostly – which are part of this investigation.

It is important to say that no statements henceforth should be understood as implying that these institutions are working in conspiracy to create from out of nowhere a brand new – or fake – historiographic narrative encompassing all these groups scattered around the world. Nevertheless, said rhetoric and exhibitions are the result of a process of social, cultural and economic replacement of the populations which historically have been labeled under the nomenclature of Gypsy/Romani populations in relation with non-Gypsies/Romani. This operation is led by an intellectualized Romani group, who supports and reinforces the aforesaid reframing and relabeling of the Gypsy/Romani status. Yet, any organization or institution related with the Roma people is touched by this mechanism of reclassification and, in that way, they are – in several different levels – its reflection. In short: all the proceedings around the Roma topic are both the result and creation of the attempt to change the Gypsy/Roma status – whether economic, social, political, cultural and so on.

The argument will be developed by establishing a dialogue of elements which essentialize – in the sense that they imply natural and intrinsic characteristics – some aspects of Roma history and culture. From now on, within a debate of the assertions and material exhibitions here highlighted, there is a specific deliberation in which there remains no doubt that that some aspects are part of the claimed Romani way of life. Also, the exoticizing process provides a narrative in which such elements belong to them, emphasizing the group as different and sealed. As a result, such ‘natural/organic’ and ‘exclusive’ customs must be common to the big group – otherwise there is not a

creation of an encircling *Roma Nation* –, and, therefore, to reinforce the umbrella Romani rhetoric, all these characteristics must be organized in a generalizing way. In other words, the political and ideological standing point of the museum, although blurred by the supposedly scientific and objective museal institution, elaborates discourses which naturalize some customs, elaborate cultural patterns restrictive to Gypsies/Roma and generalize all those characteristics, in order to shelter as many people as possible.

In order to exemplify what has been presented along the previous paragraphs, this research opens the debates with the case of the Gordon Boswell Romany⁸⁰ Museum⁸¹ (GBRM). The museum website does not provide much information about its date of foundation, targets, objectives and number of visitors. In an attempt to gather more information, three emails were sent to the address available on the website⁸², yet all attempts resulted in no answer. However, on its main page the GBRM claims to be “the largest public display of Romany vardos and Romany History in the World” (Gordon Boswell Romany Museum 2016). The pictures about the exhibition show plenty of Gypsy wagons and also some equipment of ordinary household care and work.



Image 13 - ‘Exhibition of Gordon Bowell Romany Museum’ (2016a)

⁸⁰ In this work I am not using the word Romany with ‘y’ at the end. However, as is the way used by the website of the museum, I will reproduce in the next paragraphs.

⁸¹ The museum is located in the City of Clay Lake, about 157 km north to the city of London, 140 east of Birmingham.

⁸² The first one in February 3rd 2016, the second one in July 13th 2016 and the last one in October 25th 2016.



Image 14 – ‘Exhibition of Gordon Bowell Romany Museum’ (2016b)

Based on Image 13 and Image 14, it might be discussed that not only an attempt to rescue and organize elements of a Gypsy/Romani history can be seen, but there transpires also a conservative conceptualization of museums: a place to safeguard the past. This institution could be understood by looking at the categorisation made by Possamai (2001) into the *Guardian Museum* and the *Memory Museum*. While the first one seeks to save and/or reproduce cultural aspects connected with a determined period of time, mainly material ones, the second is a place which aims to preserve the collective memory about a specific a time, a place or a group.

It is possible to say that GBRM presents elements from both types of museum. It is not only concerned with exhibiting and therefore reproducing some allegedly Gypsy/Romani cultural aspects – as *Guardian Museums* usually do – but it also claims to be a place which recalls “the Romany life style” by offering “A Romany experience” (Gordon Boswell Romany Museum 2016), which is a characteristic trace to *Memory Museums*. As a strong example of such Romany experience, the museum promotes a six hours program when the visitor is taken for a ride on a *Romany vardo*, while the public and staff stop to make a fire and cook a steak in “traditional Romany way” – in their words.

It is possible to say that the culture of wagons and the wandering style of life are considered by this museum as an important trace of Romani culture. In this way, to understand what it means to be a Roma, it is important to sense the experience of cooking outdoors and to feel, at least for a while, how it feels to live in a carriage. Such a straight connection between nomadism and the Gypsies/Roma is also stressed in a

different museum, the *Tikno Musée Tsigane*⁸³ (TMT) even from its ground conceptions: it is an institution organized as an itinerant museum.

Beyond the focus on Gypsy/Roma related topics, this museum in France is nomadic itself. On its webpage, the TMT provides information about how to contact the administration to bring the museum to where anyone might desire, and advertises that they have different exhibitions for different kind of spaces. Contact with the museum's staff was attempted three times by using their website formulary, however there was no reply. Regarding the exhibition which the museum displays, it is possible to say that it is not mainly a *Guardian Museum*, under Possamai's aforementioned concept. A sentence in the main page provides clues to interpret that TMT:

Obviously, the Gypsy people did not manufacture these objects. Practically every piece of this collection (with some exceptions) comes from gadje world (not gypsy), and has been manufactured with care and passion^{ix} (Tikno Musée Tsigane 2016a).

The museum seems to reinforce some aspects related to the memory of the Gypsy/Roma people representing (and not always displaying original pieces) what they consider relevant to show about this group. With this approach it is possible to categorize the TMT under Possamai's concept of *Memory Museum*: a place which aims to develop and rescue a memory of a people, a group or, even of a person. Is not a place where objects will be kept safe from the action of time, but rather a room which will keep safe the remembrance which surrounds its objects. What a museum of this kind displays are "(...) representations related to the affective level, the remembrance, to connections with other people, those ones which allow to assign to objects a reminiscent and celebrative capacity^x" (Possamai 2001: 98). In other words, the main relevance of the exhibition is not in the object itself, but in the memories and symbolism elaborated through what is displayed.

⁸³ Tikno Gypsy Museum. Author's free translation.



Image 15 – ‘Exhibition of the Tikno Musée Tsigane’ (2016)

The part of the TMT exhibition shown in Image 15 was displayed in an exposition which was organised at *Middle School Jean Vilar*, located at the city of Herblay⁸⁴ – France. Firstly, it seems necessary to highlight that the exhibition was displayed in a school, which means that beyond the objective aura of screen of the past, the museum is invested twice – even if temporarily – of an educational role. The pictures, images, miniatures and everyday-life objects allude to a supposedly traditional Gypsy/Romani way-of-life. Interestingly, such representations comply with the non-Gypsy/Romani stereotypes about beliefs, behaviours and practices of all the Gypsies in the world. In the above picture, it is possible to see the ideal of wandering, represented by the wagon, the outdoor cooking and the colourful clothing, among other details. In summarizing, it seems that to this museum, the nomadic and cheerful/unchained life style is intrinsic and essential to the *Romanipen*. Other objects that belong to the museum and are displayed on the website go in the same direction. For instance, there are dresses, dolls, mini-wagons, colourful musical instruments, ceramics and several

⁸⁴ The city of Herblay is located 22 kilometers west from Paris.

pictures. Unfortunately, the resolution of the images is of a quality which does not allow their reproduction here. Others cannot be downloaded at all and are used here for illustration purposes⁸⁵. But to better understand the targets of this museum, Regine Robin's (1977) approach will be used, as follows. The technique supposes that, for the identification of the representations present in the discourse, all the connectors from the sentence need to be removed. In this way, the *arguments* and the *assumptions* present in the communication become more evident.

Table 16 – Analysis of TMT statements

Phrase n° 1	
“The <i>Tikno Museum Tzigane</i> is a dream. A trip back in time, between the real and the imaginary, between earth and sky, in a world where everything can exist, a magical world ^{xi} .”	
Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TMT is a dream. • The TMT is between the real and imaginary, between earth and sky. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going to the Museum will take you back in time. • There is a magical world. • The exhibition in the museum is magical. • The Gypsy world is a magical world.
Phrase n° 2	
“With the installation “The Kabale of the Gypsies”, you enter the mystical world of Gypsies. Worship of saints, religion, magic, spells ... the atmosphere that emanates from this installation invites visitors to project into another dimension: the supernatural, invisible, magic ^{xii} .”	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TMT take you to the world of the Gypsies. • The TMT takes you to another dimension. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a world of Gypsies. • There is another dimension which is supernatural, invisible, magic.

These excerpts available on the museum's website indicate that the exhibition tends to project the Gypsies/Roma in the similar exotic way as the great majority of the non-Gypsies/Roma understand them. The exoticization gains strength based on the praxis of representations of the Gypsies/Roma as a separated group, ignoring their cultural and social contexts and their relations with the non-Gypsy community (Marushiakova and Popov 2011). For example, it attaches the wandering way of life to the Gypsy/Roma culture itself, without raising questions about the fact that they were not accept and expelled from several areas of Europe in the last thousand years. During

⁸⁵ The pictures and images are available at <http://www.tiknomuseetsigane.com/galerie-dumus%C3%A9/quelques-objets/>. As the images are not available for download, it was decided to respect the will of the administrators of the museum website.

the 15th century, for instance, the Imperial Diet of Emperor Maximilian issued edicts in 1487, 1498 and 1500 expelling Gypsies accused of espionage (Fraser 1996). The migrations might have been – and are still – less a style of life than a necessity⁸⁶.

This kind of exoticization, however, is not exclusive to the TMT. The *Roma Ethnographic Museum* (REM) in Tárnow⁸⁷ is a subdivision of the *Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie*⁸⁸, which deals with ethnography and has a permanent exhibition on Roma people. The history of the museum itself goes back to the year 1927, when Joseph Jakubowski and Julian Kryplewskiego had the idea to create a “Museum of Tarnow”, aiming to rescue all the documents which could be important to the municipality. The first exhibition was opened in the summer of 1927, and the first temporary exhibition took place two years later in 1929. Right after the start of the Second World War, the exhibition was moved to a building behind the Cathedral, a modification which kept the items safe until the end of the conflict. In 1945 the Museum of the Earth was opened and took for itself all the collections that used to belong to the municipal museum. A few years later, in 1949, the museum was nationalized and adopted the name of *Muzeum w Tarnowie*⁸⁹. Until 1950, the museum consisted only of the Town Hall but, after 1971, a series of renovations and expansions brought the museum closer to what it is now. Today, the institution is divided as follows: the Main Building (the building of temporary exhibitions, described on the website of the museum as the most historical); the Town Hall; the Castle in Debno; the Branch Wierzchosławice - Museum of Vincent Witos; the Remnants Museum of John Metejce Koryznówka in New Wiśnicz; the Manor in Dołędże; the Museum Farm Felicia Curyłowa in Zalipie and, what is of interest for this research, the Ethnographic Museum (Muzeum Okręgowe W Tarnowie 2016).

According to Marushiakova and Popov (2016), the disclosure of the ethnographic exhibition of the museum took place during the 4th International Romani Union Congress, held in in Warsaw, in the year of 1990. The person responsible for the exhibition was the former director of the museum, Adam Bartosz and, currently, the

⁸⁶ For more information read:

Fonseca, Isabel. 2000. “The Truth about Gypsies.” *The Guardian*, March 24, sec. UK news. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2000/mar/24/immigration.immigrationandpublicservices>.

Voignac, Joseph. 2013. “French and Roma: Incompatible Identities?” *Cambridge Globalist*. November 27. <http://cambridgeglobalist.org/2013/11/27/french-and-roma-incompatible-identities/>.

⁸⁷ Tárnow is a city situated 83 kilometers east of the city of Krakow and 280 kilometers south of the capital of Poland, Warsaw.

⁸⁸ Regional Museum of Tárnow. Author’s free translation.

⁸⁹ Museum of Tárnow. Author’s free translation.

person responsible for the exhibition in the Ethnographic museum is Maria Cetera. The building is located less than 300 meters from Tarnów centre, in Krakowska street. In its front yard there is a sign with the Polish name of the museum and the name of the museum of which it is part: *Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie*.



Image 16 – ‘Façade of the Roma Ethnographic Museum’ (2016)

On the website, unfortunately, there are neither many pictures about the exhibition nor of the internal part of the museum itself. This scenario led to a research trip engaged by the researcher and the photographer and researcher Kodo Miura, which occurred on August 30th, 2016. A meeting was held with professor Bartosz in the backyard of the museum for an informal conversation between wagons and almost inside the reproduction of a tent.



Image 17 - Backyard of the Roma Ethnographic Museum (Miura 2016)

Professor Bartosz is no longer working at the museum. However, as he was responsible for the elaboration of the exhibition, it was he who answered the attempts to contact the institution. At the very beginning of the talk the two main targets of the exhibition became clear: 1. the need to show the culture of one of those ethnic groups which are part of Poland and, 2. teach the history of their own people to the Roma and their children. As the backyard of the museum can show, the museum considers as a relevant part of the Gypsy/Roma culture and history the wagons, similarly to the other two museums previously mentioned. But the REM goes further. They work, since 1996, with the project *Międzynarodowy Tabor Pamięci Romów* – the Gypsy Caravan Memorial.



Image 18– ‘Wagons in the Roma Ethnographic Museum’ (2016)⁹⁰

This project, organized by Adam Bartożs and Adam Andrász⁹¹, consists in a few days of travel using old Gypsy caravans in a kind of pilgrimage. Quoting a project sent by email for Bartożs (2016):

The assumptions of the organising parties are as follow:

- Commemoration of the Roma holocaust
- Integration of Romas through calling on the myth of migration
- Historical and cultural education of Romas’ children and youth
- Utilising the positive stereotype of Romas as colourful wanderers, for changing the negative image of Roams in the Polish community
- Exposing the Romas’ symbols accepted by international institutions – the flag and the hymn

The assumptions are purposely used for strengthening of the Romas national awareness, intertribal bonds and ties with the history, leading towards the formation of political awareness of Romas.

During this trip, they visit sites where Gypsies/Roma where killed by the Nazis within the current territory of Poland. Once they arrive at those places, the people who are composing the entourage gather together to pray and play music: i.e. observe Gypsy traditions through cultural activities. Professor Bartożs also stresses the amazement of the Gypsy/Romani children and adults with such activities, *very exotic in comparison with their everyday life*. Also, it is necessary to highlight three aspects from the

⁹⁰ This image is illustrative. There is no confirmation that this picture was taken in a Caravan of Memory celebration. However, Mr. Bartożs confirmed that these wagons are used in the event.

⁹¹ President of the Association of Romas in Tarnów (Bartożs 2016).

quotation above. Firstly, the clear attempt to create awareness about Romani unity, materialized not only in the cultural activities but in the recognition of symbols, such as the Romani national flag and anthem. Secondly, it is possible to sustain how the wandering way of life is also an important element in the construction of the representations of praxis connected to Roma people at the museum in Tárnow. Not only are the wagons part of the exhibition, they are also used in a project which aims to safeguard and rescue certain Gypsy/Romani cultural activities. Last but not least, the focus in the so called positive stereotype, reinforcing some aspects which support the exoticization of the Gypsies/Roma.

The exoticization process felt by children and adults at the caravan can also be found within the exhibition. The first room of the exposition portrays a scenario where the figure of a Roma woman is sitting on the floor in front some cards, alluding to tarot⁹². There are, still, other paintings and pictures which illustrate palm reading and fortune telling. These activities are related with the common sense imaginary about Gypsy people, namely about Roma women. Plus, the image suggests the idea of Gypsies/Roma as a different people, magic and mysterious, and provides exoticised representations of people framed as living in a sort of parallel world (Marushiakova and Popov 2011), thus reinforcing their differences in relation with the non-Gypsies/Roma.

⁹² According to Herman (2015): “The Tarot is a pack of 78 playing cards that have been around since the mid-15th century in Europe. From the late 18th century on, Tarot cards have been used both for divination (predicting the future) as well as a kind of guided meditation”.



Image 19 – ‘Exhibition of the Roma Ethnographic Museum’ (2016)

The *Museu Cigano Itinerante*⁹³ also reinforces the exoticism in its representations on Gypsies/Roma. The institution is located in Brazil but, as the name suggests, it is not fixed in any city. The museum’s main proposal is to travel around the country to promote, according to its own assertion, the

(...) dissemination and the rescue of Gypsy traditions for future generations, avoiding that such a rich culture, as the Gypsy one, falls into oblivion. The museum was created in order to sow seeds in the social, historical and cultural field, aiming the promotion of cultural and social meetings, debates, lectures, events and so forth^{xiii} (Museu Cigano Itinerante 2016).

However, the museum has not always been totally along the lines of this description. At the beginning, the institution was called *Museu Cigano de Santo André*⁹⁴, and it was founded by Albino Granado. In a post on the blog *Espaço Filhos do Vento* (Espaço Filhos do Vento 2012) there is a brief biography of him. There, he is described as

[...] holistic therapist, professor of esoteric sciences, researcher and disseminator of Roma traditions. For over thirty years, he lived and lives directly in Gypsy camps. He helps preserve Gypsy culture in its entirety in a bid to reveal it with a commitment to the truth^{xiv}.

⁹³ Itinerant Gypsy Museum. Author’s free translation.

⁹⁴ Gypsy Museum of Santo André. Author’s free translation. Santo André is a city located in southeast Brazil, in the metropolitan region of the city of São Paulo.

Alberto Granado clarifies, in a local newspaper, what the targets of the museum are in its opening. The exhibition, he attested, would enable visitors to enter the magic world which is the Gypsy tradition. Is possible to say that the exotic aura of the museum starts with the founder himself, as a professor about the esoteric, going further in the way in which he propagates the institution.

These affirmations can bring a lot of information in themselves, but with Robin’s (1977) technique of discourse analysis a more accurate interpretation can be provided.

Table 17 – Analysis MCI statement

“The ludic aspect of the museum will be due to the magical world that encompasses the Gypsy tradition in a whole: dances, mysteries, legends, the practice of divination cards, palmistry and the various rituals based on the strengths of the elements of nature that we are showing here (ABCD Maior 2007).”	
Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The museum has a ludic aspect due to the magical world that encompasses the Gypsy tradition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gypsy tradition encompasses dances, mysteries, legends, the practice of divination cards, palmistry and the various rituals based on the strengths of the elements of nature

Through this discourse analysis is possible to remark a few things. Firstly, the text describing the targets of the museum is constituted by elements which were earlier referred to as common sense understandings of the so-called Gypsy/Romani culture present in the Gadzhé imaginary. As examples of such practice it is possible to list the dance, the legends, the divination and the palmistry. In addition, it reinforces the Gypsies/Roma being part of a magic and different world, which is accessible to non-Roma through the exhibition. These attempts can be also seen in the itinerant exhibitions themselves.

The image 20 illustrates the Brazilian flag and the Roma flag in the same frame. Plus, the traditionalist elements are again alluding to the supposedly Gypsy History.



Image 20 – ‘Exhibition of the Museu Cigano Itinerante’ (2016)

The painting with the lady in red and the cards in her hands on the right side of the picture indicates the same common sense and essentialist understanding about the Gypsies as a mystical presence – it is interesting to remember how the mannequin present in the Museum in Tárnow has similar characteristics: once more, exoticized representations on this group, connected again with magic and a different mystical world.



Image 21 – ‘Exhibition of the Museu Cigano Itinerante’ (2016a)

In image 21 it is possible to see the praxis of representations of what the museum considered as materialized aspects of ‘the real’ Gypsy/Romani tradition. Apart from the ornamented elements – possibly used in the past in the daily life or decoration – there are also pictures which seem to suggest particularities of ‘traditional’ clothing practices and ceremonies. Plus, the coins from different countries and a Brazilian flag suggest that there is no contradiction in claiming being part of a Gypsy/Romani culture and at the same time acknowledging the belonging to a different citizenship. Despite the fact that the museum does not use the nomenclature ‘Roma’ in its name, the flag of the *Roma Nation* is present at the exhibition. Here, the use of the word *Cigano* instead of *Roma*, which could be seen as evidence of a certain distance from the Roma nation political project, should be understood in a different way. What is the most important is the fact that, independently from the nomenclature, the museum operates with a universal approach based on the idea of a *singular history* of these people. Through one of the posts on its Facebook profile, the museum recalls the International Romani day, chosen to be April 8th as a tribute to the 1st World Romani Congress.



Image 22 - Picture present on the Facebook profile of the 'Museu Cigano Itinerante' (2016)

What can be evidenced here is both nomenclatures – *Roma* and *Cigano* (Gypsy) – are used as synonyms in the holistic representations present in the *Museu Cigano Itinerante*. About the holist nationalist discourse, nothing but the use of the Romani flag and the celebration of the International Romani day suggest a big engagement of this museum with activist action. However, the exhibition and the museum manager's discourse suggest a universal view on the so-called Gypsy culture. In other words, the Gypsy culture, which comes broadly described, with no stress among different behaviours, faiths and other everyday activities than can found among the so-called Roma people.

Similar actions can be found at the already discussed Museum in Tárnow. It is possible to also note holistic representations of a Gypsy culture and historiography: the name of the permanent exhibition – *Roma: History and Culture* –, the flag adopted by the 1st WRC exhibited at the façade, and a banner which reads: *Cyganie, Kultura and Historia*⁹⁵. Still, as Marushiakova and Popov (2016) affirm, the museum is closely connected with several Roma organizations since its opening, and is linked with the organization of the annual tour of memorable places of Roma victims of the Holocaust

⁹⁵ Gypsies, Culture and History. Author's free translation.

in Poland. Thus, the exhibition focusing on representations of a supposedly traditional Gypsy way-of-life can be seen as a reflection of this proximity between the museum's organisers to Roma activists. That is because traditionalist rhetoric is supposed to strengthen the image of the Roma as one group, with a robust and shared common culture. In this way, the existence of a museum institution became a tool working to change the status of a group. In other words, the Gordon Boswell Romany Museum, the *Museu Cigano Itinerante*, the Roma Ethnografic Museum in Tárnow and the *Tikno Musée Tsigane* – as much as any other, like the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Museum⁹⁶ –, might not scream letter by letter a Romani nationalist statement, but their very existence is a scream for legitimacy to tell their History, which is almost the same. That is because those institutions are never claiming to show the history of a specific Gypsy/Roma group, but displaying a whole set of characteristics which supposedly represent the whole Roma group.

Beyond their exhibitions, statements and so forth, the very existence of these museums works as a referential point, as a space which changes the status of the memory highlighted. One of the changes in the understanding of the role of the museum in the last 40 years consisted of affirming that museums were not only the house of “important people,” such as kings, queens and supposed heroes. In fact, every person deserves having their memory preserved and, in this case, experienced. Thus, every memory can be considered important enough to be framed in a museum.

Souza Chagas (2010) discusses this fight for the *right to memory*^{xv} which took place after the end of the Second World War. Into his view, this fight for the right to memory, materialized in a *desire to museums*^{xvi}, resulted into an exponential growth of the number of institutions of this kind in the 20th century. In this specific century, several groups started a struggle for legitimisation of their culture and costumes in the eyes of “the other”. In this way the museum can be seen as

[...] new war machines stored in favour of social ‘empowerment’ of those who have been historically subordinated and expropriated from the right to construct and narrate their own Histories, their memories, their cultural heritage and their museums^{xvii} (Souza Chagas 2010).

The battle of such war machines is fought in the fields of representations. Yet, one can find practices of representations and representations of practices in everyday

⁹⁶ Both these museums will be discussed below.

life, as the ones stressed in the prior museums, in the historiography and within institutions, such as the historical museum. Museum exhibitions can thus be seen as a set of representations of practices organized to bring up something that is far away or no longer exists (Chartier 1990).

More than a space of representations of History, every historical museum is a *lieux of memoire* (Nora 1993). History and memory, proceeds the author, are different things. The first, *History*, is always an imperfect look and narrative upon the reality, upon what people lived: a reconstruction of something that no longer exists. It is important to say that History is always an incomplete reconstruction, meanwhile the second, *memory*, is alive, dynamic, and thus relational. According to the author, the memory would be always evolving during the exchanges and acquaintanceship among the different groups in the present: “Since there are footprints, distance, mediation, we are no longer in the true memory, but within the History^{xviii}” (Nora 1993: 8).

Nora remembers that a pursuit for memory shelters is a characteristic of our era. For him, as we do not have the exercise of strong interpersonal relations nowadays, which are the base for memory, we struggle to save any reference that could help our self-identification – even though they are fading, do not make much sense in their original shape and must be reorganized and relabelled. When a group feels that their identity is threatened, memory loses strength and the need to create a *lieux de memoire* where memory can be stored emerges. In other words, if there is no such memorial experience of a group as a result of the liquidity that took account of interpersonal relations nowadays, there surfaces a need to materially and/or symbolically defend a forged memory (not in the sense of fake or fictitious, but in the connotation of something elaborated from the possible), for example with birthdays celebrations, monuments or museums. From this point of view, every museum would be a place of struggle to save something that has no more space in the present, which is no longer vivid in daily life. An attempt to, through some sort of materialization, maintain a collective memory which does not have the same practical values but, coated with symbolic values, is placed in the game to avoid oblivion.

To Halbwachs (1990), the collective memory would be organized within groups through an affective bond that would unite the memorial elements. So, through this affection, they would form their memory and the memory would break when the group became extinct or changed. These memories of the group would not make sense anymore within a reorganized community with other members, and some memories

would be left to the oblivion after the group's dissolution or reshaping (Halbwachs 1990; Šubrt, Maslowski, and Lehmann 2014). For this reason smaller groupings of affective relationship persisted longer than bigger groups.

Thus, if we meet members of a society which we were part of, but now it has become a strange group, howsoever we find ourselves in the midst of them, and we cannot reconstruct with them the old group. It is like approaching a path which we walk once, but now from a different viewpoint, as if we envisage a landscape that we have never seen. We put together the whole set of details within another bowl, made up of our representations of that very moment. It seems that we have reached a new different path. The details would not have, in effect, its former sense. This would happen only in relation with a whole set of details which our thought no longer covers. We remember all the details and their respective order. It is from this set that we would be required to depart. Now we are no longer able to, because, for a long time, we have been far from it and it would be necessary to go back too far^{xix} (Halbwachs 1990: 32).

In the case of museums, the representations usually consist of material fragments associated to the history or everyday life of a certain group of people. When the group feels it is on the edge of disintegration – situation that under Nora's understanding is happening often and often –, the urge of building a place to fixate the common memory appears. In this space, elements with which that group identifies will be represented, elements which – in their understanding – brand their position in the world, and objects that represent values which would mark or indicate their existence as a community (Chartier 1990).

Joel Candau (2011: 23) calls this process and this narrative *metamemory*:

[...] It is, on the one hand, the representations that each individual makes upon her/his own memory, the knowledge that she/he has related to it and, on the other hand, what she/he says about her/his memory, the dimensions which “are connected to the individual's affiliations with her/his past” and, likewise, [...], the explicit construction of the identity. Metamemory is therefore a claimed memory^{xx}.

Although Candau referred in this quotation to personal experiences, it seems that this approach can be used for a better understanding of group behaviour. The memories which the group and/or an individual invokes are self-representations considered to be eloquent for the individual or collective identity and selected to indicate their particularities while engaging in the relationship with other groups. This is the process that occurs in mounting a museum exhibition: one organizes the History that is believed to be the most accurate – or convenient – version to be shown to the public. This

process of transmitting values and beliefs through the organization of exhibitions may be considered as starting with the choice of the place where the museum is supposed to take place (Possamai 2001).

However, Candau (2011) draws attention to the fact that these representations are not, in any way, unanimously acknowledged as such within a group. For this author, the individuals of a community hardly share the same ideas upon the “perfect” representations about themselves and the same understandings on the symbolism of the material elements that could depict their identity. What is designated as *metamemory* would be in fact a holistic rhetoric, i.e., significant symbolic elements which the group shares with less individual resistance. Moreover, the process is a power game in which these representations are formulated through a social construction of identities – not always in a peaceful way.

This formulated holistic rhetoric of a group identity aims, above all, at the naturalization and legitimation of its members’ attitudes, beliefs and values. What Bourdieu (1989) calls *mental representations* are precisely those faiths that groups have in their values. It is the strong belief that something must be done in a certain way and that it has always been done in that particular way. Moreover, the – historically supported – belief that it has always happened that way seems to justify the stagnation of their attitude. The outcome would be the creation of a status of identification of those who act in a certain way while building a clear barrier against those who act in a different manner. The thought of Bourdieu finds support in Chartier’s historical analysis of representations:

The representations of the social world built in this way, although aspiring to a universality of diagnosis based on reason, are always determined by the interests of the group in which were forged. So, in all cases, it is necessary to refer and place discourses with the position of those who used the rhetoric^{xxi} (Chartier 1990: 17).

But Chartier goes further. He stresses how important it is to keep in mind that representations are constructed by one group and aimed to be understood by another. In this sense, the message represented will not always find among those who will receive the information the same symbolic value that it was intended to communicate, back in the emission. Thus, the representations of practices and values are issued by the emissaries, based on their cohabitation and exchange of symbolic values, meanwhile the receptor group is supposed to decode the message based on their context and

understanding about the symbols used in communication. It is never a predictable communication.

In this way, it is important for emissaries to use symbols which are more likely to find an anchorage among the receptors. That is why, in the case which is being studied here, it is advisable to adorn the elaboration of the Roma/Gypsy nationality with concepts and ideals that are already used to symbolize a nation. In this sense, stressing a shared language, a shared culture and, also, a *Founding Myth* which, in the case of the Roma nationalist movements can be encountered in the Indian origins.

The Indian origins constitute one of the key elements in the construction of the supportive narrative of the *Romani Nationalism*. This interpretation highlighting historical common roots is shared by numerous authors, as Hancock (2001: VIII) claimed:

“[...] the Indian roots are both demonstrable and undeniable, there is reason to believe that our Romani language, and a good part of our core culture, only crystallised once the migration westwards had reached Anatolia, which it seems to have done in less than fifty years after leaving India”.

Other scientific works also bring up this view about the origins, stating few doubts on the topic, in an objective and assertive choice of words. For example McGarry (2008: 453) says “On arriving from India, Roma dispersed across Europe and their heterogeneity and diversity have prompted some to describe this community as an ‘archipelago’”. Carmona (2013: 86) also shows that more objective discourse on the Indian origin: “Indeed, in the fifteenth century, 400 years after our departure from India, our ancestors presented themselves as coming from India” and, for last, Liegeois and Gheorghe (1995: 07) affirm:

The first Roma/Gypsy groups reached Europe from the East in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. At this time, they still remembered their homeland, as testified by numerous documents dated between 1422-1590, a period during which their Indian roots were gradually obscured by legends of Egyptian origins.

Among a relevant part of Roma activists, the idea that what is nowadays India constitutes the common origin of all Gypsies/Roma around the world is strongly fostered. As an example, there is the situation of the Royal House of Roma in Romania, as discussed by Bunescu (2012). The author highlights in a portion of her work the legitimization operation of the Roma Kings and the support received from religion institutions. In this process she reminds that the History of the Kingship in Romania

comes together with the creation of the International Romani Union, when the 1st Roma King became Ion Cioabă, who was also the 1st president of the IRU. With the death of Cioabă, a dispute between his nephew – Iulian Rădulescu – and his son – Florin Cioabă – took place. Florin Cioabă nominated himself as the King of the Roma meanwhile Rădulescu invested himself as the Emperor of the all Roma in Romania and in the whole world. For the sake of the discussion upon Indian Origins, is important to say that, in 2004, the Emperor crowned a new King for the Roma, King Tortica. Quoting Bunescu (2012: 11, my italics):

The crowning of the new king Tortica, unlike that of king Cioaba, was made in Christian Orthodox rite with the blessing of the Romanian Orthodox Church. Few days before the crowning, king Tortica said that his crowning is going to take place at the City Hall of Argeş County in the presence of the *Ambassador of India* in Romania.

And this is not the only political attempt to come closer to the Indian government as political representatives of the Roma people. Marushiakova and Popov (2004) bring the information that during the 90s, when the direction of the IRU was not so rigorous regarding the concept of a nation without a state, there were discussions about the fight for the recognizing of the Roma as a people of Indian origins. This discussion went further and it was even considered the chances to issue Indian passports to Roma people⁹⁷. About this topic, the opinions within the IRU were divided: on the one side Christo Slavov Kjučukov⁹⁸, who was in favour, and on the other side Emil Ščuka⁹⁹, who was against.

Such a narrative supports the assumption that all the Roma have the same origin and are part of a same group nowadays. The Indian Origin works as a *founding myth*¹⁰⁰ of the Romani people. In the words of Marilena Chauí (2000: 05):

⁹⁷ It is relevant to remember the discussion in Chapter 2 about the sponsoring of the 1st World Romani Congress by the Indian Government.

⁹⁸ Born in July 19th, 1962 in Provadia – Bulgaria. He was the Secretary General of the International Romani Union (IRU) between 2000 and 2004.

⁹⁹ Born in September 9th, 1957 in the former Czechoslovakia.

¹⁰⁰In the original: Mito fundador. Author's free translation.

When we talk about *myth*, we take the concept not only in the etymological sense of public storytelling legendary accomplishments of the community (i.e., in the Greek sense of word *mythos*), but also in the anthropological sense in which this narrative is the imaginary solution to tension, conflicts and contradictions which cannot find a way to be solved on the level of reality.

If we also say *founding* myth is because, as well as all *foundation*, this myth imposes an internal link to the past as origin, in other words, with a past that never ceases, which keeps perennially present and, therefore, does not allow the work of the temporary difference and understanding of the present as such. In this sense, we speak of myth also in the psychoanalytic sense, i.e., as an impulse to repeat something imaginary imposing a blockade on the perception of reality and makes it difficult to handle.

A founding myth is one that continues to find new ways to express itself, new languages, new values and ideas, so that the more it seems to be something else, the more it is repeating itself^{xxii}.

The *founding myth* is a whole set of representations situated out of History. It is temporalized at a remote past, in a moment that cannot be precisely defined – and works very well in filling any kind of gap precisely because of that characteristic. The *founding myth* attempts to be immutable and eternal, live at the present and justify several actions on current everyday life. In this way, the idea of a fixed origin in India simplifies the discussion of several complex situations, such as: 1. the idea of the existence of an Indian nation based in ethnic principles more than a thousand years ago; 2. who were the people who supposedly left those lands; 3. what happened with that population on their way to Europe; 4. are all Gypsies/Roma today direct descendants of them, and several different questions. The most important thing in the *founding myth* is establishing an origin that must be strong enough to fill some questions and malleable enough to adapt to different contexts and situations.

Chauí works on the construction of this myth in Brazil, nominating the Brazilian case as *verde-amarelismo*¹⁰¹. In her arguments, the ideal of Brazil was constructed on the basis of its nature: the green of the forests, the yellow of the gold and so forth. Such rhetoric started with the letter written from Pero Vaz de Caminha on May 1st, 1500, addressed to the Portuguese King Dom Manuel I, when he stressed the nature found at the new world and goes further up to the patriotism expressed on the yellow-green of the national football team jerseys, without forgetting when the economy of the country was based on the ‘green gold’, coffee.

¹⁰¹ Green-yellowism. Author’s free translation.

In the Brazilian case, the *founding myth* involving the claimed natural richness of the land is elaborated as a bond to all who were born in that area and, nevertheless, it is possible to draw a parallel with *Romani Nationalism*. In a similar way in which one characteristic was – and still is – shaped and framed in the Brazilian case to explain and support a whole set of actions nowadays, the problematic connection between the Romani language – a language not spoken by all Gypsies/Roma – is being used to forge an Indian origin. And, if the *verde-amarelismo* is used several times to advocate the way in which Brazilians behave – usually in an exoticized rhetoric –, more than a few times the origins in the Indian subcontinent aim to legitimize, justify and illustrate the Roma culture, belief and behaviour. The museums herein discussed, whether subtly or otherwise, help to reinforce the mythological origin in the East.

As one example, it is possible to debate about the *Muzeum Romské Kultury*¹⁰². The museum's website tells a part of its story. The MRK was founded in 1991 after the initiative of Roma intellectuals and it is, since 2005, funded by the Culture Ministry of the Czech Republic, under the Department of Protection of the Mobile Cultural Heritage, Museums and Galleries. However, the first ideal about the construction of a memorial that would organize Romani history and memories has its roots in the 1960s, the process being interrupted by the Soviet occupation in 1968 (Schuster 2015). The museum building is located in an area of the city of Brno¹⁰³ which is known for its historical and current concentration of people designated as Gypsies.

As stated during a visit to the museum and via an e-mail interview with Mr. Michal Schuster, the exhibition of MRK has been prepared so that a visitor who has no knowledge about Roma history can understand it. Thus, the exhibition is divided into six rooms. The first room presents a narrative about the origins of the Gypsy people. The second hall discusses/shows the arrival to Europe – dated about the 10th century – with a narrative which follows until the late 19th century. The third room displays elements related to gender and magic/mysticism, with a focus on the differences between the Gypsies/Roma who inhabited Bohemia and Moravia (the Eastern and Western region of present-day Czech Republic, respectively). The fifth subdivision of the museum has as topic the Holocaust during the Second World War¹⁰⁴, with an

¹⁰² Gypsy Culture Museum. Author's free translation.

¹⁰³ Brno is located approximately 208 kilometres south-eastern from Prague. Is the second biggest city in Czech Republic. The museum is located in an area called Zábřovice, northeast from the city centre.

¹⁰⁴ This room will be discussed below.

emphasis on the two concentration camps built in currently Czech lands¹⁰⁵. Last but not the least, the sixth room seeks to generate a discussion about the contemporary situation of the people known as Gypsies.

Firstly, it is relevant to emphasize the understanding that the museum has upon itself. In an interview with *Cz*, an employee of the museum, it was stated that:

Roma people, Roma kids, don't learn at school about Romani... Very often nothing about language, about history, about anything. So when Roma people come here and see the history, see the lines, see the things and items, then this feeling is coming from this awareness (*Cz* 2016).

A belief might be seen in the quotation above, that the museum has not only the role of safeguarding Romani history, but also spreading this historiography to a population which is not aware of their history and, therefore, facing problems in the construction of their social and ethnic awareness. When *Cz* was asked if she believes that the museum plays an educational role, somehow teaching to the local Gypsy/Romani population that they are not (only) Czechs, but also Roma (*Cz* 2016):

I think the museum play this role. The museum totally plays this role of being aware of it, you know? It comes from the idea that most of Roma are not educated about the Roma history, about the Roma... again, also about the Holocaust. So, there is this educational point of view, like to see the topic, to display the topic and to show it to, again, to Roma people. So I think.... It's a bit educational, maybe, and a bit schooling, maybe... It's done in this way.

These quotations bring forward the political role of the museums. It is not only a place where history is being saved or displayed, but a place which makes choices about how and what to communicate to their visitors. About the claimed Indian origins, the materialization of this narrative is visible right at the entrance of the exhibition. The connections are affirmed with the use of Indian motifs in the room, displays stressing the similarities between Indian and Gypsy/Romani dress codes. Moreover, a video presenting Gypsies/Roma groups in the Middle-East – a mid-way between India and Europe –, a multimedia installation showing the similarity between the Romani language and Hindi and also the Romani national flag side by side with the Indian flag. Finally, at the point of transition to the second room, there is a map showing the

¹⁰⁵ Further information at Baar, Huub van. 2011. The European Roma: Minority Representation, Memory and the Limits of Transnational Governmentality. Amsterdam: F&N Eigen Beheer. http://www.huubvanbaar.nl/uploads/3/8/0/4/38045389/van_baar_2011_-_the_european_roma.pdf.

claimed path of the Roma people, since their departure from India up to the arrival and spread across Europe.

The concordance with this theory is also seen in some texts presented on the website of the museum. For instance:

The permanent exhibition called “The Story of the Roma” will introduce you to the history of the Roma people. It will guide you from the times of their ancestors in the ancient India through the arrival of the Roma in Europe in the 11th century over to the events of the Second World War and present days (Muzeum Romské Kultury 2016).

Table 18 – Analysis of MRK statement

Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The exhibition will introduce to the history of Roma people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a Roma people history. The history started and India. The Roma left India and the Roma arrived Europe; the events during the Second World War and present days.

Here, we can see how the History of the Roma people has, in the discourse of the MRK in Brno, a clear beginning: the lands of current India. This aggregator discourse as a historical umbrella encompassing the whole Gypsy population, this narrative about a common origin to all the Gypsies/Roma, is also found in other museums, such as in the *Muzej Romské Kultury*¹⁰⁶.

In the first half of 2000 the *Roma Community Centar 8. april* was created in Belgrade¹⁰⁷, an NGO which has as its main target researching about Gypsy/Romani culture. Through this work, the NGO aims to improve the knowledge about the Roma within the general population and the Gypsy/Roma people themselves. In 2009, the organization, with the help of the Belgrade City Hall, was able to open the MRKu, in the words of Belgrade’s Mayor, Dragan Djilas:

It is important to change the image of the Roma because they are an integral part of Serbia and Belgrade. Therefore their contribution to our culture and history is huge. The museum is the right way to show it^{xxiii} (Muzej Romské Kultury 2016).

From the website of the museum it was not possible to gather much information, mostly because it is completely in Serbian. There were attempts to contact via email¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Roma Culture Museum. Author’s free translation.

¹⁰⁷ Belgrade is the capital of Serbia and counts with approximately 1.281.801 inhabitants in its metropolitan area.

¹⁰⁸ The first was sent on July 13th, 2016, then on August 24th, 2016, on September 8th, 2016 and on October 25th, 2016 – this last one with a copy to the personal email of Dragoliub Acković.

but no answer has been received so far. During two days, in September 20th and 21st, a visit to Belgrade was conducted to, among other tasks, visit the MRKu. Unfortunately, hours before the visit, the researcher on Roma people Andrej Kubiček, warned this researcher that after some attempts to contact the museum staff he received the information that the institution was closed, with the whole collection covered in dust and a shameful way – their words. Despite that, the visit to the location was carried out in the morning of September 20th. At the location there was no sign related to the Museum. After inquiring neighbours who were on the street, two different answers appeared: while one said that there was no museum – and there one had never existed–, other pedestrian pointed to where the museum was supposed to be, also emphasizing that the place was closed. Further information gathered with Mr. Kubiček says that right after the opening of the museum there was an election in Serbia and, with the new government, Mr. Dragoljub Acković, who oversaw the museum, could not work on the project with so much inclination, due to his new obligations. However, the fact that the museum is not opening to the public does not diminish the fact that there was a will to work on the Gypsy/Romani memory in Serbia.

There is, however, a video available on YouTube, consisting of four parts, with images, recordings and interviews during the renovation of the building, the opening party and other moments. The statement made by Rajko Đurić, a former president of the International Romani Union, is particularly relevant. His explanation is especially interesting because he stresses the belief about the origins of the Roma people: “As for the name Roma, namely Rom in singular and Roma in plural – already that phoneme indicates clearly that we are talking here of Indian origins, (...)” (Acković 2010).

In Poland a similar approach of Indian origins can be seen. At the museum located in Tárnow, there are two main elements related with Indian origins. First, in the passage from the first to the second room, a map is displayed showing the way travelled by the Gypsies/Roma from India to Europe, with arrows showing their spread throughout Europe. Later, at the last room there is this exhibition:



Image 23 - Exhibition at the Ethnographic Museum in Tárnow (Miura 2016a)

In image 23 we can see the picture of the former prime minister of India, Indira Gandhi. Indira ruled India from 1966 until 1977 and, after losing one election, returned to power in 1980, where she remained up to her murder in October 31st, 1984 (‘Indira Gandhi: Prime Minister of India’ 2017). The picture of an Indian politician side by side with the Romani flag suggests the relations between the *Roma Nation* and the Indian subcontinent. Mr. Bartosz said that this wall aims to “(...) building contemporary political awareness” (Bartosz 2016) which might be considered as close to an attempt to elaborate on the nationalist awareness discussed by Gellner and Hroch. The nationalist statement can be seen also in the words *Ópre Rroma*, which means “Up, Roma” and is part of the national Romani anthem: “*Ópre Rroma isi vaxt akana / Ajde mançar sa lumáqe Rroma!*”¹⁰⁹ (“Gelem, Gelem Lyrics’ 2011).

Still in a similar way, but in the Western Europe, the *Gypsy Woman Ethnological Museum* (GWEM) – created by the *Asociación de Mujeres Gitanas*

¹⁰⁹ “Up, Gypsy! Now is the time / Come with me Roma”

*ROMI*¹¹⁰ – also reserves space for the Indian origins in its exhibition. The museum is located in Southern Spain, in the Andalusia region, more specifically in the city of Granada¹¹¹. The ROMI association claims, in one folder founded on its blog¹¹², that the museum was created based on both the Gypsies’ and non-Gypsies’ need to know and safeguard the history and culture of the Gypsies.



Image 24 - Advertisement about the Gypsy Woman Ethnological Museum (Romi 2011)

The folder above (Image 24) serves as the basis to make further interpretations. The museum opened its doors in 2006 and has three rooms: The Cave of History, the Cave of Art and Culture, and the ROMI Cave. Despite the fact that the folder does not have enough digital quality to enable the reading of all the data, some points can be highlighted. Firstly, the name of the museum supports the word Gypsy or “Gitano”, in translation to Spanish, instead of Roma or Romani. Secondly, a page of the El País Newspaper, available in ROMI’s webpage, offers the headline “Tres cuevas de Sacromonte de Granada albergan el primer museo de la mujer Gitana¹¹³”, e.g., the word being used to describe the ethnic group is, again, ‘Gitano’. Such denomination is another evidence that the *Romani Nationalism* does not work in a bloc, such that a non-nationalist statement, as the concept of ‘Gitano’ is also used to reference the whole population of non-Gadzhe.

About the Indian origins discussion, the first cave of the museum is described on its website as follows:

¹¹⁰ Gypsy Women Association ROMI. Author’s free translation.

¹¹¹ Granada is located 427 kilometers south of the city of Madrid.

¹¹² The blog *Mujeres Gitanas Romi* is available at <<http://mujeresgitanasromi.blogspot.de/>>.

¹¹³ Three caves of Sacromonte in Granada hosts the first museum of Gitana woman. Author’s free translation.

In the first cave there is the Hall of Gypsy History and it is structured chronologically making a route which comes from the origins of the Gypsy people in northern India up to nowadays. In this first room it is possible to see images and documents related to the departure of the Roma people from northern India and the complex migration process which began crossing the Persian Empire, Middle East, Turkey to enter Europe^{xxiv} [...] (Asociación Mujeres Gitanas Romi 2016).

Here, the discourse that the MRK and the REM support, with the maps showing the alleged path from India to Europe is represented in words. In turn, the *United States Holocaust Memorial and Museum* also provides on its website references to this common origin of all the Gypsies. The USHMM, located in Washington, D.C.¹¹⁴, had its ground-breaking in the end of the year of 1985. However, its doors were actually opened under the Government of president Bill Clinton, in 1993. The exhibition is focused on Jewish history, but it is also possible to see references to the Roma and Sinti Holocaust. This museum also affirms on its website the existence of the Indian roots:

Roma (Gypsies) originated in the Punjab region of northern India as a nomadic people and entered Europe between the eighth and tenth centuries C.E (United States Holocaust Memorial and Museum 2016).

In the above quotation, it is possible to see the representations claiming Indian roots for all the European Gypsies. The way in which the sentence was written leaves little doubt or room for discussion – as all the museums discussed so far: in the three cases the idea of the common origin is taken for granted and institutionally supported. However, different scholarly works express a certain degree of reluctance concerning this certainty upon the Indian Origins. Will Guy (2001) recalls that the most important bond that could tie the current Gypsy/Romani population of Europe – and of the whole world – with an ancient Indian population is the language. However, he stresses that the Romani language today is spoken by less than half of the Gypsies/Roma in Europe and, even among them, there are between 50 or 100 different dialects, many times intelligible only in very basic senses connected with everyday life.

Ládanyi and Szelényi (2006: 125) say:

¹¹⁴ Washington, D.C., is the capital of the United States of America and has a population about 601,723 inhabitants.

Roma political activists promote the term *Roma* in order to create a positive identity and to mobilize various groups, many of which, at least according to Judith Okely (1983), do not share a common ancestry. The term Roma comes from the Romany language, which is related to Sanskrit – the only hard evidence of the Indian origins of the Gypsies. In Romany language, *Rom* or *Roma* means husband, or the generic term for man. The roots of this term in Sanskrit are quite different however. In Sanskrit, *dombe* or *doma* refers to a low caste musician (Fonseca 1995: 100). Nevertheless, Roma activists wanted to manufacture a positive alternative to gadjo. Thus, if you are not gadjo, ethnic, or other, you must be a man or a Roma.

For these scholars, the attempt to create a link between the current Gypsies/Roma and ancient India is either a forced interpretation of some signs or irrelevant from the point of view of the broad Gypsy/Romani population. Ládanyi and Szelényi (2006), in the very same work, attest that some Gypsies do not feel comfortable with the use of the patronymic Rom instead of Gypsy. Stewart (1999) provides similar insights. Reflecting on his contact with Gypsies, he argues that they are aware of the intellectual elite's attempt to frame a common origin for all the Gypsies. Nevertheless, this average population is little or not at all interested in this relabelling: "(...) they know that their ancestors are said to come from India but display no interest in this fact" (Stewart 1999: 92). Thus, the use of this new word became mostly recurrent when people try to engage in political discussions and statements¹¹⁵.

The political discourse of the Indian origin walks hand and hand with another, also serving as basis for the nationalist interpretation about the Gypsy/Romani groups. This second element is the suffering under the Holocaust. Nazi ideology considered the Gypsies/Roma as a uniform group. Mayall (2004) warns that the Gypsy Holocaust, seen as forgotten for so many years, is now being remembered by historians writing on this topic and by museums dealing with the subject. This might be understood from the sentence proffered by Dragoljub Acković in the second part of the aforementioned video available on YouTube (Acković 2010a) about the MRKu: "Whoever comes to the Museum of Roma Culture will understand the extent of the crimes and atrocities committed there". The MRKu exhibition which he was talking about was called *The Holocaust Must not be Forgotten*.

¹¹⁵ It is not the intention of this work to gloss over the historical context which might have forced the whole population of Gypsies/Roma to stop using the Romani language, to deny or pay little attention to the claimed Indian origins. As previously attested, there are evidences of both an Indian origin and even of a shared language. However, this work focuses in analyzing how such facts are politically shaped and instrumentalized.

3.2 *The Holocaust in evidence*

Although historiography strongly highlighted the killing of Jews back in the time of the Second World War, other groups also suffered a similar faith. It is critical to highlight, beforehand, that this part of the chapter does not put in doubt the unspeakable atrocities that the Nazi policies enacted during the war against the Gypsies/Roma, but instead to understand how the narratives are being used in favour of supporting the *Roma Nation*.

The Romani Holocaust has its relevance in the MRK. Room number five of the exhibition hosts a display about this sensitive topic. As the museum is in the Czech Republic, it concentrates its efforts on the two concentration camps that the Reich maintained in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. It displays the suffering, showing the hardships to which Gypsies were subjected on these lands and stressing the number of deaths. This part of the exhibition ends it with a documentary which contains strong images¹¹⁶. Nevertheless, there is no highlight regarding the possible differences between the groups labelled as Gypsies that were arrested in these camps. Actually, it is possible to see in the rhetoric of Cz (2016) the rhetoric of kinship amidst Gypsies/Roma:

I don't think is possible to avoid the topic of the *Porrajmos* [in the construction of the Romani identity]. [...] [...] it was our collective suffering and I think that the idea of collectiveness is still in Roma culture very strong and is still strong in Roma identity. This feeling of that we are somehow in touch with each other, that we feel each other, you know? [...] Roma will very often speak about, maybe they won't speak about when they speak with non-Roma people, but I think I can speak about because I feel that it's important. Roma just feel this closeness with each other and it's coming also from that. And when [...] you enter with Roma people in the *Porrajmos* [inaudible] in the exhibition, very often many of them will cry there, because they feel it somehow very strong.

It is possible to see that in Cz's narrative and understanding about the Holocaust bringing element of closeness and connection between different subjects with Gypsy/Romani background. That approach finds parallel in the already mentioned rhetoric of brotherhood which unites all the Roma throughout the world. In the exhibition itself, the only fact mentioned is that all of them suffered prejudice under the

¹¹⁶ The documentary is not necessarily the same every day. At the time of my first visit in September 2015, it was being shown ...to *Jsou Těžké Vzpomínky* (Rychlíková 2002).

stigma of *Zigeuner*. It might be important to stress that, in a brief description about Romani historiography which is narrated by the museum on its website, the institution highlights three main dimensions which are displayed at the exhibition: the *origin*, the *contemporary aspects* and the *Second World War*. This shows the importance with which the MRK invests the Holocaust as an essential phase in Gypsy/Romani history, even going beyond their exhibition. Baar (2008) spotlights the relationship between the MRK and the fight for the recognition of the two Concentration Camps exclusively for the Gypsies/Romani population situated where today is the Czech Republic. When the owners of the summer camp located where the concentration camp of *Hodonín u Kunštátu* used to stand wanted to wipe out the last remaining barrack from war times, the MRK was one of the voices which aided to prevent it. In Spain, the GWEM highlights the theme concerning the Holocaust. Inside the last of the three caves which form the museum exhibition, there is at least one mention about the Holocaust and about the Gypsy/Romani history between 1933 and 1945. In a video which presents the museum in a general way it is possible to see, although not possible to read, a banner which brings in the title the narrative of *Porrajmos* (CREARC 2009).

Furthermore, the Roma Ethnographic Museum in Tárnow also includes the Holocaust in its exhibition. At the last room, there is a display stressing the situation of the Gypsies/Roma who were killed by the Nazi regime.



Image 25 - Exhibition about the Holocaust at the Roma Ethnographic Museum (Miura 2016b)

Different of what happened in the territory where today is Czech Republic, most of the Roma in Poland were not arrested and taken away against their will straight to concentration or extermination camps. The Nazi army travelled around the occupied territory killing the Gypsy/Roma groups which they encountered along the way. The exhibition, therefore, displays a few pictures of the Polish Gypsies/Roma taken to prison but, mainly, shows a big map pointing out the sites where groups were ambushed and assassinated¹¹⁷.

If the Holocaust was not forgotten in Brno, Tarnow and Granada, a museum prepared exclusively to deal with the Second World War could not be lacking on this topic. Thus, the USHMM also discusses the Gypsies/Romani's fate in the lands ruled or occupied by Nazi forces. Considering the following statement from the website:

Drawing support from many non-Nazi Germans who harbored social prejudice towards Roma, the Nazis judged Roma to be "racially inferior." The fate of Roma in some ways paralleled that of the Jews. Under the Nazi regime, German authorities subjected Roma to arbitrary internment, forced labor, and mass murder. German authorities murdered tens of thousands of Roma in the German-occupied territories of the Soviet Union and Serbia and thousands more in the killing centers at Auschwitz-Birkenau, Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum 2016a).

However, the museum also attests that, differently than in the Jewish case, what triggered the persecution of Gypsies was the fact that they were not "pure blood".

The *Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum* (ABMM) is, perhaps, the most famous *lieux de memoire* about the Second World War and the Holocaust in the whole world. The efforts to develop the memorial started already in the year of 1945, with the Ministry of Culture and the Arts of Poland authorizing the use of the site as a place open for visitation. However, when the place was officially open as a museum, on July 2th of 1947, under official decree of the Polish government, the exhibition was discussing only the Holocaust and the murdering of the Jewish people in those fields.

The permanent exhibition which started to relabel the memory of the Gypsies/Roma who were murdered in Auschwitz was open only in the year of 2001. The year is the same of the *Declaration of a Roma Nation*, the document in which the Roma intelligentsia pointed out clearly their intention and their methodology to achieve such targets.

¹¹⁷ These sites are visited by the aforementioned "Caravan of Memory" project.

As Kapralski (1997: 277, my italics) argues:

The Romani presence (in Auschwitz) proclaims their suffering to the outside world; but, it is also a practice which transforms the disparate individual memories of survivors and their families into collective memory, revitalizes the past of the Holocaust in the present, *and creates a historical tradition to which the Roma may adhere*. The latter functions, which may be called internal, contribute to the consolidation of different Romani groups and support their collective identity.

Here, a relation between Kapralski's statement and Candau's conceptualisation (2011: 16) can be traced:

If identity, memory and heritage are “the three keywords of contemporary consciousness” – they could, in fact, be reduced to two if we admit that heritage is a memory asset – it is memory, we can say, that strengthens the identity, both the individual and the collective: thus restoring a memory which is missed to a person also restores their identity^{xxv}.

The idea of a broad narrative, discussed previously when approaching nationalism, might find a parallel with the concept of *holistic rhetoric*. *Holistic rhetoric* is created when a narrative aims to encompass a big number of people under one single discursive practice and it is employed by many institutions, in the attempt to create meaning for different representations. In this way, the barrack sheltering the exhibition proclaiming the history of the Roma under the Nazis is a sort of homogenising representation that puts all of those who suffered during that time together, under the umbrella of suffering.

Opened in 2001, it is divided into four thematic areas. The first part documents the persecution of the Roma in the Third Reich up to the outbreak of the Second World War and the earliest deportations to occupied Poland. There are explanations of the racist ideology and the elimination of this minority from almost all spheres of community life, and the deportation and persecution of 1933-1940.

The main subject of the second part is the Nazi genocide against the Roma in occupied Europe.

The third area presents the bureaucratic structure and the organization of the extermination apparatus.

Another subject is the medical experiments conducted in various camps and the murderous labor there. Special chapters are dedicated to the fate of women and children and the various forms of resistance.

The final part depicts the Familienzigeunerlager in Auschwitz II. For the Roma, this was the epicenter of the Nazi genocide against their people. As a result of a decree issued by Himmler on December 16, 1942, almost 23 thousand Roma from various countries were deported to this camp. For almost all the deportees, Auschwitz was the final stage in their persecution, which ended in death as a result of the dreadful living conditions, or killing by the SS in the gas chambers (Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum 2016).

On its website, the ABMM has more references to the Romani Holocaust throughout the *Plain Visit* advice part, on the page about the *Thematic sessions*, in the section *Basic information on Auschwitz* and so forth. What draws attention is an available on-line lesson named *The Roma in Auschwitz concentration camp* and a recent post (from August 2nd, 2016) about the *Roma and Sinti Genocide Remembrance Day* (Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Museum 2016a). As part of the content of the online lesson, it is possible to find statements like:

At least 23,000 Sinti and Roma were held in Auschwitz concentration camp. The vast majority lost their lives, as a result of hunger, diseases, brutal treatment or the gas chamber. (...).

Following the pseudoscientific arguments of the Institute for the Study of Racial Hygiene, the Nazi state established strict rules for dealing with the Sinti and Roma, who were considered racially alien, inferior and asocial (Wontor-Cichy 2018).

Beyond the recognition of the Gypsy/Romani suffering, the online lesson also stresses the first Gypsies/Roma who, at their arrival in the camp, were subjected to the living conditions of the named *Zigeunerfamilienlager* or Gypsy family camp. It also refers to the experiments which made many Gypsy/Romani as victims, including Gypsy/Romani children who were taken to be researched by Nazi pseudo-scientists. In their case, the intent was to discover the so called 'nature of the Gypsies' since the early age. Similarly, descriptions about the suffering are also present in the news about the

commemoration of the genocide day, August 2nd. The Head of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, Beata Kempa, read a letter written by the Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydło, affirming: “During the war the Roma experienced unimaginable sacrifice” (Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum 2016a).

Hence, what we see is that the remembrance of the Romani Holocaust gained strength, being recognized not only by the Roma intelligentsia, but also by the academia and politicians. From this point on, all these aspects enable me to suggest that the discourse supporting their ethnicity is based on the fact that they suffered as an ethnic group under Nazi times. In other words, as they supposedly came from India, as they apparently had their own language and culture, the Nazi pictured them as a danger to the supremacy of the Aryan race. Thus, the fact that they were treated as a race is one of the means used to provide the current legitimations of Roma/Gypsies as an ethnic group.

To Poulot (2009), the heritage is not past, because its aim is to attest identities and to affirm values. In this case, one can bring Gellner’s view into discussion, which attests that usually nationalist patches are arbitrary inventions. No one is saying that the persecution against Gypsies is an invention. However, these representations about the persecutions of the Roma and/or Sinti as a single and ethnicised group seems to be much an adaptation of a Nazi prejudice on Gypsies as a tool to unite all under the same discourse. Nevertheless, as mentioned, the instrumentalization of the memory for identities arrangements and, consequently, for political and nationalist aspects is not a surprise. Competing groups can fight for the same memories and reorganize them in agreement with their needs, as much as a group can restructure their own when the group itself is facing a reconstruction. This movement, the always vivid dynamism of memory, is the subject of the next subtitle.

3.3 Contradictions of the memory

Certain oversights and generalizations seem to characterise the representations concerning the Gypsy/Romani historiography in the museums. As it is important to highlight, this chapter does not entail that there is any lie being told by the museums. But, as Candau also stresses, oblivion is not necessarily a mistake or a failure, but sometimes it is a manner to construct representations about the past in ways that make sense for the current needs of one group in a continuous identification interplay game. And, this kind of construction and reconstruction, these lacks, absences or

rearrangements of memories of the past, have the aptitude to say much about one given society and their values and their plans for the future (Maslowski 2014).

In the contemporary world – highly industrialized and with financial capital increasingly determining power relations each day – the so-called old Gypsy way-of-life might be seen as fading out. There is neither much space for people who base their income on mysticism related activities, nor room left for the informal business. As Gellner (1983) suggests, we live in the era of the Diploma dictatorship: a time when if you are not engaged with formal education, you are put aside from several social interactions. Furthermore, it is not only the people considered and nominated by the Gadzhe and by themselves as Gypsies and/or Roma who face these problems. Also, those who live in the cities and try to fill formal jobs and do not feel as Gypsies or, at least do not claim openly be part of this group – the so called ‘integrated ones’ –, face similar troubles. They attempt to be part of the non-Gypsy society but often face prejudice and violence in an everyday basis. In other words, those who are named as Gypsies and live outside of the mainstream market are facing social, cultural and economic problems, as much as those who try hard to be part of the Gadzhe way-of-life and are acknowledged as such – in the most variable levels which, in turn, depend of the kind of relation with others and position within the society they are placed.

Therefore, as one of the outcomes related with the difficulties faced by all these groups to find their social place within societies which treat them as others/outside, certain elite groups of people (whether economic, intellectual or prestigious elites) developed museums which, in turn, started to illustrate them closely to an ahistorical and monolithically organized set of costumes, culture, language and values. That is because the Romani intelligentsia see that the overall relabelling of the people known as Gypsies as a *Roma Nation* can contribute to improve the quality of life of all Gypsies/Roma. That is because the Roma, differently to the Gypsies, would be a people with a History and a culture feasible to be respected as much as any other in the world. Here it is important to highlight that this is not a case of constructing a new set of cultural patterns, rather a relabelling of existing cultural practices under a more positive rhetoric.

These constant memory (re)elaborations are also correlated with the crises of identity, a common concern of the contemporary man. So far, a human being was seen as a person with a total, permanent and fixed identity. However, current social interactions are very fluid, and the subject assumes different identifications when facing

different social contacts and contexts. As Hall (2006) affirms, if the person feels that she or he has a strong and fixed identity from the course of the entire life it is because the group she/he belongs built a narrative for itself, aiming to pretend some stability.

Almost all, if not all, scholars who study Gypsies/Romani issues agree that this group is, actually, a very heterogeneous group, consisting of different populations characterised by distinct languages/dialects, costumes and cultures, always in mutation given the contact with other groups socially seen as Gypsies/Roma or non-Roma. Fraser (1996), for instance, attests the multiplicity of dialects which the Romanes language is composed of and Guy (2001) calls attention to the fact that not all Gypsy/Roma groups speak this language. To exemplify such diversity, it is possible to use Kjučukov (2013). In his work, this scholar discusses two Roma groups settled close to each other in the city of *Çatalca*¹¹⁸, Turkey. On the one hand, the people who call themselves *Kibar Çingene* (a Turkish version to the English word Gypsy) do not know how to speak the Romani language and identify themselves with the Turkish nationality. On the other hand, the other group speaks the Romani language and they identify themselves as Roma. The ethnic borders and patters are thus very fluid.

Marushiakova and Popov (2013), in their study identifying a relation between the ethnonyms and professions of Gypsy/Romani groups in the Eastern European countries, show how difficult and plural are the identity relations of the so-called Gypsies:

It is quite difficult for them to determine exactly which kind of Gypsies they are, what kind of ethnonym to use for their community, and they answer such questions generally ‘just Roma, Romane Roma’. When, however, they have to come into contact with other Gypsy communities (in this case the *Košničari*, who live in nearby villages), then their appellation is based on the differences in their traditional occupations – ‘we are *Kalajdži*’. Similarly, in Turkey, in answer to our question ‘which Gypsies are you?’, the place where they live (the settlement or the mahala) was indicated first, and then, if we continued to insist, a professionym was created, and in many cases the answer was not a single item but served as reference to the specific social situation, for instance ‘we used to be *Boxčadži* (junk-dealers), we became *Luludžilar* (florists)’, or ‘we were *Bojadžilar* (shoe-shiners), we became *Boxčadžilar*’, and so on. Probably most of the ethnonyms that are based on the designation of a certain occupation or profession were created in this way (Marushiakova and Popov 2013: 65).

¹¹⁸ Çatalca is located 58 kilometers West of Istanbul, in the European part of Turkey.

These examples are here to emphasize how museums usually, including all of the museums studied in this chapter, have a policy of generalization of the identity of the people known as Gypsies, mainly under the label of Roma. Despite all the hardly contestable plurality of faiths, languages and cultures, all the museums present themselves as museums of ‘the’ Roma or Gypsy people. Through their names, there is a semi-mute claim that they represent all the Roma people, as if they were all the same.

It is relevant to stress that, legitimate or not, this strategy is very common when a nationalist rhetoric is being founded. As Gellner (1983) says, a nationalist discourse must be broad enough to bring a whole range of populations together, despite the fact that they might have different internal characteristics. A nationalist narrative is supposed to make sense to a large group and, to this end, it stresses the widespread features which cover this large group, while trying to deemphasize the differences. According to Gellner, this is a pattern reiterated by all the nationalist movements since the mid-19th century and, from the point of view of this research, is not different at all in the case of the present-day Roma nationalist movements. All the museums discussed in this chapter confirm this strategy.

The *Gordon Boswell* claims to provide the ‘true’ Romani experience, similarly to what *Tikno Musée Tsigane* claims to do in regard to the Gypsy memory around France. *The Roma Ethnographic Museum* in Tarnów presents an exhibition named *Roma – History and Culture* and the *Museu Cigano Itinerante* builds a narrative about the Gypsies/Roma based on reinforcements of traditionalisms and exotizations. Although in their displays and texts might make reference to plurality – in Tarnów, for instance, there are three versions of the *Our Father*: in two Polish dialects of the Romani language and in the “standardized” Romani language –, in their names and headlines what prevails is the holistic concept of Roma or Gypsy.

The MRK, for instance, claims the following on its website: “We are paving the way to a new understanding of the roots of Romani identity”. This sentence does not clarify which one, from all the different Gypsy/Roma populations, is going to be displayed in the museum. Also, inside the exhibition, the only clear differentiation between Gypsies/Romani populations from the lands of the current Czech Republic and Slovakia: i.e., the difference between Roma people comes from elements detached from them. In other words, the differences are based on the land and countries where they live (or used to live) and not within their culture and history. In a very similar way, in its explanation about the programs for schools, the museum affirms that it brings the

visitors closer to the Romani culture. An analogous situation can be seen in the video about the MRKu, in Belgrade. Right at the beginning of the recording, Dragoljub Acković states that anyone who visits the museum will have contact with the *true Roma culture* (Acković 2010, my italics), again with no highlight on the plurality characterizing Gypsy/Romani populations.

The two museums that focus on the Holocaust do not have much difference, even though a new ethno-designation shows up: Sinti. Several times, the texts presented in the USHMM assign this broad description to what, in fact, is characterized by plurality. In the section *Roma (Gypsies) in Prewar Europe*, it states: “The term *Roma* has come to include both the Sinti and Roma groupings, though some Roma prefer being known as *Gypsies*.” Note that, though different designations are presented by the museum, still there are no observations about diversity. The denomination *Sinti* is just located under the *Roma* umbrella.

In the ABMM, it is possible to grasp this discursive strategy from the name of the exhibition *The Destruction of the European Roma*, but not only there. At the section *Sinti and Roma (Gypsies) in Auschwitz*, the text provided is the following: “The Nazi Germans regarded Sinti and Roma (*Zigeuner*, as they were referred to in official German documents of the period) as enemies of the Third Reich, and therefore sentenced them to isolation and extermination”. Consider the following analysis:

Table 19 – Analysis of ABMM statements

Phrase n° 1	
“For example, in November 1941 over 5,000 Austrian Roma were put into the Jewish ghetto in Łódź”	
Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,000 Austrian Roma put into the Jewish ghetto 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concept of Austrian Roma
Phrase n° 2	
“The main Roma camp books, which were saved by Polish prisoners, include 20.982 Roma names. Today these books are an invaluable source of information regarding the mass extermination of Roma at Auschwitz.”	
Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were Roma books with Roma names • These books are source of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roma camps • There was an extermination in Auschwitz, they were Roma
Phrase n° 3	
“The Day of Remembrance for the Destruction of the Roma was commemorated at the site of the Auschwitz II-Birkenau camp.”	
Arguments	Assumptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Day of Remembrance was commemorated at the Auschwitz II-Birkenau camp. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The destruction of the Roma

As can be entailed from the above sentences, the construction of the Roma as a homogeneous group is also predominant in the narrative from Auschwitz, even when the museum presents elements which can be a bit controversial, as can be seen in the following quotation, withdrawn from the section *The Roma in Auschwitz concentration camp*:

The deportation of Roma to Auschwitz begun in February 1943 and it continued until July 1944. Those arrested were chiefly from territories in: German, Austria, the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, Poland, and to a lesser extent from France, the Netherlands, Croatia, Belgium, the Soviet Union, Lithuania and Hungary. The camp registers also include entries for Roma citizens of Norway and Spain.

As seen in the aforementioned work of Marushiakova and Popov (2013), even when the discussion concerns Gypsies/Roma living in Eastern European countries alone, the plurality amidst these populations is huge. If the process of generalization takes place, it goes hand in hand with the process of relabelling Gypsy memories as a Roma historiography. After all, in the discussions found in almost all museums, the

Gypsies are nominated as 'Roma' in a generalized way¹¹⁹ even in moments historically placed before the 1st IRU conference, when Roma intelligentsia agreed on the use of this nomenclature. This shows, perhaps, an early plan for the future, an attempt to organize a new discourse to teach the new generations a new history about these people. What is more, this new History would place a new status in its relation with other national narratives, now deemed on an equal basis.

Nevertheless, a big difference it can be traced between the construction of the memory in the ABMM and other museums discussed above in this chapter: apparently, the process of exoticization does not have such a big influence. A small portion of the pictures present in the exhibition present the Gypsy/Roma living a life differently of any kind of majority society in their respective countries. From 210 pictures countable, only nine clearly evoke a traditionalized country-side wandering way-of-life, four stress poorness and thirteen show the music as their main theme. A significant portion of those more traditionalized pictures are from the area of present-day Romania. In sum, if in some exhibitions the essentialized, exoticized and generalized culture which is rooted in the claimed old origins in India is developing the shelter rhetoric, in Auschwitz the material closeness with the suffering seems to be strong enough to create a bond between all those who were killed. Still, this discourse is strong enough to freely discuss the concept of Sinti without losing the power of ethnic unity.

The MRK affirms that it seeks to educate new generations through their educational programs and workshops. The MRKu follows in a very similar way, asserting its will "to inform and educate the young Roma" (Acković 2010), and the will, confirmed by Rajko Đurić's speech, to save for posterity the – singular – Roma culture. In the news about the *Roma and Sinti Genocide Remembrance Day* on the ABMM, the speech of Raymond Gureme, a French Roma aged 91 who was in Auschwitz concentration camp, is an illustration:

You are obliged to fight against discrimination, racism and violence the victims of which are the Roma and Sinti of the entire Europe. We, the old generation, raised the flame. Now it is your turn to keep it and make it burn brighter and brighter so that we get stronger.

It is possible to see a relabelling of a history full of persecutions and cheerless moments as a new one, related with culture and positive aspects. Hence, considering the

¹¹⁹ It is important to highlight here that there were groups considered as Gypsies that always named themselves Roma or similar, but what the museum rhetoric does is different.

plurality that characterise the Gypsy/Romani people, it was necessary to articulate common aspects – whether truthful or not, is not the target of this work to discuss – which would legitimise this new identity, a Roma identity. In this process, museums are playing an important role, with their aura of truth meant to enforce and legitimize the narratives which constitute the core of this chapter.

^{ix} In the original: “Evidement, le peuple tzigane n’a pas fabriqué ces objets. Pratiquement chaque pièce de cette collection (à quelques exceptions près) provient du monde gadjé (non gitan), et a été fabriqué avec soin et passion”. Author’s free translation.

^x In the original: “representações relacionadas ao âmbito afetivo, às lembranças, aos elos com outras pessoas, que permitem atribuir aos objetos uma capacidade rememorativa e celebrativa”. Author’s free translation

^{xi} In the original: “Le Tikno Musée Tzigane c’est un rêve. Un voyage dans le temps, entre le réel et l’imaginaire, entre la terre et le ciel, dans un monde où tout peut exister, un monde magique”. Author’s free translation.

^{xii} In the original: “Avec l’installation “La Kabale des Gitans”, vous entrez dans l’univers mystique des bohémiens. Culte des saints, religion, magie, envoutements, ... l’atmosphère particulière qui se dégage de cette installation, invite le visiteur à se projeter dans une autre dimension : celle du surnaturel, de l’invisible, de la magie.” Author’s free translation.

^{xiii} In the original: “(...) divulgação e o resgate das tradições às futuras gerações e evita desta forma cair no esquecimento uma cultura tão rica como é a do povo cigano. Foi criado com o intuito de lançar sementes no terreno social, histórico e cultural, pela promoção de encontros culturais e sociais, debates, palestras, e eventos entre outros”. Author’s free translation.

^{xiv} In the original: “(...) terapeuta holístico, professor de ciências esotéricas, pesquisador e divulgador das tradições ciganas. Há mais de trinta anos, viveu e convive diretamente em acampamentos ciganos . Ajuda a preservar a cultura cigana na sua totalidade, pela sua correta divulgação em compromisso com a verdade.” Author’s free translation.

^{xv} In the original: Direito à memória. Author’s free translation.

^{xvi} In the original: Vontade de museu. Author’s free translation.

^{xvii} In the original: [...] novas máquinas de guerra colocadas a favor do “empoderamento” social daqueles que historicamente foram subalternizados e expropriados do direito de construir e narrar suas próprias histórias, suas memórias, seus patrimônios e seus museus”. Author’s free translation.

^{xviii} In the original: “Desde que haja rastro, distância, mediação, não estamos mais dentro da verdadeira memória, mas dentro da história”. Author’s free translation.

^{xix} In the original: “Assim, se encontrarmos mais tarde membros de uma sociedade que se tornou para nós a tal ponto estranha, por mais que nos encontremos no meio deles, não conseguimos reconstituir com eles o grupo antigo. É como se abordássemos um caminho que percorremos outrora, mas de viés, como se o encarássemos de um ponto de onde nunca o vimos. Recolocamos os diversos detalhes dentro de um outro conjunto, constituído pelas nossas representações do momento. Parece que chegamos a um novo caminho. Os detalhes não tomariam com efeito seu antigo sentido senão em relação a todo um outro conjunto de que nosso pensamento não abrange mais. Podemos recordar todos os detalhes e a sua respectiva ordem. É do conjunto que seria necessário partir. Ora, isso não nos é mais possível porque, há muito tempo, estamos afastados dele e seria necessário voltar longe demais.” Author’s free translation.

^{xx} In the original: “[...] que é, por um lado, a representação que cada indivíduo faz de sua própria memória, o conhecimento que tem dela e, de outro, o que diz dela, dimensões que remetem ao 'modo de afiliação de um indivíduo a seu passado' e igualmente, [...], a construção explícita da identidade. A metamemória é, portanto, uma memória reivindicada, ostensiva”. Author’s free translation.

^{xxi} In the original: “As representações do mundo social assim construídas, embora aspirem à universalidade de um diagnóstico fundado na razão, são sempre determinadas pelos interesses de grupo que as forjam. Daí, para cada caso, o necessário relacionamento dos discursos proferidos com a posição de quem os utiliza”. Author’s free translation.

^{xxii} In the original: Ao falarmos em *mito*, nós o tomamos não apenas no sentido etimológico de narração pública de feitos lendários da comunidade (isto é, no sentido grego da palavra *mythos*), mas também no sentido antropológico, no qual essa narrativa é a solução imaginária para tensões, conflitos e contradições que não encontram caminhos para serem resolvidos no nível da realidade.

Se também dizemos mito *fundador* é porque, à maneira de toda *fundatio*, esse mito impõe um vínculo interno com o passado como origem, isto é, com um passado que não cessa nunca, que se conserva perenemente presente e, por isso mesmo, não permite o trabalho da diferença temporal e da compreensão do presente enquanto tal. Nesse sentido, falamos em mito também na acepção psicanalítica, ou seja, como impulso à repetição de algo imaginário, que cria um bloqueio à percepção da realidade e impede lidar com ela.

Um mito fundador é aquele que não cessa de encontrar novos meios para exprimir-se, novas linguagens, novos valores e idéias, de tal modo que, quanto mais parece ser outra coisa, tanto mais é a repetição de si mesmo. Author's free translation.

^{xxiii} In the original: “Važno je da se promeni slika o Romima jer su oni sastavni deo Srbije i Beograda i njihov doprinos našoj kulturi i istoriji je ogroman. Muzej je pravi način da se to prikaže”. Author's free translation.

^{xxiv} In the original: “En la primera cueva se encuentra la Sala de la Historia Gitana que está estructurada de manera cronológica haciendo un recorrido que va desde los orígenes del pueblo gitano en el norte de la India hasta la actualidad. En esta primera sala se pueden observar imágenes y documentos que refieren a la salida del pueblo rom del norte de la India y el complejo proceso migratorio que iniciaron atravesando el Imperio Persa, Oriente Próximo, Turquía hasta entrar a Europa (...).” Author's free translation.

^{xxv} In the original: “Se identidade, memória e patrimônio são 'as três palavras-chave da consciência contemporânea' – poderíamos, aliás, reduzir a duas se admitimos que o patrimônio é uma dimensão da memória –, é a memória, podemos afirmar, que vem fortalecer a identidade, tanto no nível individual quanto no coletivo: assim, restituir a memória desaparecida de uma pessoa é restituir sua identidade”. Author's free translation.

Final considerations

This work developed a critical analysis concerning *Romani Nationalism*. The *Romani Nationalism* is a paradox and unique type of movement, inhabiting the border of the traditional concept of *nationalism* for two main reasons: the lack of a coherent group leading the movement and the absence of a claim for a territorial Nation-State. Therefore, the present dissertation aimed to define *Romani Nationalism* by stressing its origins, discussing its developments and targets and, notwithstanding, pointing to its possible obstacles. One of these challenges, for instance, it would be the recognition of the *Roma Nation* without the formation of a territorial *Roma State*.

In order to answer this question, it was decided to follow a historical, sociological and political analysis. Historical because it is a misinterpretation to understand nationalist efforts as an everlasting movement; a feeling that it is always there strictly connected with a given ethnic-cultural/national group. Nationalist feelings are conceived and developed in a determined historical moment, and supported by a certain context. Therefore, it is also sociological, given that it is also connected with concrete problems which groups, elites and communities face in their everyday life. Finally, it is also a political issue due to being composed of feelings, sentiments and a set of actions which might be – and usually are – instrumentalized by certain groups for different purposes. Thus, three main approaches were taken and three questions elaborated. This procedure led to the development of three chapters. The starting point was framing and understanding the specificity of the *Romani Nationalism* within a wider context. It took in consideration the spread of the Gypsy/Romani populations and the multiplicity of their identities, debating the ideal of a *Roma Nation* with traditional nationalist theories. Secondly, analysing the national mobilization, this research understood that it was not centralized and, even further, the strongest actuator of the *Romani Nationalism* is not attached to any organization, but works as a set of representations which can be seen not only within NGOs, international organizations and social movements, but also in the process of elaboration and safeguard of Gypsy/Romani memory. From now onwards each of these questions and their answers will be discussed.

1. Is it possible to see the work of Romani and Romani-Friendly social movements through the lenses of the theories of nationalism?

This research sees the Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations as following a path similar to the one discussed by Miroslav Hroch: an intelligentsia, formed mostly by a group of people formally educated within the standards of the national majority of the States where they live who, in a given moment, start a process of relabelling what they believe to be their ethnic-national culture. This process became more visible in the case of the *Romani Nationalism* after the internationalization of the movements, in the 1960s, but it had roots in the early 20th century. Before the Second World War, Gypsy/Romani organizations which started to appear in nation-states throughout the Balkans (but not only) were mostly discussing the need for Gypsy/Romani populations to achieve the same citizenship status that their peers enjoyed within the countries where they lived. Therefore, these social circles can be seen as an attempt to fight against the understanding that people who were not ethnically part of the majority in the countries could be considered and treated as second class citizens. After the Second World War, the Gypsy/Romani Holocaust and the following years of silence about the killing of Gypsies/Roma (and those who were perceived as Gypsies), the Romani social organizations emerged again during the 1960s. At this point, in addition to the fight for equal civil rights and better quality of life, appeared some level of will for self-determination. Also, willingness for the acknowledgement of Romani culture and the search for the recognition of the *Porrajmos*. This, at least, is what can be interpreted when analysing the rhetoric and the discursive practices from international Gypsy/Romani institutions from the 1960s and 1970s.

It is possible to say that there was a general belief from the intelligentsia/activists who were (or who felt as) Gypsy/Roma, deeming that they had to erase the general mischievous understanding about these groups. There was – and still is – a usual non-Gypsy/Roma rhetoric insisting that Gypsies do not have an appreciable behaviour and a civilized culture. Therefore, in the eyes of the Gypsy/Romani intelligentsia and activists, it was imperative to show that they were similar to other European Nations. It was necessary to stress that Gypsies/Roma had a set of morals, a history, an origin and so on. Therefore, the concept of *Nation* seemed to fit in what was needed.

In summarizing, the work, the behaviour and the mind-set of Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations can be considered a *nationalist movement*. Mostly

because it was (still is) a set of practices and discourses developed by an intellectual elite and activists, which aims for the general recognition of their (claimed) group as a *Nation*. However, the characteristic of not aiming for a State makes it unique. *Romani Nationalism*, therefore, does not fit in Gellner's, Hroch's, Smith's or any previous nationalist theory, but follows its own path, adapting key concepts. *Nation* is roughly understood as a group with a nuclear, basic and broad shared culture, with a communal historical past expressed in a remote origin, though not necessarily attached to a specific clearly defined land in current times. The will for a *State* is denied, mostly because States had never been kind or helpful to Gypsy/Romani populations. Nevertheless, there are attempts of self-determination which would be enforced through a state-like organization in an international level (even though it is not clear which one). The ideal of who are the *Roma* is malleable and uncertain, rhetorically associated with cultural practices but pragmatically more closely connected with social-economic issues. In plain words, the fight against Antigypsyism is somehow structured as a nationalist movement, in order to humanize the subjects known, called or self-ascribed as Gypsies. Gypsies were relegated in non-Gypsy/Romani discursive levels to a people without culture and, therefore, their behaviour would be explained by their biological condition. Nations, on the other hand, are formed by ties based on cultural characteristics. Therefore, to rhetorically transform Gypsies into a *Roma Nation* might have been seen as a way to fight for a better life for the Gypsy/Romani population. It is a nationalist movement, but a very specific one.

2. *How is the concept of Romani Nationalism framed and employed?*

As mentioned, even though the internationalization of the *Romani Nationalism* might be traced to the WRC/IRU group, they did not act as a closed group which managed and determined the steps of the *Roma Nation* (even though it might be argued that it was their intention). Actually, *Romani Nationalism* cannot be summarized to the work of a specific NGO or party. Rather, this work understands it as a set of practices of representations and representations of practices. These representations are at same time designed by different groups – which are not necessarily working together – and architects of the mind-set and strategies of these very same groups and organizations. The ideal of a *Roma Nation* and *Romani Nationalism* might be shaped by all the actors immersed within Romani issues, but at the same time these persons live within this

ideal, without clearly realizing its characteristics, shapes and borders and reproducing such values and beliefs. These representations, for analytical purposes, can be divided into *Pan-Romani* and *Social-Political*. While the first one focuses in describing all the Gypsy/Romani population as a plain group – glossing over differences and highlighting similarities – the second one highlights the social and political difficulties which all (or at least big part of) the Gypsy/Romani population face in Europe. These two representations helped the elaboration and the enforcement of the *Romani Nationalism* throughout the times, helping to create the picture of the whole plural populations known, called and self-ascribed as Gypsies, Roma, Olah, Ursari and so on as a single *Roma Nation*.

In order to talk to and be heard by larger international organizations, the Gypsy/Romani intelligentsia started to speak the same language of *Nation-States*: If the UN and the CoE, for example, interacted with nations, Romani people should be a nation to be heard. And nations have a group which acts as interlocutors of their needs in front of international organizations. Therefore, back in the 1970s, the WRC/IRU group chose the ideal of political representative democracy, and invested themselves in the position of speakers for the general Gypsy/Romani population. In order to legitimize themselves, they applied some vicious logic which worked well while there were no other groups to claim such political position. Strictly speaking, they claimed to be the political representatives of Roma, legitimizing themselves as such political representativity thanks to their previous privileged position as intellectuals and activists and, then, profited from the context where there was no one to challenge their post. As discussed, it is possible to say that the WRC/IRU behaved as a vanguard party. Avant-garde groups usually suffer from a lack of communication between them and the people who they claim to politically represent, who are living their lives in the communities. There are two situations that might be stressed here: 1. the Romani intelligentsia from the 1960s/1970s, when welcoming the concept of *Nation*, decided to embrace those similar strategies and rhetoric which might be seen as responsible for the overall legitimation for their own exclusion; and 2. it is possible to say that the WRC/IRU had little influence in the actual life of the Gypsy/Romani population, which does not mean that they did not contribute in different ways with the visibility of Gypsies/Roma.

The end of the so-called Socialism in the Eastern Europe brought an easier mobility within the European continent, not only of intellectuals/activists from the East to the West, but also of finances traveling the other way. A new paradigm was installed

and Western Donors started to be more and more influential and affected the landscape of the *Romani Nationalism*. It was no longer a question of a circumscribed group of intellectuals/activists thinking about (sometimes ungrounded) international strategies to boost the *Roma Nation*, but local organizations, which could be instrumentalized in their everyday work within the communities by the representations created by the predecessors. That is because the Western Donors arrived in Eastern Europe aiming to solve the *Roma problem*, and the local organizations embraced this approach, learnt and adapted the Western point of view. The angle through which the Western donors understood the Gypsy/Romani population in Eastern Europe, in turn, had a strong influence of the WRC/IRU nationalist approach since the 1970s. Such cyclical interaction had effects in the mind-set of the Eastern organizations. In their local work, the NGOs ended up forging and re-forging the nationalist feeling daily, in an endless exercise of continuous mutation. What is being implied here is that, since the 1960s, there has been an international effort to bring under the umbrella concept of *Roma* all the different populations which were known, considered or self-ascribed as Gypsies in Europe. This same mind-set was applied by the Western Donors: they also saw these plural populations as *the Roma* and, with their financial support, they taught people to act locally (Gypsies/Roma and non-Gypsies/Roma) within these same parameters. Therefore, the generalized representations of *Roma* grew in importance and impact, at least among activists, academia and intelligentsia – whether Gypsy/Roma or non-Gypsy/Roma.

Nevertheless, it might be said that one rhetoric brings materially together both the *Pan-Romani* and the *Social-Political* representations: the relabelling of the memory of the Holocaust. That is because beyond the fight to bring light onto the violence which Gypsies/Roma were submitted, the memory of the *Porrajmos* is being organized in a way to create a bond between these populations. In a certain way, there is a discursive practice approaching the characteristics of the persecution against Gypsies to the oppression to Jews. This narrative claims that Gypsies/Roma were killed because the Nazi machinery wanted to erase them as an ethnic group. However, there are different perspectives which discuss the *Porrajmos* as a plan to kill those who did not manage to keep their *race* pure. This alternative point of view is founded in the fact that the Nazi pseudo-science recognized Gypsies as having an Indian origin and being, in that way, also descendants of the Aryans. In plain words: there are two versions about the reasons for the killing of Gypsies/Roma during the Second World War, one which insists that

the murders were legitimized by the Nazi with basis in a lack of purity of the Gypsy blood (which, in turn, would lead them to be criminals and so on) and another which emphasises that Gypsies/Roma were killed because they were an ethnic (racial) group which the Nazi wanted to erase. Focusing in the last narrative, the *Romani Nationalism* manages to support the rhetoric in which both *Social-Political* and *Pan-Romani* representations merge in one discursive practice which helps to camouflage the Gypsy/Romani multiculturalism inside the concept of *Roma Nation*¹²⁰.

3. How are politics of memory part of the Romani Nationalism?

The third chapter discussed how the memory about Gypsies/Roma is being relabelled and displayed in museum exhibitions. It is possible to say that, materially, the rhetoric supporting *Romani Nationalism* within museums works by *essentializing*, *exoticizing* and *generalizing* the practices of representations and the representations of practices about the Gypsy/Romani populations. *Essentializing* in the sense that they attach to this population certain behaviours, *exoticizing* because they raise a clear border between Roma and non-Roma beliefs and morals, and, *generalizing* because they attempt to ascribe those conducts upon all the Gypsy/Romani populations. Even though, when bringing up the existing plurality among Gypsies/Roma, either this plurality is portrayed as the result of violence – and therefore to be overcome – or the cultural multiplicity is an opaque note within the bright discursive practices stressing the kinship among all Roma. Such actions might be seen in the museums debated in the third chapter. All of them, to different levels, depict Gypsies/Roma in a broad sense. If it might be unfair to affirm that these institutions hide on purpose the differences among Gypsies/Roma, it is possible to say there is a systematic choice for an approach which focuses a very bright light on the (possible) resemblances among all those populations known, called or self-ascribed as Gypsies/Roma throughout Europe. For example, all of them are *the* (singular) museum of *the* (singular) Roma population, also some still display the mystic and exotic representations of Gypsies/Roma. Notwithstanding, when

¹²⁰ It is always important to highlight: there are no intentions to make any revisionist theory which denies the killing of Gypsies/Roma during the Second World War. The Gypsy/Romani populations of Europe were persecuted, imprisoned, violated and killed. In order to keep the support to Human Rights it is important to stress that it does not matter which legitimation the Nazi machinery had and used, the systematic chasing and killing of human beings it is not excusable. The debates about the relabelling of the memory of the Gypsy/Romani Holocaust only makes sense in the theoretical level concerning politics of memory and process of identifications.

discussing the Holocaust, the museums rush to represent the killing of the *Roma*, not offering to debate possible different points of view about the topic, as those here mentioned.

In plain words, since the late 19th century there were groups of well educated (in the formal educational sense) Gypsy/Roma who started to work locally reflecting upon their ethnic affiliation and their role as citizens within the countries where they lived. Up to the Second World War these movements grew in number, but later decreased thanks to the killing of a large part of their leaders – and the population which they were claiming to politically represent – during the conflict. Right after the War, differently of the Jewish Holocaust, the Gypsy/Romani murder was not recognized and started to grow in general awareness only in the early 1970s, after the internationalization of the Romani social movements. Then, these intelligentsia/activists started a process of relabelling the so-called Gypsy ethnic and/or social label into a *Romani Culture*, bypassing the differences found among the plural Gypsy/Romani population and underlining the similarities. This rhetoric was the milestone for the *Romani Nationalism*, which is supported by representations which affirm a bond among all Roma, being either by origin and culture, or by social and political challenges. Such representations were also embraced and employed by the activism after the fall of the Iron Curtain, not only by the Western Donors and their partners, but also consequently by the local organizations risen/supported, taught and organized through their parameters.

Thus, *Romani Nationalism* can be seen as a set of representations which inhabit around and within Romani and Romani-Friendly organizations, social movements and museums. *Romani Nationalism* cannot be found consistently in a determined group, aiming for established a Nation-State in a marked area, but it is an overall belief which is being instrumentalized by international and local organizations which aim to (at least in the rhetorical level) bring these populations to a better social, political and economic position. Also, it is used in struggles to legitimize those who have the right to politically represent these populations. Within the Gypsy/Romani population in Europe (and in other parts of the world) it is possible to find a large number of groups living below the line of poverty, facing different kinds of violence and treated as second-class citizens – when they are treated as citizens at all. Therefore, the enforcement of the category of *Roma Nation* is perceived by a significant part of the Romani intelligentsia/activists as a way to call attention to their problems, exorcize a past full of brutality and a chance to

envision a brighter future. Nevertheless, as said before, the tools which are being wielded by these activists are very similar with those which helped place a large part of the Gypsies/Roma in such an unprivileged social position. The *Roma Nation* might be one way to fight against prejudice and exclusion, but it might also be fertile soil for the sprout of vanguard groups, which are usually disconnected from those who might be in need and end up in a vicious circle of policies of social handouts which generally do not achieve measurable achievements among the communities.

In summarizing, this research believes that *Romani Nationalism* might be understood as a response for nationalist and xenophobic beliefs and behaviour. The *Romani Nationalism* is a counter-attack against the supremacy of the ‘*only one nation fits in one country*’ mind-set, one of the characteristics of the *principle of nationalities*. *Romani Nationalism* is, therefore, a socio-political claim supporting that more than one nation/ethnic group can co-survive within the borders of a country, and it is possible to respect the right of all. It is also possible to say that the *Romani Nationalism* is not only an ethnic-cultural movement looking for (some level of) political self-determination, but also to (allegedly) fight for a better life for the populations known, called and self-ascribed as Gypsies/Roma throughout Europe (and the World). Even though it is possible to point to the role of the WRC/IRU group in the internationalization and spread of the concept of a *Roma Nation*, the *Romani Nationalism* is not led by a particular group, but is supported by a set of practices of representations and representations of practices which are in continuous mutation and are instrumentalized since their origin, being used and adapted by different groups – internationally and locally – to different needs, depending of timing and space.

This character of *Romani Nationalism* might be useful to understand the coming challenges of the European Union as a transnational governmental organization. It seems that the national approach under the transnational discourse of the European project it is facing its shortages, given the rise of xenophobic nationalism and violence against minorities seen in recent years. The mind-set which acknowledges to a specific group their *right* to self-determination within a set area and, by consequence, the relegation to the status of minorities to the cultural, political, economic and/or historical aspects of *others* does not seem to be able to answer the needs of the European – and maybe worldwide – population. *Romani Nationalism* presents, in its uniqueness, a proposal to rethink the understandings concerning national belonging and citizenship, consciously or not. In the *Roma Nation*, a large part of the stable (or at least considered

stable) traces of a *nation* are being challenged. Therefore, more study is needed in order to understand not only the general behaviour of the *Romani Nationalism*, but also their nuances and specificities.

References

- ‘About ERIAC’. n.d. European Romani Institute of Arts and Culture. Accessed 23 March 2018. <http://eriac.org/about-eriac/>.
- ‘Alexa Top 500 Global Sites’. n.d. Alexa. Accessed 1 June 2017. <http://www.alexa.com/topsites>.
- ‘CEU Summer University (SUN)’. 2011. CEU Celebrates Its 20th Anniversary: 1991-2011. 24 March 2011. Accessed 26 July 2018. <http://20.ceu.edu/blogs/guest/2011-03-24/ceu-summer-university-sun>.
- ‘Eva Davidová’. n.d. Torst. Accessed 13 April 2017. <http://www.torst.cz/czech/detail.php?pk=413>.
- ‘Exhibition of Gordon Bowell Romany Museum’. 2016a. Accessed 5 July 2016. http://www.boswell-romany-museum.com/graphics/display1_P1010332.jpg.
- ‘Exhibition of Gordon Bowell Romany Museum’. 2016b. Accessed 5 July 2016. http://www.boswell-romany-museum.com/graphics/crockery_P1010337.jpg.
- ‘Exhibition of the Museu Cigano Itinerante’. n.d. Accessed 2 July 2016a. <https://www.facebook.com/486311394831111/photos/a.1484670218328552.1073741836.486311394831111/1523906657738241/?type=3&theater>.
- ‘Exhibition of the Museu Cigano Itinerante’. n.d. Accessed 2 July 2016. <https://www.facebook.com/486311394831111/photos/a.1484670218328552.1073741836.486311394831111/1529926423802931/?type=3&theater>.
- ‘Exhibition of the Roma Ethnographic Museum’. n.d. Accessed 3 July 2016. <http://www.muzeum.tarnow.pl/img/etno2.jpg>.
- ‘Exhibition of the Tikno Musée Tsigane’. n.d. 9 August 2016. <https://image.jimcdn.com/app/cms/image/transf/dimension=480x10000:format=jpg/path/s00399b3a54fd9974/image/iaf3de9c4c2a5dfd6/version/1279429284/image.jpg>.
- ‘Façade of the Roma Ethnographic Museum’. n.d. Accessed 3 July 2016. <http://www.muzeum.tarnow.pl/img/etno1.jpg>.
- ‘Founding Fathers’. n.d. Council of Europe. Accessed 4 October 2017. <http://www.coe.int/web/about-us/founding-fathers>.
- ‘Gelem, Gelem Lyrics’. 2011. Lyrics Translate. 2011. Accessed 27 October 2016. <http://lyricstranslate.com/en/gelem-gelem-i-went-i-went.html>.
- ‘Grattan Puxon’. n.d. FreeRoma. Accessed 13 April 2017. <http://freeroma.wixsite.com/freeroma/grattan-puxon>.
- ‘History of the International Romani Union’. n.d. International Romani Union. Accessed 27 September 2017. <http://iromaniunion.org/index.php/en/%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%81/history.html>.
- ‘History’. n.d. Central European University. Accessed 26 July 2018. <https://www.ceu.edu/about/history>.
- ‘History’. n.d. Page. World Council of Churches. Accessed 27 September 2017. <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/about-us/wcc-history>.
- ‘Indira Gandhi: Prime Minister of India’. 2017. Encyclopædia Britannica Online. 28 September 2017. Accessed 27 October 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Indira-Gandhi>.
- ‘IRU News’. 2015. International Romani Union. 20 August 2015. Accessed 1 March 2018 <http://iru2020.org/>.

- ‘Museu Cigano Itinerante’. n.d. Accessed 2 July 2016. <https://www.facebook.com/486311394831111/photos/a.486324604829790.1073741828.486311394831111/835854876543426/?type=3&theater>.
- ‘Open Society Foundations Annual Report 1999’. 1999. Budapest: Open Society Foundations. https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/a_a_complete_99_0.pdf.
- ‘Protect Human Rights’. 2014. United Nations. 11 December 2014. Accessed 4 October 2017. <http://www.un.org/en/sections/what-we-do/protect-human-rights/index.html>.
- ‘Roma – Selected Finding’. 2018. Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey. Luxembourg: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. Accessed 16 April 2018. file:///C:/Users/Douglas/Desktop/fra-2016-eu-minorities-survey-roma-selected-findings_en.pdf.
- ‘Romani People’. 2017. *Wikipedia*. Accessed 1 June 2017. https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Romani_people&oldid=783165479.
- ‘Short Presentation of Romani CRISS’. n.d. Romani CRISS. Accessed 29 June 2018. http://www.romanicriss.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1737&Itemid=564.
- ‘Slobodan Berberski’. n.d. Sarajevske Sveske. Accessed 13 April 2017. <http://sveske.ba/en/autori/s/slobodan-berberski>.
- ‘The Life of George Soros’. n.d. George Soros. Accessed 29 June 2018. <https://www.georgesoros.com/the-life-of-george-soros/>.
- ‘The Roma and Open Society’. 2013. Open Society Foundations. May 2013. Accessed 18 April 2018. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/explainers/roma-and-open-society>.
- ‘Timeline’. n.d. World Council of Churches. Accessed 27 September 2017. <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/about-us/organizational-structure/assembly/since-1948>.
- ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’. 2015. United Nations. 6 October 2015. Accessed 4 October 2017. <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>.
- ‘Values’. n.d. Council of Europe. Accessed 4 October 2017. <http://www.coe.int/web/about-us/values>.
- ‘Vision and Mission’. n.d. International Romani Union. Accessed 1 March 2018. <http://iromaniunion.org/index.php/en/about-us/vision-and-mission.html>.
- ‘Wagons in the Roma Ethnographic Museum’. n.d. Accessed 3 July 2016. <http://www.muzeum.tarnow.pl/img/etno5.jpg>.
- ABCD Maior. 2007. ‘Sto. André Tem Primeiro Museu Cigano Do Mundo’. ABCD MAIOR - O Jornal Do Povo Do ABCD. 30 August 2007. Accessed 12 July 2016. <http://www.abcdmaior.com/materias/sto.andre-tem-primeiro-museu-cigano-do-mundo>.
- Acković, Milos. 2010. *Muzej Romské Kulture Deo 1/4*. Online. Vol. 1. 4 vols. Muzej Romské Kulture. Belgrade. Accessed 10 August 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ge05K4uubzc>.
- Acković, Milos. 2010a. *Muzej Romské Kulture Deo 2/4*. Online. Vol. 2. 4 vols. Muzej Romské Kulture. Belgrade. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPkdQ5PXCWA>.
- Acton, Thomas, and Ilona Klímová. 2001. ‘The International Romani Union: An East European Answer to West European Questions? Shifts in the Focus of the World Romani Congresses 1971 - 2000’. In *Between Past and Future: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*, by Will Guy, 157–219. Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press.

- Acton, Thomas. 1972. 'Meetings of the Social Ad War Crimes Comissions of the World Romani Congress. April 25-29, 1972. A Summary Report'. *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 3, LI: 96–101.
- Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Rev. ed. London ; New York: Verso.
- Árnason, Jóhann Páll, and Nicolas Maslowski. 2015. 'Situating Historical Sociology'. *Historická Sociologie*, no. 2: 5–8.
- Asociación Mujeres Gitanas Romi. n.d. 'Museo Etnológico de La Mujer Gitana'. Asociación Mujeres Gitanas Romi. Accessed 10 August 2016. <http://www.mujeresgitanasromi.org/español/museo-etnológico/>.
- Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum. n.d. 'Roma People: The Exhibition The Destruction of the European Roma'. Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum. Accessed 6 August 2016. <http://auschwitz.org/en/visiting/national-exhibitions/roma-people/>.
- Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Museum. 2016a. 'Roma and Sinti Genocide Remembrance Day'. Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Museum. 2 August 2016. Accessed 6 August 2016. <http://auschwitz.org/en/museum/news/roma-and-sinti-genocide-remembrance-day,1215.html>.
- B. 2016. The situation of the Romani people and the Romani social movements in Bulgaria Interview by Douglas Neander Sambati. Personal archive.
- B1. 2016. The situation of the Romani people and the Romani social movements in Bulgaria Interview by Douglas Neander Sambati. Personal archive.
- Baar, Huub van. 2008. 'The Way Out of Amnesia?' *Third Text* 22 (3): 373–85. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09528820802204854>.
- Bakunin, Michail. 1916. *God and the State*. Translated by Benjamin R Tucker. New York: Mother Earth Publishing Association. <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/michail-bakunin-god-and-the-state.pdf>.
- Bakunin, Michail. 1972. 'On Representative Government and Universal Suffrage'. In *Bakunin on Anarchy*, by Sam Dolgoff, translated by Sam Dolgoff, 218–24. New York: Random House. [https://libcom.org/files/Bakunin%20on%20Anarchy%20\(1971\).pdf](https://libcom.org/files/Bakunin%20on%20Anarchy%20(1971).pdf).
- Banac, Ivo. n.d. 'Josip Broz Tito | President of Yugoslavia'. Encyclopædia Britannica. Accessed 5 June 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Josip-Broz-Tito>.
- Barany, Zoltan. 2000. 'Politics and the Roma in State-Socialist Eastern Europe'. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 33 (4): 421–37. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0967-067X\(00\)00014-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0967-067X(00)00014-3).
- Barany, Zoltan. 2002. *The East European Gypsies: Regime Change, Marginality, and Ethnopolitics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bartozs, Adam. Letter to Douglas Neander Sambati. 2016. 'Visit to Tarnow Museum - PhD Research', 30 October 2016.
- Bauer, Otto. 2000. *The Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy*. Edited by Ephraim Nimni. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Beetham, David. 1991. *The Legitimation of Power*. New York: Palgrave.
- Bezerra, Aline Maria Marques, and César Roberto Castro Chaves. 2014. 'Revitalização Urbana: Entendendo o Processo de Requalificação Da Paisagem'. *Revista Do CEDS* 1: 1–16.

- Blake, Isaac. 2016. 'Roma Nation Day'. *Romani Cultural & Arts Company* (blog). 8 April 2016. <http://www.romaniarts.co.uk/international-romani-day/>.
- Bookchin, Murray. 1991. 'Libertarian Municipalism: An Overview'. In *Social Ecology Project's Readings in Libertarian Municipalism*. Green Perspectives. Accessed 12 April 2017. <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/murray-bookchin-libertarian-municipalism-an-overview>.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1989. *O Poder Simbólico*. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand.
- Brealey, Margareth. 2001. 'The Persecution of Gypsies in Europe'. *American Behavioral Scientist* 45 (4): 588–99. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00027640121957367>.
- Broughton, Simon, Mark Ellingham, and Richard Trillo, eds. 1999. *World Music: Africa, Europa and Middle East*. Vol. 1. London: The Rough Guides.
- Brown, Philip. 2013. 'Who Are the Roma People?' *New Internationalist Blog* (blog). 28 October 2013. Accessed 1 June 2017. <https://newint.org/blog/2013/10/28/roma-minority-prejudice/>.
- Brüggemann, Christian, and Eben Friedman. 2017. 'The Decade of Roma Inclusion: Origins, Actors, and Legacies'. *European Education* 49 (1): 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10564934.2017.1290422>.
- Buick, Adam. 2009. 'The Role of the Soviets in Russia's Bourgeois Revolution: The Point of View of Julius Martov'. Libcom.Org. 7 May 2009. <http://libcom.org/library/role-soviets-russias-bourgeois-revolution-point-view-julius-martov>.
- Bunescu, Ioana. 2012. 'The Creative Use of Mainstream Myths in Legitimizing Minority Representation. The Case of Romanian Roma Kings'. presented at the Annual Convention of the Association of the Study of Nationalities (ASN), Columbia University, New York, April 19. Accessed 10 August 2016. https://www.academia.edu/4933312/The_Creative_Use_of_Mainstream_Myths_in_Legitimizing_Minority_Representation_The_Case_of_Romanian_Roma_Kings.
- Candau, Joël. 2011. *Memória e Identidade*. São Paulo: Contexto.
- Carmona, Sarah. 2013. 'Memory, History and Romanipen: Reflection on the Concept of Trace'. In *Roma Identity and Antigypsyism in Europe*, edited by Christo Kjučukov and Omar Rawashdeh. Munich: LINCOM Europa.
- Chacko, Priya. 2015. 'The New Geo-Economics of a "Rising" India: State Transformation and the Recasting of Foreign Policy'. *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 45 (2): 326–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472336.2014.948902>.
- Chartier, Roger. 1990. *A História Cultural: Entre Práticas e Representações*. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand.
- Chartier, Roger. 2009. *A História Ou a Leitura Do Tempo*. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica.
- Chauí, Marilena de Souza. 2000. *Brasil: Mito Fundador e Sociedade Autoritária*. São Paulo: Fundação Perseu Abramo. http://www.usp.br/cje/anexos/pierre/brasil_mitofundador_e_sociedade_autoritaria_marilena_chau_i.pdf.
- Chiaramonte, José Carlos. 2003. 'Metamorfose Do Conceito de Nação Durante Os Séculos XVII e XVIII'. In *Brasil: Formação Do Estado e Da Nação*, 61–91. São Paulo/Ijuí: Hucitec/Editora Unijuí.
- Chirîtoiu, Ana, and Ana Ivasiuc, eds. 2013. *It's about Us: 20 Answer to the Question 'What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?'* Bucharest: Oscar Print.
- Chomsky, Noam. 1967. 'A Special Supplement: The Responsibility of Intellectuals'. *The New York Review of Books*, 23 February 1967.

<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1967/02/23/a-special-supplement-the-responsibility-of-intelle/>.

- Chomsky, Noam. 2004. 'Reforma e Revolução'. In *Notas Sobre o Anarquismo*, 161–86. São Paulo: Imaginário.
- Cioabă, Florin. 2013. '8th April IRU'. *International Romani Union* (blog). Accessed 1st Jul. 2015. <http://internationalromaniunion.org/8th-april/>.
- Corrêa, Felipe. 2014. *Teoria Bakuniana Do Estado*. São Paulo: Intermezzo / Imaginário. <https://ithanarquista.files.wordpress.com/2016/05/felipe-correa-teoria-bakuniniana-do-estado.pdf>.
- Crampton, Richard J., and Loring Danforth. 2015. 'Balkans'. *Encyclopædia Britannica*. 25 March 2015. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Balkans>.
- CREARC. 2009. *ROMI Museo Etnológico de La Mujer Gitana: Sacromonte Granada España*. Online. Granada. Accessed 10 August 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=_uZnJCcmp_A.
- Cviklová, Lucie. 2011. 'Social Closure and Discriminatory Practices Related to the Roma Minority in the Czech Republic through the Perspective of National and European Institutions'. *Journal of Comparative Research in Anthropology and Sociology* 2 (1): 55–70.
- Cz. 2016. The exhibition and the work of the Muzeum Romské Kultury/Brno Interview by Douglas Neander Sambati. Personal archive.
- Dahlgreen, Will. 2015. 'Roma People and Muslims Are the Least Tolerated Minorities in Europe'. YouGov: What the World Thinks. 5 June 2015. Accessed 16 April 2018. [//yougov.co.uk/news/2015/06/05/european-attitudes-minorities/](http://yougov.co.uk/news/2015/06/05/european-attitudes-minorities/).
- Delacroix, Eugène. 1830. *La Liberté Guidant Le Peuple*. Peinture à l'huile.
- Dias, Carlos. 2017. 'Frases Nas Paredes Ameaçam de Morte Ciganos de Moura'. *Público*, 3 January 2017. <https://www.publico.pt/2017/03/01/sociedade/noticia/frases-pintadas-nas-paredes-ameacam-de-morte-a-comunidade-cigana-de-santo-aleixo-da-restauracao-1763577>.
- Duminiță, Gelu. 2013. 'What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?' In *It's about Us: 20 Answers to the Question 'What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?'*, edited by Ana Ivasiuc and Ana Chirițoiu. Bucharest: Oscar Print.
- Duminiță, Gelu. n.d. 'Pentru Copiii Noștri'. CD. Edited by Agenția Împreună.
- Encyclopædia Britannica. 2010. 'Mihail Kogalniceanu: Romanian Statesman'. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. 12 May 2010. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mihail-Kogalniceanu>.
- End, Markus. 2013. 'History of Antigypsyism in Europe: The Social Causes'. In *Roma Identity and Antigypsyism in Europe*. edited by Christo Kjučukov and Omar Rawashdeh. Munich: LINCOM Europa.
- Fantezie, Paul. n.d. *Sfat de Tată*. CD. Pentru Copiii Noștri. Romania.
- Flusser, Vilém. 2002. *Filosofia Da Caixa Preta: Ensaios Para Uma Futura Filosofia Da Fotografia*. Translated by Vilém Flusser. Rio de Janeiro: Relume Dumará.
- Fraser, Angus M. 1996. *The Gypsies*. 2nd ed. The Peoples of Europe. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Gellner, Ernest. 1983. *Nations and Nationalism*. 1st publ. New Perspectives on the Past. New York (NY): Cornell University Press.
- Gheorghe, Nicolae. 1991. 'Roma-Gypsy Ethnicity in Eastern Europe'. *Social Research. Nationalism: Central and East Europe*, 1991.

- Goldberg, K. Meira, Ninotchka Devorah Bennahum, and Michelle Heffner Hayes, eds. 2015. *Flamenco on the Global Stage: Historical, Critical and Theoretical Perspectives*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company.
- Goldman, Emma. 1998. 'The Social Importance of the Modern School'. In *Red Emma Speaks: An Emma Goldman Reader*, edited by Alix Kates Shulman, 3rd ed., 140–49. New Jersey: Humanity Book/Prometheus Books.
- Gordon Boswell Romany Museum. n.d. 'Home'. The Gordon Boswell Romany Museum. Accessed 4 November 2016. <http://www.boswell-romany-museum.com/>.
- Guibernau, Montserrat. 1999. *Nations without States: Political Communities in a Global Age*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers.
- Guy, Will. 2001. 'Romani Identity and Post-Communist Policy'. In *Between Past and Future: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*, edited by Will Guy, 3 – 32. Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press.
- H. 2016. The situation of the Romani people and the Romani social movements in Hungary Interview by Douglas Neander Sambati. Personal archive.
- Halbwachs, Maurice. 1990. *A Memória Coletiva*. São Paulo: Vértice/Revista dos tribunais.
- Haliliuc, Alina. 2015. 'Manele Music and the Discourse of Balkanism in Romania'. *COMMUNICATION CULTURE & CRITIQUE* 8 (2): 290–308.
- Hall, Stuart. 2006. *A Identidade Cultural Na Pós-Modernidade*. 11th ed. Rio de Janeiro: DP&A.
- Hancock, Ian. 2001. 'Foreword'. In *Between Past and Future: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*, VII–IX. Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press.
- Hancock, Ian. 2004. 'Romanies and the Holocaust: A Re-Evaluation and Overview'. In *The Historiography of the Holocaust*, edited by Dan Stone, 383–96. Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-230-52450-7_18.
- Hancock, Ian. 2005. *We Are the Romani People / Ame Sam e Rromane Džene*. Interface Collection. Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press.
- Hancock, Ian. 2013. '1938 and the Porrajmos: A Pivotal Year in Romani History - Centre for World Dialogue'. *Global Dialogue*, 2013.
- Hatef, Azeta. 2018. 'Alternative Spaces of Engagement: Media Use among Roma in the Czech Republic'. presented at the Romani Identities and Antigypsyism, Budapest, July 13.
- Herman, Barbara. 2015. 'What Is Tarot? A Professional Tarot Card Reader Tells All'. *International Business Times*. 29 May 2015. Accessed 04 October 2016. <http://www.ibtimes.com/what-tarot-professional-tarot-card-reader-tells-all-1938557>.
- Horvatová, Jana. 2013. 'The Role of Healthy Roma Self-Confidence in the Integration Process'. In *Roma Identity and Antigypsyism in Europe*, edited by Christo Kjučukov and Omar Rawashdeh, 72–82. Munich: LINCOM Europa.
- Hroch, Miroslav. 2000. *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- International Romani Union, ed. 2000. 'International Romani Union. Statute of the Organization'. Accessed 22 March 2018. <http://iromaniunion.org/doc/IRU%20Statute%20English%20Version.pdf>.

- Kapralski, Sławomir. 1997. 'Identity Building and the Holocaust: Roma Political Nationalism'. *Nationalities Papers* 25 (2): 269–83. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00905999708408503>.
- Kapralski, Sławomir. 2012. 'Symbols and Rituals in the Mobilisation of the Romani National Ideal'. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 12 (1): 64–81. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-9469.2012.01152.x>.
- Kearney, Seamus. 2012. 'Who Are the Roma People?' Euronews. 30 April 2012. Accessed 1 June 2017. <http://www.euronews.com/2012/04/30/who-are-the-roma-people->.
- Kellner, Peter. 2018. 'George Soros'. Encyclopædia Britannica. 25 May 2018. Accessed 29 June 2018. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/George-Soros>.
- Kenrick, Donald. 1971. 'The World Romani Congress - April 1971'. *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 3, L: 101–8.
- Kjučukov, Christo Slavov. 2013. 'Projection Hypotheses in Language and Identity among Muslim Roma'. In *Roma Identity and Antigypsyism in Europe*. edited by Christo Kjučukov and Omar Rawashdeh. Munich: LINCOM Europa.
- Klímová-Alexander, I. 2010. 'The Development and Institutionalization of Romani Representation and Administration. Part 3c: Religious, Governmental, and Non-Governmental Institutions (1945-1970)'. *Nationalities Papers* 38 (1): 105–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00905990903386629>.
- Klímová-Alexander, Ilona. 2006. 'The Development and Institutionalization of Romani Representation and Administration. Part 3a: From National Organizations to International Umbrellas (1945–1970)—Romani Mobilization at the National Level'. *Nationalities Papers* 34 (5): 599–621. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00905990600953010>.
- Klímová-Alexander, Ilona. 2007. 'The Development and Institutionalization of Romani Representation and Administration. Part 3b: From National Organizations to International Umbrellas (1945-1970) - the International Level'. *Nationalities Papers* 35 (4): 627–62. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00905990701475079>.
- Kyuchokov, Christo Slavov. 2013. 'Introduction'. In *Roma Identity and Antigypsyism in Europe*, 07–12. edited by Christo Kjučukov and Omar Rawashdeh. München: LINCOM Europa.
- Ladányi, János, and Iván Szelényi. 2006. *Patterns of Exclusion: Constructing Gypsy Ethnicity and the Making of an Underclass in Transitional Societies of Europe*. East European Monographs, no. 676. Boulder: East European Monographs.
- Leis, Héctor Ricardo. 2000. 'Sobre o Conceito de Interdisciplinaridade Em Ciências Humanas e Outras Ciências'. In *A Interdisciplinaridade Em Ciências Ambientais*, 107–118. São Paulo: Signus.
- Lemon, Alaina. 2002. 'Without a "Concept"? Race as Discursive Practice'. *Slavic Review* 61 (1): 54–61. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2696981>.
- Liegeois, Jean-Pierre, and Nicolae Gheorghe. 1995. 'Roma/Gypsies: A European Minority'. London: Minority Rights Group International. <http://www.synigoros.gr/resources/roma/sxetika-genika-eggrafa/romareport.pdf>.
- M. 2016. The situation of the Romani people and the Romani social movements in Macedonia Interview by Douglas Neander Sambati. Personal archive.
- Martí, Teresa Sordé, José Ramón Flecha García, and Teodor Mircea Alexiu. 2013. 'El pueblo gitano: una identidad global sin territorio'. *Scripta Nova: Revista electrónica de geografía y ciencias sociales*, no. 17: 3.

- Marushiakova, Elena, and Veselin Popov. 2004. 'The Roma – a Nation without a State? Historical Background and Contemporary Tendencies'. *Nomadsed.De*. 2004. http://www.nomadsed.de/fileadmin/user_upload/redakteure/Dateien_Publikationen/Mitteilungen_des_SFB/owh6marushiakova.pdf.
- Marushiakova, Elena, and Veselin Popov. 2011. 'Between Exoticization and Marginalization. Current Problems of Gypsy Studies'. *Behemoth* 4 (1). <https://doi.org/10.1515/behemoth.2011.006>.
- Marushiakova, Elena, and Veselin Popov. 2013. "'Gypsy" Groups in Eastern Europe: Ethnonyms vs. Professionyms'. *Romani Studies*, 2013.
- Marushiakova, Elena, and Veselin Popov. 2013a. 'Roma Identities in Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe'. In *Roma Identity and Antigypsyism in Europe*. edited by Christo Kjučukov and Omar Rawashdeh. Munich: LINCOM Europa.
- Marushiakova, Elena, and Veselin Popov. 2015. 'The First Gypsy/Roma Organisations, Churches and Newspapers'. In *From Dust to Digital: Ten Years of the Endangered Archives Programme*, 189–224. Cambridge: Open Book Publishers.
- Marushiakova, Elena, and Vesselin Popov. 2003. 'Ethnic Identities and Economic Strategies of Gypsies in the Countries of the Former USSR'. In *Nomaden Und Sesshafte – Fragen, Methoden, Ergebnisse*, 1:289–310. Wittenberg: Orientwissenschaftliches Zentrum der Martin-Luther-Universität.
- Marushiakova, Elena, and Vesselin Popov. 2016. 'Roma Museums'. In *Roma Culture: Myths and Realities*. Munich: Lincom Academic Publisher. https://www.academia.edu/27156243/Roma_Museums.
- Marx, Karl. 1969. 'Theses On Feuerbach'. In *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, translated by W Lough, 13 – 15. Moscow: Progress Publishers. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/theses/theses.htm>.
- Maslowski, Nicolas. 2014. 'Politika Paměti Jako Nástroj Manipulace a Morálky'. In *Kolektivní Paměť: K Teoretickým Otázkám*, edited by Nicolas Maslowski and Jiří Šubrt, 1:69–81. Prague: Karolinum.
- Mayall, David. 2004. *Gypsy Identities, 1500-2000: From Egipcians and Moon-Men to the Ethnic Romany*. London: Routledge.
- McGarry, Aidan. 2008. 'Ethnic Group Identity and the Roma Social Movement: Transnational Organizing Structures of Representation'. *Nationalities Papers*, 2008.
- Miura, Kodo. 2016. *Backyard of the Roma Ethnographic Museum*. Photograph. Personal archive. <http://kodography.com/>.
- Miura, Kodo. 2016a. *Exhibition at the Ethnografic Museum in Tárnow*. Photography. Personal archive. <http://kodography.com/>.
- Miura, Kodo. 2016b. *Exhibition about the Holocaust at the Roma Ethnographic Museum*. Photograph. Personal archive. <http://kodography.com/>.
- Museu Cigano Itinerante. n.d. 'About Us'. Accessed 12 July 2016. https://www.facebook.com/MUSEU-CIGANO-ITINERANTE-BRASIL-486311394831111/info/?entry_point=page_nav_about_item&tab=page_info.
- Muzej Romské Kulture. n.d. 'O Osnivaču Muzeja'. Muzej Romské Kulture. Accessed 10 August 2016. <http://romamuseum.rs/onama.html>.
- Muzeum Okręgowe w Tarnowie. n.d. 'Historia Muzeum'. Accessed 12 July 2016. http://www.muzeum.tarnow.pl/historia_muzeum.php.

- Muzeum romské kultury. n.d. 'Permanent Exhibition – The Story of the Roma'. Accessed 10 August 2016. <http://www.rommuz.cz/en/exhibitions-and-programme/permanent-exhibition-the-story-of-the-roma/>.
- Niremberg, Jud. 2009. 'Romani Political Mobilization from the First International Romani Union Congress to the European Roma, Sinti and Travellers Forum'. In *Romani Politics in Contemporary Europe: Poverty, Ethnic Mobilization, and the Neoliberal Order*, 94–114. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nora, Pierre. 1993. 'Entre Memória e História: A Problemática Dos Lugares.' *Projeto História*, 12 October 1993. <http://revistas.pucsp.br/index.php/revph/article/viewFile/12101/8763>.
- Öcalan, Abdullah. 2011. *Democratic Confederalism*. Translated by International Initiative. London, Cologne: Transmedia Publishing Ltd.
- Orlandi, Eni Puccinelli. 2000. *Análise Do Discurso: Princípios e Procedimentos*. Campinas: Pontes.
- Perlman, Freddy. 1984. 'The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism'. *Fifth Estate*, 1984. <http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/fredy-perlman-the-continuing-appeal-of-nationalism>.
- Positive Romani Stories. n.d. 'About'. Facebook. Positive Romani Stories. Accessed 9 March 2018. https://www.facebook.com/pg/Positive-Romani-Stories-390354817677859/about/?ref=page_internal.
- Possamai, Zita Rosane. 2001. *Nos Bastidores Do Museu: Patrimônio e Passado Na Cidade de Porto Alegre*. Porto Alegre: EST Edições.
- Posted by Espaço Filhos do Vento. 2012. 'Albino Granado'. *Espaço Filhos Do Vento* (blog). 4 October 2012. Accessed 10 August 2016. <http://espacofilhosdovento.blogspot.com/2012/04/albino-granado.html>.
- Poulot, Dominique. 2009. *Uma História Do Patrimônio No Ocidente, Séculos XVIII-XXI: Do Monumento Aos Valores*. São Paulo: Estação Liberdade.
- Público*. 2008. 'Juan de Dios Ramírez Heredia, Primer Gitano Investido Doctor Honoris Causa', 20 February 2008, sec. Última Hora. Accessed 13 Apr. 2017. <http://web.archive.org/web/20080626223613/http://www.publico.es/051103/juan/dios/ramirez/heredia/primer/gitano/investido/doctor/honoris/causa>.
- Puxon, Grattan, and Ramuš Muarem. 2016. 'Democratic Transition: IRU Plan Roma Movement Reform'. *Roma Times*. 11 June 2016. <http://www.romatimes.news/index.php/en-us/iru/1057-democratic-transition-iru-plan-roma-movement-reform-by-grattan-puxon>.
- Puxon, Grattan, and Ramuš Muarem. 2016a. 'IRU Builds System for Democratic Transition'. *Roma Times*. 7 December 2016. <http://www.romatimes.news/index.php/en-us/iru/1615-by-grattan-puxon-iru-builds-system-for-democratic-transition>.
- R. 2016. The situation of the Romani people and the Romani social movements in Romania Interview by Douglas Neander Sambati. Personal archive.
- R1. 2016. The situation of the Romani people and the Romani social movements in Romania Interview by Douglas Neander Sambati. Personal archive.
- R2. 2016. The situation of the Romani people and the Romani social movements in Romania Interview by Douglas Neander Sambati. Personal archive.
- Radek, Karl. 1921. 'Is the Russian Revolution a Bourgeois Revolution?' Translated by Einde O'Callaghan. *The Voice of Labor*, 1921. <http://www.marxists.org/archive/radek/1921/xx/rusrev.html>.

- Ringold, Dena, Mitchel A. Orenstein, and Erika Wilkens. 2005. *Roma in an Expanding Europe: Breaking the Poverty Cycle*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.
- Robin, Régine. 1977. *História e Linguística*. São Paulo: Culturix.
- Rocker, Rudolf. 1997. *Nationalism and Culture*. Montreal: Black Rose Books. <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/rudolf-rocker-nationalism-and-culture.pdf>.
- Rodrigues, Neidson. 2001. 'Education: From Human Training to the Construction of Ethical Subjects'. *Educação & Sociedade* 22 (76): 232–57. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0101-73302001000300013>.
- Romi, Loli. 2011. 'Proyectos 2011'. *Mujeres Gitanas Romi*. (blog). 23 March 2011. <http://mujeresgitanasromi.blogspot.com/2011/03/proyectos-2011.html>.
- Rosenthal, Joe. 1945. *US Marines Raise a Second Flag atop Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima*. <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/iwo-jima-and-okinawa-death-japans-doorstep>.
- Rychlíková, Monika. 2002. *.....To Jsou Těžké Vzpomínky*. Czech Republic. <http://www.csfd.cz/film/273630-to-jsou-tezke-vzpominky/komentare/>.
- Ryšavý, Zdeněk. 2013. 'Leading Roma Representative Ján Cibul'a Passes Away'. Translated by Gwendolyn Albert. *Romea.Cz*, 19 August 2013. Accessed 13 Apr. 2017. <http://www.romea.cz/en/features-and-commentary/reportage/leading-roma-representative-jan-cibula-passes-away>.
- Ryšavý, Zdeněk. 2015. '8 April: Romani People Worldwide Celebrate International Romani Day'. *Romea.Cz*. 4 August 2015. Accessed in 30 Mar. 2017. <http://www.romea.cz/en/news/world/8-april-romani-people-worldwide-celebrate-international-romani-day>.
- Šakaja, Laura, and Hrvoje Šlezak. 2013. 'The Romani ("Gypsies") in the Social Space of Post-Socialist Countries: The Example of Croatia'. In *The Overarching Issues of the European Space*. Porto: Faculdade Letras Universidade Porto. <http://ler.letras.up.pt/uploads/ficheiros/12352.pdf>.
- Schweber, Howard. 2016. 'The Limits of Political Representation'. *American Political Science Review* 110 (2): 382–96. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055416000137>.
- Simhandl, Katrin. 2009. 'Beyond Boundaries? Comparing the Construction of the Political Categories "Gypsies" and "Roma" Before and After the EU Enlargement'. In *Romani Politics in Contemporary Europe: Poverty, Ethnic Mobilization, and the Neoliberal Order*, 72–93. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sk. 2016. The situation of the Romani people and the Romani social movements in Slovakia Non-Recorded Interview by Douglas Neander Sambati. Personal archive.
- Smith, Anthony D. 2008. *The Cultural Foundations of Nations: Hierarchy, Covenant and Republic*. Malden: Blackwell.
- Sokol, Jan. 2010. 'Europe Speaks'. *Angelaki* 15 (3): 185–93. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0969725X.2010.536024>.
- Sommerville, David. n.d. 'Battle of Iwo Jima: World War II'. Encyclopædia Britannica. Accessed 8 November 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Battle-of-Iwo-Jima>.
- Souza Chagas, Mario. 2010. '+ Direito à Memória'. *Rede Museus - Memória e Movimentos Sociais* (blog). 14 September 2010. Accessed 07 March 2017. <http://redemuseusmemoriaemovimentossociais.blogspot.com/2010/09/direito-memoria-mario-chagas.html>.

- Stalin, Iosif Vissariónovitch. 2012. *Marxism and the National Question*. London: CPGB-ML. http://www.cpgb-ml.org/download/publications/stalin_marxism_and_national_question.pdf.
- Stewart, Michael. 1999. 'The Puzzle of Roma Persistence: Group Identity without a Nation'. In *Romani Culture and Gypsy Identity*, 84–98. Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.
- Stewart, Michael. 2017. 'Nothing about Us without Us, or the Dangers of a Closed-Society Research Paradigm'. *Romani Studies* 27 (2): 125–46. <https://doi.org/10.3828/rs.2017.8>.
- Strickland, Patrick. 2017. 'Life in Slovakia's Roma Slums: Poverty and Segregation'. *Al Jazeera*, 10 May 2017. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/04/life-slovakia-roma-slums-poverty-segregation-170425090756677.html>.
- Šubrt, Jiří, Nicolas Maslowski, and Štěpánka Lehmann. 2014. 'Maurice Halbwachs, Koncept Rámčů Paměti a Kolektivní Paměti'. In *Kolektivní Paměť: K Teoretickým Otázkám*, edited by Nicolas Maslowski and Jiří Šubrt, 1:15–30. Prague: Karolinum.
- Surdu, Laura, Enikő Magyari-Vincze, and Marius Wamsiedel. 2011. *Roma School Participation, Non-Attendance and Discrimination In Romania*. București: Vanemonde.
- The Roma Nation Movement. n.d. 'About'. Facebook. The Roma Nation Movement. Accessed 8 March 2018. https://www.facebook.com/pg/romanationmovement/about/?ref=page_internal.
- Tikno Musée Tsigane. n.d. 'Vous Entrez Dans Le Tikno Musée Tsigane Itinérant!' Accessed 9 August 2016a. <http://www.tiknomuseetsigane.com/>.
- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. 2016. 'Roma (Gypsies) in Prewar Europe'. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. 7 February 2016. Accessed 10 August 2016. <https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005395>.
- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. 2016a. 'Genocide of European Roma (Gypsies), 1939–1945'. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. 7 February 2016. Accessed 10 August 2016. <https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005219>.
- Vermeersch, Peter. 2006. *The Romani Movement: Minority Politics and Ethnic Mobilization in Contemporary Central Europe*. Studies in Ethnopolitics. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Weber, Max. 1946. *Politics as a Vocation*. New York: Oxford University Press. https://archive.org/stream/weber_max_1864_1920_politics_as_a_vocation#page/n7/mode/2up.
- Weyrauch, Walter O., ed. 2001. *Gypsy Law*. Los Angeles: University of California Press. <http://www.ucpress.edu/book.php?isbn=9780520221864>.
- Wheatcroft, S. G., R. W. Davies, and J. M. Cooper. 1986. 'Soviet Industrialization Reconsidered: Some Preliminary Conclusions about Economic Development between 1926 and 1941'. *Economic History Review* 39 (2): 264–294.
- Wimmer, Andreas, and Nina Glick Schiller. 2003. 'Methodological Nationalism, the Social Sciences, and the Study of Migration: An Essay in Historical Epistemology'. *The International Migration Review* 37 (3): 576–610.
- Wontor-Cichy, Teresa. n.d. 'Roma in Auschwitz'. Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum. Accessed 25 July 2018. http://lekcja.auschwitz.org/en_roma_auschwitz/story_html5.html.
- Żelazko, Alicja. n.d. 'Liberty Leading the People'. *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed 19 September 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Liberty-Leading-the-People>.

List of Images

Image 01-	Balkans.....	19
Image 02-	Hroch's Integrated Type.....	25
Image 03-	Hroch's Belated Type.....	26
Image 04-	Hroch's Insurrectional Type.....	26
Image 05-	Hroch's Integrated Type.....	27
Image 06-	Romani Type.....	29
Image 07-	Romani flag.....	33
Image 08-	Scheme about Chiaramonte's thought.....	45
Image 09-	Situation of disadvantage of Roma people in Slovakia.....	62
Image 10-	Picture taken by Eva Davidová during the WRC.....	80
Image 11-	US Marines Raise a Second Flag atop Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima and <i>La Liberté guidant le peuple</i>	81
Image 12-	Scheme discussing the Western Donors in the <i>Romani Nationalism</i>	100
Image 13-	Exhibition of Gordon Bowell Romany Museum.....	118
Image 14-	Exhibition of Gordon Bowell Romany Museum.....	119
Image 15-	Exhibition of the Tikno Musée Tsigane.....	121
Image 16-	Façade of the Roma Ethnographic Museum.....	124
Image 17-	Backyard of the Roma Ethnographic Museum.....	125
Image 18-	Wagons in the Roma Ethnographic Museum.....	126
Image 19-	Exhibition of the Roma Ethnographic Museum.....	128
Image 20-	Exhibition of the Museu Cigano Itinerante.....	130
Image 21-	Exhibition of the Museu Cigano Itinerante.....	131
Image 22-	Picture present on the Facebook profile of the 'Museu Cigano Itinerante'..	132
Image 23-	Exhibition at the Ethnografic Museum in Tárnow.....	144
Image 24-	Advertisement about the Gypsy Woman Ethnological Museum.....	145
Image 25-	Exhibition about the Holocaust at the Roma Ethnographic Museum.....	149

List of Tables

Table 01-	First Gypsy/Romani Associations in the Balkan Region before 1950	19
Table 02-	Roma Organizations around the World before 1950.....	21
Table 03-	Hroch's Three Phases Model.....	22
Table 04-	Acronyms of Hroch's Four Types of Nationalist Development.....	25
Table 05-	Main international events related with Romani issues from 1990 to 2000.....	30
Table 06-	The Declaration of a Roma Nation.....	30
Table 07-	Main names of the 1 st World Romani Congress.....	34
Table 08-	Analysis of TRNM statement.....	68
Table 09-	Analysis of PRS statement.....	69
Table 10-	Analysis of IRU/Macedonia statement.....	70
Table 11-	Analysis of IRU/Latvia statement.....	70
Table 12-	Analysis of IRU/Macedonia statement.....	71
Table 13-	Analysis of ERIAC statement.....	72
Table 14-	Analysis of REF statement.....	73
Table 15-	Analysis of point III of Juan de Dios Ramirez's ten points program at 1 st WRC statement.....	82
Table 16-	Analysis of TMT statements.....	122
Table 17-	Analysis MCI statement.....	129
Table 18-	Analysis of MRK statement.....	142
Table 19-	Analysis of ABMM statements.....	158

Annex 1

The Annex 1 is formed by the transcribed interviews taken all along a Field Research Trip in September/2016. With exception of two which were not recorded – one for unwillingness from part of the interviewee and other for technical problems – the transcriptions will be made available in the next pages. There are moments of the interviews which were not transcript because no discussions about Gypsy/Roma were taking place. The inaudible parts are symbolized by ‘[...]’ and any other word or comments between brackets are comments from the interviewer in order to increase the understanding. Question marks inside brackets identify moments when the interviewer was not sure during the transcription, but the word would make sense within the context. Moreover, any information which could help to trace the interviewee was withdrawn from the transcripts, but there were no meaningful losses which could jeopardize the interpretation of the interview by the readers.

The nicknames of the interviewees follow the same pattern used throughout the dissertation:

Nickname	Description
B	Bulgarian activist/academic of Gypsy/Roma background
B1	Bulgarian activist/academic of Gypsy/Roma background
Cz	Czech activist/academic of Gypsy/Roma background
H	Hungarian activist/scholar of Gypsy/Roma background
M	Macedonian activist of Gypsy/Roma background
R	Romanian activist/scholar of Gypsy/Roma background
R1	Romanian organization of Gypsy/Roma background
R2	Romanian activist/academic of Gypsy/Roma background
S	Serbian academic

For last, none of the information display below can be publicized without previously authorization of the interviewer, in an effort to keep the non-traceability of the sources. Further comments will be places before each interview if necessary.

Interview 1

Interview realized in the city of Brno.

Date: 14 Sept. 2016

Interviewer: Douglas Neander Sambati

RESEARCHER: Let`s start introducing myself and we can develop this conversation. So... two years ago I started my masters in Brazil, and it was about a museum here in Czech Republic, a museum in Ralsko - Northern Bohemia. It is a museum about migration to Brazil, [in] nothing related with Roma people. Then, when I came to Czech

Republic to know the museum, I realised that it is in a small village, Náhlov, where only Roma people live... there is [almost] only Roma living there. And this situation developed a chapter in my Master's, which developed my PhD. I came here to Prague and my supervisor proposed me this topic 'The Roma Nationalist Movement', and after two years of literature and so on and so forth, I really believe that museum and sites of memory play a role in these movements. Not only the nationalist idea but social ideas... (CZ agrees) Mainly because all the Roma Nationalist Movement or Social Movements, they do not work as a bloc. [...] I think that Peter Veermesch use this concept 'they do not work as a bloc' and I think he's really right about it. Anyway... my point is... I've been here two or three times... two times... I [...] all the exhibition... and I would like to know how is the relation between the museum with the everyday people who lives here nearby, because I understand that here is a neighbourhood where most of the Roma people from Brno live, so... how is this everyday relation with the population here; how is the relation between the museum itself and the big [international] organizations like European Roma and Travellers Forum, International Romani Union, [...]; and mostly how do you see the exhibition as a discourse about the Roma Culture. But then we can enter with more details in the end.

CZ: Ok.. there are many topics...

RESEARCHER: Yes... actually, this is what I'd like to tell you: let's keep informal. I'm making the record but... everything that is recorded here is not being used as oral history or... we'll develop this conversation by email later on...

CZ: Yes, no problem. So, I think there are different levels in what you are talking about. Let's start with the communication between the museum and the Roma population living here in neighbourhood. I would say, first of all, there was always a bit of a distance because we are kind of a research institution on Romani Culture and Romani topic, and there is something special and not always easily understandable for ordinary Roma people... who, as you know, have a lack of information or education very often. So, there is this kind of this... there always was a bit of this distance. Roma come to the museum very often for our events that we do for public, because one thing is kind of research, a kind of special part of our work, and other things are our public events what we do especially for our people from the neighbourhood. So, we organize always when we do exhibitions we have all this vernissages and [...] events; we do museum nights, which is always very popular and these events are kind of chance to people to meet with people from the museum to see what we do and be in some interaction. For us is... to be in touch with, let's say, ordinary Roma people is [a] very important thing. So, the aim is really to bring the idea of what we do in the museum closer to them and be open to them, for public of course, but a lot to Roma people. So, there is one thing... another point is our education activities towards Romani children from the neighbourhood, because this is something that is really not typical or is expected from us as being a museum. So, what we do is that we have these lectures to kids from the neighbourhood, and we have developed program for... Well, this is another huge topic, the education... But we have... let's say that we develop a program, [related with] the way in what we cooperate with the kids, and with families and with the schools. So, we are kind of a bridge institution between all these parts of the educational process. And we are not only giving support, like to support the kids, but we are kind of in communication with schools and be with them when there is anything between schools and parents. So, this is a huge and important part of what we do and who we are now in this location and in Brno, and now the situation is that the trend... the interest in lecturing of the kids is growing, their parents understood the importance of the education and very often they are not able to help them, because they have very

low level of education... or they were as kids in practical schools, things like that... So, after years we do this, we developed this kind of good relationship with the families and with the parents, so they really believe in us and they come and ask for help and now is big... [it] is big thing for us now. So, this is one thing. In the other hand, when you go deep in the Roma population in Brno, you're going to find that there are a lot of connections between people, and [this] also depends how long they are in Brno. Because probably as you know the history of Roma, main part of the Roma who are here came after the Second World War. So, there are families who came as first families in Brno, so they are really well integrated and these families are, let's say, good connections. And also, there is a connection with the museum, because very often we buy, for example, item for our collection from Brno and we are in touch with this musical level, because the connection between musicians are big and also there is something that we search on and... we... what we need for our events, so there are lot of connections like these. And... in these structures the role of the museum is, I think, very well. But when you come to people who, for example, come to Brno in the last ten years, or still have different backgrounds, very often came from the Eastern part of Slovakia, things like that...

RESEARCHER: Around Košice?

CZ: Yes, exactly. So, this people are not really... sometimes use to live in a city, which is something very different from when you compare socially and... is just a different way... so... we try to reach also those people but it's not, let's say, that easy.

RESEARCHER: But, would you say that Romani community here in Brno see this museum as either as part, as representative of their culture, or is more because of the event which are related with leisure and so one that they come here? The relation is more in this [last] level?

CZ: I would say that is more like this, and [it] is not that easy to say in general, that the Roma in Brno understands like that, you know? So... There are, definitively, people who understand the museum as some kind of representative but very often to them is more about the connection between, yes... let's say... leisure time, [...], personal contacts with the people from the museum... so... these things, these networks I think are more important sometimes.

RESEARCHER: I came across with this Brazilian scholar a few days ago and she was discussing how... when there is a community, a neighbourhood like here, a neighbourhood with some kind of ethnic group or... anyway... usually they embrace the museum because have a museum talking about them is so nice! Increase the status of the place and usually they embrace it, what doesn't really mean that they embrace the discourse of the museum. They like the idea of the museum because is increasing the status of the area. Do you have some feeling about this?

CZ: It is definitively like that. Always when you get to the permanent exhibition with the Roma people you always [...] this, this feeling, this proudness and maybe, sometimes, fascination on the whole history. Because this is the main thing... Roma people, Roma kids, don't learn at school about Romani... Very often nothing about language, about history, about anything. So when Roma people come here and see the history, see the lines, see the things and items, then this feeling is coming from this awareness, 'ok... is not just about our personal connections [but?] how we are all somehow connected with each other'. There is also something like this cultural wealth that we have, and they can see it in the exhibition, so it is always very strong for example for me, as Roma, being there as a guide... for Roma people is always very strong feeling. It is also very strong often with kids and the... the other point would be the fact that we are kind of a research institution: there are lot of people who work in the

museum who are not Roma. So, that's the difference and this make it sometimes this distance feeling, you know? It's a Romani Museum where a lot of [white?] people work, you know? It's true, right? It's like that! Some of them are specialists, like Romanologists, and people who really understand the topic and have this feeling for culture, but sometimes people fluctuate, some of them are not, for example, so long here... so... sometimes, Roma have this feeling like 'yes, there are those people who are coming and leaving and who are not Roma in the end', you know? So, this is also an important part of it... and this make this difference... to be this really research institution, you need the specialists on the topic.

RESEARCHER: And this relation between the museum and, I'll call like this, the big organizations which try to deal with the Roma issues like European Roma and Travellers Forum, International Romani Union, Roma Nacional Council and so on. How the museum is related with this?

CZ: I think we are in the structures, we know about ourselves, sometimes we go for some conferences but mainly it is joint for some topics, because is important for us Porrajmos, the Romani Holocaust, so this is one of big international topic, where the museum is very active in this field... and also in the field of history and culture... and I would say that this relations are also in these personal lines from our director to other researches who are in other institutions so, I would say that we are not that much internationally as we possibly could be, because we are so focused on what we do here, and what we do... yes, what we do here.

RESEARCHER: Maybe... there is some grant relations, like money, between the museum and these institutions?

CZ: No, not now! In the beginning, when we were a NGO, before 2005, when we became state subsidized organization under the ministry of culture, before we used some international grants like Fonthaus, some Nederland founds and some American institutions also supported us. So, this was more in the 90's, let's say, now we have mostly state money. Also we use grant support for some special things, for event, for this that we are not able to finance from our regular money, for example all this lecturing program for kids because we are a museum and, let's say, the Ministry of Culture doesn't do education, so there is a bit of... there is a bit of things that we need to co-finance, so this is something that we try to co-finance and we do it, but I'm not aware that we would... that we are joint in some big Romani International Institution on this grant level. Maybe we used something from Roma Educational Fund, something in the past probably we did, but I'm not aware of it now.

RESEARCHER: Just because I'm facing a lot of troubles about this specific case: with International Romani Union do you have some contacts? And which IRU, because yesterday I've found a new website with a totally different International Romani Union, totally different people, claiming to be the real one.

CZ: I understand. Well, honestly I'm not sure now who is from the International Romani Union but I think...

RESEARCHER: Well, Cioabă claims that it's him, but now I realize that there is a lot of people claiming that it is not.

CZ: Well... I don't see that well into their international situation right now, so I'm not able to describe it. But the museum is joint with the Romani, let's say, national movements in 90s and with people who were very active in the International Romani Union in 90s and before that. So, when there was this big congress in 1973 [1971?] we had there like a predecessor of the museum there, and there is a straight line from this to the museum now, because... I don't know if you came up to the name Karel Holomek... So, he's the father of the director of the museum Anna Horvatová, [...], also...

something like... in 70s there was an idea about having a museum and it was really... this idea was transforming to come to reality into 90s and then, at that time, this museum came up [...]. So, you know, we are somehow based in this, but nowadays I'm not aware that we would attend their event like that.

RESEARCHER: That's ok. I just brought up because you could bring some new information to me. Let's come back a little bit about the museum... So, the focus of my research is trying to understand this idea to say that the Roma people is a nation. And I'm having the feeling that this started in the interwar period, but [back] then [it] was not so strong. But after the Second World War, for clear reasons, became stronger and after 1971 [and] the 1^o International Romani Union even more. What bring my attention when I read about this Roma 'we are the nation' thing and, don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that is not... Is the fact that there is a lot of different people call Roma, Gypsy or Roma, in Europe. And when there is this idea that 'we are Roma', there is some kind of simplification and 'what means be a Roma? '. So, talking straight about the museum, the exhibition here, I don't see here clear this plurality in the exhibition.

CZ: Yes, that's is true.

RESEARCHER: I see this more simplified, let's put like this. How [do] you see this? This simplification, in brackets, of the Romani history.

CZ: This is a topic I came across to with few people already and somehow is true. The exhibition shows the history of the Roma as a kind of straight line, let's say... and the big thing is also the fact that the last hall it's now just a media reflection, you know? Since [...] starts, 2005 or something like that. It's a huge part of nowadays history, and I would say there would be a much more space to really compare attitudes towards this concept, and also there is a lot of things happening during those times. So, we still come to this... that we are working on this, how to do it and it need to be redone, totally... and... this is one thing of it. The another thing is that the exhibition was created by historians, I see like that and it's maybe my perception, it was made by historians who really [...] at [...] like that. And... also is because of the fact that the museum arose from this background were having Roma as a nation is something as a 'clear thing', you know? I think these are the three...

RESEARCHER: I see the whole discourse of 'we are a nation' thing, it's base in three things mainly: the Indian Origins and the suffering under the Holocaust. So far I'm [...] to this. The Indian Origins is a really criticized idea, I was talking with a professor a few days ago and he told me like this 'I also don't understand why there is such an appeal on the Indian Origins, because Hungarian people came from Mongolia and no one talks about this'.

CZ: It's clear because it's something really... Ok, I understand this kind of critics, but still there are things in language which are clear that there are connections. And for Roma people this was always like a crucial question, like 'who we are? ', because they were always compared with someone else, always living as strangers somewhere, and 'where are we from? '. These are two questions Roma are still facing and during the whole history we were facing, when they always entered a new place.

RESEARCHER: But don't you think that this idea that Roma came from India do not enforce the otherness within Europe? You are from here, you're here since 1000 years....

CZ: Well, that's the question! I think that for Roma people is something like... maybe the only thing that could be clear, you know? Which could be clarified or some solid point, you know, in a very unsolid history, let's say. So, maybe there is something which is [...] important, but when you start to talk with Roma people who are not educated on the topic, most of them... not most of them, a lot of them will tell you 'I

have a different idea, I think we came from Iraq, or Russia, or Something...`. So, I don't think that there is really a feeling between the Romani nation or Romani people around the world that we are from India, but in the museum is focused like that because, again, it's about the... It's not said `we are from India` it's said `very most probably Romani came from India` we don't have written records about it, but we have links in language and with different things in culture, you could see there, in the first [...] of our exhibition which points that could be like that. So... I think is really about this solidness history.

RESEARCHER: But sometimes it is really difficult to find the different between what is still part of an ancient culture or it is reframed nowadays about what you believe that is part of an old culture... but I understand, I think I understand. I just came across, for instance, the case in Romania, where there is a lot of people which are called *țigani* today, or they call themselves as Vlach Roma and so on, then there is a lot of evidences that they were Romanians but they were so poor that they started to call themselves *țigani* because it was a synonym of slaves. And now these people are claiming that they have Indian Origins... so I'm just thinking about this whole situation and about this discourse.

CZ: This is all very [spread?] joint and I think somehow coded in something what we until today understand is Roma identity and what is also perceived by Roma as a Roma identity. Because still this social, let's say this social status from very past time is still very strong part of it. And there is something what, by my opinion, leads nowadays to the fact that Roma people who get a different economic or social status very often leave their Roma identity behind and get assimilated in a mainstream culture, which is happening very often.

RESEARCHER: In Hungary a lot.

CZ: It is in my family the same.

RESEARCHER: Well, the other point that I think is the Porrajmos idea. And I saw some authors discussing, also criticizing a little bit, I think... I forgot his first name... Mayall is the surname. He has a point, he says that it's strange because is actually support the Roma identity in the prejudgment, in the prejudice, against Roma. Because if the Nazi killed all the people saying that `you are all the same so we kill you all`, and now the Roma intelligentsia would be assuming this discourse `We are all the same because we were all killed under the same name`. So, his critics are `how can we construct a positive identity using as basis such a bad feeling?`.

CZ: It's very... I'm not sure that is possible to do a positive picture without avoiding, let's say... I don't think is possible to avoid the topic of the Porrajmos. Because, I think is comparable with the Jewish people, you know? It's very similar and it was our collective suffering and I think that the idea of collectiveness is still in Roma culture very strong and is still strong in Roma identity. Like, this feeling of that we are somehow in touch with each other, that we feel each other, you know? That something would... Roma will very often speak about, maybe they won't speak about when they speak with non-Roma people, but I think I can speak about because I feel that it's important. Roma just feel this closeness with each other and it's coming also from that. And when you come, again, when you enter with Roma people in the Porrajmos [sal?] in the exhibition, very often many of them will cry there, because they feel it somehow very strong. Of course, when you enter these places in Jewish museum you also have this strong feeling, because is something unbelievable what happened and if you have some kind of empathy... you have it with people who went through this... but... I kind like your idea that the Roma identity... the Roma as a nation topic is also created somehow in fact of the Roma Holocaust, but we can't avoided, you know? And there is one also very special thing that Jewish Holocaust was topic well known since 50s, while

the Roma Holocaust was a new topic at 70s, you know? It really came up from activity of several historians who came with the topic. Also, again, I think is strengthening that this feeling of Roma being a kind of... being victims, you know? Again, something important in Roma identity, I guess so, and it's again something which would strength the feeling, you know? So... still, Roma identity is a [...] again, somehow in a negative way, by historians and by Roma themselves.

RESEARCHER: And until what point you think that the museum here, the exhibition that the museum has here, is kind of... I'll be a little bit too much here, but just to make my point... is teaching the Romani people that they are Roma? Maybe the people don't care about this, they are living their everyday life, they feel them, I don't know, they feel themselves Czech, and suddenly they come here and you're teaching them 'no... you're not only Czech, you're something more, you are Roma!'. Do you think that there is such.... the museum play this role?

CZ: I think the museum play this role. The museum totally plays this role of being aware of it, you know? It comes from the idea that most of Roma are not educated about the Roma history, about the Roma... again, also about the Holocaust. So, there is this educational point of view, like to see the topic, to display the topic and to show it to, again, to Roma people. So I think.... It's a bit educational, maybe, and a bit schooling, maybe... It's done in this way.

RESEARCHER: I remember... when I was doing my masters and I started to read about museums I read this book from Dominique Poulot, and he discuss in a chapter how just after the French Revolution, the first thing that the government did was plan four museums, to teach French people that they were French, because they didn't care... they were living there, they barely spoke French and so on... so, they needed to teach them that they were French. And this... sometimes... the museum has to have a broad discourse, it cannot be in details otherwise will not take all these people together. How you feel this about the museum role... because, at same time is a little bit paradoxical because you said about educational programs is to try to bring some critics. How is the balance between this criticism and this broad history?

CZ: Well, I think... I would say that the important really is that the museum came from this background of... it was created by Roma activists and Romani historians, and... I would say that it was really affected by the fact that they just saw it like that, you know?

RESEARCHER: The Roma nation was taken for granted? We are a nation....

CZ: Yes.

RESEARCHER: There was no discussion about...

CZ: It is definitively... I think it would be very good to you to talk about it with the director, because she is the one who is very much behind the idea and maybe when I speak about it, I speak about it as someone who is based and feel the museum very well but just for the last five years. It would be great for you talk with her and ask this question straight to her.

RESEARCHER: I will try to make an appointment with her...

CZ: I think November it'll be much better, because now it's really crazy time before this [...] exhibition...

RESEARCHER: Brno is not so far for me, I can come here...

CZ: So, how long are you in Czech Republic?

RESEARCHER: Two years.

CZ: Will you stay here for two years?

RESEARCHER: No... I'm here already two years and I will stay here... who knows how long...

CZ: Great... that's great. I think it would also good to you to really talk with her, because now I feel in a position of advocate for something that I don't create it and I don't feel definitively like...

RESEARCHER: But... to wonder... how do you feel? Because you work here, you live this everyday life. Do you receive the community; you talk with the community in your everyday life?

CZ: Yes, yes... Well, in a way I always come to this cafe and talk with people who are here, just not to stay closed in my office... so... and I'm also a journalist, I work a lot with a lot of topics that I see here.

RESEARCHER: Are you from Brno?

CZ: Yes, yes... Let's say that I'm in touch with people from this point of view, not being a social worker and trying to solve their everyday problems, but a bit in a different level, but being in touch with them. And, for me, it is definitively a bit as you spoke about it, you know? For me the history is not so easy to explain, you know... and to see only in this way. And especially when it comes to these days and to the reflection of what it is happening now, and how now is very quickly developing... I feel that yes, we are a nation, we are in a big connection with each other, but mainly with the globalization and with social networks and how we all communicate with each other... we can feel that it's more close but when you come to contact with Roma with different backgrounds, different places, there is something that you can feel as very much common. But in a way still, and this is my point, we definitively need to work on a... to understand how different we are, you know? That we can... for example there is still this idea of Roma people doing something together... when you compare with US in 50s and Martin Luther King, and... you know... this massive thing [...]... Roma people often compare with this like 'we also should do something like together, we together' but I don't think is possible now.

RESEARCHER: This is an ethno emancipation process, for sure, and I think that the nicer thing... I think that the interesting thing is that use of the national discourse to make an ethno-emancipation process, which I think that this museum is very much close to. Starting with the name. Because is a museum... in the exhibition is focused in the Czech situation, but the name of the museum is Museum of the Roma Culture, is not saying Museum of the Roma Culture in Czech Republic. So, it's pretty nationalistic, really broad. And then we have the flag of India, side by side with one of the Roma nation right at the entrance. Then the map saying 'we came from India', and I don't remember now a place where the exhibition says that 'we were and we are plenty of different groups, who speak different languages, different beliefs, different...' I don't remember in this exhibition, if there is I don't remember.

CZ: I think... definitively there is a line about Vlach-Romani, Vlach Roma people, there is a line about their history and differences, so... I think that this is a main thing [...], in the exhibition. And there is a definitively... there are in the fifth [room] it's spoken about the Sinti, and...

RESEARCHER: But the Sinti when talk about the Holocaust, right?

CZ: Not just the Holocaust, but also about the language. But there is also a part about the language, and what language different Roma groups have. But, again, I think that this it'll be great to talk with Jana Horvatova. Who is really the head of this exhibition. So... she can give you the best answers on this. I can give you some reflections but I think that she can give you the right answers.

RESEARCHER: I told you, Brno is not so distant. Actually I really like to come here in Brno, it's not far for me. Well, if you have something more that you want to tell me. The big main question to me is the relations between the museum and the community;

the relation between the museum and the people; and the relations between the museum and this national discourse.

CZ: I think, again, that she'll tell you more about the national discourses [...]... I have a few minutes more. I would like to finalize my thought which I tried to say that you... yes, you spoke about ethno-emancipation, that's for sure true. But, for me, maybe in this Czech context a lot, I do feel very often, and it is very often articulated this idea of doing something like, you know... 'we all Roma together! We should do something all together!'. What I miss, and what I think it's a big thing for this new generation who's coming to this activist field, and... I think mostly in Prague you must be in touch with a lot of people from this young generation, it's a little bit different - I hope so and I guess so -, that we really need to be tolerant and accept the fact that we are a group, maybe we are a nation, but we have different perspectives and different point of views, even though we have a basic common, we articulated different things which are important for different [...] of the nation. For example the Roma gender topic and this women perspective, which is sometimes not the same as this Roma emancipation thing, you know? And, sometimes, I come across this... some discussions with some Roma intellectuals, Roma people who are public active, that... there is a point I miss, that we are able to discuss things, you know? Be tolerant with each other and the fact that someone just see from a different perspective. Because we still in a position that, towards majority, we are still understood as 'one group', like a different group of people, but we don't feel it like that very often, but we are forced to the position where we speak like that. So, any Roma who is, for example, in Television, or somewhere speaking something publicly, is immediately understood to be the one who speaks for all the Roma. And also Roma activists very often feel themselves to be in this role, and maybe is something that you spoke that you feel in the exhibition of the museum, you know? That's speaking for all the Roma. But, from this, a lot of misunderstanding come and one thing is the [...] relationships between the Roma activists and Roma intellectuals, and for me it is something we really need to... it is a kind of level that we need to get to, because I don't feel that we are there. [...] when you speak with older activists, especially men, so this is something that... yes... this is something which I feel. And the... another thing is this point of view of the majority, which any Roma is speaking for all the Roma and it's not like that.

RESEARCHER: Even when... because I have the feeling that the average population... I'm not really sure if they are concern about be or not a group. I think that the Roma intelligentsia is really concern about this but the Roma average people... I think I was reading this more anthropological approach, people who goes more in the communities to talk with them, when they discuss 'you are a nation', they 'I'm the real Roma, that group are not the real Roma...' I think was Mark Stewart... he was in two groups in Romania, one group speak Romanes and they said 'we are not Roma, we are Romanians'. Another group who does not speak Romanes and speak Romanian said 'no, we are Roma that other people they are not'. I have this feeling, that the Roma average people they are not really concern about this, but the intelligentsia is really concern.

CZ: And also, very often you can see, when it comes to the discussion about the word Gypsy or the word Roma. Because, again, is a kind of a new concept, we are trying to teach people that use Roma is the right thing, we teach the majority... and I really have to say like that, we teach majority that it's not good to speak in media or anywhere else that you speak about the Roma as Gypsy or *Cigani*, because it's really... you know what I mean.

RESEARCHER: Yes. It's funny because in Brazil is the opposite. When they want to talk about them as a whole group, they call *Ciganos*. When they talk about Roma is about one group, not all of them. It is the richest group of 'Gypsies' in Brazil, they call themselves Roma... They don't call themselves Cale - Cale is the other group that it's the poor one -, but they use *Ciganos*.

CZ: Ok. In a language, because is coming from the language when Rom mean man. So... I think that this is very clear, so it is different in language Brazilian Roma use?

RESEARCHER: They usually speak more Portuguese than Romanes... The Cale group they don't speak Romanes at all. They are in America since the 17th century and they speak only Portuguese. The ones who call themselves Roma, they talk a little bit Romanes but not much. But that's the point, when they talk about themselves [is like] 'we are Roma, you are Cale, we are both Gypsies', and they are really proud about this... and I think is funny. But I know that this is a construction and so on... I've been in Poland two weeks ago and I've been talking with Adam Bartosz and he was telling 'in front of my museum is written *Cigany*, because here in Poland is totally different then in Czech Republic, there is not bad connotation call *Cigany* here in Poland, but in Czech Republic it's not possible'.

CZ: Definitely. Ok, so there is differences... is different in different countries, in national contexts but still, in Czech Republic when you speak 'Roma' many of them will really say that 'we feel like being Gypsies, being *Cigani*, we don't like the word Roma because it's something that we don't understand', you know? 'We feel like this, we call like this!' And very often Roma people with each other use these words, but when they speak towards majority they use the word Roma as well, so I think this language, this distinction is a good example how complicated this is.

RESEARCHER: I see.

CZ: And, can I ask you. Are you Roma?

RESEARCHER: No. I'm from Brazil and I came across with the Roma issues during my masters.

[...]

CZ: Maybe also with Jana Horvatova you can speak and I'm sure you heard about it, that there are different approaches towards Roma identity and how Roma... how identity is created. This social point of view, it is also and, again, is something that in our museum and in our exhibition is visible, that it is this inclination to not to see these social things... I don't know if I can explain it now very well... Maybe we can stay in communication and I will... I need a name now and I don't have it in my mind. Because is this discussion between anthropologists about the Roma... how the identity is created, because I know there is a big discussion about it in 90s and we are still developing... [...].

Interview 2

Interview realized in the city of Budapest.

Date: 19 Sept. 2016

Interviewer: Douglas Neander Sambati

RESEARCHER: So, Mister H, the big thing, as I explained you a little bit by email... my research is concerned about Roma social movement but actually has some kind of specific treat that is the idea of a Roma Nation. So... how the social movements deal with the ideal of a Roma nation? And on this idea I have these three question that I sent to you by email, to try to start a conversation and so on. First, how is the relation of the local NGOs with the people, and in the case of [suppressed to maintain anonymity] with

the everyday people, Roma people; How is the relation between this NGO and the International Governmental Organizations like European Roma and Travellers Forum, European Roma... I was talking with [suppressed to maintain anonymity] yesterday... European Roma.. ERI..

H: International Roma Union or... IRU...

RESEARCHER: So, all these international organizations, how is the relation between... because so far I realize that there is a big gap between the local and the international ones; and how you see these NGOs and the International Organizations related with this idea of a construction of a Roma Nation, this ethno emancipation process of the Roma people. So, from where you prefer to start... maybe we can start with the work here with the Roma people.

H: Yes... So... [name of the organizations suppressed to maintain anonymity], an organization where I'm working since the very beginning of its existence, meaning from 2005... Our [...] is saying that's trying to deal with the... mainly with the education but, here we have to make clear that [suppressed to maintain anonymity] is looking the formal education, the education that is happening into schools, kindergarten, high schools and universities. So we do not try to create a parallel system but, on the contrary, to create mechanisms that Roma child, Roma youth and, why not... Roma adults to get a [costume?] and integrate into the formal settings of the existing structures, existing agencies for education. However, how we are doing this? We are by default of an international organization, we are covering 16 countries and our main funders are the World Bank and Open Society Foundation. And we emulated out of a political process and, actually, an international initiative that started in 2003 with one conference, when World Bank and DP - another international organization -, released a report and actually was seeing that the majority of the social economic indicators and the so-called symptomatology of the Roma problem it has not just a country specific, but actually you can account different patterns and different problems in a [...] way. So, for instance, access to education it doesn't differ too much in Serbia, Romania and all the Balkanic countries, including Bulgaria, then other social economic indicators that are pretty much comparable. So... World Bank released that report and then this report grab the attention of different political bodies and this is how, in 2005, it was lunch the Decade of Roma Inclusion here in Budapest, where high level of politicians, including Prime Ministers of Romania and other countries of the region, tried to pledge their political commitment 'how to deal with the Roma problem [...] at the global level, at the regional level'. Initially 10 countries joined the initiative called the Decade of Roma Inclusion, it was... you can search this on the internet. Later on the initiative remained opened and countries like Spain, Albania, Moldova was almost to join this initiative [...]. However they could not deal with all the problems they tried to classified them and tried to prioritize them... out of this exercise they identified the four main domains of intervention, it was: education, housing, health and employment. However, out of this it was known and the report itself and other stakeholders, like academia, practitioners [...] they saw that most important and the biggest problem field remain education. In this kind of political context [suppressed to maintain anonymity] emulated and get into the existence. What we are doing? We are trying to develop models, and we succeed by now to have models for all levels of interventions... education... meaning early childhood development and I would say [...] age as well, so 0 to 6; primary school meaning 7 to 14/15, it depends from a country to another - six or seven and respectively 14 to 15 -; then we have an interesting model of secondary scholarship we call it, but actually it's a triangulation between tutorship, mentorship and scholarship; then we have a [suppressed to maintain anonymity] model, where young people, students of

graduate [...] join this initiative and they can have a hub where they can meet but also they can receive some services for increasing their academic skills [...] but also to highlight there... to improve their soft skills... skills for employability and something like that...it courses, English and so on and so forth. In other [...], maybe this is important for you, it's look at their identity and how later on the Romani students will remain on the community... either they will contribute back to their community or they will progress together as hub of Roma intellectuals, as a hub of Roma intelligentsia. We also developed a model for adult education, but here we have to make sure that... adult education is very vast but [suppressed to maintain anonymity] is looking just for formal completion of primary or secondary level of education, and we believe that having a basic education[...] for going further to do other courses, and this is to have the fundamentals... the basement of this. You cannot do too much... in our days you cannot do, I don't know what, if you don't have minimum secondary education. We do have in sixteen countries different schemes of [...] scholarship. So, when I'm saying different schemes... so we have one that is called Roma Memorial University Scholarship Program which is a trying to cover majority of the fields from social and natural sciences, and here we [...] roughly more than 1300 scholarship per year in different countries. Then we have the specific scheme to enabling the people that are working on medical professions. So... from doctors until nurses, [...] and so on and so forth, this scheme is covering only four countries... so it's Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Macedonia. Then we have another scheme that is called Law and Humanities Program and it's mainly... so initially it was thought to create a pool of activists in Human Rights, advocates in former republics of the Soviet bloc, and its covering Moldova, Ukraine and Russia. This was initially, but as the demand increased, now we don't have just law professionals that can join this but spread to wider [...] over time and not the last, it the [...] International Scholarship Program where we try to support, and additional support, for the people who already got a scholarship outside of their country. This is a brief of what we are doing... So, how we are doing this? We have models of intervention, we do have calls for application and we do work with the Roma civil society, with the local governments and with the central governments. So... just to give you a list of what we are doing, so up to now we have more than 500 projects implemented, all this data you can find open in our website so, to do not go into details, if you read our report, it's very transparent... For instance, just in a... 2015 we outreach and we cover activities in different projects of our 360 municipalities from 13 countries. The budgets, the objectives of the projects, the list of the projects is public on our website... So you can study if you're interested more into that... Yes, we do work with the Roma Civil Society but, again, is very technical, is mainly enabling them technically and professionally, how to develop mechanisms and how to scape of them too. Primary children in the school, to make sure the kids are in the school and they are learning... because is not sufficient just to be in the school and to try to convince different stakeholders that participating of the educational processes, to do their job, to give them a hand if is needed it and so on and so forth... so... Our agenda it's more technical and of course that to reach this it has also political leaders... you cannot say that we don't do politics and we don't look this but our first [...] is a partnership and the technical tools on how to advance with the education agenda.

RESEARCHER: And... I'm sorry for interrupting, but this 400 projects that you said that you implemented, big part of the money to implement this came from World Bank and Open Society?

H: Our list of donors its, again, public and...

RESEARCHER: But the biggest ones? Would you say that two are the biggest ones?

H: No... these are the founders... from their initiative came indeed. The biggest pot of money, still, is coming from George Soros, from Open Society Foundations. But they are also supported by the Swiss Government, SDC Swiss the development agency, and then Sweden... the Swedish government SIDA, also is supporting us... And also some other donors of... developing a scholarship there is the EVZ Foundation, so... all our donors are public, all of our beneficiaries... so... just to you to be... a sense of the development so... roughly now we are reaching 100.000 beneficiaries, last year it was [...], and I told you we are working in all levels of education from zero to adulthood, and everything is happening through technical. Now... what is our relationship with Governments... International Organizations... of course, we are part of the movement but, again, we have a mandate, we have very clear accountability to our donors, we have very clear accountability and mechanisms towards our beneficiaries and whatever we do it's to serve the best our people and to serve the best the mission that we have it. So... usually we have things like identity and other types of education but they are crossover, they are not central focus. So... for instance we do desegregation... we do know that segregation it's one of the worse forms of the discrimination and racism, which long lasting effects and in different years, from social exclusion of the people that are benefiting with the [...], segregated education is a wrong investment of the state. So... we do have studies showing to the state that actually invest more in a segregated education is very expensive and actually is the worst thing that the state can do. Of course if you invest in the segregated the quality of the education is very poor and later on they are producing the social dependent and consumer of the state budget rather than contributors...

RESEARCHER: I came across with lot of critics about this, about the Czech way to deal with the education or inclusion...

H: Yes... but Czech is a thing... for instance we don't go in confrontation for segregation just to point with the finger but, actually, we do have a technical expertise, both for governments and for European Court of Human Right to show all this... so... in 2007 we issued an [suppressed to maintain anonymity] [the name of the type of report requested by the Court] expert paper for the court informing them what are the risks to be in segregation, now we have a... it is not just... we said that this it doesn't work, so the European Commission now is [...] court, they imposed an Infringement to Czech Republic, we have in Slovakia, we have here, so... it seems that the European Union, and the education specialists and International forums actually look at the segregation more seriously, so, if in the past it was only discussed on the agenda, now they try to impose to the states to take some concrete measures and not to try to minimize, like the Czech government did it. So... in fact what the Czech government did, it changed the label of the schools from practical and they made normal, but in principal - and this is exactly what [suppressed to maintain anonymity] said... process, the staff, the quality education remains the same... so... it was just a... how to call it... 'painting the fence outside'! If in the past it was black they make it grey, I don't know which other colour, but in fact the process and the educational outcomes remain the same. This schools, based on our data, they are producing functional illiterate, producing people that even if their certificate do not enable them to continue to the secondary education, even so actually they are not equipped with the knowledge to do so... to pass the national tests, to go further and to cope with the requirements that are there for the high schools. So if you badly read and write you cannot cope with the material that is for the 9th grade, 10th grade and so on and so forth. Is like you built the house and you don't have the foundation and everything but still you want to put the roof.

RESEARCHER: I'm telling this since I've started this PhD two years ago, that sometimes when I talk with people, Roma activists and so on... It's really similar, some... a lot of patterns, with the afro-Brazilian people. The problems with which the Afro-Brazilians people suffer in Brazil is really similar with the Roma issues. [...]. The government make some changes, but there is not substantial change in the whole process.

[...]

H: And this is because now, in the level of 'How you look? How is the main cause of the problem?', so... sometimes is very easy, sometimes intentionally politicians and the decisions makers they are looking more at the symptomatology, at the symptoms, rather than the causes. And it's good that you raised that, maybe is coinciding or not, so if you look now up in the academia, up in the political discourse, saying that Roma are in this situation because they are poor. No! Poverty but the way that they are excluded is actually simple result of racism. So... if you want to do similarities between the Central America and this, so poverty is actually result of racism and exclusion from education, job market and this things. And sometime it might be entitlement for different actions, like segregation in the school... segregation in the schools is a political act, is an administrative decision, taken it doesn't matter if by school director, or by Mayor, or by the Ministry... so, it has an administrative dimension [...] So, we cannot say that is a social process that it's emulating from our poverty, or they are saying also about segregation 'oh... but is pattern of their housing'... yes, that housing segregation, the so-called ghetto, it happen either with the political action directly, when those some different movements as a social, or as a political inaction of the authorities. So ghettoization it's happening either by action or inaction. There are some things to look at. So, ignorance or active discrimination, racism is producing the so-called social phenomena that we try to struggle then, but actually is not simple - sorry...

RESEARCHER: So, and also there is a lot of relation with the Afro-Brazilians movement and I can tell you later how it fits... sometimes even scarily fits. But you tell me so far, there is no such a straight relation between what you do here, your work, let's call ideological process of work here, with what is being discussed in Strasbourg, or in the International Romani Union, or the Roma Nacional Council, or the European Roma Institute? There some kind of ideological link of financial link straight to this institutions or not? Or it is more with Open Society but you are kind of independent.

H: We are independent and we aim to remain an independent institution. What I can tell you is that indeed financially and common projects do not exist. So all the projects that we have they are public, [...]. Now, if we embrace some of their ideals and [...], we are Roma ourselves and then even if we try to be independent we might have like all the other people, some political sympathies and political disagreements. This is a normal, living in a society so... I think it would not be healthy for Roma society if we have a uni direction on political view, leadership and so on and so forth. So... like in all other societies we have also fractions and we have also some, as I said, sympathizes and not agree in some views and political agenda or different organizations. No. Yes, there is a political thing but we have to look at what it is Europe today? What is Europe today? It's a getting, overall, more and more radical. And I'm looking at this perspective is not just what I'm reading from different reports or different Roma Rights Organization, but I'm looking concretely how much, for instance, the Right Wing Parties are covering political scene, not further than here. In Austria, Thomas Hedl, we had elections here in Hungary ...

RESEARCHER: Apparently yesterday the German had a huge vote in Berlin. I was talking with a friend from Berlin, and he told me that it was expressive the vote to Alternative fur Deutschland.

H: Yes. There we have UKIP in the UK, we have similar things in other countries where we noted that racism is used as a political platform for different parties, so... If in the past the racist incident it was in a lower level, however racists emulate in a crisis situations. I'm not saying that is something specific now, but in the historical point of view, in a crisis situation they are trying to use the so called scapegoat strategy that other are guilty for the current problems and not we as politicians, not we as democratic, and so on and so forth. And we have this in the most developed countries, in countries with tradition in inclusion, and by the way...

RESEARCHER: And in this process to be the other, the Roma people they are put as the other in the countries. I was reading a Romanian historian, Achim, and he discusses how the Romanian identity was created with the Roma as the other. And yesterday, talking with [suppressed to maintain anonymity], he said that the same happened here in Hungary and so on.

H: Yes. So, the European Barometer revealed that actually the most hated in Europe still remain the Roma. And in countries... do you know which the champions are? The Northern countries, the ones that they are the so called socialists, with the so-called wealth-fare state, to that is answering to the social problems. So, again, if you want to look at the mechanisms... there is not the fact that three thousand Roma beggars from Eastern Europe are coming to their system, because the system it's so developed that can answer to such a problem. It's, again, the racism. It's the rejection. It's not that their system is collapsing, their social system, they are answering to a poverty program at the end. If you put it from their perspective. It's actually... Germany is in the top 5, by the way, as hating the Roma.

RESEARCHER: I think that in Barometer said something similar about Czech Republic, I was reading something like this.

H: So... It's, again, it's not... actually Simon Kuznets said that the GDP of the country does not necessarily solve some of the problems, and the income, inequality, actually is not a matter that how rich is the country but is matter of the policies that are looking on this aspects and regulating... this has to be evenly distributed [...]. So, even this is not there. So, yes, what is my critics to this international organizations is that they are not looking to what is happening in Europe and to come up with stronger agendas. Still is the level of, how to say, looking at the level of promoting the Roma agenda rather coming with the answers to the concrete problems that Roma are facing in our days. Of course that representations and dialogue it's the key element for all the things, but indeed, the existing structure do not have a real social movement behind them. There is no, so-called, constructed network that it's actually following a structure. If it's a pyramid, if has a linear of horizontal representation or whatever, so... we are not still there. And it's a... problem

RESEARCHER: I came across some scholars and they said... I've listen this several times that if I go to 20 people of the Roma intelligentsia and ask to these 20 people what they are doing, what they aim to do, I will receive 20 different answers, and probably 20 different views what are the Roma people and so son. So, it's connected with what you're saying, there is no such a movement integrated, there is not such a bloc movement? That's right?

H: Yes. Actually there is a thing, but there are two things at the end. Fragmentation exists even in Hamas. So not all the fractions of Hamas they have the same view, so... we have the radical part, we have the so-called people open to negotiate... but it's not

the subject of our discussion. I witness for instance my personal experience that fractions exist in Hungarian minority, for instance, from Romania. So why now Roma structures everything should be perfect and should be allied? But here I think it's also... it has a historical answer of how Roma structures are emulated and how Roma structures are still controlled, and even by donors. So, the fraction is coming that still Roma society, Roma leadership, is serving the donor agenda. Don't tell this to my donor because they will kill me [laughs]. But yes, if you want to make this [...] yes, one of the fractions it is that different leadership is trying still to answer the donor agenda. Second, it has an historical explanation and these things with the leadership and what you are reading in the UK magazines and American, that Roma are still organize with the Kings, so on and so forth. Actually this is the invention how the whites wanted to control and to oppress the Roma [...], I'll give you one example. Roma from Romania migrated into Poland, it was in the 18th century [...]. And they went there, and if you look historically, the policies towards Roma it was like that: exclusion and ignoring; when they notice anything they seek the control - not mixing with us; and you have the so-called forced integration through the communist and so on. Again, then now it's inclusion and things that... All the times, the policies towards Roma were either for keeping them aside and [...] their things or control. Do you imagine that even now the Roma, majority of the Roma state business and Roma affairs, historically speaking they are with the Ministry of the Interior Affairs, even now in Slovakia are under the Ministry of Police. [Slovakia, e.g]. So then, explain! Do you know how this happen with the so-called kings, barons, whatever... this kind of noble titles that... I told you, the example is in Poland where Roma migrants they did small business they encounter problems with others, [...], and Roma started to become powerful, you know what? Immediately the state authorities seek for controlling them and said 'you're the king of this group'. They don't want to interact with all the Roma as normal citizens or whatever, they said 'no, you have your representative: just this guy!'. What's happening even today, just to explain you. 'Just this guy is entitled to come, to open my door at this office, and to come to negotiate with me on your behalf guys'. And through that they also imposed the control, because they gave to that guy the full power on that [...]. It was a win-win situation, now extrapolating from the historical point of view to today, we still have some Roma kings that are empowered by different donors. Did you get the essence of this? That's why I'm saying that sometimes serving the donor agenda it's actually perpetuate some old mechanisms which actually oppress, and you choose and you have the so-called... the tolerated the Roma. So you tolerate one or two Roma...

RESEARCHER: If they behave in the way that you want.

H: That you want, and then you try to impose your policy to the others. It's an old mechanism, it's not new!

RESEARCHER: And don't you think that, now coming a little bit to the third question that I made for you, about this process of ethno-emancipation. In this two years of research I found these two ideas which are not together but I don't think that they are overlapping so much: the ethno-emancipation process itself and the idea of a Roma nation. This idea of a Roma nation, sometimes, I feel that is based in three main ideas: We are all Roma; We are all coming from the same place; we all suffered under the Holocaust. Ok? So this three basis. And I want to make it clear right now that I'm not saying that the Roma are or not a nation, just trying to think about this... When we say 'we are all Roma', it's no complicated because is being hidden the whole plurality and differences of culture among all these people which used to be known as Gypsies and now there is this process of relabelling as Roma, in the political sphere. The second thing is the Indian Origins. Is it not really complicated to bring this so far, not really

clear, origin coming from India if for instance in Romania, and you probably know better than me, a lot of people who became Tigani they were only poor Romanians who were slaved? And after the slavery they became Tigani... so, we are giving Indian origins to people who has no Indian origins. And the Holocaust is not basing the whole Roma identity on prejudgment? On Prejudice? Because, I saw Ian Hancock and another people saying `we all suffered under the holocaust, they killed us as a people, so we are a people`. Is it not three complicated basis? And in the other side the ethno-emancipation process there is a little bit more plural, but still consider the Roma people as a group. And saying this... I'll finish saying, how you think that the process... the work of the [suppressed to maintain anonymity], as an educational program, they go to the everyday life, has some connections with any of these thoughts. Why am I saying this? I'm basing all my work in the theory of Ernest Gellner, Anderson and so on... and they say that there is always and intelligentsia who teach what they need to be, what they are. How you think that all these things are connected, if I was clear.

H: Yes. I hope that in the end of you thesis you'll got this answer. It's very complex and the question, you see how many nuances and how many angles to look... It's ok. So now... indeed building the nation is a constructed thing. It was constructed over the history so and there are several mechanisms. I'm not a historian, I'm sociologist... now... people were gathering around values, gathering around power, people were force to get some of [...], `now we look at this` so... yes, we are all Roma but we faced different experiences, in different countries, in different... In majority of the time for instance, including Sweden. I was reading recently an article of Petcut, Petre [?] - a Romanian guy - looking at the first group of Roma getting in Stockholm, in Sweden. So, firstly they were received like Egyptian, they said `ok, we are coming from Egypt...`. As far as people started to perceive that they are different they started to be excluded, so... this was in the 16th century. Then, after [...], they really started to put some banning [to bans?], Interdiction by law, for the Roma in Stockholm. In 1639/1641 already they actually imposed, gave a moratoria to Roma to leave Stockholm and the majority of them went in Finland, that's why even today, in Sweden, majority of the Roma they do not speak Swedish, but they speak Finnish. They are called Nordic Roma, but actually it's just a matter... I gave you this example to see how [...] the historical differences of treating Roma are... In Romania we have 500 years of slavery, the longest period of slavery of a human kind... I don't know other, maybe in your research you can find a longer period of slavery. Then we have here, in Austrian-Hungarian Empire different way of integrating by force Roma, [...], by language, policies by Maria Thereza, [...] so on and so forth... Then we have Balkanic way of integrating Roma. There we see the majority of Roma got Muslim religion, and this was a mechanism of survival, because it was the Turkish Empire the dominant power and, there are [...] and so... We have here so many differences but the same we had in Western Europe. It was in Italy, we have legally banning documents, again from the 16th century, it was just [...] putting there, so... different historical experiences in different countries, but still all Roma are Roma, yes? First of all, if you look from how they are perceive by the others, they are Roma even if they are saying that they are Egyptians, Ashkali, Sinti, whatever, yes? So, we have this: how they are perceived by them? Then, common history. Indeed, Holocaust it was the most painful and the most recent, but if you go deeper, you see that kind of different holocaust and different direct policies of exclusion were there. Now, Roma... when it was the... For instance if you take the Romanian example. It was the era of the nationalism, of creating of the Romanian state, because otherwise we had three principalities: Walachia, Moldova and Transylvania ... [...]. People created nation and indeed, you know here like other people, indeed the nation is built, is a constructed , so

there are people that are working on a language and creating it , there are people who are looking at symbols and values that gather people around this, and there are the so-called technics of [...]. So... now if we said these diversity, maybe I will raise a question like what makes America a nation? It's a symbolic, it's a think and it's an idea under propaganda that it's put it by the federal government. I hope that you've been in America and you see that they have special form of symbolic... Have you ever seen an American movie without the American flag? The American flag is always there. Whatever is the movies from love story till the war, the flag is there. Have you ever seen movies and things to not touch main values like president, army etc..

RESEARCHER: Always there.

H: And [...]. The flag is exhibited there before that you... that the people play with their skyboards, on the sewage leads you have passages of the constitution... so, this is a built process and it's not that I'm saying that it's bad, because at the end you have to create this, you have to offer values, and sometimes people join voluntarily believing is their values, sometimes they have to be drag, let's say.. or expose to learn about their values .

RESEARCHER: I always have problems when I present this. Last year when I was presenting part of my work there was a person who raised the hand and said `of course Roma are not a nation`. I had to say `It's not `of course`, the Roma are as much a nation as Polish, Germans or French, or none of them are a nation, because all of them are construct`. My question is, apparently to me - so far - the Roma identity is constructed by how the others see Roma.

H: Yes.

RESEARCHER: Not by how the Roma feel themselves as an ethnic group.

H: Because, I told you... because there is no...

RESEARCHER: It's constructed, I'm sorry, it's constructed based on the anti-gypsyism. It's not based on the culture or language, because there is such a unique culture, a unique language, but is based in `we all suffer, we are a group`. And how can help to improve the quality of life of the Roma people, because this is the main legitimation: `let's construct a Roma nation, then the nation can fight against the anti-Gypsyism, against the social disadvantages, and so on and so forth`. But how basing the identity in the anti-Gypsyism can help these people?

H: But this is the thing. Now initially having the minority rights was put it on the agenda, but Europe and also the politicians they learnt from history and they know that very well, they are not ignorant, their acts are conscious and knowing exactly wats next . So, when the war in Yugoslavia started all the international institutions they changed focus from minority rights(Roma rights) discourse to poverty and social exclusion and so on and so forth. Which at the end I understand this... now. With the Roma, yes, you pointed very well when you said that the Roma nations is built by the other and how is perceived, because studies think that [...] from the perspective and from the lenses of the white. So, from Grellman until all the other people that is writing, it's like that! Now, what is going on is that other people is saying that `yes, Romani intelligentsia should have the self-determination and should try to put... must put there their political opinion down on a table`. Now... our days... I, our friends, we have kind of an exclusion from this, so... whatever is produced now in the academia by Roma is tried to be put it aside, saying that... does not meet the rigor, requirements, and academic standards and so forth. And [none the last?] [nevertheless] among the non-Roma academics, they try not have an open debate about such a things. E.g. How Roma can take in their own hands their fate and their future? So... They still have a power position into the academia, into the institutions that really can control the process. So, emancipation process might start with the new paradigms, new set of values, with putting together these and by trying to

disseminate this, or some political structures like Community-led local development, get efficient, visibility, sufficient power and articulate some messages that the masses will come. Or, another think, and by the way this is an answer to your question, is to have community education. I do believe in the Paulo Freire.

RESEARCHER: Paulo Freire.

H: How is he call?

RESEARCHER: Paulo Freire.

H: Paulo Freire. The pedagogy of oppressed. How you can des-slave people, you know... education them, rather than believing that we, [suppressed to maintain anonymity], we can create a nation in a gadjó school. So, it's the so-called Pierre Boudieu. The Romanian school, creates Romanians, Hungarian school, Czech school, is prepared and has as its main objective to make you Hungarian, Czech citizen. So, it doesn't have the aim to reproduce the 'marginal' culture to make you Roma. Actually is creating, is reproducing the differences and disparities which are continuously growing, of the overall society. So, of menacing the power.. for the people who are in power... middle/upper class white people. So, the school will never make you Roma... and it doesn't have a mandate... so...school, by the way, it's was massively developed in the nationalist sphere, when the public school emulate? When education for everybody was compulsory? And so on and so forth, school system is a result of the nationalist era, is the creation of the nation-state the public school and vice versa. And then it was forever projected to reproduce the values and the culture of the majority of the state. So, I don't believe that a school will produce a good Roma citizen. So, school will produce maybe an educated Roma, but not a free-minded culturally [...] Roma citizen.

RESEARCHER: And then the role of the [suppressed to maintain anonymity] is try to make them good Roma citizens?

H: It is to enable them to be citizen, to access and to indulge the full citizen rights, including the right to self-determination, to political thinking. Because an educated person it might be capable to reflect on the other things, an educated person will be active contributor to the taxes system, an educated person might vote very consciously on a political platform or on the ethno-cultural believes... So, we try to enable and to make sure that our Roma is receiving the same quality of education like their peers. Our mandate is close the educational gap between Roma and non-Roma. So... with our mechanisms, with our projects, Roma that is in a school should perform comparable and should... we try to eliminate the barrier that the Roma children would use their potential in such school, Romanian, Hungarian, Czech, and German, whatever.

RESEARCHER: But when you are in this position, here, you are working in the [suppressed to maintain anonymity] and then you are going to the schools to teach... not to teach, but to improve the education. There is not a risk that you in certain level you will... in a such plural group that you are going there to... there is not such a risk to be... that you fill the role of the Roma kings? With you being the mediator between this plural society with the European level and killing this plurality?

H: No. No, because concretely our mechanisms and thinks are embedded in a research, so... and in practices. We do not do any political, any proselytism... Any political participation neither proselytism of any kind. On the contrary, if the school... so this is public in our criteria... if the school has any political affiliation or any religious affiliation, we try to make sure from the very beginning that our resources and the time that we spend there, it is not use for proselytism but just for the wellbeing of the child and the, actually, the formal education... We are not perceive like that because we do have ties with the locality. We are not called here from Budapest and say 'do this and that!'. But, we have in each country a coordinator there, a country facilitator that is our

fox eye there and can tell us what is happening. We go there twice per year, to all our school, we go now in the autumn and then next year, maybe May or June. We visit, we see the progress of our children... we do look at this. Second: we never fight with the governments, but on the contrary, we have the so-called 'learning by doing process'. For instance, in Czech Republic, we have a project that, by the way should continue, with those families trying to show them how to avoid the segregation through giving to the Roma kids good quality, early childhood development, (ECD), pre-kindergarten and kindergarten... to enable them to go on with the school. Then we have a partnership with the Slovak government, for instance, to try to deal. Then, already our models and our practices are taken by the governments. So, majority of our Secondary Scholarship scheme it's in partnership with the Macedonian Government, Albanian, Kosovo, Bosnia. in Romania also we tried but now it is crisis... The only government that does not contribute is the Slovak government. Our model, like Early Childhood Development, is already taken as model by other donors. So, we have small things in Romania, working in three localities, without funds... now Norwegians (EEA) believed the approached and fund our work on sixteen localities. And in this scheme we try to believe and we have sufficient data and practices to show to donors that, whatever we implement, is working. Now, it's not perfect... we do not have a panacea to solve all things, but critical mass of the kids that are treated in our projects, they are progressing. They show real progress through measurement, through longitudinal studies and so on and so forth.

RESEARCHER: Yes. But I feel like... in certain way you are improving and giving basis to the ethno-emancipation process?

H: Yes, emancipation through education, but we are not into the...

RESEARCHER: political aspect, you mean?

H: Yes!

RESEARCHER: But it's little complicated to detach these two things, right?

H: But this is what I'm saying. Maybe it's a not manifesto... but the fact that we say 'Roma go to school! Roma should do like the others!'. Maybe it's one of... on mobilizing people, it's one value that people can look at it and maybe, at certain point, can come up as a social movement. But, by the time being, we are not putting the focus on this and we have only the technical liver for this process until one critical mass of Roma children to be in school and to perform compared with the non-Roma peer. Now how? On the national standards, of course! If in Bosnia these are the standards, so Roma should reach... in Romania, here, wherever...

RESEARCHER: I bring this because I've heard, for instance, the case of [suppressed to maintain anonymity] when there is a lot of cases that when they enter the program, if you ask you call themselves... they'll name themselves Gypsies, Tigani and so on. But when they leave the program, they are calling themselves Roma and they have a national consciousness.

H: Yes. We have a...

RESEARCHER: Is not that [suppressed to maintain anonymity] want to make this, but it's almost a process that when the pass through the [suppressed to maintain anonymity] program they bring this national consciousness in the end. So, in certain way this educational, even though they have no political target, they fill some political gaps, don't you think?

H: Yes. Yes, but this is on the level of the adults, but I think it's not ethical in our case to put this in a school. Second, if we try this, ethnical development very practically, to do it in a school it's like in a waste, or throwing the seeds. You might throw the seeds, first of all in an asphalt or in a stone and will never grow, because that environment, the

school, it has a different mandate. And I told you: they minimize multiculturalism, they minimize the exhibition of minorities, they still consider 'otherness' minimal, but their every day job it is to make people Hungarian, Romanian, Czech, Slovak, whatever. So, would be by default a non-friendly environment to make that. Second, they will immediately have the power to exclude us from that school. So we... we are 'tolerated' there. We have a partnership there and this mutual game, this win-win situation. So, if we come with any political things or things which will make the school unsecure, immediately they'll say 'sorry...'

RESEARCHER: 'Good bye!'

H: Yes. And this is not our interest. I told you, it is unethical take a child of seven years and I from here, from Budapest, to put already... no, I'll let him till be in [suppressed to maintain anonymity] and then I'll discuss with him as an adult. Saying 'ok... do you know about your things?'. And there, in [suppressed to maintain anonymity], indeed we have language, identity, components like that... because there is another level, so... he has a moral duty to offer our students the political and ethnical, option, it's not doctrinarian, he might refuse things. But, I don't think that it would be so ethical working with the seven years child saying 'ok... I'll buy your books but you have to say everyday...'

RESEARCHER: But the normal school, they do this?

H: Yes! [laughs]. But they have a different way of managing the power. So here, I think, is also the power position.

RESEARCHER: Yes. Usually when I start to do this nationalist studies, some person ask to me 'yes... and you? what makes you Brazilian?'. For me it is easy, I was born inside that country, I was born inside that area, of course. But then I started to think that this was built with the school, singing the anthem, we are looking the flag every week, every Monday morning we need to raise the flag...

H: Symbols! Pele...

RESEARCHER: Yes. Football..

H: Ronaldo, football...

RESEARCHER: And, definitively, I became ten times more Brazilian when I move to Prague.

Interview 3

Interview realized in the city of Belgrade.

Date: 20 Sept. 2016

Interviewer: Douglas Neander Sambati

Obs.: This interview was conducted in a public place and the local noise harmed the transcription. Also was present the contact between the researcher/interviewer and the interviewee who made some comments during the interview. He is mark as S2 during the transcription.

[...]

S: because, I think I should answer this question with mine question, I mean, do you think that funding something, giving money to some group actually can influence their self-identity or something like that?

RESEARCHER: well, if I think by the base that I'm using, like Gellner, Anderson and so on... I think so. Because they're kind of instrumentalizing some group that teach another group what they are. I was talking with Marius Taba in Budapest...

S: You like giving some money, some material basis to some elite to teach... to construct identity.

RESEARCHER: Yeah.

S: Something like this. Because they don't have a state, they don't [...] the state fundings, so you [...] some no state funding sources. Ok. Now I understand. Well... and I think about, because this is very interesting, because... the question is: do they have an interesting to have this ethnic identity as... is an important question. Do you understand? I mean...

RESEARCHER: What the interest of Soros to have the Roma as an international... or as a Roma ethnicity.

S: Well... because I don't think that this is the question. I think that the main question is like 'human rights', you have this field of...

S2: Yes! General concern on something...

S: Like... I'm just living like a [...], who is like 'in democracy everybody is concern about...' we feel bad for some people who are in miserable situation, and we are concerned about that. But we actually do not do something about it. Maybe he has something like this, this universal concern. And this is important part of our soul.

RESEARCHER: When we were talking about the European Union itself...

S: Because if you fund some sort of ethnic groups construction, this will be in many ways contradictory to your broader goal because, ok... you're like against nationalism for human rights and so on and now you're making some nationalist elite. Which... like...

S2: [...]

S: this is like small groups, but, you can't [...] the difference between a small and large [...]. I think this is missing the mark, the main question is like 'oh... they're poor, they're miserable, we need to help them because we are so better and some people, like part of the community and part...

S2: political community... part of the state...

S: Yes... [asking how to translate a sentence in Serbian to S2]...

S2: Public opinion... but it is public community in that sense... public community.

S: Yes... because public community is like 'Oh... yes... now [...] because they don't care with anything and now they'll be happier than used to be before', and this is the main question and this is the main motive, that you've asked me. But, through ethnic identity... wow... you can't construct ethnic identity if you [...].

RESEARCHER: Well, I cannot answer why George Soros can send this money to this people, because for me... so far I cannot understand such influence of Soros... It's a little bit of a surprise to me, so far.

S: This is [...] to LGBT groups, and this construct of an ethnic identity or [...] identity.

RESEARCHER: But LGBT groups are not an ethnic group.

S2: But it's not just about an ethnic identity... it is his or his organization as his class upbringing, he's a global upperclass guy, [...] people. He is one of the top 30 richest people in the world, who now emancipates you to do something! And that's it!

S: The question is 'what thing?'

S2: 'What thing?'

RESEARCHER: Maybe it's not part of his process... but what is the outcome of this money in the hands of a Roma intelligentsia, is a construction of a Roma nation?

S: No!

RESEARCHER: or a Roma ethnic emancipation...

S: No... if you asked me. And now the question is 'the consequence of this' is not constructing any sort of Roma intellectual elite. Is constructing part of a [word? Board?] like an intellectual elite, which cares with Roma origins. Do you understand me?

RESEARCHER: Say it again, sorry.

S: You don't care on Roma elite. You care part like an transnational elite, which cares on Roma origin.

RESEARCHER: Which cares with the Roma origin.

S: Which cares about it professionally and has some origins. They use to be... But now they are not part of the Roma community anymore. Because they won't marry a Roma person. There is one case, I know... But only one I think... they [...] their own person... it is are mostly likely they will move to Budapest or some larger centre, and they'll marry with some [...] that is not from Serbia at all.

RESEARCHER: Yes... but this Roma inteligentsia... so, are you saying that they are looking for assimilation?

S: Yes, assimilation... but in which community? In a [assistential] community.

S2: Yes, is not like being in a Hungarian or something like that...

RESEARCHER: It's be a Roma?

S: No, it's not to be a Roma... it's to be a cosmopolitan.

S2: Cosmopolitan, global os something like that.

RESEARCHER: Then, in this process, the easiest way to be a cosmopolitan someone is maybe to accept this Roma identity, because the Roma identity is transnational.

S: [Laugh] That would be something quite nice. This is a nice story and sounds quite romantic. But... it... Roma community is segregated in one national culture. And how can they be [not segregated] in transnational cuture if they are segregated in one nacional culture? They are, like, pushed down one level before it.

RESEARCHER: That's my big question. Because all the Roma... The people who say about Roma nation and also the people who say about Roma ethnic emancipation, that's not the same thing - despite they are similar but it's not the same thing -, they always say that they want this to improve the quality of life of the Roma people around the world. How - and that is my other question - how the life of the Roma people in Serbia can be if they considered themselves Roma and not Serbian anymore.

S: This part like `oh.. We are the Roma, we [...], we're always travelling and so`, this is totally idealistic...

RESEARCHER: This is a romantic...

S: Yes... Idealistic or Romantic. Because you cannot be citizen of the world if you cannot know English. And if you don't know you have to write and you cannot lean English... and you can't be a citizen of the world, you're citizen of your [...]. In the best. So, this is something like `my spirit is free and I don't know...` and you'll die in your fifth birthday. So, the other question is how can you [have to?] improve Roma life in Serbia?

RESEARCHER: No no... let's keep about the idea... because that's my big topic... So, how you see this discourse - or you don't see this discourse - of Roma nation ou Roma ethnic emancipation, among the Roma inteligentsia or the NGOs here in Serbia.

S: There are many discourses. There is one, like, the modern discourse, I'll call it like this. Which is are `oh, we are the first europeans... we are the prototype of the European Union... everybody shoud be like Roma... because we invented this...`

S2: Who talks in this way? Sorry...

S: Well, there is this notion like `oh... we don't care about borders...`. They are the free Europe.

S2: They are the fisrt Europe.

S: Yes, this is like some liberal discourse. And there is this romantic discourse, which is like... which has its roots in nineteenth century, and which is like `our empire is the empire of the spirit`. Like... `we are free, restless and so on...`. Also, [...], something like that... also. And there is one, like a popular discourse, which you can't see... which is...

RESEARCHER: Popular in the sense of Populist or only popular?

S: Popular... popular... not populist. A discourse from down, from below. Which is more like 'oh... we are living here, we're rooted here, we have our particular honor'. And, for example, there is an actual interesting [...], is a bit better [...]. Because I think that this anecdote is really nice to this type of discourse. Is like... a girl from [...], she was volunteer in some settlements, and she spoke with some Roma [...], a few daughters, and they were like twenty or thirty years old, so they were very young. And they were like 'oh... I marry them all, they are no more my concern'. And she was like 'oh... that's sick!'. And he was like 'no, it's not sick, they are whores [prostitutes], and if they wanna dishonor a house, they will dishonor another man house, not mine... now they are not my concern'. She was like 'oh... come one... I can't believe in what he's saying about them...' And he talked to her like 'well, I know, you Serbs do not respect anything. You don't care if you daughters are whores... We are Roma, we are [...]'.

RESEARCHER: The honor discourse about their nation... because they share this honor.

S: [he denied the idea of nation with gestuals].

RESEARCHER: Well, not nation but their ethnic group.

S: I dear to call it an ethnic group, is like an status group. Like status... I'll call it status group.

RESEARCHER: But... when you talk about this guys - and now I'm quoting like Gellner, Benedict Anderson, this guys - also this popular things, this low people, [suppressed to maintain anonymity]...

S: Yes, but they care about honor.

RESEARCHER: The question of my work, about the nation and so on is about the intelligentsia.

S: Yes. But peasants care about honor, and this is quite a Weberian theme because he said 'not only nobles are status group, but also peasants'. Those people who are getting, like, [...] paper and so on they are a status group, and they care about their particular [...] of honor. This control of their household is the main social [...], the honor. I was like... and this is also very interesting for you, because this is like hadling on a experience. I was really [...]. Here there is this great Roma settlement, under a [...] bridge - it is down the Danube -, and most of them are from Kosovo. But this guy, who was my host, he was like 'oh... I know how to expect custumes, I'm born in Belgrade, I'm not from Kosovo'. And how did he expect customers? He was like, two [...] to the table, and he ordered to his daughter, who was on the floor 'clean the table'. And the girl came with the reck and with this washing detergent and washed the table... Camon, I was like 'this is ridiculous, who cleans the table with the detergent?' It is too much for me. And he was like 'She has to do it, because she needs to clean it and I know how is the nice behaviour because I'm from Belgrade and not from Kosovo'. And I was 'come on...'

RESEARCHER: No one here do this...

S: Nobody does, it is ridiculous. But I'll go further... he felt great honor in this commanding to his 17 years old daughter... 'clean this table because our guests needs to sit in here'. [...]. After a few minutes he told to the other daughter like 'bring to our guests water'. And she brought one bottle and he 'oh... you're stupid, you don't know anything...'. He was 'yes, she is seventeen years old and she doesn't know anything.'

RESEARCHER: But beyond this honor situation about the peasants... among the Serbian Roma intelligentsia... do you feel that there is some union between...

S: Union between them... between members of the intelligentsia?

RESEARCHER: Yes, like... some... not union, but do you feel that they gather together to think about what this ethnic emancipation process or not?

S: they gather in small groups. They gather in the small parts. But they don't gather at the [whole?]. Because they are like... in Serbia we have this expression: they are like horses in the back. They are always hitting each other. Because they are like horses put in the back, and they are always pocking each other. They are simply bound... their destiny is being bound together, trust each other, because they are fighting for the same resources. And they maybe have this sort of Roma elite identity, some declared like 'yes, we are Roma and they are like elite'. But practically you can forget about it.

RESEARCHER: Is it a fight for money?

S: Well... not for money, for honor... for money, for honor, for self-esteem, status... you can call it [...] you want...

RESEARCHER: But this do not reach the poor people? It is more among the intelligentsia. So, do you think that you have some contacts that I can make email contact with this Roma intelligentsia that I can ask you?

S: Yes, but there is a big problem: most of them do not speak English.

[...] Jump to time 17:25.9

RESEARCHER: Because... yes... this kind of... this gap between the intelligentsia and the people it's ok to me. What I want to see in this traveling is: how this local intelligentsia, with the NGOs here, are connected with the big discourse within the International Governmental Organizations. Because, in European Roma and Travellers Forum [website] is really clear that they are a nation... that they talk about the Romas as one group. They pass a rubber on the all diversity among the Roma people. I can bet that inside Serbia there is a lot of different Roma groups, with totally different culture. Or not?

S: Yes, totally different. Totally different. Different in any aspect... [...] you have Catholics, Orthodox and Muslims. And linguistic [...]... oh my... [...] those who speak only Hungarian, those who speak only Romanian, those who speak only Albanian, those who speak only Serbian, those who speak only Romanes... those are five groups. But you have combinations...

RESEARCHER: Yes... and why you call all of them Roma?

S: I don't know. This is something... I don't know! I mean... This is something that I'm quite critical about. What makes them Roma? But, those who are, like, Roma nationalists [...], they are like 'oh... but they all used to speak the same language, and they should start to speak again and then they'll be once again members of this nation', but I'm like... well... this is very hard to say and, the most important thing is that they use to have this old Serbian ethnologist who wrote about Roma, his name is Stephen [...], I have to check, and he was like 'what makes Roma people Roma people, when they don't have the same religion, the same language and...' - The most important, he noted this in the nineteenth century, which is very important - 'And they do not care for [...], they don't care about [...] us.'

RESEARCHER: Yes, what is the big discourse about the people who talk about Roma emancipation right now, not much about the Roma nation, but emancipation is the anti-gypsism - they are all united by the anti-gypsism. Don't you think that united a whole bunch of people because of something really bad that is this prejudice...

S: Yes, this... Ok! This is something that I'm quite interested in but I think the politicians put the accent on the anti-gypsism, but... because it produces many different answers. There are many different answers. I can note few of them mostly. First is assimilation, which serves good for everybody who can do it, who can assimilate... who is educated, who doesn't look too much like Roma, [...] and so on. Those people who can assimilate...

RESEARCHER: There is much assimilated Roma in Serbia? Because in Hungary there is a lot.

S: Yes. Of course. One of my friends... we went to school, his mother is Roma. I never noted until I was very old. And then my father, they are of the same age as she, he told me 'his mother is Roma'. And I was like 'no!'... I was like 'came on...'. She has two brothers, they call one of them Cerny, which means 'black one'. And the other one is like... yes... like a typical Roma. You can see in them, but in her you can't see. But when you think about is like... 'oh.. well...'

RESEARCHER: It makes sense...

S: It makes sense, but if you don't have an idea, you'll never tell. And there are many [...] examples. Especially those who manage to marry with some people who is not from their community.

RESEARCHER: I see... so, assimilation and?

S: Assimilation is the [...]. The other one is a strategy that is like a self-segregation. And is a strategy that is not chosen by the poor people, but is the only strategy that they can do. And this is like... how can I explain... We can not [...] this poverty status and we can't leave from it because we are poor. We can [have?] a state of funds, we can [have?] [...] social help... We can do things that other people can't do...

RESEARCHER: As they don't have other choice they start to be really good in depend on the [...].

S: No! They start to be acting like Gypsies. They start to be like...

RESEARCHER: They gypsyalize themselves!

S: Yes! 'We are, like, totally Gypsies... so we don't need to pay electricity, we don't need to pay tax in transportation, [...]'... we can...

RESEARCHER: But they are Roma? Or are they only acting like Roma because they are poor?

S: No! They are Roma. I mean... I carry these distinctions: they real Roma and the real Gypsies. Roma is an ethnic identity, [...], is about language, history, [...] and so on. But we [have?] Gypsies, and Gypsies is an status group, which doesn't need to have any thing with language. It has to do with how poor are you, and how do you manage to survive. If you are really poor and you manage to survive by getting a spair paper and, I don't know, [...] and so on, and if you don't give a damn about some people saying that you are Gypsy. Because he says 'oh... yeah.. I feel bad for it but, once again, is the way in which I live, is my profession', then becomes a status group. And there is one [...] videoclips in Serbia, and there are elderly Roma woman, like... 'what does your son do? What is his profession?'. And she is like 'oh... his profession... well... the same as mine, he's a Gypsy'. So, this is a status group, a profession, this is something that you do, that your monopolize. I mean... you monopolize one of the means to get money, for example.

RESEARCHER: It's like this kind of... but we are not talking about the professional Gypsy that Elena Marushiakova talks? This guy... Because this professional Gypsy is people who take money from EU, grants... this is other kind, right?

S: No! This is a kind... this is not a professional... no... those are people who are making the Roma question their profession. These people that I'm talking with those who are making Roma way of life their way of life their profession. They are doing everything that Roma do...

RESEARCHER: They do all that a non-Roma society expect for the Roma.

S: Yes. And they are doing all things that the non-Roma society won't do. So, if you are not Roma, you're not...

RESEARCHER: Taking paper from the street..

S: Yes. You are not doing... that's something that only Roma would do it. Like a profession... and major part of this profession is get state support, [...] social funds. It's important part of this profession. And it's a great gap that I can talk about it... This is a gap between Roma elite and Roma people. Because I heard many times from members of the Roma elite, [...] discourse, like narratives, about those poor Roma... and they are very interesting. They are like 'oh... we came to one Roma settlement and, you know, they are like those wild people from Amazonia who never saw white men, who don't know about civilization, they are like this'. Or 'we came to one Roma household, because Social Care told about them, like they are quite a problem, they do not want to cooperate, they are terrible and so on... [...]. There is a man in the house, he was sitting in front he was drunk even though was afternoon, sometimes before noon... the mother was smoking cigars... and we are, like, your traditions are terrible, you [...] window, you're like 'oh my god', dirty, everything is terrible and we ask 'why is that?' 'we don't have money!'. And he was like 'well, how much money do you get from the State?' And they were like forty thousands dinars.. which is like 350 euros which is a lot for Serbia, something like an average for Serbia, but in south of Serbia this is a lot of money. And he told that she was [...] 'Are you not ashamed? You have plenty of money to live a decent life, but you're not doing it'. And he said... you could see lot of [...] disgust. And I know very other situations...

[...] Jump to the time 31:19.6

RESEARCHER: So... do you mean that there is like... I could say that there is like four groups: the International Governmental Unions, the Roma Serbian inteligentsia, the integrated Roma and the popular Roma. And these Roma they don't overlap? These groups overlap really a little bit?

S: Yes! Those two groups overlap...

RESEARCHER: They don't overlap.

S: [denying with gestures]

RESEARCHER: But no like in everyday basis... they overlap in some moments, but not all the time.

S: Those two can overlap in some... some cases...

RESEARCHER: An these two groups - let me make a guess - these groups all overlap when they need money to [...].

S: To care about them. Because, and this is something which is very interesting. Because if is noted... because this is the main source of the anti-Gypsism in Serbia. Because, then, lot of people where who are Serbs are like 'oh... there is too much money given to those people and they don't want to change, they are too headstrong, they are in the way that it is... and they are making fool of us', but they do not know this whole process... thst they don't ask for help.

RESEARCHER: And it is a help which come so little to them that give no option to they really change, sometimes right?

S: No [agreeing with me]! But... there is also a fifth member, a fifth element, which are the political parties. Which are no-Roma political parties, and which can give a real help to them. They can give them oil, cooking oil, floor, [...].

RESEARCHER: But they don't care about them?

S: They do! They do care a lot about them...

RESEARCHER: There are no Roma political parties?

S: There are a few but they are not important...

RESEARCHER: But you mean that the non-Roma political parties care about them?

S: Yes! They are a lot about them every four years. Because they have election every four years. So, they start to care a lot about them because you have those 'for sure

votes', people who will vote for you for sure. And if you ask **S2** or me [...], if you vote for me we can say yes or no, they know that we can vote against them. But, if you bribe a Roma leader for a local community... `ok, we'll give you some money, and you give to your employees and your subordinates [...], but you're [...]. And, then you have the `sure votes`. Because he has the power to go to every house [...] votes to this party. They give you [...] and if you don't vote to them I know... So, this patriarchal structure is very [aluring?] to political parties. Because they can carry sure votes.

RESEARCHER: So, let's recheck just to [...]. International Governmental Unions and the Roma Serbian intelligentsia they are departed, but they have some connections. The Roma Serbian intelligentsia with the integrated Roma, they are departed but they have some contacts...

S: Yes, because they can intermarry, they can...

RESEARCHER: And those groups they, sometimes, talk among them when they are trying to get some money, or some funds to help the popular Roma. That are also helped sometime, each four years, by the parties...

S: And by the State. But we told that with all the help, the situation is not changing at all.

RESEARCHER: Why?

S: Because all the help [...] is temporary help.

RESEARCHER: Is it not maybe because, maybe we always to make them be like us? [...]

S: You [...] this anthropological perspective `make them like us`. It's important to do a copernican [...] and ask `who are we?`. Those people, they have these [...] some sort of burgeoise `to be is to work in some office` and to be like this and, if we manage to educate - and education is a key word [...] - if we could educate this poor Roma [...] to work in [...] or in some [...] this will be like `oh... the best thing`. But, mine pespective is, and it is the answer to the question `how can we improve Roma life?`, try to make this people look like them. Like, he doesn't need to be an official in some large NGO [...], let him become a craftsman. Because those people who are the members of the elite, they are lost! Those too can't communicate. These people disgust them and this people cannot understand them.

RESEARCHER: The Roma Serbian intelligentsia disgust the popular Roma and the popular Roma cannot understand the Serbian intelligentsia.

S: I mean... this is ridiculous because, if you are a member of this inteligentsia and I've herd the stories... like stories about Chandragupta...

RESEARCHER: These people [the popular Roma] don't [care] about it...

S: No!! They can't [care]... is not that they just don't [care], they can't [care]...

RESEARCHER: But don't you think that these people [the inteligentsia] trying to make them understand about Gupta and India and so on, is not a nationalistic approach?

S: It is [laughing], but this nationalist approach is like a discourse produced by an small group, but it can be consumed by this small group. Because it is quite exoterical...

RESEARCHER: But then is not the role of the NGOs make this discourse be consumed by all this group [popular Roma]?

S: No, it can't be! No, because you don't have resources to understand it, you don't know where India is... I mean, you don't know where Hungary is! Bulgaria it's ok... but you don't know where is Hungary, Austria... how can you explain something like India? [...]. [...]. Because this Roma ethnic history [...] `wow, we are like members of [...] class which were Rajastan, which were defeated by [...] Turks and then, because of our great skills we were sold off to Kabul then our history of opression started, but before this we used to be great priests...

RESEARCHER: This is totally Ian Hancock...

S: Yes!! And before that we used to be warriors and... it is ridiculous, I mean, [...] nation state in India. [...].

[...] Jump to time 43:10.0

RESEARCHER: That's the point, these NGOs... we forgot to put the NGOs here [in the model that we drawn]. They are not making this process? To try to make the contact with these [...] and teach them that they need to be like them? Not like this people, like them?

S: They are actually jumping...

RESEARCHER: Yes... you should not be an integrated Roma, you should be a intelligentsia Roma. You should be aware of your origins.

S: We return to the beginning... they don't care to make them be like this, because they can't be them... I mean... If you can't write how can you learn English? If somebody of those popular Roma, by some sort of [...] or chance of faith, becomes like them is like 'this is great, this is fine, this is very nice', but, if you would ask to those people 'honestly, do you think that those can become like you?' they will [...] 'we don't want to because [...], [...].'

Interview 4

Interview realized in the city of Bucharest.

Date: 23 Sept. 2016

Interviewer: Douglas Neander Sambati

RESEARCHER: In the email that I sent to you I raised three main questions: [1^a] How is the situation of the Roma people, the organization of the Roma people as such in Romania; [2^a] the relation of the organizations in Romania with the International Organizations; and [3^a] how you see the role of these national organizations, including this one where you work here - the [suppressed to maintain anonymity]...

R: One second... how the Roma are organized in Romania; How they are related with the international Roma movements and the...

RESEARCHER: And the third is like this: How you see the work of the national organizations, the NGOs inside Romania - and also the [suppressed to maintain anonymity] -, in this process of ethno emancipation of Roma people or Roma nation.

R: Well... the third is quite debatable, we have to discuss more in depth. But when you're referring to the Roma nationalism, what is your definition of that? Because we have to discuss on the same level of understanding.

RESEARCHER: Well... I'm using pretty much as main basis the concept, better saying the model, developed by Ernest Gellner. The idea that there is a group who became aware of some kind of ancestry, and they start to develop this thing, and they try to teach other people that they are part of the group. Some people that sometimes don't really care about this, but an intelligentsia, an elite, try to spread through schools a language... they start to relabel the history. Long story short, they construct a broad history, a broad discourse, that can be embraced for a lot of people... and all these people become a nation. I'm not saying that it's bad or good... but this broad discourse can bring a lot of people together. And in the Gellner's idea it was a process related with the modernization, for him they needed people to work in the factories, to teach people to work in the factories they need schools, it's easy to teach in all the schools in one language, [...] so we need to standardize the language.

R: Ok.

RESEARCHER: I had some problems in the past, when people confused this far-right nationalism and so on, but definitely is not about this which I'm talking about.

R: It is a sort... certain particularity, a very particular case of nationalism... the one that you are referring to, but anyways... So the first question to how the Roma... social movement in Romania it's organized and Europe... We have to start a bit with a short history, you're referring to Roma in Romania. I don't know if your research is broader...

RESEARCHER: My research is about Europe and even world, if I manage to. It's a broad approach...

R: I don't know how... ok... I will try to answer your questions. Just to know the topic is huge... you... perhaps you are aware the limitations of the research, you cannot not capture.... how many interviews did you...

RESEARCHER: I think I'll manage to make in this travel ten interviews.

R: In Romania?

RESEARCHER: No, in the all countries... if I manage to do ten interviews it'll be perfect to me. Because what I am trying to do now is... the approach of the university is a broad approach, is not... I don't to see in details.

R: And the number of interviews for your research?

RESEARCHER: My research is more based in the analysis of reports and articles of the Roma intelligentsia. But I had the feeling, when I was developing [the research], that I should go a little bit out of this to have another view. To see if what I was feeling inside this articles and reports actually have some basis in the everyday life. And I'm feeling, since I started this travel five days ago, that's not. For instance, just as one example, for me... so far, George Soros - The Open Society and so on -, had a role but not so strong. That European Roma and Travellers Forum has a stronger role. But then, since I started to talk with people in Bratislava, in Budapest, in Belgrade... no one of them talked about ERTF, only about George Soros.

R: Yes, it's true.

RESEARCHER: So, this is what I want to see... I want to compare. I know that maybe I'll have some interviews that won't be enough to understand, but I want to see if I'm going in a totally wrong way or if I can try to understand and make a broad analysis. Broad... not shallow, but broad. Look the whole picture from the top.

R: I see. First of all, in order to understand, the landscape here of Roma in Romania, we have to know a bit about the history... I don't know if Mr. [suppressed to maintain anonymity] and another interviewees have immersed you in this short history. The Roma were officially registered here in Romania, in Romanian space, five or six centuries ago and they were slaves until 1856... and after... starting from that point we can discuss about the start of an emancipation movement. Which picked in 1990s, when the first Roma associations were [...], they were advocating for Roma emancipation, access to school, and jobs and other social related issues. We have to know that the Roma in Romania, which were slaves are we mentioned, they didn't benefit from any properties after being released. Unlike the Romanian peasants who benefited from certain policy... and after the abolishment of the slavery there was no... you know... they were left by themselves, they didn't have [...] to continue the work, they were carry out for the aristocracy or churches, they use to be slaves before so... They benefited from a very weak access to some resources. The situation somehow evolved, before the Second World War there was a number of NGOs managed by local leaders, fighting for the Roma emancipation.

RESEARCHER: They were really connected with the church, am I wrong?

R: Yes?

RESEARCHER: These NGOs before the Second World War, they were quite connected with the Orthodox Church?

R: No! They were set up by some educated Roma, who get the chance to get educated... They were the post-revolutionary movement of 1848 period which picked with the abolishment of the slavery, but unfortunately they didn't benefit from that transition from that process of modernization of Romania, let's say... they were somehow slaves without the legal status of slaves. They were people used as cheap labour, for both Church and majority population who needed workers or... anyways... So, there were attempts to aggregate the people around this cultural movement, they were even... The Roma were presents in the biggest moments of the Romanian history... Declaration of the Independence it was also supported by the Roma, who were advocating also for their own emancipation and improvement of the situation. The Roma were a constant presence in the Romanian history for half a millennium, let's say... in this region. But all these attempts of emancipation were trying to get coagulated until the Second World War, when it was dramatically stopped by the ethnic cleansing policy by the Antonescu Regime. Numberless Roma were deported to Transnistria and the so-called 'Bug' - you might find in your various [...] -, half of them came back from there and survived. During the communist regime the Roma were subjected to the forced assimilation policy. Maybe you can find some writings from Mr. Nicolae Gheorghe on that... He was one of the main actors and witness, maybe a contributor... some are saying the he was contributing to the Communist Party policies to forced... to assimilate the Roma. Some... are claiming that the Roma during the communist regime were... the communist period was very beneficial for the Roma because, due to that policy, every citizen who wanted to work... they benefit from work, from housing, education... So, unlike the post-revolutionary period, in 1990s, when they were left behind, they were the losers of the so-called Transition, and they were the first who lost their jobs... and they lost their houses, they were pushed to the margins, they were forced because of the poverty to sell their houses and they were pushed into the margins of the society... They were somehow... the transition has determined them to become the so-called 'excluded' or 'vulnerable' groups, which are... we are discussing about today. These are... These are the mine stones, let's say, of the Roma history in Romania. Of course that after the Revolution in 1989 the movement... the associative movement has started to get revived, let's say... As any other minority groups in Romania, and there was a... First of all it was motivated by the discrimination. The Roma movement, after the Revolution, was somehow built on two sites: on political activism and on the civic activism... for fighting against discrimination and fighting for social rights, economical rights and cultural rights as well. So, these are the... this is the landscape of the Roma movement, let's say. It is still a divided movement, the political movement is not communicating very well with the civic movements, the human rights activists... the movement is polarized, and there is no real communication between the two worlds. It is a one... how to say...

RESEARCHER: Frames? Different frames? Two thoughts?

R: To paths that are rarely touching each other, because there is not a common goal. There is common goal to build and to get a better situation for the Roma minority, but is not well defined this... but is not a touchable thing, so that the both sides might work together, towards their common goal. So, maybe it's part of a natural, let's say, process in transition countries... societies, because is the same in the mainstream society as well. The political parties are divided, they are not... there is the so-called right, the so-called left wings... you know... In the civic movements also are [...] conveying to a common goal, so... I don't think that is something that defines the Roma movement. The Roma movement is not that well connected with the European Movement. There are some attempts to participate to the international, you know... organizations such International

Romani Union or ERTF - the European Roma and Travellers Forum -, but they are mostly access by the so-called intelligentsia, who are those more connected with the political and have more political ambitions and... they might... the problems with the Roma minority is, at least in the case that I know best in Romania, are so numerous and the needs are huge... So it is very complicated to aggregate people who do not have the basics needs satisfied, to make them to discuss about, you know, political aspiration, representation and even to think more about nation, Roma nation or something like this. People... most of the Roma, not only in Romania but most of the European countries, they are in a very vulnerable and [...] situation. They are very poor, they cannot afford to think and [...] more on that. It is rather a struggle of the leaders, who are more educated and they feel that the Roma nation should get together and to demand more on their rights. But it is a very slow process and the fact that the Roma do not have a country, a mother country, to fight for their rights or to refer to... it's India or... to be considered that is where the Roma are rooted but, the problem is that... being a minority, a transnational minority, with no motherland you cannot [aspire?] more than be integrated in the society where you are living.

RESEARCHER: Yes... about this Roma nation discourse and so on... It's for two years that I'm doing this research in reports and so on and so forth. I have the feeling that there is three main legs where this `Roma nation` is supported or has its basis. I'd like to talk a bit about this supporters because they are together, actually. First to me is like `we are all Roma`, this idea that `we are all Roma` also reminds me a little bit this Gellner broad discourse. That's because a lot of scholars and some reports always bring, really clear, that there is a really huge diversity among all these different people that are called Roma. So, how it works with this idea that we are all Roma?

R: That's also one of the explanation that I was preparing to tell you. It's not only the social or economic condition, it's also diversity. There are Roma speaking Roma, and those who are not speaking Romani language. [...]. So it's a huge diversity... In Romania the Roma groups are gather historically and traditionally by the crafts, by the jobs they were... they used to work in the past. So this diversity... there is an attempt... a sort of nationalist, not very well understood, or a reverse racism - I don't know how to call it -, it functions among some Roma groups. There are some Roma leaders saying that those who are not speaking Romani language - as myself - are not true Roma, [ciacio Roma?]. So... and they cannot be representative for the minority. On the other hand... It functions also a sort of competition between traditional and integrated/assimilated Roma. So... this division seems to be more visible and seems to prevail, you know, when discussing about the Roma unit and something like that. It is complicated, let's say, for uneducated people with some basic needs which are not satisfied... they to afford to think or aspire a more philosophical level.

RESEARCHER: But in this sense, such a diversity only within Romania... if you talk about this diversity in European level is even bigger. How to label all these people as Roma?

R: How to label?

RESEARCHER: How to put all these people under the same umbrella?

R: Well, you cannot put them under the same umbrella.

RESEARCHER: This Roma national movement, this Roma nationalistic ideas or even the ethno-emancipation process... When you call all these people as Roma is not putting under the same umbrella?

R: Well... they are somehow put under the tree Roma, Gypsies/Travellers and Sinti, depending on the space where they belong. Sinti are in Italy and Germany, Gypsy and Travellers are more in the British/Irish part, and the Roma is the term which is mostly

used, at least in the European international level, as opposed to ethnonyms which are țigani, gitanos... It was... this diversity it was also subject of discussions, this in the last 25 or 26 years, and it was somehow regulated in international level by international organizations when discussing and... the Roma representatives and Roma NGOs... In Romania the term `țigani` has a strongly pejorative connotation and for this reason it was somehow promoted in a campaign against the anti-Gypsyism, we say anti- țiganism in Romania. It is a struggle, we have to... you know... as an activist, I'm a former activist, I'm working for the government only since last year, but until then I was a civic activist, a human rights activist. And it is a struggle... we have to work with the majority population mentality as well with its own people mentality because, as I told, it functions somehow sort of reverse racism... you know, against the majority population or against the assimilated Roma who are, you know, somehow, identified in a wrong manner... a sort of enemies or so, because they have more access to power, to resources, they are in dialogue with the political and governmental bodies, they are considered more partners for dialogue for the public institutions than for the traditional Roma, who are considered by numerous racists people working in the public institution as well, uneducated, you cannot discuss with them because also the language barrier. For someone who doesn't speak Romanian as a mother tongue it's complicated to get, you know, to get understood. And also when we discuss with the public institution, advocating for your community, you have to speak the administrative or technical language that the administration understands, so... this is also a subject of... or... factors that are impeaching... preventing to build trust within the community. But first of all I think that people are lacking, you know, having aspiration because they don't have the basic need satisfied. You cannot aspire to the next level, [...], unless you don't have...

RESEARCHER: The things that I'm wondering, since I started this PhD is, this idea that `we are all Roma`... I can talk in Romanian level, but even in European level, is based in two things: the Indian origins and suffering under the holocaust. Because there is no shared common culture about all these people that are being named Roma in Europe, there is no common language...

R: Well, there is a common... there is a common vocabulary which is rooted in Sanskrit language, which is common for all the Roma groups. I was witnessing numerous situations when a Kalderash man from Romania was fully understood by a Kalderash guy from Sweden, or from elsewhere. Because there is a... as in English, we don't know all the English dictionary...

RESEARCHER: But also I came across some situation... yes, a Kalderash from Romania can understand a Kalderash from Brazil, but a Ursari from Romania cannot understand a Kalderash from Romania.

R: Yes... that because they are different dialogues [dialects?]. But there is a core vocabulary which is common for all of them. And it is complicated in Romania, for example, because of the regionalism. We have the Transylvania... well, the Roma used to borrow from the majority population, from the language of the majority population where they were settled. I myself, as a Roma Romanian speaking, personally, I might not understand a Romanian speaking in some words from people in Transylvania or Moldavia... because I was born here and we have... I was taught the literal Romanian. I have some knowledge about people; because I was myself interested in know more words and their origin and so on... sometimes even people living in the same region cannot understand number of words from the same region. It is a matter... because the diversity of the Romanian language spoken in different parts of Romania, and Roma population has borrowed some words for all the countries... So, even in Romania, which are a big country - compared with Czech Republic, or with Slovakia, or whatever -, the

diversity of who are speaking, is somehow influencing the diversity of the dialects of the Roma. So... if you would like, if you would like to elaborate on that, you might discuss with someone... a linguist or Grigore, perhaps...

RESEARCHER: I know... I came across these two different opinions, actually. Some people saying that there is a core language that is shared, and some people saying that 'yes... there is not! There is some words that almost all of them use but, but is not so easy to put them in touch'. So, based in this diversity... ok, the language let's assume that there is some core situation, but the culture is really diverse. I think that what I'm trying to say to you, I will be really straight right now and please don't get me wrong. What I'm trying to say is: There is such a thing as a Roma nation? Or 'Roma' is a political project aiming to put such a diverse people scattered around Europe under the same name? And try to teach them how to be a Roma?

R: No... I think we are in the early childhood of the building of the Roma nation. There are a number of... you know, because of the slavery, at least in Romania, the difficulties, the persecutions and so on, the Roma lost the start, you know, historically speaking about the nations states in the 19th century... 19th century... sorry, I am tired...

RESEARCHER: The formation of the States and Nations were in the 19th century.

R: We were in the first days of the discovering and trying to catch up, you know, the lost time. There are some attempts and I was witnessing, at least in the last 10 years, since I am advocating for Roma, attempts at the international level, European level, to promote such a concept. I myself was one of the former executive director of the [suppressed to maintain anonymity], which was a network of [suppressed to maintain anonymity] Romani NGOs in Romania... I was discussing openly about the Roma nation. There were very few people discussing about this... and there are few Roma leaders discussing about this but, it requires a level of understanding and a political agenda to... to feel and promote the concept. For the public institutions on the mainstream political environment it might look very scary: 'who are these Roma who have political aspirations?'... you know, because they are afraid that some Roma might require piece of lands for create Romanesthan. There was such an attempt, I don't know if someone told you about the Republic of Ploiești.

RESEARCHER: In Ploiești?

R: There was a Roma leader after the Revolution who said 'well... we are going to declare independence [laughs]...' it was a...

RESEARCHER: I heard that in Eritrea, in Africa there was an attempt, but not here in Romania.

R: No... there was... people are referring to this anectodically. Maybe that individual fully believed on that... it needs to act like this... but they weren't totally prepare and Romanians traditionally... Romanian nationalism is traditionally focus on the so-called Hungarian attempts to steal Transylvania. Somehow [he?] was speculating [...] this fear of the majority population, in trying to get the attention of the political [received a call]. Perhaps this was his weapon in order to get serious or to be taken into consideration by people who are...

RESEARCHER: So, let me put like this: Using the Gellner idea of bringing to modernization, I have the feeling that there is this intelligentsia, this Roma intelligentsia, and they are trying to organize this national discourse. Mainly they are trying to bring Roma people, this entire people... All will not call them Roma so far, all these people - Ursari, Kalderash, Manush, Sinti and all these people with different names -, bring them to this modernity, this new world where maybe can take them out of all these social disadvantages and so on, and name them Roma. It was chosen this name, Roma, for several reasons. And now there is an attempt to standardize the

language, really strong, even though... well... there is a lot of different languages but standardize one, also standardize one history 'we came from India to Europe and we suffered under the Holocaust'. Do you agree with me that there is such a project? And in which stand this project is reaching the everyday people? The average Romani people.

R: There is such a project but is not something which to the regular people is aware of. If you ask many young Roma children or youth, whatever, they don't know their history. Even their families don't know their recent history. I'm not referring to the slavery... Romanian people are not taught about the Holocaust in Romania. So, it is a huge lack of information of the presence of these Jewish and Roma people in Romanian educational system, so... The level of awareness of both Roma and non-Roma population on that is very... it is minimum. It is true, in Roma, in Jewish and in other persecuted minorities this awareness degree... the degree of awareness is higher than the majority population, but the regular Roma - again - must [...] the pyramid, and the basic needs. If you're not able to escape that vicious circle of poverty you cannot...

RESEARCHER: And what is the place of this agency in this project? Even if is not reaching the average people...

R: Well...

RESEARCHER: There is a role of this agency in this Roma project?

R: We are a governmental body... with 25 employees. Here there are sixteen and in each region, region of development, another 8 people.. so... one per region. One people serving five or six counties... So you can imagine...

RESEARCHER: Is not a lot of people.

R: Well... So the Agency is... these are the regions... so we have one employee per region, except this region because... we lack a colleague there. So you can imagine, even though we are perceived as the Ministry of Roma, we are not in fact... Our role is to monitor the implementation of various policy measures in education, health... employment and housing. So, the public policies for the Roma inclusion.

RESEARCHER: But the very existence of this department is not an outcome of this Roma nationalist...

R: Well... it might be... it might be... because the Romanians in order to prove that, and now I'm quoting 'we are a model in Europe of the way that we are treating the minorities', end of quoting, because we have the biggest number of national minorities officially recognized here in Romania, we are 19 national minorities... Hungarian and Roma minority are the first... the two first minorities... I dare to say that Roma are more numerous than Hungarians, but unfortunately Roma do not declare themselves... their ethnicity during the census so, the official figures are fewer. Our role is also the existence of this... Such institutions is also the result of the fact that the Romanian government has acknowledge, after a number of years after the revolution, that the Roma minority deserve a special attention, in order to cover the gap between the majority population and the Roma minority. Historically speaking the slavery and so on have led to this situation of accumulating social-economic gap. So... public policies after the revolution were developed... the first ones were in the field of education, with special seats for Roma... well... in high-schools and universities, which are so-called affirmative actions, which are happening until now as well. So... there were also measures in the field of health, promoting Roma health mediators... a [...] without any higher education, but which acts somehow as a link between the community and the mainstream health public system, as well as the Roma school mediator. Again... [...] between the community in order to increase the access of Roma communities to the health and education services. And also there are other [...] that exist on the level of city

halls, or prefecture offices, the so-called 'local expert Roma' or 'counties office for Roma', which are somehow trying to help the access of Roma to the public administration. Because some of them are not speaking Romanian language or they are speaking very poor and they cannot interact with the public administration. Of course some affirmative actions might be temporary because... we are expecting that the local public administration, the schools, and the hospitals and whatever, to be inclusive enough so then we don't need the Roma service to mediate between the citizen, regardless their ethnicity, and the... but we are still in the process when such level of development is still low.

RESEARCHER: So, the last thing because I'm really happy that you received me here, but I don't want to take all of your time.

R: But if you want we may discuss under the skype... maybe when you come back we can make an skype conference...

RESEARCHER: The last question, and I don't know if you agree with this kind of thought: The Roma identity is based on the Roma origins, the suffering under the Holocaust and so on... But sometimes seems to me that the main base of such Roma identity is the anti-Gypsyism. 'Who suffers the anti-Gypsyism is Roma'... Isn't this complicated...

R: Is this your perception?

RESEARCHER: Sometimes... I came across with this.

R: Of course, we should have started to saying that we cannot discuss about Roma as a whole, you know, so we have to discuss about the diversity within the so-called Roma group. So, the problem is that Roma who are not speaking the Romani language or are assimilated, might share this feel. Because, you know, 'I'm not Roma, but whatever I do... I'm trying to behave... to blend into the mainstream society to meet the society expectation... whatever I'm doing is not good, I'll be also perceive as a Roma'. This might be a fact... a psychological conclusion that such a person might grow. So... but you cannot discuss... There are some people claiming that 'well... I'm a țigani and I'm proud of it', because they... and now the explanation is that they had internalized that much the stigma to be a Roma or an assimilated Roma and they need to satisfy the majority population by claiming, or speaking, or identifying themselves as the non-Roma [...], in order to gain the... to enter in the other people [...]. So, it's might be applicable such a situation to the Roma who are feeling oppressed... they... it is also applicable to Roma coming from mix-marrieds, I myself come from a mix-marriage, and many of us have identity related issues: who am I? Am I Romanian or Roma? Which is the most, you know... I myself I'm not enough dark skin to be considered... and I'm coming.. when I was kid... since I was a kid I was always asked 'are you Romanian?'... but all the questions were, you know, somehow... the question was perceive as the question was if I was foreigner, not a non-Roma. So I was very confused 'what is this question?'. So... this might also... have also an impact on any individuals identity, is a matter of assuming one or another identity, depending how are you comfortable with the situation or not.

Interview 5

Interview realized in the city of Bucharest.

Date: 23 Sept. 2016

Interviewer: Douglas Neander Sambati

Obs.: This interview was supposed to be carried out with the head of influential Romanian NGO related with Romani issued. Nevertheless, thanks a last minute problem two of the workers of the NGO replaced him.

RESEARCHER: So... I'd like to introduce... than I can explain a little bit more about my PhD topic and then maybe we can develop this talk. So... I use in the emails, usually, the word social movements when I make contact, because when I was using the actual word that I want, usually people started to run away from me... the Roma intelligentsia or the activists... so, that's the point: I try to understand how the Roma social movements, in a whole, they act like a nationalist movement. Of course that not nationalist movement in the sense that we have in Europe right now, these right-far... Le Pen and so on, but nationalist movement used by sociologists like Gellner and so on... a construction of a nation, and so on and so forth. Anyway... So it's why I sent those three questions, expecting talk with him [suppressed to maintain anonymity], but I'm pretty much sure that we can talk and develop something really nice. Because... the big target that I have is try to understand how it works this Roma nationalist movement, or this ethno-emancipation of the Roma people... and the big target of this travel itself is understand how the NGOs are part of this movement... this nationalist discourse. It's why... based in some scholars agencies like [suppressed to maintain anonymity] are really important in this process. So, long story short is more or less like this. And then I have these three questions. The first is how [suppressed to maintain anonymity] deals with the Roma people, that mean not the intelligentsia, let's call intellectual elite, I'm talking about the Roma people in the everyday life: how is the relation of the agency with them.

R1-A: So with the people with the grassroots.

RESEARCHER: Yes. Let's call the average Roma people..

R1-B: We call them the people of the communities.

RESEARCHER: Yes. The second is how is the relation of the agency and the European Roma and Travellers Forum, George Soros, International Romani Union... actually in this case if you can help me with which IRU is the real one... because I came across with three so far. All of them swore that they are the true one.

R1-B: I think that, regarding this question we can tell you from now that we won't be able to answer this much, or give much information about this, because...

R1-A: We can tell you a few projects which are granted or we are collaborating with some international NGOs, but it's hard to say exactly...

R1-B: So, more details strictly with this question you'll find out from [suppressed to maintain anonymity] and he can tell you the history and the whole vision..

RESEARCHER: Let's develop what we can, it's ok to me. And the third question that it is written there is how [your agency] itself see this process of ethno-emancipation or this nationalist movement... and then we can talk. So... let's start with the contact with the Roma community, how is the contact with them?

R1-A: Maybe we can... I don't know what do you know about our NGO.

RESEARCHER: Not much, really.

R1-A: Maybe we can tell you a little bit of what we are trying to do and our methodology, and what we want to do in the Roma communities. I can start... And she will complete me. So... we work since 1999, we try to develop Roma communities, especially through community development process. So, this means we do not offer services in the communities, but we try to mobilize people to work with the local initiative groups. And we try to use bottom-up approach... this means that we are talking with the people, we try to see which ones want to involve in the solving of problems of the communities, but as volunteers, as part of the local initiative groups. And then we start the facilitation process... this means that there will be some meetings with them,

identifying their needs, prioritizing their needs, trying to solve small problems... but they will solve the problems.

R1-B: They will be the... they will have the core action. The things that we do are give them some methods and techniques and empower them to actually take action. And... believe in themselves, knowing their right and possibilities, encouraging them to work with the local authorities with the local institutions, county authorities and so on and order to them make their voice heard, and learn how to do that.

RESEARCHER: This is in the Romanian level? Around the whole country?

R1-A: Yes.

R1-B: I think that last year we worked in more than 300 communities, or something like this..

R1-A: It depends. Last year, let`s say, specifically with this type of methodology, with the community development, I think we had 60 communities...

R1-B: We were present most of the time in [...] people there... Which whom we are in contact all the time. So we knew what it was happening in that specific community. We also visited other communities with some projects that we have, empowerment and education, mostly...

R1-A: That`s what we try to do, as the name of the organization. [suppressed to maintain anonymity]...

R1-B: [suppressed to maintain anonymity]...

R1-A: [suppressed to maintain anonymity]... for community development. So, this is the idea of community development.

R1-B: We try to have the switch of image from Roma people being considered victims, to Roma people be considered by the others and by themselves resources. We are trying to do this shift.

RESEARCHER: But... you don`t work outside of Romania?

R1-A: Only inside Romania.

RESEARCHER: And this means... educational... how is this educational process that you mentioned? Are you in the schools? Are you..

R1-A: We work in the schools, right now we have a program with the UNICEF Romania in [suppressed to maintain anonymity] this year... but last year...

R1-B: Last year we had 200 communities.

R1-A: In schools, exactly in schools...

R1-B: We had 200 communities and in which community we were in 2 or maybe more schools.

RESEARCHER: So, you bring them some possibilities to make them work in the community. But there is some kind of training?

R1-A: So, this part of community development, and we have a different methodology for de education part, where we go with some movies, educational...

R1-B: Maybe I can talk about this educational and you can have community development. So, on the educational parts what we actually do? We have two things: First one is the motivational/aspirational part where we have, and you can see this [showed the researcher some material], where we are trying to promote Roma successful models... Roma people who succeed in life through education. We work with UNICEF Romania, they are our main partners on this... the project is call [suppressed to maintain anonymity] and this is the sixth year that we are doing that. This is in English, good... So, we have some... let`s call it [products?], we have this [...], is called about us and here you can find the story... the stories of this Roma people... we have a short movie [suppressed to maintain anonymity], where some of them are in the movie, you can show you in the YouTube.

R1-A: It has subtitles...

R1-B: In English, so you can watch it. Where they share the stories and they say how they overcome some problems that they have... they were facing poverty, hunger maybe, discrimination and so on... So, we go in schools where most of the kids are Roma, and we go to each classroom and we ask to the kids 'ok... what do you want to be when you grow up?'. And most of them, and this happen all over, they say that they want to be a hairdresser or a football player, or whatever their parents or members of the family are, which are usual our low-paid jobs. So, after that we play the movie, where there are some Roma people who are journalists, sociologists, priests...

R1-A: Lawyer...

R1-B: Lawyer and... I don't know... military officer... And they are like 'is there a Roma priest? Are there more? Can I be one?'... or something like a policeman 'can I be one?'. And after the movie... also we take one of the models, they come with us to the classroom. You can see the kids like... when they see him or her on the screen and in the classroom they are like 'Oh my god, he's here!'. You can see all this kind of reactions... So, after that we play the movie we ask them again 'what do you want to be when you grow up?'. And they say 'can I be a policeman? There are any Roma policeman? I can't believe it'. Because all they know is this and we show them something more... that they can achieve more and they can dream, and they can be more that they were [...]. So... we are trying to...

R1-A: I am going to bring also a kit...

R1-B: Ok! Yes... so... we are trying to... we started this because we work with so many kids and we saw how they don't actually know how to dream big. And when some of the kids from here, from Bucharest, we work with, when they say they know that they are Gypsy - not Roma, Gypsy -, and they know that they are not allowed to have foolish dreams, like going to high-school or even college, it hit us! So we started this... So, the first movie is our first product and the book, and they we decided that we have to work also with the parents and the professors. So, for the parents we have a CD with Romani music, Romani musicians, and we work on the lyrics, and we wrote some songs about the importance of the education, the importance to let you girl, your daughter, to go to school and not marry her or not even think about marriage... you better think to let her to go to school and study... about do not let your kid to go to work but to go to school and so on. So, we organize this [...] concerts in the middle of the community, then we invite all the parents, all the members of the community to attend this concert, we give them the CD - [suppressed to maintain anonymity] -... you know... is the same message that we wanted to give the parents, like, 'you should believe in your children', 'you should believe in the importance of the education'. But if we from here, from Bucharest, go to that community and say to you as a Roma parent who thinks that he need to put some meal on the table tomorrow, and he doesn't think 'ok... I'll do something now to my kid go to college'... they have primary needs, they have to...

RESEARCHER: They have to survive.

R1-B: They have to survive! So... if we go from here to tell them the message, they won't hear us... they won't listen. They will say 'ok... you are fine, I'm not... you don't understand me'. But when we go with music, they understand the message... they feel it. They understand in a more complex way that we could ever say with words. And we saw the changes after that... we use music as a mean of communication with them... so... it was absolutely perfect. Because after the concert, the days after, the weeks after... parents came to school and talk with the professors to find a solution... they call us, they are asking things 'ok...how do I do that? How can I solve this? How can you help me? How can I help myself or my family?'. So, this was the first CD, which we went with in

the community. Afterwards, we did a second movie which is called 'Ilia story'. Ilia is a small Roma kid, a boy, and he wants to become an actor... after he saw the first movie he told to everybody, including his parents, that he want to become an actor. So we did a second movie, with Roma youth... we call them 'invisible Roma', because they don't fit the general stereotypes. So... We play this movie to the parents to show them that their efforts are acknowledge. And in that movie in which you can also see with English subtitles, there are these Roma youth and also some of the parents, that share the same issues with most of other parents, like don't having the necessary money to send you kid to school, but they did. They fought with themselves, they fought with everything to send their kids to school, and their kids succeeded, in return. So... they... the parents see all the stories and they cry and they say 'yes... it's like this, it's like this...'. It's the same message that we wanted to share, but in another way.

RESEARCHER: Only two questions came to my mind right now. The first: how is the border, in this work, between fill their needs and push them inside the Romanian society? Did you understand my question? Let's put like this... They have some kind... you told me, for instance, about the early marriages, the father who oblige the daughters some times and so on... So... how go there to tell them you cannot do this? Is not a process of Romanianization of the Roma? Like trying to make them more Romanians then Roma? It's just a provocation... I want to see where is the border between this. And the second question: It is in Romanes, right [talking about the music]? So... which one? Because, as far as I know, there is a lot of different Romanes... so, who decide that this is the right Romanes to send to them?

R1-A: Is the standard, the academic.

RESEARCHER: Yes, but who decide which the academic one is?

R1-A: [among some laughs]. This is the one which you study in Universities. We have... maybe you can talk a little bit later with our colleague [suppressed to maintain anonymity], she... her [native?] language is Romani, but she also studied the language in the university... so this is the language... she knows both of them but, the one which you speak in the communities and most of the time is not written, this one is the written one.

RESEARCHER: Ok, so let's go back to the question of border.

R1-B: Well, when we talk about the early marriage we don't actually talk about...

RESEARCHER: Actually this is only like an example... I meant all the process, for instance... 'go to school, and then you'll be successful', this is not a kind of white European way to think like 'go to school, is a good thing... to school and you...'

R1-B: We try to do it... we don't tell them 'you have to do this because we know better'. As far as I understand that's is your question.

RESEARCHER: I'm not saying like this 'you have to do this', but you are giving examples. In this way you are planting a seed like 'do this and you'll have a good outcome from this'...

R1-A: You might... that what... You might have a good outcome we don't tell them that's for sure... but this is what you have to do to have a chance to have a good outcome.

RESEARCHER: In the western European way of life? In a kind of a process of assimilation inside the Romanian society?

R1-B: Assimilation?

RESEARCHER: Or integration? Integration, assimilation, inclusion...

R1-A: It's different, we use the term inclusion. So, in this organization we work both Roma and Romanian [...]. For example I'm half [suppressed to maintain anonymity].

R1-B: And I'm half [suppressed to maintain anonymity], half [suppressed to maintain anonymity]...

R1-A: So... when we go in the communities we are not perceived by the others as being Romanians that tell them what they should do. That's why is important to have Roma in our staff, and when you go in the field to have also a Roma person, so it won't be this idea that 'oh... someone outside the community what should be better to do!'. And also we are investing a lot in talking with people and finding out their needs. For examples, with the early marriages, to keep this example, we have a small project... but we never went to the field and told them 'oh... the early marriages are bad!', no, we ask them what is your opinion?

R1-B: What is your story?

R1-A: What is your story? Why did you ended up getting married early? What do you wish for you child? So, we think that debating with the community and with the members of the community, all the subjects... this is how they will find their own solutions. Because they felt, the women felt and for most of them it wasn't a good idea marry at 14...

RESEARCHER: Yes, I'm not saying that it is...

R1-B: For some of them it was perfect! It was a good life... It depends.

R1-A: What we say is that, for example, early marriages are not an ethnic thing. Romanians do the same.

R1-B: It is not Romani culture.

R1-A: It is because of social status, education, poverty...

R1-B: If you go in traditional Romanians villages, you'll find the same thing. You'll find early marriages, and it's not a cultural trade or something like this, it's just as [suppressed to maintain anonymity] said, there are other reasons for that.

RESEARCHER: I read something about, especially in Balkan countries and a [...] discussion in Romania, some kinds of aspect of the culture which it doesn't fit anymore our modern life, they are kind of ethnicized in relation with the Roma... like the early marriage, or for instance something really... the wall carpets, that the Romanians used to use and now is like 'it's a Gypsy' thing.

R1-A: What we say is that we do not have to ethnicized things... when is nothing ethnical... We do this, most of the time in the public discourse, in every project that we do.

RESEARCHER: But I want to come back to the Romanes because one of the scholars that I use more, Ernest Gellner, he always... he said that one of the process of construction of a nation is the standardization of a language. So, they do not speak like this in the everyday life, but then you come there with this CD e give to them... is not a process of standardization of the language? Is not trying to create a standard language to them?

R1-A: it is the standard language, it exists, right?

RESEARCHER: But who decided that this is the standard language? That's my point... Actually I'm just provoking because, it's always some kind of intelligentsia who decide! Romanian was the same, Portuguese was the same back then, and so on and so forth... A small group is who decided what is the right way to speak and they need to force other people to speak like this.

R1-B: No... as long as I know... I don't have only... I don't have... maybe [suppressed to maintain anonymity] or [...] would know better... I don't know if it was a small group, if there were some Roma academics back in the 90s that decided [...] some people in the European level... international level... There wasn't a small group deciding, [...]

Romania or something like this. Roma academics, people from all around Europe... So, I don't know... I don't know any other...

R1-A: In some of the schools they learn Romani language and also in University, you can study in the Language Faculty or Romani or some other...

RESEARCHER: I will rephrase my question and maybe it'll become clearer: They are there living in their communities... so they are Ursari, they are Kalderash, they are a lot of different communities with different languages sometimes, with different religions sometimes, and different ways-of-life. Then you go there with the DVD and you say to them 'this is a standard Roma', and first of all, you say to them that they are Roma... because some of them are more concerned to be Ursari or... at their community level. So, in certain way is not a process... you need to understand, English is not my first language... sometimes the phrase can be not so beautiful... to be really straight, is not a way to teach them what they need to be... like 'you're not Romanian, you're Roma because you need to speak this language... because if you were Romanian we would not be coming here to give you this CD... If I'm giving this CD to you is because you're Roma. So, that's your language'... long story short, all this contact that you have with them - maybe not as a target, but as outcome - a process to teach them some awareness about their ethnicity?

R1-A: Of course. We try to aware them... I mean, we talk about them about their ethnicity, we encourage them to tell to the others but not... is like... we always tell them 'you're nationality is Romanian, but your ethnicity is different', so we all have the same rights and duties as Romanians citizens, but we are different in culture and in other things. And we have to be aware of diversity and also encourage them to be diverse.

R1-B: To assume their ethnicity, being proud of it... And say 'ok... I am who I am, I'm Roma, I'm a sociologist, I'm [...], I'm whatever I want but I'm still Rom. So, whatever we do in working with people, we are trying to empower them to say that they are Roma, to know what it means to them be Roma, and to become whatever they want and remain Roma. Because in Romania is difficult to say that you're part of this ethnicity because you... [...] stereotypes, and discrimination, and lack of opportunities because your ethnicity.

RESEARCHER: So, what makes a Roma Roma?

R1-B: It's different for each every person.

RESEARCHER: I know... that's my point! So, that's a question that I'm facing since I started this PhD two years ago. How to, when you make some policies or some works like you're doing here, how you decide that that groups should be [included] because they have some culture, they... and so on. Sometimes is based, in my point of view, more in a social situation... Sometimes I have the feeling that is a social situation, some people who face some social difficulties, and then they are ethnicized in this social situation. Like, you're a poor person, who is not accepted in this society, and suddenly you are now Roma.

R1-A: The public policies in Romania... you're right, the public policies in Romania are treating the Roma group as a social group. So, according to the Romanian government all the Roma are poor.

R1-B: That's not true.

R1-A: And we are trying to do different. And every time that we have the opportunity to say our opinion, is that we should not treat the Roma as a social group.

R1-B: This is why we came up with this [suppressed to maintain anonymity] [program aiming increase the visibility of socio-economic plurality among Romani population]. Because there are Roma people which are Roma and they are not poor, they are not very rich, they are middle class, usual people, and they don't fill the stereotypes. So... we

have this... we also have the invisible Roma week, which we do in April, from 1st to 8th of April... you know is the International Roma Day, so we try... in that week we try promote national wide the history and the present of the Roma community, we are promoting some of the traditions like clothes and things like this. But, in the museum, the Roma museum, we are trying to promote artists, young Roma artists... this year we had an art gallery, in the middle of Bucharest... for the first time in 20 years. We had a huge [tent?] in the university square, which is important part of Bucharest because everything happens there. So... we had concerts, with [...] Romani music, traditional Roma music, painters and artists, and theatres plays, and stuff like this. We are trying to promote all these events.

R1-A: And also to break the stereotype. We also have a campaign where we said `Roma people don't always listen only to Manele, Balkanic music...`

RESEARCHER: I know manele.

R1-B: We work with Roma youth, especially here in Bucharest, but also in other counties... So, at some point we were gathering here in the office, and some of the youth were [saying?] that they were here because when they are hook up in the bus, some people go further away from them and cover they pockets, and they are Roma students, they have a different colour of skin. So.. they were really angry that it was happening and they said `come one, I didn't do anything... I just went on the bus to go to this meeting. I didn't do anything, why did they three steps away from me?`. And they say `I even payed my ticket! I'm a normal person!` So they were really angry... so we decided to do... to react immediately. We made a list of stereotypes that they face and we went to the university square, because there is a place for revolution and stuff like this, so we had this kind of papers - it was actually a calendar which we found in the office - and we turn into backwards and tried to broke stereotypes. You know the one that you drown like a Gypsy? When you start to do something but then you give up?

RESEARCHER: I see...

R1-B: You drowned yourself to the shore like a Gypsy. It's a very popular Romanian saying. So... we did something like `we didn't drown raw to the shore like a Gypsy, I took swimming lessons!`. Or `I don't eat letter, I study them!`. It was a Roma student of foreign language faculty... Or things like `I don't shake my belly or my ass, I go to school!`. Or `I don't have carpets on the wall, I have paintings!`, like everyone else. Or, there were two friends, a Roma girl and the Romanian girl and they did a photo together and said `Madalina, 21 years-old student and Andreea, 21 years-old also student, a Roma and a Romanian`, and they were best friends. Or, I also did a photo with my cousin, she's brunette, with dark skin, long hair... I'm whiter, blonde and with blue eyes. And we also did a photo and we said `We are family`... yes, stuff like this. We took, like, ten photos like this and we posted on Facebook and that was it. It went viral, like really viral, like 200.000 shares and even today... this took place two years ago, something like this... even today they share de photos and we have comments, stuff like this. The press exploded, they called the children to TV shows, to the news media and ask them about the campaign and stuff like this. All the... you know the websites that make fun and humour and bla bla bla, they also took the photos and replace the text that we did with other stereotypes. It was really fun! We did it because we want to break stereotypes and to show people that not all Roma are the same. And they are a bit blind, because all of they see is the beggar in the corner, which they assume that it's Roma - even if it's not...

R1-A: Or the thieves in the bus...

R1-B: Or thieves in the bus or... if you see a person with a darker skin or something like this in the bank or in the supermarket, they are treated less nicely. But you don't know if

that person is maybe a doctor or something like this... They don't ever think that they are Roma people who could actually be professors, or doctors, or priests.

R1-A: And even when they know, they said 'that's an exception!'

R1-B: Or they say 'yes, but you're not like them, you're not like the others'. We are preparing now a theatre play which telling [...] the relationship between a Roma person, who do not fit the stereotypes as image, and these people friends, where they made all kind of jokes about Roma people with Roma friends near to them, so... it happens a lot and you have to react... and people, actually... when my friends say that they know that all the Roma people keep a horse in the living room and I say 'well, I don't!', they say 'oh... you're not like that! [...] you're not even Roma, you're blonde!'... 'Ok.. wait a second!'. So, this happens a lot and as [suppressed to maintain anonymity] said... people when they see an invisible Roma, when they see a person who succeed through education or... he doesn't steal or... he or she works, and they live in a common apartment or whatever, and they don't like in a big house with... I don't know how to say in English...

RESEARCHER: the statues and so on...

R1-B: Or they don't live in a poor house... they are... I'm [...] to say middle class, but they have... They don't see them as a Roma, because they know either the poor people or the very wealthy people. Because that's is what the media shows. At least in Romania they have... they show the very poor ones...

R1-A: Or the luxurious marriages...

RESEARCHER: I saw this program...

R1-B: Do you know the TV Show 'My Big Fat Roma Wedding'... no, 'My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding'.

RESEARCHER: I know the program. I was in a conference there was a girl presenting about them... this specific program.

R1-B: You also will find... I have a paragraph in the book, which the Roma priest said that in his church he often hears that the women who come to his church say that they cannot listen to the [...] because there are Gypsy person buying candles, and gossiping and stuff like this, and Gypsy person should die and they should not be allowed to go to church, and maybe the government should make a church only to Roma people. And he said something that 'I hope they know that then they kiss a Gypsy hand... that they know that he is a Gypsy and actually a Gypsy is praying for their loved ones and their [...] ones', something like this... is a very nice [...].

RESEARCHER: I know... I think is really interesting all that you're talking, because then we reach a point... so... [be] Roma is not [be] part of the stereotype. Roma is not a social condition. Roma is also not a cultural condition, because otherwise you cannot... there is a lot of different kind of Roma, even though some Roma who live in a middle class - I will use this word but please understand the nuances - and they are quite assimilated. Is a word that I don't like it, I cannot have a better right now... or integrated... but assimilated in the Romanian society. So, what make a Roma Roma? How do you know that you are going to a community which needs you and they are not poor Romanians, but they are Roma? Or in the opposite? So... you need to go to a community, the community need some help in education, so on and so forth. So... how do you know that they are Roma and they are not, I don't know... poor Romanians?

R1-A: First of all, people are asked in the national census about their ethnicity. So... some of the people express themselves as being Roma. According to our national census, the last one was in 2011, we have 600.000 Roma in Romania. But most of them wouldn't say that they are Roma and this is also... we think... one of the answers is because the person who is doing the census, doesn't seem trustful so you don't want to

say that you're Roma because he'll laugh, he'll say something bad about you... and he'll feel...

RESEARCHER: I see, to avoid the prejudgement, some violence...

R1-A: Yes. And it is also about the history of the Roma holocaust. Where, especially old person, don't feel safe saying they are Roma, because once... like... some years ago when they said that they were Roma they were... it was not very good for them. This is why most of the people do not say they are Roma. But, turning back to your question, so we are also looking in the national census result to see the percentage of Roma and also you usually know who is the Roma leader there. And also in the city hall they know the percentage of Roma, because they have to declare it when you apply for projects, you have to know that percentage even if is not according to the national census. But, usually when we go to a community, it is because we have worked there before and we know that they are Roma people or because we go there for the first time and we just go and talk with the people on the street. Or we know someone there, a group of people, a local NGO, someone who is Roma and can go with us in the community and, again, we talk with them.

RESEARCHER: They know that they are Roma or they know that they are Ursari, Kalderash and so on and so forth, and then you come with this Roma identity on them?

R1-A: It depends. From my experience, when I was in the field, this Kalderari, Ursari, whatever... they feel themselves as Roma...

RESEARCHER: Roma or țigani?

R1-A: It depends.

R1-B: It depends on how much interaction with the Roma movement they had or the level of education...

RESEARCHER: That's my point actually.

R1-A: Probably most of them who are not involved in projects and didn't go to school would say țigani.

RESEARCHER: I don't think that it's the same thing.

R1-B: It's not.

R1-A: We believe that is not the same thing.

RESEARCHER: I don't think that automatically change... I mean... like 'I consider myself a țigani, I say to the people that I am a țigani and now I tell the people that I am Roma...'. I don't think that is a change only of word, but I think that it's a change of awareness about their ethnicity.

R1-A: Exactly.

RESEARCHER: And in this process of changing on the awareness of the ethnicity, if [your agency] has some role on this.

R1-B: Now I think that we can start to talk about what we are doing regarding this issue. So... years before we suit the Romanian Academy because in the national dictionary they would say that Gypsy is a person with a bad behaviour, lazy with [...]... I don't know... 'we are not working, we don't go to school' and so on. So we suit them and we won, and they changed the definition. Now we can see Roma, is the national minority and so on. So, after that when we go in the schools we have, again, we do this... we have here țigani and we have here Roma [she's doing a sort of a board in a sheet]. And we ask to the kids to tell us the first word that pops into their minds when they hear the word țigani. And you'll see all the stereotypes here... like... smelly, bad, does not go to school, listen of manele and so on... And then we ask the same question about Roma and they will say clean, goes to school, has a job, and they we say 'oh... this is the story!'. We studied in the national archives, we also founded the first Romani archive, where we have documents regarding the slavery period and so on, and we can

find the Roma museum in Bucharest. We ask them where this țigani word appeared and how, and when we work with the kids we use stories to explain the stereotypes, like... you drown yourself like a Gypsy in the shore; when we work with high-schoolers, or students, or adults, or professors we use the same documents what we explain them the difference... so... is a common level. So... this is the thing that we do when we are directly with people, otherwise we have certain programs that we are trying to implement, like the one now on slavery in the scholarship, maybe you can talk about this...

R1-A: So... we have that community development part, we have the educational part and we also have the research component. We have a scholarship program for researches who are studying the Roma slavery in Romania. This one is in a partnership, somehow, with the Open Society Foundation, so they are helping us with money for the scholarships, because this is regarding your second...

RESEARCHER: I've seen that George Soros is all around the place in the Balkans...

R1-A: Yes. So we work a lot with Open Society Foundation in Budapest. We have this scholarship on Roma slavery and right now we also have some studies on anti-Gypsyism. Maybe you heard that the European level, they are trying to use this word as a specific kind of discrimination and racism. And we are also trying to... we have a [...] study, that is financed here in Romania, on documents starting with the slavery, in the recent periods... on how this attitudes of the majority were created and recreated, starting with the slavery period and also on anti-Gypsyism, we are involved in a study that will be at the European level, it is also with the Open Society foundation. So we will have some interviews with the national actors from the institutions, from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Justice and we'll try to see how... what do they believe about the anti-Gypsyism in Romania. And we also have a project financed by a foundation in Germany and in this one we'll realize [...] the anti-Gypsyism educational kits for high-school students.

R1-B: It's not [...], but it's also... 'why do you want to be when you grow up?' is an educational kit for professors to use in class, they have one hour per week when they have to do social things, and have fun and do some other things, so... in the schools where we are working now we are trying to make a national program, the professor is invited to use this educational kit and they have here lessons...

R1-A: It's in Romanian...

R1-B: It's in Romanian, we don't have in English. So, these are stories about the Roma that I told you earlier, and there are questions and exercises, and they learn about discrimination, stereotypes, how to combat them and what you as [...] can do in their school too... some kinds of activities and some kind of this...

R1-A: But what I also want to say is that we are trying to inform people and... we want to make them aware about Roma history. Roma and non-Roma, both of them, most of them don't know about Roma slavery, about Roma holocaust... and right now we are working with the Ministry of Education...

RESEARCHER: Indian origins as well?

R1-A: Most of them they heard something about it...

R1-B: All they know from the media...

RESEARCHER: But I meant, you said that you discuss about the holocaust, do you come with origins as well? The Indian origins?

R1-A: A small part, but... because this information exists. So, most of them will know about the Indian origins but they will not know about the Roma slavery in Romania. And now we are working with the Ministry of Education to include in the history lessons this information.

R1-B: This is the books used in schools from fifth to twelfth grade...

R1-A: There is nothing about Roma slavery, about the Holocaust there is a small part.

R1-B: So, if you take any history book that kids have in school from fifth to twelfth grade... so this is a page of the book, this is the paragraph where they talk about the Roma holocaust [shows a small part of a sheet], in the whole book, and the book is like this. In any manual that you can find in the past 20 years.

RESEARCHER: It's better than in Brazil where they don't even know about...

R1-A: This is also about create the nation that you're talking about, it's important to recreate the history first of all.

RESEARCHER: Yes, this follow some patters... actually, for me so far I have the feeling that the base of the idea of the construction of a Roma nation, the assumption that there is such a thing as a Roma nation... I'm not saying that there is not, but this political assumption, this political project is based in three things: 'We are all Roma', in certain level is 'let's forget that we speak a lot of different languages, let's forget a little bit that we don't act as a group... we are all Roma'. Of course one can develop this, this will probably be a whole chapter because is a really sensitive discussion; the second one is the Roma origins, 'we came from India', what there is a lot of criticism when really good scholars say that this is really, really forced...

R1-A: That's why we don't say much about Indian Origins...

RESEARCHER: Even more... if there is one place where is even more pushy is in Romania, because of the time of the slavery. And the third situation would be like 'we suffer under the holocaust as a group', and this come really strong from Ian Hancock, to me he is the main guy saying this 'if we suffered as a group, if we suffered as *Zigeuners*, this means that we are a group'. There is a lot of criticism about this as well, because almost make a whole ethnic identity on the prejudice. What I am trying to say with this discourse, is a process of relabelling a history, right? Relabelling a history, relabelling a ethnicity. To take... 'now you're not Gypsies anymore, now you are Roma'.

R1-B: We never were Gypsies. That's the point! Because in Romani language I don't think you'll find the Gypsy word.

RESEARCHER: I heard that.

R1-B: So, I don't think that we were ever... we were named Gypsies...

RESEARCHER: But it was an identity which was accepted for several years.

R1-B: Imagine that you'll teach a kid, a child, that his name is stupid and he grows like that, and he teaches the others that their name is stupid. When they grow up and you ask them the name, he'll say 'I'm stupid', and if you try to explain to him that he's not he'll say 'you're crazy'. Imagine that happens for more than 500 years during the slavery, so...

RESEARCHER: I totally understand your point and I'm not saying that I disagree, but I'm talking now more in the level of a political project. So... 'you should not accept anymore be named Gypsy, because you are Roma' and the political implications of this. There is some kind of political hope that this will improve the Roma life... to be recognized as a nation or an ethno emancipated group or not? Or am I wrong? The idea that be recognized as a group it'll help to improve the life of this disadvantage people.

R1-B: Of course it will improve because if the pejorative and the bad attitudes won't be attached, that are now attached with the word țigani, won't be attached with the word Roma, imagine that the people will be more empowered to acknowledge and say that they are Roma.

R1-A: I also want to say that in Romania we also have the image of the movement of the Hungarian groups. That... they are very proud of who they are, about their culture, their language and their social status it`s...

R1-B: Way better...

R1-A: Yes. It`s way better than the... the Roma groups. It`s like... I don`t know... let`s use the word a model how to..

RESEARCHER: Yes, but Hungarians has a kin state to help.

R1-A: I know! We know this...

R1-B: So [...] prophecy... when you grow up knowing you`re a țigani, you know that you`ll fail. It`s really like this.

RESEARCHER: This word really annoys me... everywhere when I`m talking within conferences and so on. Actually I`m using the word Gypsy, I`m using in my work so far, but is not in my process. Because I think the Gypsies exist as a social identity. Roma is an ethnical identity and Gypsy is a social identity.

R1-A: We believe in something like this.

RESEARCHER: The question is: it`s always coming the idea of failing. Why they failed in go to school? And sometimes I think `why this idea that they failed?` Because if we started from the assumption that they failed, we are starting from the assumption that what we do is something that should be achieved, and they haven`t. Why are we starting from the point that what we do, what the white society does should be achieved?

R1-B: You return to the history, [...]. I think we would find the explanation in the history...

RESEARCHER: And when someone use the Hungarian example, I think ok... it`s a model, the Hungarians... I know that they suffered a little bit here, even more during Ceaușescu time... it was terrible for all people who was not Romanians...

R1-A: And still nowadays, their stereotypes and discrimination, but the self-esteem, the Hungarian self-esteem is much higher than the Roma one.

RESEARCHER: What I`m not really sure about is, to make the parallel, if the social implications of this low self-esteem about the Hungarians are the same social implications of the low self-esteem towards the Roma. The Hungarians were socially departed, deprivation of basic needs of life, because they are Hungarians as the Roma are because they are Roma? I don`t think so...

R1-A: There are a lot of differences and what we say is... one of the biggest problems of the Roma communities is Romania, probably in Europe is that they don`t have proper rights or lands, they never had it in Romania. And our explanation is that because of the slavery period, and because what happened after the slavery was abolished. When no one... you`re free but you have no land, you have no house, you have nothing. So, this is a problem that nowadays, in 2016, in Roma communities most of the people don`t have property rights.

R1-B: Do you can imagine after more than 500 years, there is still this problem?

RESEARCHER: Another thing that I`m talking since I started this PhD is that there is a parallel between what Roma suffer here and what the African-Brazilian people suffer is really amazingly similar in a lot of aspects.

[...] I will just make a last question, actually a provocation. Your starting point is that exist such a thing as a Roma people in Europe? There is such a thing as Roma people! Because sometimes I think that what actually exists is a people in Europe, there is a lot of different people in Europe, with different cultures and they don`t fit in any national states that current exists... and there is a movement putting all this people together under the label of Roma people. Do you think that is totally bullshit?

R1-A: In my opinion, the old definition of Nation state for sure it doesn't fit to Roma people. But I think that if we agree with the idea of nation, Roma people is a nation... in my point of view. They don't have a state, they don't have a territory, that is not a problem...

RESEARCHER: Not even a common culture? Not even a common language?

R1-B: There is a common language, it has different dialects, but it's the same language. If I speak Romani language in a dialect or the academic one, and if I go to another part of the world I will understand the other, with no problems.

R1-A: I have in mind the same... you were talking about the political project. The way in which Romania was built...

RESEARCHER: It's the same.

R1-A: This is how nations were created, we have so different cultures, the ones from Transylvania, from Moldavia, we have different dialects. It's [...] how you feel!

R1-B: If I go in the north part of Romania, I [...] understand. I mean, I can talk with them but they will use some words specific of the area, and I won't understand, for sure.

RESEARCHER: So, we agree that there is a process of creation of a nation? I'm not saying that is created from the blue, there is some basis, but is a process of creation of a nation?

R1-A: I think each nation was created, in my point of view.

[...]

RESEARCHER: There is project to put this entire different people living in Europe as a Roma people? With a standardized language, with a sort of standardized culture...

R1-B: Maybe we will find a better answer if we could give to [suppressed to maintain anonymity], and I think that it's better for him and for you.

R1-A: In my opinion yes, is a project... a political project, but I don't think that this is something bad. It sounds like is something bad...

RESEARCHER: No... all the nations were created like this! The only difference is the claim of the Roma intelligentsia that they don't want or have a state, the only difference so far is like this. Or Europe should be this state, but this is other...

[...].

Interview 6

Interview realized in the city of Bucharest.

Date: 23 Sept. 2016

Interviewer: Douglas Neander Sambati

RESEARCHER: So... pretty much, Adrian, what I want to talk with you are that three main question that I sent to you. Summarizing is: How you see the situation of Roma people nowadays in Romania, How your work is related straight with Roma people; How do you think that is the relation between the Romanian NGOs with the European Roma and Travellers Forum, the International Romani Union and so on, how you see this relation; and how you see this process of ethno-emancipation of Roma people. I want to talk about these three topics. I know that it is quite broad, so don't worry about details and something... I really would like to discuss. Because I'm reading reports, articles and so on and sometimes I think that this is too much separated, detached, of the discussions... so, what I want? It's discuss a little bit of this with someone who works on this.

R2: So... what I want to understand it is... I mean... you consider that it is important the relation between the different organizations from different countries with ERTF, IRU...

RESEARCHER: How do you see the relation of the Romanian NGOs with the International Governmental Organizations: European Roma and Travellers Forum, International Romani Union, Roma Nacional Council.

R2: So, from what I know, it's the fact that in Romania I don't know how many organization are registered but, I know that the number is very big. And I know that from this number of organizations there are just a few that are named like big organizations, or important organizations, like RomaniCriss, Amare Rromentza, Agenția Împreună. But, from what I know Amare Rromentza does not communicate with IRU or ERTF, or with organizations from European level. And, I mean, I think that the - I would not say problem - explication is the fact that IRU and ERTF are formed from traditional Roma, they have in their corps traditional Roma and I think that all organizations from Romania which communicates with ERTF, and IRU, it is Partida Romilor. Do you know Partida Romilor?

RESEARCHER: Yes.

R2: So I think that only them communicate with them. An important leader, Gheorghe Raducanu, he is a very active member of ERTF. So... I think that the opportunity to create lot of NGOs, also it's like one of the reasons for which at this moment we don't have a coherent policy about Roma.

RESEARCHER: I came across of certain kind of fight, between ERTF and George Soros. Kind of... each one has a different approach and people who is related with the Open Society is not related with ERTF and the opposite game.

R2: Yes.

RESEARCHER: Do you see this here in Romania?

R2: I see in a way the effect of this. Because, a lot of organizations from Romania are established with money from Soros, you know? They have institutional support from Soros. Paying the rent, administrative stuffs. So... but here at the local level, how to say, at this moment there is a very big fight between Roma Federation, established now - I don't know if you know something about this. But it is important to you to know that at this moment, in Romania, it's established a federation that is compose by Partida Romilor and the most important NGOs from Romania. So, this federation it was created to balance the Partida Romilor. But, in fact, there were only political games and this federation, that should contain the Roma elite, it does not have any real power... making decisions?

RESEARCHER: So, who is in the power?

R2: I think that [every?] organization has, how to say, a field, or a domain, or an area where it makes lobby and advocacy, and every organization has its own specialization or domain. I mean, we can say that they have power in that direction. For example Romani Criss they have power in justice, making...

RESEARCHER: Human rights?

R2: Human rights, something like this. Amare Rromentza in education they write to the Ministry of the Education about different stuff, Sastipend - it's a big organization - for health. So... and the problem is that at this moment we don't have Roma leaders or Roma activists...

RESEARCHER: In political aspect?

R2: Civic and political. You have a lot of Roma that are making some services in the place of the government.

RESEARCHER: Like volunteers?

R2: No... I mean, do you know about the European Funds in Romania? So, for a lot of organizations the European Funds were like... make these organizations do not be active but implement projects. I mean, transforming them from watchdogs in implementer.

So... if something happens you are busy with your project... If you have a conflict in a Roma community `ok... never mind, I have the project. I must go on` and so on. At this moment, I don't know if there are Roma organization active from the civil society, do you understand what I mean?

RESEARCHER: I think so. There are more active in a cultural way, to try to do some cultural aspects but in civic society, to help to improve the everyday life they are not so active?

R2: And to send letters to the government...

RESEARCHER: For this they are active?

R2: They are not in this way, they are busy looking for projects. Busy for implementing projects. So, implementing a project for a few months or one year, it doesn't transform in real that community. Because, if you want to see at this moment in Romania community that you can talk about success [improve of life], you don't have this. Because they are implementing a lot of projects but the results are not like how they expected.

RESEARCHER: Then, [suppressed to maintain anonymity], how you see this work, this `trying to get funds`, this `looking for projects` and so on? How do you see this connected with the ethno-emancipation process or project of the Roma people? That nowadays I see in two aspects: one group calling strictly `The Roma Nation` and the other [closer to] `let's give power to Roma people`. So... there is two ideas: one say let's organize ourselves as a nation, and the other say let's empower Roma people. How do you see these organizations, and what do you see in your everyday life, that's somehow related with these two discourses? Or you do not?

R2: It's just something about how the political actors decide: will we give power to the Roma or will we not? Because here is the office of the National Centre for Roma Culture, [suppressed to maintain anonymity]. And it is a structure of the government, but for a long period this institutions it was invisible. So... the ordinary people, the Roma, they don't know that there are institutions for Roma like National Centre for Roma Culture, if you go in a community, a traditional Roma community. People will not know that we exist here. Because the funds that we have are very small and we cannot reach to the entire population.

RESEARCHER: So, if you are telling me that there are no close connections between Romanian organizations with the International ones, it would be fair say that there is no such nationalist discourse within Romania? This transnational discourse, transterritorial discourse, that International Romani Union supports since the 70s...

R2: Like creating a Romanesthan or something like this?

RESEARCHER: Yes, `where there is a Roma, is the Roma nation`, `we are a European minority`, `we should be recognized as a nation`, these discourses are not very strong in the everyday life in the NGOs.

R2: No. It was this, it was an important discourse in the time of Nicolae Gheorghe. So... I'm not sure but he is one of the leaders of this idea, of creating for Roma a European minority. But, for few years the discourse it that we should make from Roma active citizens in Romania.

RESEARCHER: So, more in a national level?

R2: Yes, yes...

RESEARCHER: But even though, treating Roma as a group. One group. Because what I'm trying to provoke right now is something that came to me. Because when these activists say about Roma nation - ERTF and specially IRU -, I have always the feeling that there is a problem there: because they always treat Roma as a single people, a single nation. And then when we go to other approaches, we see that usually there is no

the same language, there is no a shared culture... the only thing that they share is the anti-Gypsyism. So, the question that I'm trying to do but a little bit soft is: there is such a thing as a Roma nation in this sense? Or it is more a political project?

R2: In my opinion... do you refer to the efforts of the organizations of Romania if they have such a project or if the ordinary people, if they have such aspiration.

RESEARCHER: Both. Is fair to say that the average people they do not care about this, right? In the communities they do not think about Roma as group, or they do?

R2: I think the only NGO from Romania that think in this way is Amare Rromentza. There are some ideas in this way ` what beautiful would be to have our own state!`.

RESEARCHER: Really? They talk about this?

R2: Yes, but only in their philosophy. But in fact, when they implement projects and so on...

RESEARCHER: But there is some certain belief that there is one standardized Romanes, for instance? There is such a thing?

R2: Yes. There is...

RESEARCHER: But who decide which one is the standard Romanes?

R2: It's a... in Romania, it's Gheorghe Sarau, he's professor of the Faculty of Foreign Languages in the section of Romani language and he adopted the alphabet from one of the congresses that... one of the International congress... I think it is from the first congress it was adopted the alphabet, with theta, the letter and so on... So... It was a little bit difficult for the people that were writing in Romanes to [...] that alphabet and use it, but I cannot say that someone is forcing to...

RESEARCHER: You don't think that there is such a project to force, but force not in a bad sense, but to make `this is your language, this is the language that you should speak!`? Even though they don't speak that language in their daily life?

R2: In my association that is called [suppressed to maintain anonymity], at this moment I develop a project on the Romani language in which I collect different life stories with Roma from communities and different dialects of Romani. And I ask to the people to that is making the interviews to transcript them keeping the influences of the dialect, but to use the standard graphic. But I think is not a problem have something standard, because this will make from Romani language... will give to the language a little bit more of power.

RESEARCHER: But, don't you think that the only aspect that you call different dialects is not a political point of view?

R2: It is not.

RESEARCHER: Because, let's use for instance Czech and Slovak. Czech and Slovaks can talk with each other, they can understand each other, but they consider two different languages. And as much as I am concern, there are different dialects of Romanes that people cannot understand each other. So... don't you think that some kind of political approach to try to think [frame] the Roma people as a single people, diminishing/decreasing the differences not as languages but as dialects?

R2: No. I'm sorry to say, but there are not two dialects in which people cannot understand each other. Only utipoirori [?]. Utipoirori which is very much influenced by the Turkish language, it's hard to speak with them but we can speak. The basic structures of the language are the same.

RESEARCHER: This in Romanian level?

R2: In Romania. And I spoke in Romani with Roma from all over the world.

RESEARCHER: But Roma intelligentsia or Roma in the communities?

R2: Belonging to the Roma elite they were. But I had the opportunity also to speak with people from communities in Romani, in different countries and yes, there is a Romani

language. It's not like to speak about Romani language at the universal level, is not something like a political project, because in fact the language is the same; the fact that it is influenced by the contact language it's.. but... just referring to the language... I don't know if the ordinary Roma are interested in creating a Romanesthan or stuff like this, they are more interest in their daily life and...

RESEARCHER: And why this intelligentsia is interested in this?

R2: At this moment, I don't know if the Roma elite is interested in this. In fact lot of, at this moment, a lot of people from the Roma elite they adopted the assimilate. There are different approaches... Even the Romani language in Romania... there are lot of communities where the parents they don't want for their children to learn Romani language at school. Because they say that it is something bad, this is like a negative [...].

RESEARCHER: I've heard... do you remember Andreea, she was with us in Gypsy Lore Society last year, so... she said that in her community, near Bacău, they don't allow because they say that children will have this strange accent of Romanian, so it is not good to them.

R2: And not only this. I think that it's a... today I put my dossier, my application for PhD. It's about how Roma understand, and remains [...] their history here in Romania - because it was the only place where Roma were slaves five centuries. It's interesting because, if you speak with the people, they don't know nothing about this. The majority of the Roma population here was enslaved and... Roma are more interested in survive like family, like group, like... you know? So that's was the situation, and now I don't think that they have, the Roma elite, they really have a project for the Roma and, if they have, I'm not sure that Romanian government will let them to implement.

RESEARCHER: This project to construct this ideal international nation... you don't think that this project is so strong?

R2: No, it is not so strong. Because I don't know, at this moment, projects between Roma organizations from Romania and from partners of Roma organizations from other countries, at this moment. I don't know if there are.

RESEARCHER: So, would it be fair to say that this discourse of ethno-emancipation is more in Brussels, in Strasbourg then actually in the countries around Europe?

R2: I think yes. I think. I didn't analysed too much this but it is more present there.

RESEARCHER: But definitively there is this project to standardize the language and this is happening in the Romanian level?

R2: Yes, it is happening. For example, we translated our website in Romani, but we didn't use the standard graphic [alphabet] and we receive some messages `please, the website of the National Centre of Roma Culture in Romania, please use the standard language and the alphabet`.

RESEARCHER: Which alphabet do you use? Is the Latin?

R2: No, it is the standard alphabet. The standard alphabet is it with Greek letters with Latin letters, it's a mixture. But if you speak about Roma standard language, like a standard spoken language, it's very basic [...]. But is not too bad to have a standard alphabet, because it'll make the people communicate much easier in Romani, to write. For example, one of my projects in my mind is to write an article in Romani, using..

RESEARCHER: The Romani alphabet and language.

R2: Yes. Because people say that is very hard to write in Romani and to express hard ideas or complex thoughts.

RESEARCHER: It was never used in the everyday life, right? Some academic concepts were never developed in the language.

R2: It's a poor language, but I really don't think that it is impossible to write.

RESEARCHER: I wouldn't say poor, but a language which developed in the way that the language needed. They never developed in an academic way, so...

R2: Yes. The fact that the world, the Roma elite to write... it's evident.

RESEARCHER: But when do you have some cultural projects, which is... How to define a Roma person?

R2: The Roma identity?

RESEARCHER: Yes. Because, let's say... When some people ask to me 'what define to be a Brazilian?', for me is quite easy to say, because in America is like this: we were born inside the borders of that country, so I'm Brazilian. Of course, this was an constructed idea in me at the school when they taught me Portuguese, when I needed to sing the anthem looking to the flag and so on. But now I can say 'what is it a Brazilian?': It is a person who speaks Portuguese, we share some things. But as far as I'm concern and I'm aware there is no such a shared Roma culture in European level. There is such a culture?

R2: Yes.

RESEARCHER: But where you can see this culture? Only in the language that not all the Roma speak the language.

R2: No.

RESEARCHER: Where?

R2: It is like a Roma way of being.

RESEARCHER: But from where it comes this Roma way of being?

R2: From inside. It's from our culture, you know? I mean... There are some things that define you like Roma. If you know Romani language it is very good, but if you don't know... I don't know how to explain this, but there is a way of feeling like Romanes or acting Romanes...

RESEARCHER: But then if you take a person who is born in a Roma family, put in a Romanian family, and they will never know that he was Roma, he'll act like a Romanian, or not?

R2: At what age?

RESEARCHER: All the life... If he never knew that he was a Roma?

R2: Ok! I agree with this because I don't want to say that it is something in the blood...

RESEARCHER: Ok, but you said that it comes from inside, I cannot understand that...

R2: Comes from inside, I mean, because you learn in the family to have very special respect for the people who are older than you. If you don't have something very serious with the girl to do not approach her in the way... to be your girlfriend and stuff like this. I'm [...] Roma communities...

RESEARCHER: But and who does not live in the Roma communities?

R2: Who is living?

RESEARCHER: Who is not living?

R2: Who is not living? Who is not living act like a Gadjó. But even that he's not living in a Roma community, he'll feel much better in a Roma community. Because in the big society in Romania the pressure is very big on Roma, because people don't like Roma. They... in my case they say that I'm Arab or other... So, they treat me like with... they are more kindly, but for the people that are growing in a bloc about Roma, if you speak with them you'll see that they have like a handicap. Because they have friends, they have... They accept them but when is coming about their Roma identity, we'll not speak about this. Because the Roma identity outside the community is seeing as something bad, something about we should not discuss.

RESEARCHER: Sometimes when I'm speaking and talking I have the feeling that be Roma is less related with what is a Roma, but more related in not be the other one.

Like... be a Roma is more [about] not be a Romanian, it is more [about] no be a Czech, It's more [about] not be a Slovak that be a Roma itself.

R2: I'm not agreeing with this and I'll say... I'll give you some examples. I was in Italy, presenting one of my documentaries, so... I was invited by a colleague from the CEU in Budapest. I spoke with the students in the first day and in the evening, after the presentation, she told me '[suppressed to maintain anonymity], you don't have Roma shoes!'. And I asked 'why?'. 'Because you're just like a Gadjó, and I know that Roma have always some very beautiful shoes'. I said 'Ok... just a second' and I took from my luggage the shoes 'these ones?'. 'This ones', she said. It was like a, I don't know how to say in English, black but very shine. And she said 'Ah... ok, those are Roma shoes'. I mean.. I think that it is a Roma identity based on the... If some people laugh about that Roma have Mercedes, they like to have gold and so son... I think that there are some elements to define, but I will not define the Roma identity in comparing with or in contradiction, you know? For me, to be a Roma is to learn to my daughter Romani language, to learn her about Roma history and to try make from her an active person who researching or working for Roma. I think that Roma identity it is like any identity in the world, but the only problem it's the fact that the people speaks a little bit bad about it. But in fact, also in the Romani culture, you have customs like in any other culture, you have history, you have language.

RESEARCHER: There is one or there is plenty and diverse customs and...

R2: There are different indeed, from Romania they have their own history, the Roma from Spain they have another history. But when I speak with Roma from Spain, and when he speaks about their history there, I feel like I'm like a part... I feel like that he's sharing with me that history and also is like one of your relatives it was in prison and he's telling you how it was there, and you listen about how it was. It is like you were there... It is not... I don't have this idea that they are with their own history...

RESEARCHER: My point is: of course all nations are like this. If you think about 19th century France, probably they could not speak with each other inside what today is France... southern people with the northern people they could not understand. Germany one century and a half ago and Italy as well. It is not because of this that they are not Italians, Germans and so on. The question is: I feel sometimes that maybe there is some intelligentsia developing a broad discourse, where all the Roma people around the world can fit inside this discourse, and to create this idea that we are a Roma nation and this legitimize the idea this will improve the life of the Roma in the world. Do you think that this work trying to bring all the Roma together under this label - I'm not saying that it is a bad thing, and not saying that this is true or not, I'm not saying that this label is good or not -, this view will help to improve the life of Roma people in Europe? Do you think that it will? Because my feeling that is that this idea to construct, maybe will improve the anti-Gypsyism.

R2: I think that it'll gives more possibilities for the Roma elite to find more ways and resources to express themselves. Because you know that it is, at this moment, it was already stablished the Roma Institute.

RESEARCHER: The European Roma Institute. George Soros support and so on...

R2: It is also the idea to put all the Roma on the same umbrella.

RESEARCHER: I think that only the fact that you're using the word Roma and not Ursari, Kalderari, or Manush is an attempt to put this entire people together.

R2: Even that the Roma themselves they make some differences, little differences, when they say 'ah... I'm a Ursari and you're a Kalderash... ', but in fact we are Roma. When I speak with the Kalderash, I'm not different of him.

RESEARCHER: I have the feeling that all this idea that there is one Roma nation is based in this first idea 'we are all Roma', and then the second thing 'we all came from India', and the third thing 'we all suffered under the Holocaust'. But this idea 'we all came from India' is it not even worse, if you think that it is supporting the idea that you are not European? Because no one is talking about the Asian origins of the Hungarian people, and they came to Europe after the Roma people. So... why Hungarians do not talk about this origins but the Roma intelligentsia is so willing to bring this Indian identity?

R2: Because they are not accepted. I mean... I will not speak about Roma identity in an opposition of other identities, but it's impossible to speak about Roma identity without take in consideration the anti-Gypsyism. In 2007, I participate of the elaboration of the Sociological Report about the Roma Self-esteem. So... There are people who are suffering very much, they hide that they speak Romani or they want to be... is like an illness, they want to be white, they want to... It's... Because I was raised in this way 'it's good to be a Roma, for you it is the most beautiful thing that happened in your life, because you were born as a Roma', so my self-esteem was very strong. But there are cases in which the family does not know how to raise the self-esteem of the children and this is very hard for the families which are separated from the community. Because they'll have Gadje neighbours... The Roma identity it'll be something more, how to say... like a label and not like a culture heritage. Because who someone is saying 'ok... I'm English', I will [...] from the fact that he's coming from a country and... you know... when you say 'I'm a Roma', the first thing that it is... you'll try to impress the person: 'I'm a smart Roma... I'm a brave Roma... I'm a rich Roma...', do you know? It is something... it is not enough to be a Roma, you must a Roma sociologist, a Roma artist, a Roma...

RESEARCHER: I saw someone talking about this but not about professions, but the same... that the Roma identity is necessary... it is happening something... 'I'm a Romanian Roma... I'm a Hungarian Roma...'. They always need to be supported not only by this, but also supported by the national status.

R2: I don't know... I'm not to agree with this because I'm not defining myself 'I'm a Romanian Roma!'. No! I'm just a Roma. If I am in the middle of Roma of different countries I will not say... when I present myself I will not say 'I'm a Romanian Roma', I'm Roma. I don't know how was this situation for me five or six years ago, I don't know...

RESEARCHER: We are always changing, right? I usually make this talk with people and I usually say that I became ten times or even twenty times more Brazilian when I came to Prague.

R2: Last evening, I was thinking that for me it was very interesting to be born in Romania. Because here you have, it is the only place I think, where you have this all groups of Roma people and also this contact with the Balkans but also with the occidental culture and way of thinking. So... but, for long period this... It's obvious that also the people are changing very much and they tend to become more uniform without too much look to elements to define them in a...

RESEARCHER: But normal this is a process which came up to bottom, right? A group which try to uniformalise this?

R2: I don't know. Because I'm a Jehovah Witness, this is my religion, so in every week I preach and I go in Roma communities. So... I see Kalderash woman driving cars with a lot of horses and... so... they use much better than me the smartphone and so on and no one came to them and tell them 'ok... please be more modern, let you wife to take driving lessons'. No, it was own decision to do this. Because, from the Roma elite,

intelligentsia.... I don't know if they really consult the communities, I don't know how much they are connected...

RESEARCHER: But the work of the NGOs in the communities does not serve as this media. Because there is a Roma intelligentsia here that is doing some things, then have the work of the NGOs to reach there. Like yesterday I was talking with the people in [suppressed to maintain anonymity] and they have this: they go to the places to discuss about the possibility that they have to study and different situations... 'hey... you can study, you don't need to be like this, you can study and you can be a priest, you can be something...' , is this not already a way to up-to-bottom, although the [suppressed to maintain anonymity] claims that it is bottom-up, is it not a way to teach them to do what the intelligentsia think what is the better way to do?

R2: It is, but it's like some case studies this...

RESEARCHER: And I'm not saying that it is a bad thing, I'm just saying that it is a process.

R2: It is a process. I can agree with this, but what I want to say is the fact that there are a lot of communities in Romania, where the Roma NGOs or other NGOs they didn't get there with any projects. So, I think the [...] Roma communities can connect with the phenomena of the globalization and so on, without the intermediation of the other actor, like NGOs and so on.

Interview 7

Interview realized in the city of Sofia.

Date: 25 Sept. 2016

Interviewer: Douglas Neander Sambati

RESEARCHER: First thing that I could ask you how is the situation of the Romani people here in Bulgaria? Second thing it would be: how is the Roma intelligentsia in Bulgaria? Third thing how is the relation between this Roma intelligentsia, the local NGOs and the International ones? And the fourth thing, but then we leave to later and so on, is how do you see this ethno-emancipation process or nationalist process. So... we can start, if you don't mind, with 'how is the situation of the Roma people here'..

B: ok... [there was a small talk about a message inside a biscuit]. So, the situation of Roma... I assume you mean not only the situation of the Roma today, but the last maybe 20 or 25 years after the so-called transition. Or even before, I don't know!

RESEARCHER: We can start from the transition...

B: Because the situation of Roma before the transition is also an interesting topic. Here in the post-communist country, so-called, the situation of the Roma in the Balkan countries, in the post-totalitarian countries... So, I can start from the transition point, this is the end of 1989, when the so-called democratic revolutions took place here in this Region, Central and Eastern Europe... How the Roma accepted these changes? I can say that the Roma accepted these changes as an opportunity to do what was not done during the socialism. The period of the socialism, you know, is the period between 1944 and 1989; this is period which we call socialism. So, what it was not done during the Socialism ... the government, during the prevailing part of the Socialism didn't give us the right to express our identity, in general. Actually in the beginning of this period (1944-1953) it was in the opposite side: the government very much stimulated the minorities to express their identity... like the Turks, the Roma, the others. Then in the period of 1953 to 1983, it was, I would say, a mild period... not that much pushing the ethnic identity, but also having a lot of positive policies on Roma, by the Government... for employment, for education, in the sector of education and in the sector of employment it was... and even in the sector of housing. So, in these three sectors I

would say that there were a lot of positive measures towards Roma. In the last period, in the so-called revival process - 1985 to 1989 - changing the names, forcefully changing the names, and stopping... not giving the rights to express ethnic identity. It was a process mainly directed to the Turks, let me express this, these measures were mainly against the Turks, but also Roma. The Roma were not the first target of these policies, but also Roma. Just in quotations, or in brackets, the Turks accepted these measures with changing the names, changing the names it means from Arabic names to Christian names. Which it was policies not only under the communist government, but also before the communism... from the late 19th century started policies of this type... to change the name of the, I think, Turks and also [...] Roma... Especially those who had Arabic names, or Roma names. By the way, my father also, he had changed name. [suppressed to maintain anonymity]. So, I would say that this period, the socialist period, it was controversial. From one side policies towards Roma had positive effects in the sphere of employment, especially in the sphere of employment, it was a very successful period. In the sphere of the education, even in the sphere of housing. Almost half of the Roma lived in a mixed neighbourhood, [...]... which was a success. In the same time we had these policies of stopping... somehow repressing ethnic identity, especially in the last five years of the period. That's why I want to say that in the socialist period it was a controversial situation: from one side we had positive measures, from other side we had negative measures. I'm not from these group of people who totally... who wants totally to mark the period in a negative way. I think we need a more detailed view for this period, because if we don't see the positive measures it's not good for future discussions. I think that in the future discussions we need to take into consideration both sides: positive sides and negatives sides. So, in order to do not repeat the mistakes and in order to continue the positive policies. Because, for example, in the sphere of the education, in 1945, we start with 80% of illiteracy among Roma, according to the official statistics, and in 1989 we finished with 11% of illiteracy, only the old people, the very old people. I mean, all the young people, in 1989, were literate, which I would say that it is a considerable achievement. Also, we had 100% of employment, this is a very important lesson because now - I'll come to the situation now -, now we had a widespread understanding that Gypsies are lazy and don't want to go to work. So... during the socialism Gypsies were not lazy, because it was a type of economy that employed people... it's another discussion, the economy... the economy it's another discussion. But... how come the Gypsies were not lazy during this period 25 years ago? But now they "became lazy". Of course they are not lazy... the thing is that there is not job... there is no economy. But, what I am saying is that we need these lessons, to see both positive and negative sides. Coming back to the beginning of the transition, in 1989, to Roma this was the chance, a historical chance maybe... we accepted like this, a historical chance to express our identity in a free way. So, we saw 1989 as chance to say `yes... this is a democracy, now we have the chance to say yes, we are Gypsies. And we are happy to be this; we don't... we are not ashamed of being Gypsies`. We use the word `Cigani [Bulgarian], which is Gypsies, and then we got Roma. Do you know the difference between the two words?

RESEARCHER: Yes... I know... in some countries this difference is stronger...

B: Here we accept more the word Gypsies, Cigani.

RESEARCHER: I was talking in Romania and there is quite unacceptable the use of Tigani among the intelligentsia and NGOs, it's almost unacceptable anymore...

B: I would say that here only the NGOs use the word Roma. The Roma themselves they use the word Gypsy.

RESEARCHER: In Romania is the same...

B: Even I would say that in the last years the word Roma has a bit of negative connotations among the Roma themselves. Because if you say Roma `oh... yes... these guys with the projects for us`, you know? So, coming back to 89, it was a chance, it was an opportunity for us to say `yes... we are part of this society, we give a lot to this society, we work every day in the villages, in the towns, in the fabrics [factories], in these enterprises, in the agricultures... everywhere... we contribute for the development of this society and want that our contribution be recognized. We don't want to be ashamed for the fact that we are Gypsies`. So this was... this was our view...

RESEARCHER: About the opportunity in 89?

B: Yes. This is how we saw this change. We wanted to be in the mainstream of this society, we didn't want to be in the...

RESEARCHER: borders?

B: Yes. But be part of the society, equal part. So, the first organizations... if you read their programs, you see these priorities: `we want to be equal part of this society, we want our contribution be recognized, we want to be in the mainstream of the society, we want to contribute actively for the democratic development of Bulgaria`. I am saying these things because later on, later on, I mean a couple of years after this, this trend it was a bit changed. So, in the first years we have a very, I would say, genuine Romani movement. I was part of this, I was a young boy, 24 years old in this period, and my father was co-chair of [suppressed to maintain anonymity] one of the two big organizations.

RESEARCHER: What's the name?

B: The Confederacy [Confederation?] of the Roma in Bulgaria. And... and of course I was close to all these movements, you know... to all the discussions, I was a participant in the discussions, so I can say from a very direct view on all these movements in the beginning. It was, I would say, very romantic period for the Roma movement, the first seven years... from 1990 to 1997. I divide this period, this 25 years period, into three sub-periods: The first period is 1990 to 1997, which I call it `Romantic Period`, the beginning... all the time the beginning is a romantic period. Then the second period is 1997 to, let's say, 2007, 2008 or 2009 - is not a direct end of this period but, relatively is when the EU ascension happened. Let's call it 2008, let's put it like this... so this is the period of the EU ascension, this is the second period. And the third period is the period after 2008 until today, this is after EU ascension. These are three very different periods, this is why I mark them in three big sub-periods. So, the first period was strange, in a way, but I will tell from the Roma point of view. The first Roma organizations were created, which was an expression of the Romanipe, Romanipe which means...

RESEARCHER: The way to live, the Roma way to live.

B: Yes. We had the chance and the right to have Roma organizations and these organizations they had this view, which I just expressed: the new way of recognizing Roma within society. The Roma organizations were, in the one side, very unprepared... the Roma activists were unprepared, none of them were prepared... [we changed places inside the cafeteria]. So, the Roma activists from the Roma point of view, the period was, as I told you, a period of big expectations, of optimism and trying to find the exact Roma place in the society as active participants in the changes. I stress on this: active participants on the changes. Because later on will come the view of Roma in a complete different way, the view on Roma in a complete different way. So, Roma were... the Roma organizations were, I would call them, unprofessionally working, none of the Roma activists were... was prepared politician with moderate speech, political speech. But from other side they were... much more, how to say... genuine and clear in the views...

RESEARCHER: in the targets maybe?

B: Yes... for example I remember the conferences, we didn't have payment... payed road, payed travel costs, payed lecturers at all, you know? It was a discussion with the mayor to give us for free the venue for two hours or something. We didn't have travel costs, we go... went with our old Russian car, of course with our payment for gasoline. We went... sleeping in the houses of our friends in Varna, for example. If you go to Varna or in [Bulgarian city], we didn't have... you know... lot of money to go to hotel... you know... like this. So, it was a period [...] not professionally [...] strictly in a best way. But in the other side the Romani activists, as I told you, had very clear and good ideas and views about the Roma movement, in general about the Roma in the society. What made the change in the Romani movement was the invasion of... the big coming of the foreign donors.

RESEARCHER: George Soros?

B: Mainly western donors, not only him. He, but not only... I think he was not the major donor, because it was also Dutch money, British money, it was French money...

RESEARCHER: So when Bulgaria entered the European Union this money started to come.

B: Yes. It actually started a little bit before that, but the big change was in 1996/1997, when the government of Ivan Kostov, this was the beginning of 1997, came into the power [...] and his government definitively made the term pro-western orientation... pro-West political orientation of Bulgaria. Until 1997 Bulgaria was not clear, somehow, which way to take. And it was... you know... of course... you know... the Soviet Union got ruined, Moscow was very much involved in the wrong businesses, they didn't think about the former countries of the Soviet Bloc, so-called, Bulgaria was not stable, Russia was not stable and until 1997 it was not clear. Also European Union, Brussels and the others, they were not clear whether they wanted Bulgaria. For Bulgaria and Romania it was not clear until the end, whether the West wanted these countries or not. It was more [closer to] they didn't want. Anyhow, this is a geopolitical discussion... but anyhow in 1997, Bulgaria received a clear signal that it can start discussion with European Union for the EU ascension, the European Union ascension. And this actions marked huge changes in the society including with the Roma. I would say that until 1997, in the first period so-called, the Romantic one, we almost didn't have the government as an actor in this field, in the field of Roma issues... Roma integration... even during this time no one would call it integration, it was Roma issues, yes... Government didn't take part, foreign donors started to take it some part in 1993/94/95, but it was very little, during this time... It was an outburst after 1997, it was an outburst... relatively a lot of foreign donors started working here. It was both: governmental and non-governmental money. Money from Western governments, from European Union, and also from private foundations... as you said, George Soros, and others. So, it was an outburst. In the beginning... in the first period, we had more human rights organizations, like the Human Rights Project, for example... which made the monitoring of the human rights situation and the human rights violations against Roma. There was some other organizations, but this was the most visible one which made the reports, even [...] conferences, reporting about human rights violations against Roma. Then, started the second period, 1997 to 2007, [...] 2007 was in first of January, it was the starting point the European Union membership of Bulgaria. I don't put the end of the second period in first of January of 2007 because, I would say that... maybe it was two years after that when the people started the feeling that, somehow, these huge expectations they had... they didn't happen... They didn't get realized... implementation... realisation... they didn't get implemented, these expectations. I would

say that there were two waves of optimism in Bulgarian society, and of course Roma also. When I speak about Roma I want to say that Roma are not isolated from the macro society. What happen with the macro-society happen with the Roma also, in one way or another. So there were two big waves of expectations, of optimism: the first wave was 1990, the democracy... so 'Bulgaria joint the democratic world' so on and so forth, then went down after one or two years, when we saw that somehow is not a miracle and the democracy... who know whether this is a democracy or not, or whether this is effective or... Definitely it didn't happen in the way we expected. And the second wave was in 1997, the EU ascension period... process. We expected that somehow that the EU membership would put Bulgaria in the right railway...

RESEARCHER: To the future.

B: Yes. It would give the right direction, somehow... the EU membership. Of course that both waves of expectations somehow were blamed [?] after one or two years, that's why I told you that in 2007 started the EU ascension [membership?], maybe in 2008 and 2009 started the first signals for...

RESEARCHER: Let me ask you something: do you think that there is some relation with the world crisis in 2008, or not?

B: Yes. Yes, but I wouldn't say that this was the central reason. Of course that it had a lot of influence because until then Bulgaria had a positive economic trend and we almost didn't have unemployment here. Somehow the immigration a little bit decreased during this period... The period 2000-2008 it was the most productive period here. Relatively good economy, good level of employment, of course that the payment it was not good all the time but relatively, somehow, it was... you know... more or less good, and it was actually a wave of optimism. You're right and this had some influence, the economic crisis, but I would say that it's more deep, it's deeper... I'll come to this. So, in 1997 the big change was the coming here of the foreign donors, so they totally changed the picture, totally. Why? Because, as I told you, the Roma organizations were not working on the professional level, they had very clear views on what need to be done, but they were not professionals. So, the foreign donors came here with money, with payment...

RESEARCHER: From 1997 on?

B: Yes, in general. I told you that some came even before that, but little number. The biggest number, the outburst started after the EU ascension perspective. They changed dramatically the picture, in a way that started the NGO period of the Roma movement, you know? The NGO period was completely different in comparison to the Roma organizations, because these was professional people... they were professionals, more English speakers, more prepared for public discussions, more... also as I told you, these were payed actors, payed workers with offices, specialists, materials, with everything needed to work professionally. So, the work was professionally organized... the conferences were not anymore with our money, it was payed participation, with flipcharts, with good facilities and everything... with hotel, with payed travel costs, everything. I say this for both sides, positive and negative. Positive, of course, is much better when one is a payed worker, which means that he, he or she, can do the things 24 hours a day, devoted to this cause. But the negative part was that somehow the donors, somehow, imposed their own views. This was the big change and they completely change the direction of the Romani movement. So, if the Romani movement started with the positive program, you remember what I told you from the beginning - participation of the Roma in the new changes as active actors in the development, in the democratization -, the new trend was 'Roma are victims', 'Roma are a vulnerable group', 'Roma are marginal with difficulties' Roma are a problem.

RESEARCHER: A group who needs help, disadvantage...

B: Yes, disadvantage, this is the word. 'Roma are disadvantage'. 'Roma need special attention', in general 'Roma are not an active part of the society', 'Roma are not a productive part of the society', 'Roma are a group which need care, special care'. So, this was the new trend, the new line...

RESEARCHER: But, don't you think that this new line was an outcome of the fact that after the end of the socialism until 1997, the Roma people were put aside of the society? Because they were some kind of integrated within the socialism, they had the employment and so on. But then after 89 they were the first ones to lose their job, they were put aside by the real estate speculation... is it why in 97 they were transformed... they were not more possible active people but victims of the society?

B: No. I don't think so. It was until certain extend, but I think that the view of the foreign donors was not based on the reality here. I think their view was based on their experiences with other minorities in their own countries. For example in Holland, they had the experience with integrating the Marroquin minority in Holland. And they came here and said 'we have very successful projects with Marroquin immigrants, here in Holland. It worked there, so it should works here'. They said directly... or the Black people in America, or in New Zealand with the Maoris, or in France with their minorities... you know... like this. By the way, we saw that those projects were not so successful not even in Western Europe, you see now what happened in Western Europe. So... this was an indication that even there they were not so successful very much with these programs. But they came here and said 'look... these are successful programs you should do that'.

RESEARCHER: Yes... it was more or less make-up programs to make everything hidden, but do not really solved any situation...

B: And what was the situation? The situation was that very little number of us, I would say even in general in Bulgaria not only Roma, were ready to somehow have a heavy discussion on priorities and issues because... you know... it was a strange period, we were not part of the western world until then and... very little number of us were ready to have a heavy discussion with people, coming from the world of the democracy. We were somehow the "students" of the democracy and when come the "professors" of the democracy, let's put in this way, somehow very little of us felt that they have to discuss. 'If the professors comes here and say that this is this, then this is this'. And see... they were the people with the money... of course there was discussions, let's put it like this... I was also part of these discussions, somehow saying that 'look... yes we agree that in some ways there are Roma who are victims, there are Roma who are vulnerable, there are Roma who are marginal, yes... it's true.. maybe 10%, maybe 20%...'. But they told 'this is 99%', 'they are marginal'. It was very difficult to explain them that we are not marginal, as a group. Among us there are marginal, yes... as I mentioned maybe 10%, maybe 20%...

RESEARCHER: Even today?

B: Even today... But we are not marginal, in general. Maybe some Roma groups in France or in other countries are marginal, but Roma in Eastern Europe... we are not marginal. Roma were relatively very well integrated, as a mentioned... you know... what marginal we are since we were together with the Bulgarians in the same way? Many of us live with Bulgarians in the same way... we are part of this society, we watch TV, we listen radio, we send children to school in the same way... we are not marginal. Of course there are some percentages of us which live in the last part of the neighbourhood which are marginal, really... which...

RESEARCHER: I came yesterday by bus and I passed through a really poor area... I was actually quite surprised because I could compare with the poor areas in Brazil. And I was not expecting this...

B: I should say that in this period it is an increasing tendency. If in 1990 we almost didn't have poverty because, literally, 100% of Roma were workers... I mean all Roma were employed. And it was the situations when the employed people had, she or he, at least the necessary minimum for living, which means normal payment, social security, medical security, everything... you know... and it was a fact. And then all started to go down and down... the social level... Since the closing down of the enterprises... of course they didn't close down only for Gypsies, for everybody... So it was not a policy towards Roma. To close down the enterprises it was not... you know, some of the people want to show like that, but it was not like that.

RESEARCHER: In other countries, when I came across the same situation, they said 'yes... it was not against the Roma, against the Gypsies, but they were the first one to pay the bill'.

B: Yes, Roma were the first ones to be taken out from the... to be cut from the staff.

RESEARCHER: So, here was it the same?

B: Yes. But, you know... after... in the end of the day, they closed down the enterprise, you know? And they also cut the Bulgarians, this is the thing. I, as a Roma, I tell you the truth: it was not an action against the Roma. Roma, of course, were the first to be taken out, but the second were the Bulgarians in the same way... more or less. So, you cannot say that only Roma were cut...

RESEARCHER: And this was mainly after 2008?

B: Yes. It was only after 2008. Because we didn't have cut enterprises before that. Even during the first year of the democracy, were not cut... they were cut after 1997, actually. The first five or six years were still kept, more or less, the previous economy. So... coming back to the NGO sector, as I told you for us it was good, it was a professionally done job. From other side, they imposed changing the light. And the projects were directly to this, it was a lot of projects, but unfortunately directed mainly in this line 'Gypsies are victims'... So... for example in the educational sphere, it was a huge discussion. Whether support the so-called segregate Gypsy schools, whether to direct the Roma to the school - at least to have some school, whatever is this -, or to direct the Roma children to the integrated schools. So, I insisted to direct the Roma to the integrated schools. Because, maybe it will take me two minutes to explain you about the schools. So, from the socialism we had a very bad heritage... the so-called segregated Roma Schools. Almost 50% of the Roma visited the Roma schools. It was most probably... the view of the government during the socialism... that they want to encompass all kids in the school, which from one side is good, because they were at least literate, but from other side it was very bad, because the Roma kids didn't have chance to integrate to the macro-society... to the mainstream kids. And also these schools were special, with different curriculum, and the Roma kids after the 8th grade didn't have the chance to continue as the other normal schools. So... this situation in the education was very bad, and we wanted somehow to repair this after 1989, to somehow give the chance to the Roma kids to visit the normal schools. Because, from the one side, the Roma kids and the Bulgarian kids would start from the same level and from other side they'll have social integration from the very beginning, from the seven years old period, not from the eighteen years old period, when is too late. That's why we insisted very much in the integrated model for the students. But the foreign money went mainly for the segregated schools... because the most easiest is 'you go and buy

textbooks... you go and buy notebooks` and so on... and pencils... and you give them to the kids and say `we give to the Roma [...]'.

RESEARCHER: `We helped them`.

B: Yes, `we helped the Roma, we helped the Gypsies`. So, this approach we had it in many sectors. Whether to do something in order to something to be done, or do something which develops the community, which integrate the community, which helps for equal integration. So the integration approach had somehow... has its huge... the biggest materialization in 1999 with the Framework Program for Equal Participation of Roma in the Bulgarian Society. It was a political document initiated by the Roma organizations and Roma NGOs... It was the human rights project with I mentioned previously, Confederacy of Roma in Bulgaria, and the United Roma Union, the main three actors which initiated, this document I took participation myself in this group. I was actually the actor with who from one side prepared the Program, as a political document, and from another side made the negotiations with both Roma community and Bulgarian government. Because when we went with the political document to the Bulgarian Government they said `who are you? You are nice people, but who are you? Nobody is behind you, you are not legitimate`. Then we started this huge discussion, with the Roma community... we visited many different places in the country, we express this document for integration of Roma,? The program envisaged equal participation in the education, employment, integration in the housing sphere, to live together... very important points that are still actual now. If you see now the Framework Program you'll see that we didn't want the building of new houses for Roma, as many projects started to do this, we wanted legalization of the now-existing houses because 95% of them are normal houses, are not dwelling or... you know... We wanted also legalization because the main problem is that they are not legalized. Many of them are not legalized... or we wanted infra-structure with...

RESEARCHER: Because these housing projects, in the end, almost a hundred percent of the cases create ghettos, right?

B: Yes. We want in the opposite side, we want a de-ghettoization. So, with this document we got serious support from Roma side, more than 80 Roma organizations supported with signatures this document. Then we went again to continue the dialogue with the government, we had maybe... half of a year of discussion. After the Government saw a strong support from the society for the Framework program, in 21st of April 1999, they signed the document. So our view became a governmental policy, it was maybe the first and unique case, maybe not only in Bulgaria, when the Roma organizations got together and agreed on a priority document, political document. It was not somebody against somebody else but all of us pro something. And we were united to negotiate with the government and to, somehow, impose our view to them. It was a very optimistic moment for us because we, somehow, realized that when we are united we can do something. What happened is that, little by little, we saw that the government didn't have the necessary the political will for implementation of the Program. We thought... we were naive, I would say, to think that since this was a governmental document this would be implemented... they would start the implementation in a normal bureaucratic way... you know... money, people, institutions to be involved, this ministry will do this, that ministry will do that... you know? Nothing like this happened... they didn't even think about this. When we said `look! let's do something! This is your engagement, you sign it! It was the prime minister...` It was not something, you know... it was the prime-minister signature... They said `yes... but you know... you said good things but... B, you are a nice guy and you say good things but Gypsies don't want it... what if I do school desegregation, as you want, but the Gypsies do not want

this... the Gypsies themselves...'. Then what happened was that in 2000 I candidate and I got the place of director of the Roma Participation Program of the Open Society Institute, in Budapest. It was the biggest European program of George Soros for Roma...

RESEARCHER: In 2000, you mean?

B: In 2000... and the first important project it was the so-called school desegregation. School desegregation in two words means to direct the Romani children not in the segregated school, only for Gypsies, but in the integrated school where Bulgarian kids are... We acted through the NGOs because this was our instruments during these times. We were not participating to the politics and governments but the NGOs, and this was the only real instrument in our hands. So... when you have only one instrument you need to use it: 'this is the instrument, use it!'. So we started with these instruments, somehow to show the government that it is possible, it can happen, and not in the small group because, to be honest, the foundations prefer to work with two kids, with five kids... you know... like this... to make laboratory experiments here and there. So we started with a massive group, 460 children only in one town. In the town of Vidin [city in Bulgaria], with a massive project to integration of these kids. It was a huge discussion... before that we were told that... first of all the Gypsies kids would not make it in the school, the achievement would be low, it would be conflicts between Bulgarian kids and Roma kids, the Roma kid would start to leave the schools because of pressure or Bulgarian kids would start to leave the schools, to have the so-called 'White Flight Phenomenon', I'm sure you know that... Or the parents of the Bulgarian kids would jump against this process, or the schools would jump against... we had a lot of all these discussions... So, we made the process in the way that somehow we, little by little, all these... of course, I wouldn't say that it was not at all a problem, what I just mention. To certain extent it was. But when you have a good diplomacy, a productive discussions before the work, when we organize a couple of meetings with the Bulgarian parents, with the school authorities, with the school director, with the educational director in Vidin, for example, with the Ministry of Education... When we have very good job with the Roma parents, somehow to strengthening the motivation... Actually the main point of the opponents of the process was that the Gypsy parents would not have the motivation to send the children to school. I wouldn't say that all the parents had 100% motivation, some of them had much more, some of them very little, some of them in the middle... It was not an ideal situation, but actually we organized a good campaign to, somehow, to [...] increase this motivation.

RESEARCHER: And this money came from George Soros?

B: Yes. I was director of the [suppressed to maintain anonymity] at the Open Society Institute in Budapest... this was a funding program. So, the Roma Participation Program supported several NGOs to develop the school desegregation process. So, they conducted first the Romani parents motivation, then school authorities motivation. During the process itself, it was introduced the figure of the so-called teaching assistant or facilitator.. These were people who take care of the Roma kids from 7am, when the kids go to the bus to go to the school, during the schooling - but not in the classroom -, and taking children back to the neighbourhood. These were [...] people who were taking care of children in order that something bad not to happen with the kids, or if, let's say, Ivan or Petr have problems in mathematics... they help, they discuss with the teacher. If the teacher says that Ivan needs additional classes, then they organize additional classes, paid by the NGO. Let's say 2, or 4, or 8, or whatever, in order Ivan to catch up with the others, and this was very important for the academic achievements of the Roma pupils. Because, you know... when something happen like this... of course, many teachers would say 'this Ivan, take him out... he... is not possible him to continue'. But, when we

conduct these measures in time, when we help Ivan in time, then until certain point he'll catch up with the others. And the first years finished in a very positive way of the process. The first year, 2001, it was a very little number of kids who dropped out... 95% of the kids continued in the next class. We didn't have conflicts of Roma kids with Bulgarian kids... the kids normally accepted the new environment, so all the bad expectations didn't happen. We were very enthusiastic, very much... somehow we got wings after this success and we continued, little by little, we encompassed ten big cities like Vidin, ten regional centres, [names of Bulgarian cities]. Ten big cities, with the same process. So, we encompassed more than 3000 children and this process took part in ten years. During this ten years we wanted, as I told you, to show that this process is possible to be done. Because, as I told you, the main prejudice was that it could not be done `Gypsies themselves didn't want it...

RESEARCHER: `they didn't want to integrate in the same way`

B: Yes. That there is not parents motivation, that Gypsy kids cannot have good achievements in the classroom, that they would have conflicts with the Bulgarian kids... Anyhow... So... we saw that the reality, the praxis, show that all these prejudices were not true, and we started the new discussion with the government in order to all these thing be done by the government.

RESEARCHER: Sorry... just a [...] question: Meanwhile you were doing this work with the George Soros Foundation and money, where were International Romani Union, the European Roma and Travellers Forum in this context, or they were not working here?

B: No, they were not working here.

RESEARCHER: Roma National Council?

B: The European Roma and Traveller Forum...

RESEARCHER: They are from 2004, I know...

B: They were after...

RESEARCHER: But you said that it was a ten years project, and in this ten years...

B: No... in general they supported this... they supported the school desegregation, but they didn't take active part. And what I started to tell you was that we started the discussion with the government, because we didn't plan all this to be done by the NGOs forever. We thought that the NGOs only showed how it happened and the government, since they see that it is possible, to continue the implementation of the process. This is their job after all, their obligation... this is not George Soros job, this is the government job, this kids are not the kids of Soros, they're kids of Bulgaria. And the government... first they said `look... what is this segregation? We are not America! The segregation is in America! We don't have black people here... Segregation? This is in America with the Black people! Here we don't have black people`. Then they said `look... maybe you're right...`, because this was a large discussion, you know? They said `you're right, there is segregation, but it is inherited by the socialism`, which by the way is true... this is not new establish, but this is inherited. And they, little by little, started to come to our point of view and, in 2002, it was the first breakthrough, when the government - the Ministry for Education -, produced an act called the `Instruction`, to the regional directors of education to support the process of school desegregation. It was the first recognition, by the government, that, first of all, the school segregation it does exist and, second, that the Roma NGOs are doing successfully something which the government need to help out. Before that they only refused that the issue of segregation exists... In 2004 the Ministry for Education issued even a stronger document called `Strategy for School Desegregation`, from the Ministry for Education. In 2007 they included this process in the so-called `EU absorption [?] money process`... you

know... European Union funds, which support different areas , so... the government decided a special rubric from this money to be directed for school desegregation, it was called exactly in this way. So all of this projects I described were successes here, I would say that this was a success also internationally. Because this process here, and the success of this process, somehow gave impetus to the process in Hungary, to the process in Romania, to the process in Slovakia and in Czech Republic... where also segregation exists, in one way or another. In Hungary, for example We negotiated with the Hungarian Ministry for Education, Bálint Magyar, and he employed our coordinator for desegregation school in Hungary as a Deputy Minister for education. The Hungarian Government allocated r relatively good budget to conduct the school desegregation process. The Romanian government directed EU ascension money for Romania to school desegregation... The Roma Participation Program had also good programs in Romania. We had some programs also in Slovakia and in Czech Republic. So it became more or less an international process here, in these regions...

RESEARCHER: And it is still under the finances of George Soros?

B: No... it was ten years. We started in the year of 2000 until...

RESEARCHER: but until 2010 there was George Soros money involved?

B: Yes, yes.

RESEARCHER: And only... well... maybe is a stupid question but... Only money or also some kind of ideological support? Like... `If I'm giving you my money, let`s do it in my way`?

B: I have held leadership positions in the OSI structures in Budapest for 10 years: I was director of the [suppressed to maintain anonymity] for 6 years and deputy director of the [suppressed to maintain anonymity] for 4 years. When I joined the OSI, the predominant view was that Roma are a marginal group, victims, etc. I brought a different view: that the Roma have capacity and aspirations to integrate in society, that they have the talent and capacity to contribute to the development of the larger societies in which they live, and not just to the development of their own communities. In this ten-year period, I managed to put into effect this view about the Roma in the OSI environment. Moreover, in this ten-year period, this view was also introduced in and started dominating the discussions about Roma at European and international levels. Partly, this view has been developed through the establishment of the Roma Education Fund, the launch of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, strategic documents of EU institutions. My views about Roma were debated as well as contested by some organizations, as well as within the OSI itself, and it took hard work to defend them. However, as I already mentioned, the OSI was not the only actor in the Roma integration field, and the policies of many other actors in this field were not promoting this view of the Roma.

RESEARCHER: There are some discussions and some criticisms saying that today the ERTF big problem is that they keep working like this, with the Roma people as victims. Meanwhile George Soros and the Roma Network for Studies and so on, that culminated in the European Roma Institute, if I'm not mistaken, support another view, some kind of cultural emancipation of Roma people.

B: [Confirming with gestures]

RESEARCHER: What I would like to ask you now is how all these process that you are describing to me since 1990, here in Bulgaria... how these processes are connected with the project of construction of a Nation of Roma people? A transnational, transterritorial nation of Roma people?

B: No, it was not connected. I would say... I know about this.

RESEARCHER: All this process of a going to schools and so on, is not a process to make this people aware of their ethnicity?

B: So, first of all we go for the ground that we cannot speak about nation to illiterate people. So, the illiteracy is the ground of all the bad things... You go to India, you see what happen. You go to other countries were illiteracy takes places and you see what happen... So, it is irrelevant to have, in one time, speaking about nation and a process of illiteracy. I can tell you that even the illiteracy among the young people here, in 1990, it was 0% and now it is 25%. So, what discussion of nation you can have with these people? It they are illiterate... if they do not know anything. So, our view was that we need to be well integrated in our societies as Roma, not as Bulgarians but as Roma.

RESEARCHER: But, this is not a nationalist statement? Is this not a nationalist idea? Even though been integrated in the society, but as Roma...

B: As Roma means... look, let me put it in that way... Our culture is, of course as any culture, is a different culture in comparison with the Bulgarian culture for example. We have our cultures and differences. It is not a discussion about what they are but let's put in general. But, I wouldn't say that... yes, there are differences between us and, for example, the Bulgarians, but I wouldn't say that there is a cultural gap. There is no cultural gap. Because in the same time we are also Bulgarians, because we read Bulgarian, we know about Bulgarian poets, Bulgarian singers, Bulgarian writers, I myself... I'm also a product of the Bulgarian culture, because I'm sure that I have read more Bulgarian literature than many Bulgarians, for example. I cannot say that I'm not a product also from this culture, so, I share also this culture. And I wouldn't say that our cultures are so different. I'm sure that, for example, the Bulgaria culture is much more... so the distance between the Bulgarian culture and the English culture is much bigger than the Bulgarian culture and Roma culture, if you know what I mean... So, we are not that much different. What I am saying is that we do not have that big distance to cover up, somehow...

RESEARCHER: But and the distance within the Roma community?

B: Yes.

RESEARCHER: Because as I'm aware, there are some big differences between different groups that... We are calling all of them Roma, but there are big differences between them.

B: Yes.

RESEARCHER: So when you go with these projects and... to these schools and so on, which Roma identity you support? Because you need to choose one Romani identity to support, to discuss... and among all these different Roma cultures, how to choose... how to standardize one of them?

B: No, we don't need to standardize them. And I wouldn't say which Roma identity to choose, because is not the issue. As I told you, we supported this participative approach, participative approach. Which means what? Which means that `yes... we feel ourselves equal citizens, we feel ourselves equally gifted, we don't feel ourselves marginal not equally gifted, stupid or whatever... we feel that we are as much intelligent as the Bulgarians and we want to be respected in that way... yes, we are Gypsies, but we are also Bulgarians and we want together to build the democracy we want together to build the society, the new society...`, so this is the view, this is the identity! Which does not see the Bulgarians as enemies, it doesn't see anybody as enemies, but which see Roma as being from one side Roma, as bearers of our culture, from other side as one ethnic group which together with the other build the new society.

RESEARCHER: Yes, but how to organize this identity as Roma? If there is so many different Roma groups?

B: No, there is not so many different, there are not? I told you, the difference is not big.. The difference... among Roma there are differences, among us... yes, there are Kaleigi, Kalderash, Resetari...

RESEARCHER: Some authors even say that even the Romanes spoken between these people are not understandable.

B: No, it is understandable... it is different, but it is understandable. I understand all the dialects, I speak one dialect but I understand the others. For me is different, is hard to understand for example, some Hungarian dialects because they put some Hungarian words. And if you don't speak Hungarian you do not understand. So, in other words, the identity issue it was not an issue, because we do not have problems with identity, you know? And this is a main thing: we never had problems with identity, it was an issue to people who had problem with identity. Or it was an issue to people who wanted somehow to change the perspective to another way. Because ... what does it mean to construct a nation? A nation is built in a natural way, not in constructing nation. Nation cannot be constructed by somebody in a laboratory, in my view... nation is created in centuries and centuries... that's why we didn't go in that laboratory way, somehow artificial in many ways, to construct nation. What does it mean, construct nation? We are a nation. We got constructed centuries ago, why do we need to construct it today? So we entered to the deep roots of the problems, which I told you... which are... what we are in the society? Which is the education, which is the employment and these basic things. As I told you, what can you say to somebody who is unemployed, who is illiterate in the neighbourhood to speak to him 'you are a Gypsy nation!' You construct a Gypsy nation? It's stupid! So, the first thing was, somehow, to normalize the status of these people in the new situation...

RESEARCHER: Ok, but and among the Roma intelligentsia in Bulgaria? Do you think that they are willing for this discussion about to be a nation or they are more concern about these small problems? They are more connected with this international discourse or more connected with this [national/regional problems]...

B: As far as I know them.... I wouldn't say that this was not even an international discourse, this was the discourse of several people, it was not an international discourse, definitively. It was just several people... I was very active participant in the discussion, both at in Bulgaria and at international level, and I can tell you that the issue of nation it was not an issue of the Roma people themselves [...] at all.

RESEARCHER: The ideas came from Nicolae Gheorghe, the people who was presented in the International Romani Union Conferences?

B: It was a very marginal discussion here... and I told you, because we have very good Roma identity here. I would say that this was a discussion of people who were not clear with their own identity. It was Deilia Grigore, who many people say that she's not Gypsy, maybe she is, I don't know... I didn't see... but she was the most active participant in this discussion.

RESEARCHER: What is her name?

B: Delia Grigore.

RESEARCHER: And she was from here or?

B: Romania. It was mainly a discussion of people with their own problems of identity. We know that we are Gypsies, this is the first thing.

RESEARCHER: How do you know?

B: Because of my father, of my grandfather, that's why. I told you... Those who don't have clear roots they have this problem, we don't, we are Gypsies. We don't need this discussion. We started after this, you know? For us this is like... let's say, you have one, two, three, four, five points, you know? So, first point is 'Are you Gypsy?' 'Yes, I am'.

And then, go to the second point. These people are still in the first point... `are you Gypsy`, `what is Gypsy what is not`, come one, this is a stupid discussion. We are Gypsies and let's go to the second point. Do you know what I mean? For us this is not an issue, it is not... we are Gypsies.

RESEARCHER: Yes... but there is some kind of attempt to construct an international discourse about this...

B: There were attempts, yes.

RESEARCHER: There are still attempts, or not? Do you think that is...

B: There were attempts and maybe to some laboratories they still have, but this is not an issue of the Roma themselves. If you go to the neighbourhood and ask somebody... you know... they'll think that you're stupid or crazy.

RESEARCHER: Don't you think that also...

B: It's not an issue of the ordinary people.

RESEARCHER: Don't you think that also back then when Bulgaria was being constructed, the Bulgarian, the peasants, they were not also much concerned about if they were Bulgarians or not, they were living their lives. But there was some kind of an intelligentsia that was constructing this idea of be a nation, for several reasons. My question is, you are telling me that this process of construct this Roma identity, this international identity... you acknowledge that there is some people trying to do this, but it's not really strong here in Bulgaria?

B: It was not an issue for the normal, ordinary Roma. Do you know?

RESEARCHER: And in the local Roma intelligentsia, it was an issue?

B: Everybody... here both the ordinary people and the Roma intelligentsia, they have very strong and clear Romani identity... for them this is not an issue. Do you know? It's not an issue, we are Gypsies. And let's go forward. [laugh]. It was not an issue... what does it mean a Roma identity? Are you really Roma or you more like this, do you know? So, it was for us a very strange discussion for us here. Because we are Roma, yes, we are Gypsies.

RESEARCHER: Maybe this was the result of something. Because this was the first time that I came across with this History of the post-communist country, where do you have so many year when you could manage your... you said here from... until 1983, the Gypsies, the Roma people in Bulgaria could be proud of their nationality... I came across in Romania, in Czech Republic... it's different. There it was since the beginning, in 48, at the 50s, they were stopped `no, you cannot... you're a proletarian, you are part of the international society, you are a communist, you are not a Roma...`. And here in Bulgaria it was different.

B: No, it was... I told you, there was three periods.

RESEARCHER: But until 83 it was not an issue declare himself.. a person declare himself a Roma.

B: Let me put it like this: From 1944 to 1953, it was very much pushing on the Roma identity. The government made a theatre, Roma Theatre, the government made Romani newspapers...

RESEARCHER: And it was not like this in the other communist countries.

B: No, it was not. It was... Here following the Soviet Model, the Stalin Model. The Stalin Model was this... Until 1953, in 1953 Stalin died, then here it was changed the government and the new government started a new policy. They closed down the Theatre, they closed down the Roma newspapers, and they continue the policy to Roma be communist, not to be Roma. They said `look... we built the new communist society, in the new communist society we are not anymore Turks, Bulgarians... we are communists, we build the new communist society`. This was the official line. And this

was until 1983, as I told you. From one side positive policy towards school integration, encompassing the kids in the school, towards giving jobs to the Gypsies, encompassing them to work in the neighbourhood everywhere in the enterprises. From the other side closing down the discussion about the ethnics and nations.. `we are not different ethnic groups, we are all communists`. And then, in 84 to 89, it was the revival process. In a forced way change the names...

RESEARCHER: We are Bulgarians... we are in Bulgaria so we are Bulgarians.

B: So, `you are not anymore Gypsies you are Bulgarians; you are not anymore Turks you are Bulgarians`, you know? So, you've got instead of Mustafa you go Michael... This what I told you that it was not one policy, it was three policies in one period. Three different policies and that's why I told that in the beginning of the changes, of the transition period, in 1990, for us - as Romani activists - it was not a discussion `are we really Roma or not?`, it was a discussion `how we, as Roma - because we know that we are Roma, unlike maybe others who still don't know if they are really Roma and what does it mean to be Roma`, for us this is a stupid discussion`. So, for us it was `how we as Roma to participate equally in building the new democratic society?`.

RESEARCHER: Perfect, I see.

B: This it was our and is still our view `how we as Roma - because we know what is Roma...`

RESEARCHER: So, and today, which of these international organizations European Roma and Travellers Forum, International Romani Union, Romani National Council, European Roma Institute, George Soros... which of these organizations, these international ones, has the closest contact with the local organizations in Bulgaria? If you can name one of them...

B: To be honest, I'm not aware.

RESEARCHER: Not only financially speaking, but also intellectual support.

B: So, you're bringing me to the third period of the transition. I told you about the first period, the Romantic one (1990 – 1997), I told you about the second period (1997 - 2008), by the way the second period was the most productive, somehow. What I described to you, about the School desegregation was one of the most visible projects, because it was not only in Bulgaria but it was international... it somehow occupied the international discussion, the school integration and the integration of the Roma in general. After these programs here we had the initiative... As the success of the School Desegregation here gave the impetus for the Decade of the Roma Inclusion, for example. So George Soros...

RESEARCHER: 2005 to 2015.

B: Yes... George Soros saw that these school desegregation projects were successful and he invited in Budapest seven Prime-Ministers, to a very high level Conference, to bring them to promise somehow at very high level, political will for the integration of the Roma, not only in schooling but also in the other three important spheres, like education, like housing, employment and health issues. And he got this promise but unfortunately, by the way many people don't know this, many people don't know what the Decade of the Roma Inclusion is about... It was not understood clearly from the governments, because George Soros brought the... not the European Union as a partner but the World Bank, and the World Bank means money. And Soros means money, generally. Of course the governments expected somehow that these two financial institutions will pay them to integrate the Gypsies... of course it didn't happen. Because Soros told them `look... you pay for this, I give you only the expertise... I have here the good expertise, the good projects... I will give you prepared people, I'll give you expertise, experts...` and of course they didn't do it... the government didn't do it since

they saw that there was no money... somehow he created this bad expectation that... that this is a job or foreign donors, you know? The Roma integration is a job for foreign donors, it was a bad signal. And this is one of the reasons that, I would say, policies here didn't happen... the integrations policies, and they still don't happen. Because they still somehow put it... Because our view was that the integration policies means not money, it means implementation, it means involvement of the local structures of ministries, you know... So, in many cases, integration means that... So, the Ministry for Education, for example, closed down the Gypsies schools and directing the Roma children to normal schools, which doesn't take money... not at all. But they didn't understand in that way, you know? They believe that somehow they should be paid for every step. And this is the reason for not, I wouldn't say failure, but the Decade didn't happen in the way in which was thought. Also this is the reason that the European policies for integration of Roma, the so-called National Roma Integration Strategies, which still take place - formally at least -, they didn't happen. Because the governments still not recognize the Roma policies as a central... a part of the normal governmental policy, but the Roma policy is somehow additional stuff. So, the local ministries are not involved, the local institutions are not involved, it's somehow an additional thing. Of course nobody takes place, is only to use the money from some... this are the reason for what the things don't happen. So, we are now coming to the third period, after 2008 or 2009 until today. When the people saw that the EU integration didn't take place somehow, or didn't take place in the way in which people expected. So, the economy went down a lot, massive unemployment took place, huge migration... By the way now we have a new situation: we speak about the Roma here, but the Roma are there, in abroad! This is the situation, actually. Nobody knows... maybe 1/3 of the Roma went abroad.

RESEARCHER: Mostly to UK, from here, right?

B: No. Mostly to Germany, Spain, Italy, Greece ... Mostly there, in these countries. So, Gypsies are not here. We speak about policies to Gypsies here, but Gypsies are there. So, Gypsies without any policy they took their lives in their own hands. [the waitress came to the table]. They are not marginal, as I told you, they are clever people...

RESEARCHER: The ones... the percentage of those who were marginal they fled?

B: No... no... the most active went there.

RESEARCHER: The most active went there, the marginal are still here.

B: Are still here. And the migration wave still continues. So, at certain point, since there is no state economy, there is no economy at all, people went out... So, little by little, this situation discredits ours causes also. Because what happened in practice was that we helped to the kids, and to the parents to send them to school, but the father and mother go for example to Italy to work, and of course, they take the kids with them. So, we help preparing the kids with the schooling one, or two or three years, everything goes well in the schooling process, and we cannot say anything to the father or mother, who take the kids in Italy because we cannot provide them job here, to bring them here, to stabilize them here, we cannot do anything. What I mean is that the general policy of the government was somehow very bad for Bulgarians, for Roma, for everybody, and they somehow left space for huge migration: Bulgaria is a catastrophe! Bulgarian was 9 million in 1990 and now is 6 million. It's a catastrophe! A demographic catastrophe! One third of the country went out, and most probably one third of the Roma. Roma were 800.000, you can imagine now how many Roma are. So, since we speak about policies towards Roma, we need to take in consideration that very little number of Roma are here now. Most of them are there in abroad ... and actually the most active part is there. So now we are very far from the discussion what is to be Roma. What is to

be Roma? The real discussion... so this discussion is not a real discussion, is groundless discussion... the real discussion is what we do with this country... when one third of the country, more or less the same is in Romania, huge migration there also, huge migration in Poland, huge migration in Czech Republic... Because of the bad economy and because of the bad policies in general, and also including towards Roma. So, I can say one other thing, which is important, and this is that... during the socialism it was this discussion 'What is more important?' or 'What are the positive and negative outcomes from the policies of the government towards Roma directly' or 'the policies towards everybody, including Roma'. Because during the socialism we had both. We had directly policies towards Roma and indirect policies to everybody, including Roma. And I would say that those more effective policies were those which were towards everybody, including Roma. So, we got positives for us, for Roma, much more from these policies, instead from the policies directly towards Roma. Because directly towards Roma was, for example, the Gypsy schools, so-called, the segregated schools... this was directly towards Roma, to encompass the Roma children in schools... it was directly towards Roma but this policy resulted in segregation. As I told you 50% of the Roma kids went into segregated schools during the period of the socialism. That's why now what we call for it is more like general policies... so general policies for employment, it means that employment for Bulgarians but also for Roma; so general policies for education, which means policies for education including the Roma in the same school - Bulgarian kids and Roma kids -; and so on and so forth. Because the direct policies towards Roma they had negative effects. For example this projects for building houses, these are bad projects. I can tell you; in one town here they built some houses, since the Roma are not employed they cannot pay the rent for these houses, you know? They are not [they housing projects] well thought... and these are 200 houses, for whom first to go? if the Roma are employed they can take into... take care about their houses, if you are employed you can pay the rent and there is no problem. So, there is not complex approach with these projects... these are European projects, from European Union money. So, coming back to the issue that you are asking... Now we are in the third period of the so-called period of disappointment, you know? Major disappointment... you have a major disappointment and lack of perspective, for both Bulgarians and the Roma. Because as I told you, what is for Bulgarians the same is for Roma, more or less... in one way or another is the same. Bulgarians are also without perspective. We still have big migration, only for Germany... about 50.000 every year goes to Germany. 50.000 Bulgarians, including some Roma between them... 50.000 only in Germany. So, there is still migration, because here we don't have economy. What Roma policies we are talking about if there are no Bulgarian policies? So they destroyed the Bulgarian education, and we ask about the Roma education! They destroyed the Bulgarian economy, the Bulgarian working places, we ask about the Gypsies working places! They destroyed everything, you know?

RESEARCHER: Because in this project which come from ERTF and are ideologically supported by them, there is always the discourse 'if you construct a transnational, a transterritorial nation where all the Roma will be together, and we take our future in our hands, this will help to improve our life, our quality of life'. But...

B: The ordinary Roma are very far from this discussion. As I told you, in the beginning of the changes we were in the situation somehow to think and structuring the country, structuring policies towards Roma, so the Roma somehow raise their status. Now we see a total collapse of all of this, total collapse of state policies, and of course total collapse of policies on Roma. Of course the Roma will need to live in this time. Until we have these discussions, people need to take care of their children, of their lives, and

they cannot wait us! And this is why I told you, they take their ways to migrate to Italy, to Spain, to Germany, to Britain also, in order to take care of their families. So, these discussions are very far, very much far from the real people. Construct a new European nation is really groundless for all these people. Do you asked me what is the influence...

RESEARCHER: But even in the NGOs here, they don't talk about this?

B: We almost don't have NGOs now. Because the financial support after the EU ascension has stopped dramatically. We almost don't have NGOs now... if, for example, only in Sofia we had 100 maybe of Roma offices, now we have only 2. You can imagine. In [Plovdiv - Bulgarian city] maybe 50 Roma offices, now we have only one.

RESEARCHER: Do you think that I can manage to visit them tomorrow morning?

B: Why not?

RESEARCHER: Do you have the addresses?

B: I have the addresses of one them, I can give you.

RESEARCHER: I can try tomorrow morning.

B: So, you can imagine. You say 'what the Roma NGOs are doing?', the Roma NGOs almost do not exist. Because the foreign donors, in the way in which they came here, in 1996/1997, in the same way they went out. They came here somehow without being invited, they just came here, without a large discussion they started to impose their views - I'm not saying this in a bad sense -, they came here of course, is normal, Central and Eastern Europe was a new market, you can come to this democratizing countries and so on and so forth... and it is normal, they came here. But, somehow, they left the place here, the space, and the field, without a discussion... without analysis... what we did, what we didn't... where is the most interesting perspective... what we keep still in place, what we take out... you know? It was not a discussion like this, to see what it was successful and what it was not. They just left and went to the new markets of Central Asia and North Africa. Just without discussion... And now, of course, the Roma movement, the Roma NGOs... because the second period was dominated by the NGOs... The Roma organizations, more or less, they were marginalized... without money, without professionals... of course, the main activists went to the NGOs, this is what happened. The main activists, like me for example, of course we went to the NGOs: we were paid there, with normal office situation, to work under normal circumstances. And in a certain point the NGOs and the donors, somehow, left the field here and you say about NGOs, but who is the NGOs? Almost there is no NGOs. So, we speak just theoretically... when you say 'what the NGOs are thinking?'... so... where are the NGOs? Also the government started very bad actions against the NGOs, in 2011. Actually when they saw that the international community was not supporting the cause anymore, they start to attack us. Since, somehow, they were the advocates... the international community was our advocate here... Somehow we had the international community behind us, discussing with the government. And when the government saw that the international community it was not with us anymore, with the Roma anymore, so they started to attack us. When Sarkozy, in 2010, start to speak hardly against Gypsies...

RESEARCHER: And deport them back to their countries, right?

B: Yes... When he wanted to expel Roma from France, in 2010, you remember that... and this was the most important, somehow, event which changed the attitudes here towards Roma... Until this time, somehow, the West was playing the role saying to Sofia government that 'look... you should be tolerant with Roma. Don't discriminate Roma. You should be tolerant... we are democrats, see how we do with Roma'. And in 2010 he French president is saying 'Gypsies are thieves, Gypsies are criminals, we don't want Gypsies, we want to expel Gypsies'. The repercussion of this act was very

serious here. And of course in 2011 the Bulgarian government started to attack Gypsies... see, if the professor in democracy is teaching the student in that way. And of course many racists here said 'wow... we were right before!', saying 'this is the right way'. So 'you told us, you the Westerns told us to be tolerant with Gypsies, but now you are not tolerant with them, so we were right!'. So these were, somehow, the signals from the main Western countries, these signals 'we don't want the Gypsies! We don't want the migrants', you know? This was read here from the racists here in the way that now we have freedom [...] to attack the Gypsies. Since the advocate is away, then... and they started the attacks, they started huge governmental attack ... they used the whole governmental instruments [...] to attack the Gypsies with prosecutors' offices... started huge prosecutions against Roma organizations, against Roma leaders... you know... it was in 2011. In order to cut the wings, to cut the hands of the Roma movement, and nobody said a word from the International organizations... nobody... I sent a lot of letters, you know? Since we are together... I sent a lot of letters explaining what the situation is. So, we have the European Roma and Right Centre which is to support the Roma when Roma are attacked, which was done so far. And when we sent letters [about] these facts in [happen] in a massive way here, there was no signal at all, you know? From any institutions... international... Even after it became clear that all these attack against us, from the government [...], and the prosecutors' offices didn't find anything against Roma... that is illegal or something... they, the International Roma Institutions didn't say a word... our friends of international, so-called movement. So... what I'm saying is that these organizations are, unfortunately, far from the reality! This discussion, what they have, is not grounded in the real problems in the countries... somehow this discussion [about Roma nation] is outside of the reality. I'm giving you an example...

RESEARCHER: I came with... I talked with this scholar once from England and he gave me this idea. I think I can quote him because he said that I can use this, Martin Kovats, and he said to me that in his view European Roma and Travellers Forum and all these organizations in European level, Roma friendly or Roma organizations, there are more a way to the European Union spend the less money possible and make the Roma people there [I meant keep the Roma in their situation]... They do not aim to improve the quality of life, they only put the Roma people in their place... 'Stay there, do not bother me... do you want to be a nation? This is your nation, you are there and stay there'. And, like this, they do not spend money and also is a really important floor to legitimate European Union because 'we need to take care of them'... What do you think about this thought?

B: First of all I think that the European Union idea collapsed, in general. What was in the beginning as Europe, many citizens, many nations, somehow didn't happen... now it is in crisis, the situation is in crisis. And I think that the Roma situation is part of this discourse... It is not a somehow isolated issue, is part of the European issue. Because we are the real Europeans, we are the real Europeans. Because the Bulgarians are in Bulgaria, the Czechs are in Czechia, the Slovaks are in Slovakia, but we are everywhere... so we the model of the Europeaness, we are the real model. We are everywhere equally, more or less, distributed! And we are not the problem of Europe at all, because 99% of Roma who go in France, in Italy, in Spain they work. They are not thieves, they are not criminals, but we are pictured in that way. So, I think that the main problem is the collapse of the European idea and from this main nucleus come the other problems. Since the European Union did not achieve the main goal to the Bulgarians, to receive the same level... more or less the same level as in Germany... even not as in Germany, but somehow to Bulgarians be happy here, you know? So, the initial idea was

to make Bulgaria more or less like Germany... more or less, I'm not saying in that way, of course. Don't take literally but, somehow, the Bulgarian be happy in Bulgaria, even not reaching the German level, of course! We cannot reach it! I know that is unreachable for us... but at least in the way that somehow do not have these huge differences in the payment, you know? At least in the payment, which means the social status. Because in what way one worker of Shell, for example, in Bulgaria is taken 200 pounds here and maybe 2000 pounds in Britain? In what way? Why? Let's say here the... you cannot say that the coefficient of work there is better than here, they do the same job! They fuel the gasoline in the car in the same way, you know? In the same angle they put the pump... is the same thing! In what way is that difference? Why is needed this economic bad model of... ruining the economies here, making here only the territory with firms of Germany workers in ruining the whole economy here, and making many people go there? Why was that? This model it was unsuccessful... And that's why we have this massive migration, massive number of people unhappy in our... because many people go there qualified, well qualified for something, but they go there to be... you know... to very unqualified jobs... and this including Roma! So, unsuccessful model of Europe... I think this is the basis.

RESEARCHER: And this is, of course, as you told me before if touch the non-Roma touch the Roma as well.

B: Yes... so... When we speak about Roma we, all the time, need to see the general picture. Because the main failures are in the main picture, and it reflects on Roma. We cannot say that these are failures of Roma... of course that we make mistakes in many ways, I'm not saying that we are ideal, we did a lot of mistakes... I myself and many of us did a lot of mistakes... But I think that things didn't happen not because of the mistakes of Roma, they didn't happen because, as I told you... I'll come back to Bulgaria... Did we make the policies well at the level of the NGOs? Yes! Were they successful? Yes, they were! Did they show that this is the way? Yes, they did show that this is the way! But what did the government? Nothing! Did we show the European Union that these policies are successful? Yes, we did! What did Europe for this? Nothing! They still continue with this 'Gypsies are marginal, victims, bla bla...!' It is like this! So, we did what we needed to do. We showed the way, we showed a clear position. What do we want to be treated like and in what way... Unfortunately we didn't succeed because it was much stronger... how to say... the machinery which imposed other views. I myself, I can say about myself that I did what I was in the position to do, when I was [suppressed to maintain anonymity], I was director of the [suppressed to maintain anonymity]... so, I directed resources into this approach what I described, and this was a successful approach. But this was almost the only factor in this direction ... and I would say that we succeeded in a way that we imposed this discussion at European level, but they changed the game and now is dominating another approach. And the European Union it was not adequate [?], not at all on the Roma issued, as they were not adequate on the many others issues also... also on the migrant issue and migrant policies it was not adequate, and you see the results now. Because, as I told you, many of these factors, the donors community, when they came here, they didn't see down to discuss with us in a simple way, to say 'hey... are you Gypsies, what do you think about these policies? Do you think that they are good for you or not?'. No, it was not like this, it was 'you should do this'.

RESEARCHER: Up to bottom!

B: Yes, up to bottom, absolutely. And, unfortunately, We need to be also self-critical and to say that many of us accepted these rules . As I told you, we accepted them as professors in the democracy, 'they know how it is... they are the professors, we are the

students', many of us did! Many of us didn't know what is dollars! [laughs]. So, it was minority of people like me, and some others, who said 'look... let's discuss! Maybe we could proceed in another way... maybe like this works in your country but here the conditions are different...'. Sometimes in a mild way, sometimes in a more harsh way, but... you know! I wouldn't say that we didn't have chances to do somethings and, as I told you, these things which I describe you, the school desegregation process were some of these sectors or places where we had chance to do something. Policies and projects What we wanted, what we Roma wanted. But I wouldn't say that this was the rule, because Soros was just one of the players... In other words, there were very little number of programs and project for Roma, initiated and designed by Roma, as it was the mentioned school desegregation process for example, There were many other players who did it in other way... in their own way and Roma were only implementing.

RESEARCHER: But no so important, let's say?

B: They were important because they were visible, they were powerful...

RESEARCHER: And what is the name of the other people, if you remember?

B: For example the Dutch Donors. Krisakmas was his name, from a huge Dutch foundation, I forgot the name... we had a few discussions with him. And he was very harsh imposing...

RESEARCHER: That work there must be done here.

B: Yes! 'It works in Holland...' It was a huge discussion. And I told him 'look... maybe it works in Holland, with the Marroquin immigrants...', but I told him 'look... first of all we are not Marroquin. We are Gypsies. Second of all, we are not immigrants, we live here seven centuries. Third of all, if Marroquin go there without being part of this cultural context, we are creating part of this cultural context... we contribute to the Bulgarian culture, not only to the Roma culture. We are active participants, we interact with the Bulgarian culture. Most of the Bulgarian musicians are Gypsies, and they created the Bulgarian culture [...], the Bulgarian musical culture and not only the music... we are not immigrants and we don't have huge differences with the Bulgarians... we are different as a culture, but there is no cultural gap. There are cultural differences, which is normal'. And we had discussions. He said 'you don't understand the situation'. I said 'come one, do you understand the situation coming here and spending two hours? And I do not understand? I am somebody to lives here, to know the situation, who wrote a lot of literature on these issues, so I don't know and you know!'. So, we had discussions... So, it is not that we didn't have discussions, we did have discussions here and there, but as I told you the dominating view was the other.

Interview 8

Interview realized in the city of Sofia.

Date: 26 Sept. 2016

Interviewer: Douglas Neander Sambati

RESEARCHER: So, my talk - and I'd like to go really straight because it's a good idea -, is... I would like to talk about two main things: How is the relation of the local organizations here in Bulgaria with these international organizations? There is money connection, or intellectual, or ideological connection or there is not; and mostly how you see this process of ethno-emancipation or this creation of a Roma nation. How you see this... how you this concepts has basis in the everyday life of the Roma people in Bulgaria?

B1: It's a very big question...

RESEARCHER: I know...

B1: Well... I prefer to start from the connection between the local people in the quarters [?] in the Roma neighbourhood and all these national and international bodies, who are trying to change the situation and to help. I could see that there is no one answers. I cannot say that they're bad or they are good, because there are different approaches and different organizations. You have organizations that are doing well and organizations that are not doing well. What I mean? These local organizations, who started with this process of desegregation of the education of Roma kids, because, before the transition during the communist regime... In Bulgaria we had separated schools for Roma kids. They were situated basically in the neighbourhood, the so-called Roma schools. The idea came really from Roma activists I could say, not academician or intellectuals, but people who felt in their shoulders that this schools doesn't has enough quality. Because those people use to go to mix schools and they find [...] useful to the Roma kids go together in the mainstream schools. This makes it easy to socialize and to integrate people if they started from the very early age, to communicate, to understand each other, to accept each other. Because when is something that you don't know there is always a fear. And this was, I could say, a very successful project. Because it was... appeared from the Roma community themselves. They didn't want to their kids go separated to the school, because in the schools always [...] unqualified teachers, [...] secondary school, and the quality was not the same that in the other schools. But then, when Soros step up and wanted to strain the communities and to help, sometimes I really don't know to be happy with this help or to be sad. Because... Of course he put a lot of efforts, not only efforts but also tremendous money, but there was not anybody to control this process.

RESEARCHER: Yes... yesterday I was talking with Mr. [suppressed to maintain anonymity] and he was saying something quite similar. He said 'ok, it was good because they brought money, but usually they do not talk much with us about how to do and so on...'

B1: Yes. They were just giving the money away, nobody was controlling the results, nobody was interested in what happened. Because when you mix some groups, you have also to keep the culture, you have also to keep the language. Other way you just assimilate them, you do not keep the identity, you just do physical movement. But you also should put some... efforts to prepare the other society, because they need to know why they have to go together to school. This was a successful project, but also along as a very successful project it was very insensible... you could say project that did... that worsened the situation instead to make it better. Because there was the announce 'we give money for Roma to want to be a lawyer!'. And, of course, some of Roma was making use of this situation, I'll give you an example to know better. For example, in Ukraine, a good looking Roma woman who is of course clever, said 'I want to be lawyer!'. She took the money to go to... but she has only the third grade education. Can you see where...

RESEARCHER: There is a gap.

B1: Yes. If they want to make they have to [...], they have to see if they have diplomas from the secondary, and to give them some preparation at least. You know, they were just throwing out the money without any results. [...]. They help as much as the troubles that they did with this money. Because lot of young people, students, for whom they give money to go to the university to finish their school, there was no... They didn't put some circumstance or conditions. For example, we were saying to them 'when we select the Roma student they have to know that if they use money, because they are Roma to learn, at least they are obliged to work with the community for free and help to the others... everywhere the voluntary work... and specially in [...] communities where need

it... which need help... to ordinary people. To write to them some letter to the social benefit or... whatever'. But nobody was taking care of this [...] of the Roma activists, as we were on that time when it was given such proposals. They [said] 'no, this is too communist... the way of thinking is: if you give to someone money you should not put conditions', but this is not good. Because now we can see, twenty five years later, they took their education, they go to abroad, or they just say we are not anymore Roma [laugh]. And from all these things the Roma community, the ordinary people, are losers, you know? Because they have some kind of an elite, but this elite doesn't make connection with this...

RESEARCHER: this average people?

B1: Yes.

RESEARCHER: And this money that it was coming and all this help, they came from the private donors usually? International Romani Union was not so present, not even ideologically back then? Because what you're telling to me.... is that right after the end of the communism... in the 90s.

B1: Yes.

RESEARCHER: Who were giving the biggest support were the private donors, like George Soros and other ones. Where was International Romani Union in this point?

B1: It was just political only. They did registration in the United Nation, but...

RESEARCHER: But do you think that their ideas... That people who was discussing in the International Romani Union Conferences and so on, they have some... they reach the Bulgarian intelligentsia or it was more like 'they are there, we are here'? How you saw this? Or... even today, with the European Roma and Travellers Forum, and the Roma National Council... those people thinking there they reach... those ideas reach the everyday life of the Roma intelligentsia here? Or the Roma activists?

B1: You know... sometimes their ideas are transformed in the way of they are created [?]. Let's say like this... If the Council of Europe appoint their few people to work in the Forum, the Roma Forum, they [...] they do what to do, their never hear from the Roma ideas, unfortunately. In the very beginning we were very enthusiastic, very... We were thinking that something [...] from us. And all the time they were blaming on ourselves, that we were not enough prepared, that we have to be more... stable, more strong in our [...] our quality. But it was not really like that. Because finally we saw that... sometime our ideas are not acceptable. Like, for example, we were telling all the time that in the education that have to not stimulate only music and dancing, because Roma people doesn't need musicians and dancers, only. Because this is in our blood, without school we can do that. But in the school they have to punch on the knowledge, because without knowledge then cannot reach Secondary School, they cannot enter the universities. We need a qualified people, educated people, to change the situation, to improve the quality of life... To represent the ideals of the ordinary people.

RESEARCHER: For instance, these international bodies, sometimes they have some efforts to standardize Romanes...

B1: Why do you have to standardize? You kill the dialects!

RESEARCHER: That's my point...

B1: I was in this working groups of...

RESEARCHER: But there is an attempt to standardize?

B1: To standardize what? The calligraphy... to standardize the writing - to be in Cyrillic or in Latin or -, orthographic you can standardize, but you cannot standardize forbidding [?] alive dialects, which are [...] everyday among the different Roma groups. If you try to standardize you kill the dialects, it is not necessary to be done.

RESEARCHER: But when they teach Romanes in the schools to the kids, they need to choose one of those...

B1: No, it's not like that. In 1992 year, in Bulgaria it was the first who started like a pilot project learning Romani as mother tongue at school, I was in that time director of a Romani school in [Bulgarian city which was not understandable]. And, of course, it was something new for me, and I was... how to say... looking for materials, looking for teaching materials, for what to present to... what is valuable for the kids to make strong their identity. This was the first problem which appear in front of me, because in my classroom I had kids from four different dialects. So, then I called to [suppressed to maintain anonymity] from Moscow, who made the classification of Romani dialects... She recently passed away, she was a [...]. And I said 'My dear [suppressed to maintain anonymity], I don't know how to handle... how to maintain with this four dialects'. And she said to me 'you cannot say to the kids which dialect is more valuable than the others, so... you have to give equal respect to all four dialects. Even more, you must say to the kids: this groups say in their dialect in this way, this others say in their dialect in the other way... you give equal respect to all dialects'. You give possibility to develop all dialects, not to kill three and to make one [...] like standardized. You have to give opportunity to all dialects to be developed and I succeed to do that in my practice. I just was giving the words in different dialects, in brackets, the others... so the Kalderash from Erli [Bulgarian city] they can learn the Lovari and the other dialects, and to enrich! If they write poems or if they write in Romani language to have more examples of the language. This is the richness of the language. Why do I have to standardize one dialect? And in the last twenty-five years in the international level... many of the meetings, conferences, and the workshops... the working language is Romani, isn't it? So... they can communicate each other, it doesn't matter the small differences between the dialects. And in a natural way it appears some kind of standardization in international level. People who are working in the Romani language, when we meet on international... we understand perfectly. Because we know the words in the other dialects too and sometimes if... we use the English word, for better understanding. And its creating some kind of international Romani language. Because people who are working for long time in the subject, when they meet...

RESEARCHER: Is it wrong to say that maybe this standard Romanes... international Romanes... if the person come into some villages and talk with this Romanes, the people in the community will not understand?

B1: Well... few words more... he can understand. It is not a big mistake because the ordinary people like to learn some international words, this... it's doesn't created problems and troubles. I don't see... because I met Roma people from more than 35 countries and I spoke with all of them. And sometimes, of course, in my Romani appears some Bulgarian word and I could feel that they cannot understand this word, so I made it... I described with more words or they understand.

RESEARCHER: This, for me, is actually really funny. I'm not Roma... so I was reading in some books... some really important people saying that the Romanes is not intelligible among people, they cannot understand each other. But then all the people with whom I'm talking this days affirm the opposite.

B1: Of course!

RESEARCHER: The Romanes is possible... that everybody who speaks every kind of Romani dialect can understand each other.

B1: Exactly! So this... I'm an alive example on this... on this issue. I spoke with Roma from Albania, from Macedonia, from Serbia, from all over the world... and we can understand each other. The only group which is very difficult to communicate is the

Sinti. Because there are lots of German words in their language... Only with the Sinti I cannot communicate easy, but with more efforts from some... German words... When I know that this is German I can understand some. But it is difficult only with Sinti... And sometimes with the Finlands [Finnish]... the Cale. But with the other? Especially in Europe... no border! In France, in Italy, everywhere we can communicate very easy. It's not true that...

RESEARCHER: Yes, I was talking with this man in Romania... I don't know if you know him - [suppressed to maintain anonymity] -, he works in the government and he told me `yes, kalderash from the whole world can understand themselves, Lovari from the whole world they can understand themselves, but sometimes a kalderash has problems to understand a lovari and so on...`. So, you don't see this?

B1: Noooo... You see the difference. We say `Roma` and Kalderash say `Rroma`. We say `ceai` they say `cei`. Where is the difference? So... wow, big trouble [sarcastic].

RESEARCHER: I see.

B1: This is totally wrong [to say that is impossible understand different Romani dialects].

RESEARCHER: And in this schools, because your work is mainly with schools if I'm not mistaken, right?

B1: Yes.

RESEARCHER: How to deal with these other situations which I came across a lot, when the group... they call themselves Ursari, Lovari, Kalderash, but they don't call themselves Roma or Gypsies. They don't use these words, they don't call themselves Roma and not even Gypsy, they call themselves Kalderash... How reach this people and say `yes... you are Kalderash but you are Roma`? How it works on this? This is something that happens?

B1: Automatically appears that they say if they are Kalderash or they are Roma, because only Kalderash are Roma. You don't have other nations to call themselves Kalderash. This is subgroup of Roma... This is subgroups of the Roma groups... are Romani groups.

RESEARCHER: If they are so different between them, among them sorry, what make them Roma?

B1: The language.

RESEARCHER: The language.

B1: This is the strongest mark which creates the strongest identity and makes you Roma, if you know Romanes. Of course in the second level come the style of living and some... some common festivals and these rituals...

RESEARCHER: And this idea about recognize Roma as a European nation and to be politically represented and so on. And those Roma who do not speak Romanes, how make them be part of the Roma nation? There are some cases inside Bulgaria of Roma who do not speak Romanes...

B1: Yes, there are some. But then I could answer in this manner: Why do they not speak Romanes? Why? Also there is a tremendous number of Roma in Spain who do not speak. In Hungary also... There are historical answers, you know it! [suppressed to maintain anonymity]... there was wishes to kill them and take their children and assimilate them. It was forcibly made it to forget their language...

RESEARCHER: I know... I know...

B1: This is not a correct question... to say that some Roma don't know the language. They are not guilty... nobody asked them if they wanted to forget their language, to speak of not.... they didn't create circumstances to learn but also forced them to forget.

This is genocide, you know? Cultural genocide. To take their children from them and put in special houses to forget the language...

RESEARCHER: Something really similar it happened in Brazil in the beginning... during the Second World War. Who was descendent of Italians, Germans and Japanese...

B1: There are several examples in the world...

RESEARCHER: My family stopped to speak Italian, because we are from an Italian family...

B1: Are you from Brazil?

RESEARCHER: Yes, I am. From an Italian family... and we stopped to speak Italian because people could go to jail... so they didn't teach the children anymore. So my grandfather didn't leant and so on... But what is complicated to me, sometimes... and don't get me wrong but I need to push some things is: There is some people - I'm not sure if here in Bulgaria there is much of this, but I know that in Hungary there is a lot of this people -, that they are considered Roma by the society, but they... themselves don't speak Romanes anymore and they don't want to be Roma anymore... but there is some policies that say 'you need to remember that you're Roma'... So, these policies are coming on them. There is some kind of policies here... how to deal with these people... they don't want to be a Roma...

B1: This is a new phenomenon, yes...

RESEARCHER: But the society want them Roma...

B1: But then we again come to Soros. He was the person who made them, artificially. They are Roma only when they want some... to use something. But they don't want to be a Roma. But through this project and this money, he destroyed the community, you know? I know a lot of people who don't want to be Roma, but because of the benefits they are Roma. [Laugh] Even some no-Roma became Roma [laugh].

RESEARCHER: To be able to reach the money!

B1: Exactly. Therefore, sometimes I say that if I [...] I'll make a decree, to forbid to the donors to give money for Roma. Because lot of people use this money to do terrible things.

RESEARCHER: Actually this... Until the start of this travelling I came across with George Soros name, but not much. And after Bratislava his name is so strong. Every time that I sit to talk, I think that it is the first name: George Soros! 'He is supporting the whole project about a Roma nation in the Balkanic countries'.

B1: I want to write to him an open letter to forbid him to maintain with Roma, to [advise him to] see his Jewish people. To pick up his hands from the Roma. Because he thinks that he makes good things, but he doesn't know what happen... He doesn't have a feedback on his work.

RESEARCHER: I see. I have the feeling that there is such a project that tries to create a broad history that all this people around the world, around Europe, can fit inside, and call them Roma for some reason. And I cannot really understand this reason, because I don't feel that this come from the people... this ideal to create a Roma nation, recognize Roma nation, an international one... It come from an intelligentsia... some people who is discussing in Brussels and Strasburg and it's with them. And this ideas, you are telling me, they don't reach this point here? Here you are more concerned about the...

B1: No! Ordinary people never want to have a special country. You that in 1920/1937 Stalin was giving Siberia to the Roma who wanted to go there... These ideas never worked among Roma communities... never and ever will be working... because people doesn't want to move their own Country. This is something in a few people head...

RESEARCHER: Don't you think that sometimes there is a really strong discourse coming from European Union about victimization, treating all the Roma people as victims... 'they victims and we need to help'?

B1: No, I don't like this position of victim. Fifteen years ago in Bulgaria started a big... how do you say... poster, with a nice gypsy girl and down was written 'I don't beg, I want you to respect me as an equal'. This is what our generation dream to see. To treat us equal not because we are Roma, but despite we are Roma to give respect and equality to people, to their education, to their culture. And I never want to take me as a victim, why as a victim? We are not a victim!

RESEARCHER: What you're saying to me it is really fitting with my conversation with Mr. [suppressed to maintain anonymity] yesterday. Here in Bulgaria the first Roma movements after the end of the Communism...

B1: Started from the Roma people!

RESEARCHER: Yes! And they want to be Bulgarian... We are Roma but we are also Bulgarians and want to be part of the society.

B1: We don't want to be [...]. Why I have to go in some artificial country, when I am born here? Ten generation of my people were born here, why do I have to leave this country?

RESEARCHER: The idea of a Roma nation is to be transterritorial. I think that in the book of Marushiakova and Popov she stresses that 'where there is a Roma, is Romanestan!'. 'We don't need to create a new country, where there is a Roma it is Romanestan'.

B1: Exactly! [laugh]

RESEARCHER: But how to deal with... put this entire different people together? Because there is a lot of different cultures among the Roma people. Or am I wrong?

B1: Yes, that's true. I always think about this but... it's very hard. And the difficulties come... First from the legislation. In the different countries are different [...]. For example in Macedonia and in Serbia they are nations, in Kosovo. But in the rest of the European countries we are ethnic group... There is not equal treatment by the different countries, first of all. Second... every... the Roma of each country are took and tell them that they are part of the mainstream society. Therefore there is a sentence 'every majority [words in Bulgarian]'... I don't know these words... 'every majority get its minority'. Because in some way they...

RESEARCHER: They always construct each other in relation...

B1: Yes... because we take them all those from them... So, if they are aggressive, we are aggressive too... if they arrogant, we are arrogant too... if they are thieves, we are thieves as well, because we see from them what they do, and we do the same. Well, this is not so serious but... The difficulties to make unit all Roma also appears from the fact that there are different groups. And any group consider being the real one. The others are [...] [laughs]... you know? Still there are no fine criteria which unite them, and the only one which I saw is the hateness of the others. Because in the national level I saw in Bulgaria how they react... where they are a unit. When is the question of the dialect [...] we are not real... when the question is cultural, for the rituals they said 'your rituals are not good our rituals are good, are real'. When I was doing my dissertation I was also going through the field work. But when the Skinhead come... they said 'oh we are...' Kalderash, they are aristocrat in the Romani groups, [...]... you know...

RESEARCHER: The Kalderash are usually the better off around the world.

B1: Yes... But when the Skinheads come then all Roma are like one. Then they forget for... the differences in the dialect, in the habits, in the rituals, in the groups, you know?

This... their, if I could say, [word in Bulgarian], this... the troubles, the difficulties and the bad treatment make them...

RESEARCHER: So, is it fair to say that the Roma identity... the Roma, this worldwide Roma - this idea to put all the Roma together, is being forged on the anti-Gypsyism?

B1: Yes.

RESEARCHER: So, this fit in a lot of what I'm listening around: `ok... we are a lot of different countries but we suffer together, so we are a group`.

B1: Yes!

RESEARCHER: And this is really connected with the Holocaust.

B1: Yes... well but during the Holocaust, especially in Bulgaria, there was no killing...

RESEARCHER: Here there was not much killing.

B1: Bulgaria kept... even the Jewish were not killed here. There was not killing but there was bad attitudes towards them, it was all the time... so...

RESEARCHER: I have the feeling that the idea construct `we are Roma` is based in two things: in the Holocaust and in the Roma Indian origins. We came from India, so we are a group.

B1: Yes... the languages come... where are from one country... and also in India you have four cases: the society structure is... and we bring all this group division from our mother land, so... India... but also India is very far away. In the last... last time even I was one year in India, I'm [suppressed to maintain anonymity] of this relationship between India and Roma, but... I don't see this as a health idea to play this Indian diaspora.

RESEARCHER: Sometimes I feel that make the Roma people be seeing even more as non-European... so... `you don't belong here, you belong to India`... do you understand? It can improve the hate! It can improve the hate against the Roma, because `if you're from India, go back to India`. I have this feeling sometimes...

B1: This is not a healthy idea.

RESEARCHER: I have the feeling, mostly based in Ian Hancock... it's really strong to him: `we all came from India`, even though sometimes he is a bit contradictory with this affirmation, because he said `we all came from India`, but then he say `but when we came from India we were not a group there, we became a group in Anatolia`... where today is Turkey, anyway... and also the Holocaust thing `we suffered under the Holocaust, this make us a group. Even though we have different languages, even though we have different cultures... what make us a group is the Indian origins and the Holocaust`. But I have this feeling, and I think you agree with me, that what is being used is the racism - a current racism, and not the question of the past -, the antigypsism today is used to forge the Roma identity.

B1: Yes, this is true.

RESEARCHER: If you're persecuted, you are Roma...

B1: Yes, because the Skinhead doesn't make a distinction between Kalderash, or Jambas, or [...], they said `just you are Roma`.

Interview 9

Interview realized in the city of Skopje.

Date: 28 Sept. 2016

Interviewer: Douglas Neander Sambati

[...]

M: Right now we are in the organization which is names [suppressed to maintain anonymity]. Formally we are working from [suppressed to maintain anonymity], but informally we are working in this community for seven years through other organizations, which we were formally separated in March of this year. Basically the same staff, the same resources, but what we are doing exactly is the support of the Roma community regarding the achievement of their social and health rights and on the problem of the education we are providing a direct financial support and a capacity building support to Roma [suppressed to maintain anonymity] students. University students and graduated doctors who want to make their specializations. We have a staff of ten people in the office, our work is not just office base field, we work also... we are good recognized in the community. What we are lacking at the moment is that we are very glad that you are working on this topic, because as a local organization we are lacking a cooperation and communication with the International Roma Organizations which work on the Roma issues. For example, the European Roma and Travellers Forum we know... we just know that we have a representative from Macedonia, who is member of that group. We have this network, Roma Virtual Network, through which sometimes we receive some information, it's an email group which is the forum to we come... But [...] somehow had the idea that all of those discussions are going just on several locations that are near to them. For example in Romania, in Hungary, or Slovakia... We somehow have the feeling that the Balkans specially are excluded... that's the need of the Roma population or the Roma organizations from Balkans are excluded for those discussions that are going in the high level. But in the other side we have the Open Society Foundation Institute as a main donor, partner and supporter who has also their offices in Brussels and, through that office in Brussels, we are making our advocacy. Efforts to sending our reports, reports in [...] in some specific issue and they can trust for [bring] that to European level, to European Commission. But... it's my opinion that the European Roma and Travellers Forum should be that concept point where we can send our local problems, need, recommendations and they could transfer. For example, now, there is a... IRU, International Roma Union, I mean it is an institution, organization, settled from 71... and, sincerely, I'm not familiar with what they are doing, except annual meetings.

RESEARCHER: Lately they are facing a political problem, because I'm in contact with three different presidents claiming that they are the real presidents.

M: Yes, that's the main information that we also have. That in several countries, different legal entities are registers as IRU. We know that here in Macedonia we have one of the organizations, actually one of Zoran Dimov, maybe you've heard that he is one...

RESEARCHER: From the International Romani Union? Yes, I tried contact with him, but sadly I had no return.

M: If you want we can contact him today, I can call him. It will be a good opportunity direct talk with him. We know that... as an International Union also supposed to include us, somehow, as a local organization in their discussion, in... but you know, somehow, none of those International organization are reliable for us at the moment. Except the Open Society Institute, which mandate is not exactly to do what they are doing, but they are doing because we are grantees of the program for many years and this, somehow, fill the need that they need to support us in showing our local need, problems at the European level.

RESEARCHER: And do you think... so... You are saying that there is a gap between you and these International bodies. But and the discourse of this International

Organizations have about the Roma transnational nation and so on. This reaches the community in some level or not?

M: No. If you ask me, I am hearing this also for the first time. I don't know exactly what is the idea behind that term.

RESEARCHER: They said that the Roma people must be recognized as a nation, but without a country, without a state, wherever there is a Roma it'll be the Roma nation. And they talk about standardize the Romanes, schools teaching in Romanes, all these ideas. But here this already happened, or not?

M: Well, here it is already happening without their influence, because Roma is recognized as an ethnic minority. It is happening not by the efforts of the Roma community, but by the efforts of the Albanian community who have reached that through, I don't know if you are familiar with the ethnic conflict that we had in 2001. Since that conflict we have, as a result, three [work?] agreements we call, each ethnic group - minority group - should be represented in the public institutions... to have their right to learn at schools in their native language. So, it is independent from those influences. It is happening for ten and more years.

RESEARCHER: For instance, the Romanes that is used here in the everyday life, in the schools, it is the same that they are discussing in Brussels or Romania?

M: It is not the same. We have not yet standardized Roma language. It is not the same and that's why here in Šuto Orizari in the both elementary schools we have not introduced yet officially, lecture in Romani language. The students, the pupils, have only the right to learn as an additional, facultative, class.

RESEARCHER: I came across with a lot of scholars who said that the different Romanes are not intelligible among them. Two people who speak Romanes sometimes do not understand each other. A lot of people [who I met in this travel] is saying that it's not true. What is your experience? Is it possible to understand or not?

M: In Macedonia or?

RESEARCHER: Talking about the Macedonian level.

M: Here in Macedonia yes, you can understand each other.

RESEARCHER: And in European level?

M: In European level with some difficulties. But, for example, now we have an annual meeting with Romanians, Bulgarians, Serbians and we understand each other... with difficulties which can be overcome.

RESEARCHER: And how... inside the community here, there is this plurality of languages and cultures or not? Or here is more or less the same?

M: It's different in the dialects of the Romani language, but it's an specific situation in Skopje, Šuto Orizari, that we all know each of the dialects. Because... you know, it's a marginalized community. As you had the opportunity to see, it's on the edge of Skopje... so the community is [living?] just inside the community, so... it is expected that the community know all the dialects, in Šutka. But, for instance, if you go further in other cities, for example in Eastern Macedonia, the native language is Macedonian. They don't know the Romani language.

RESEARCHER: The Roma people who live there?

M: Yes, yes. And in the Western Macedonia they are speaking the Albanian language as native language. Because of the assimilation with the local population that's living there.

RESEARCHER: It was common the program of assimilation. I would like to keep in touch with you, by email and so on, it'll be really important to me because actually this gap, that you're describing to me I've found in all the countries that I've been. I've been in Hungary, I've been in Romania, Slovakia, Serbia. In all these countries I faced the

same gap and in all these countries I faced the same name: George Soros. Is the only person who is reaching the whole population. With the money of George Soros, it comes also some ideological background, or he gives the money and do not pay much attention about the... how you work here?

M: I think it is ideological. Because there is strategies... in each country the founders are different and they're paying a lot of attention when they planning their national strategies, the national George Soros Foundations, they are paying so much attention to include us in the process of creating their strategies, in order to put something that is really in the need of the community, as a founding.

RESEARCHER: I just heard in [Sofia] that the problem is that George Soros come with the money, but he never ask to the people how use the money. They come and say 'the money must be use like this!', and then has problems. Do you have the same experience?

M: No. Basically, for the seven years, 80% of our funds are from their funds and we were never told 'you must do this and this'. We had freedom to work based in the needs of the community. Because the community is the final beneficent.

RESEARCHER: Even the methodology of work?

M: Yes, the methodology of work is imposed. It is proposed certain activities, mainly because of their experience worldwide. For example, here in Šuto Orizari at the moment, we are implementing one model that was piloting in India and in Africa, with marginalized communities. Provisioning of paralegal support and community mobilization, [...] accountability. It is a new methodology, which was previous shown as positive and we are accepting to pilot and to implement for the first year, because we believe that they have tried good and it has shown good results, so let's us try. If it does not work we have the right to say 'it is not working we will stop this'. And to propose other activities. So... it is flexible. It's good that they are not seeing only as donors, but as partners. That's why we trust in them and, when they are proposing and they are having the real contact with the community. For example, when we have community meeting they are always present in those meetings. Even the responsible people from Europe, from the Main Office, or from Budapest are coming. It's very important for us as an organization in order to keep our trust with the community. That's why we have never had some representative from those International Roma Union, you know? In order to show us what is their main vision, how we can help them and they can help us.

RESEARCHER: And... I don't want to take much of your time today, but I would like to make another question, this is more subjective and maybe more complicated. I'm facing this project, let's call like this, this political project to be Roma a nation, recognize Roma as a nation. But I'm facing a lot of troubles when I ask to the people what define a Roma person. So, it is more or less what I want from you: how you feel what define? Because there is a lot of different languages, lot of different cultures, or even a lot of dialects... but different cultures, different religions and this project want to put all these people together. So... how manage to put all these people together? What define to be a Roma, to be part of this nation?

M: Well, I can answer this question from both... from two perspectives. From my perspective as a member of the Roma community and from how we manage to answer question when we work with specific community. For example, in my case, I have being taught from my parents that my native language is Romanes, I'm Romani... and all those cultural aspects... the specific way to celebrating, some events in life, the specific clothing, for those events.. The surrounding, the relatives..

RESEARCHER: But then those people who, for instance - there is a big number in Hungary, I don't know if here in Macedonia also -, that they know how to speak

Romanes, but they do not follow any other pattern of this culture. Are they Romani? How put these different groups together? Maybe I need to rephrase. Because all this idea to be a Roma nation come with the plan to improve the life of Roma. So, how improve the life of Roma being all of them so different and how to put them together? [How to improve the life of Roma creating a single project for so different people?]

M: That's the big issue. You have to be aware of all the specificities of each sub-group is bringing with them. For example, we have also a group of Roma in... as I said, those who are not speaking the Romani language have also a barriers with identify themselves in Roma. For example, we have a lot of students who are coming from those places to study in Skopje, and they are living in Šuto Orizari and they have... they have different names from the standard Romani names. And they have faced discrimination within their community, you know? The general Roma population is refusing them as Roma members, because they have different names. But they have the right to declare, to fill as they are Roma...

RESEARCHER: I would be wrong if I say that in certain level the Roma identity is being built on the anti-Gypsyism feeling?

M: Yes. You are completely right.

RESEARCHER: But do you think that build an identity on anti-Gypsyism can help to overcome the anti-Gypsyism?

M: Yes.

RESEARCHER: How?

M: Well... you know... we are facing with a lot of pressure to assimilate... the Roma culture, identity, from the majority of the community [...]. So, if we bring this out as a problem, because... you know... the general community is not familiarized with the Roma identity, Roma culture... you know... we have just those anti-Gypsyism stuff: Roma... you know... dirty, beggars, thieves, etc.. you know? If we use this as an opportunity to [...] `yes, this and this. But Roma also... Roma are also this and this`, we could make stronger the feeling of the Roma identity and this is one of the methods that we are using with our students for entering, for example, our activities, and who have those doubts. Because, we are working with medical students who are supposed to work as doctors and they are facing with the issue `how I'll be perceived as a Roma doctor? Should I be seen from my colleagues as a less quality [doctor]?`. Although they are great students with great [...] during the six years of their studies. And then they are facing trouble [...] that moment `who am I? How should I present myself? Should I present myself as more integrated Roma?`... you know... because in many of the times you say... you face with comments `oh... you are Roma, but you're not like them`, `the rest are the Roma`. We are trying to rebuild that answer. It is very wrong because I am Roma as the other Roma. I just had the good start... To be lucky to have the good start, from my parents, to push me a little bit more than the other Roma which did not have, maybe, the financial support at the moment to push their children to attend the university.

RESEARCHER: And now the last question, which came to my mind right now. Among the different dialects of Roma here in Šutka, how to decide which one you are using in the schools?

M: In the schools we are using the literature Roma language because we are... I think that there is this one book, one grammar and one..

RESEARCHER: From Matras, I think?

M: No, I think it's a book from [...], from... I can ask my colleagues.

RESEARCHER: No worries, we can talk by email.

M: They have been written by Macedonians writers, Macedonian Roma writers, so they have been elected by the Ministry of the Education as an official learning material.

RESEARCHER: But it is a Macedonian thing, it is not...

M: No... It's not an international, it is Macedonian.

RESEARCHER: So, probably is different of the standardized Roma from Romania?

M: Probably, yes. Must probably, I have never seen... But we can send them to you.

[Interruption]

[Talking about a group of Roma which the Government want to take out from Skopje downtown]

M: It's hard because the society has been a long living with this idea that the Roma should be put there.

RESEARCHER: That they need to be assimilated. Also the idea of the other, because Roma is always the other, the other one. It's good to have them there, because this prove that we are not them.

M: Yes. We have this partner project now which is a new idea on othering of the Roma people. The project is called 'How the state policies for employment are othering the Roma people'. We will have this research by the end of October, so if we stay in contact by email I will send it to you. [...]. For example, they don't know the 'othering' word, what does 'othering' means, but they are doing it. They are 'othering' the Roma people...

RESEARCHER: Maybe they don't even have the intention, but it's happening...

M: Yes. This can be useful also to you...

RESEARCHER: Definitively to me.

M: What have been accomplished in the area of education. Because if you talk with somebody from our government they will say 'the area of education? great. We have done most in the area of education.'

RESEARCHER: Sorry: is it relate with the Decade?

M: Yes. Our idea is... through this law, that we have access to information from public character, to ask the institutions 'what you have done?'. Because, they are saying 'we gave scholarship!'. Yes, you have give them, but with the donors funds, with the Roma Educational Funds. Is it these scholarship enough to you to say that you have progress in the education? What about the culture? This is included! What about the learning in Romani language? Have you [...] these books? Have you trained the teachers to work with Roma children? Because they have planned many trainings, intercultural tranings, intercultural exchanges, but when we got the answers from the institutions we saw... we can see that they have doing nothing in those important issues. The scholarship is not... of course it is an important issue..

RESEARCHER: And for me is quite important because, in my point of view, the educational plans and policies are a really strong way to create national consciousness. And I'm trying to understand how the national conscious is being constructed among the Roma people. So, yes... thanks a lot.