ROMA RESISTANCE DURING THE HOLOCAUST AND IN ITS AFTERMATH

Collection of Working Papers

Roma Resistance during the Holocaust and in its Aftermath

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The Tom Lantos Institute (TLI) is an independent human and minority rights organization with a particular focus on Jewish, Roma and Hungarian communities and other ethnic or national, linguistic and religious minorities. As an international research, education and advocacy platform, TLI aims to bridge the gaps between research and policy, norms and practice.

TLI's Roma Rights and Citizenship Programme promotes the self-understanding of the Roma and aims at breaking down their prejudiced representation. Research projects examine the nature and conditions of Roma participation in social, economic, cultural life and in public affairs, encouraging active citizenship. Research and education on Roma genocide and resistance explore the darkest period of Roma history generating understanding and reconciliation between Roma and non-Roma.

Roma and Resistance during the Holocaust and in its Aftermath is a joint project with ternYpe – International Roma Youth Network and La Voix des Rroms co-financed by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and the Stiftung "Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft". The project aims to fill the gap in academic research, awareness raising in relation to the Roma Holocaust and resistance.

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Introduction

by Angéla Kóczé and Anna Lujza Szász

This collection of working papers is the final product of a two-year project on the resistance of the Roma during the Holocaust and its aftermath. Even though the project has finished, ongoing research to collect testimonies by young Roma activists and researchers will continue to develop a deeper understanding of the patterns and extent of the persecution and extermination of Roma within Europe. Further objectives of the project included assisting young Roma researchers and those active in their communities collecting testimonies, supporting Roma scholarship on the genocide by strengthening the Roma constituency for the remembrance of the Roma genocide, as well as mobilizing and advocating for the involvement of Roma in official Holocaust commemorations. This publication aims to raise awareness, spark public discussions and create more visibility for the resistance of the Roma during the Holocaust and its aftermath.

This edited volume recapitulates only the research part of the programme, mainly consisting of new archival and testimonial evidence. On the one hand, it confirms earlier findings that focused on the victimization of Roma during the Holocaust and its aftermath. On the other hand, it represents a novel stage in the social process of collective trauma of Roma by making a new claim: Roma and Sinti were not simply victims of the Nazi regime. They fought and resisted, both individually and collectively, during the Holocaust and its aftermath to get official recognition, and also demanded both emotional and institutional compensation, as well as symbolic reparation.

1. Terms naming the various population groups[1]

Since different terms are used throughout the volume to refer to various groups, it is imperative to shortly discuss the use of these terms. The First World Roma Congress was held in 1971 and is mainly known for highlighting the similarities of diverse Roma communities and laying the foundation for a shared Roma identity. Under the auspices of the Congress, a

[1] On the basis of the "Council of Europe Descriptive Glossary of Terms Relating to Roma Issues," http://a.cs.coe.int/team20/cahrom/documents/Glossary%20Roma%20EN%20version%2018%20May%202012.pdf. Last accessed 21 March, 2018.

flag and anthem were created, 8 April was chosen as International Roma Day and the name "Roma" was defined as politically correct, whilst "Gadje" was chosen to refer to non-Roma allies showing solidarity and being and supportive towards the Roma.

Although the term "Roma" is the generic term used internationally, it also denotes all groups with the same Indian origin, as well as those who refer to themselves as *Roma*. They constitute up to 87-88% of the Roma population and contain in itself sub-groups, such as the *Kalderash, Lovari* etc. The *Sinti* share a common Indian origin with the Roma; — the word "Sinti" comes from the word "Sind" (an ancient Indian name)—however, they speak a Germanised version of the Romani language and are found, primarily, in German-speaking countries (i.e. Germany, Austria, Switzerland). *Travellers* live in Great Britain and Ireland and are ethnically distinct from the Roma and Sinti. In the former, they are regarded as an ethnically distinct group, whilst in the latter they are considered as an indigenous community. The French term for Travellers – *Gens du voyage* – used in France as an administrative term, has been used since the 1970s to refer generically to the Roma, Sinti/Manush and Gypsies/Gitans, and other non-Roma groups with a nomadic way of life. *Nomad* was a category used by the French administration between 1912 and 1969 to target specific activities and lifestyles while registering anthropometrical data. *Gypsies* is the exonym of the Roma population among English-speaking people; however, since the term is loaded with negative connotations people tend to use the word "Roma" instead.

2. Holocaust vs genocide[2]

A few words need to be also said about the ongoing scholarly debate whether the terms "Holocaust" and "genocide" should refer exclusively to the Jewish victims of the Nazi regime or whether the terms can be also used to refer to the mass persecution of Roma during World War II. The concept of genocide was developed under the shadow of Auschwitz and then defined in the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948 (Convention). As a reaction to the mass murder of enemies of the Nazi regime, the Polish jurist Raphael Lemkin formulated the concept during World War II. The Convention followed Lemkin's guidance and defined genocide as "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group".[3] The concept was never applied until the beginning of the 1960's when, as a result of the Eichmann trial, the experience of the persecutions of the 1940's were given more and more attention, and the notion of genocide was used as a framework for interpretation. The persecution of

[2] On the basis of Anna Lujza Szász, "Memory emancipated. Exploring the Memory of the Nazi Genocide of Roma in Hungary," (PhD diss., ELTE, 2015), 22-27.

[3] "United Nations Genocide Convention," http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cppcg/cppcg.html, last accessed 21 March, 2018.

the Jews was aimed at their biological destruction and reached genocidal proportions. These experiences were described by survivors during the trial. It became a *primus inter pares*, an archetype of genocide.[4]

Guenter Lewy, in his book, *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies*[5] denies the possibility that the Roma experienced genocide during the time of the Holocaust. Lewy states that there was no deliberate plan, "final solution", nor were the Roma considered as a major threat to society. Hence he argues that the annihilation of Roma should not be compared to that of the Jews.

Ian Hancock, in his text, *Downplaying the Porrajmos:*[6] *The Trend to Minimize the Romani Holocaust*, responds to Lewy's arguments one by one, and provides a thorough criticism.[7] Indeed, he claims that although there is a lack of documentation, incarcerations, deportations and gassings of Roma happened. Furthermore, while the definition of Roma was based on social rather than on racial grounds, the fact that every Roma was viewed as a criminal was indeed racist.

Yehuda Bauer, Professor of Holocaust Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, draws a different conclusion: "All Jews were to be killed; '*pure*' Gypsies in Germany were to be kept alive, at least according to one Nazi view; in the other part of Nazi Europe, wandering Gypsies were sought out and brutally murdered, whereas sedentary Gypsies – apparently the overwhelming majority – were left alone. And mainly, the Jews were, in Nazi eyes, *the* enemy, whereas the Gypsies were a marginal irritant. (…) It happened at the same time, as the Holocaust, and there are of course many similarities. Yet it appears that the Holocaust is very much a unique case. If someone prefers to call it Judeocide, that is his/her privilege. It is exactly the same thing: it is the mass murder of the Jews at the hands of the Nazis."[8] Hence Bauer claims that the persecution of the Roma was genocidal, but cannot be called a Holocaust.

The Western Jewish narrative of the Holocaust becomes the model for remembering and renders exclusive significance to the victims and their testimonies. In other words the

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4 On the basis of Anna Lujza Szász, "*Memory emancipated,* .22.

5 Guenther Lewy, *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies* (Oxford University Press: New York, 2000).

6 Ian Hancock, a linguist of Roma origin from England, came up with the word Porrajmos (devouring) in 1993. He considered the word adequate however slightly modified it into Baro Porrajmos [*Great Devouring*] in order to make it more exclusive.

7 Ian Hancock, "Downplaying the Porrajmos: The Trend to Minimize the Romani Holocaust," http://www.radoc.net/radoc.php?doc=art_h_review_lewy&lang=fr&articles=true. Moreover, one of Simon Wiesenthal Lectures Karola Fings gave a talk on the epistemological and ethical dimensions of the denial of the Roma genocide. See http://vwi.ac.at/index.php/veranstaltungen/simon-wiesenthal- lectures/icalrepeat.detail/2014/12/11/111/-/karola-fings-opferkonkurrenzen-debatten-um-den-voelkermord-an- den-sinti-und-roma, last accessed 16 March 2018. In addition, Michael Stewart argues that genocide can happen even if its features are unconventional. See Michael Stewart, "How Does Genocide Happen?" in *Questions of Anthropology*, eds. R. Astuti, J. Parry and C. Stafford (Oxford: Berg, 2007); Peter Black, "The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies by Guenter Lewy," *Central European History* 35 (2002): 142-143.

8 Yehuda Bauer and Sybil Milton, "Correspondence: 'Gypsies and the Holocaust'," *The History Teacher* 25 (1992): 515.

legitimate speaker, who can give an authentic and, therefore, true account of the past, is the traumatized victim. Thus the recognition of the act of genocide in the case of Roma means that their sufferings are "labelled," and recognized as legitimate. While being part of the Holocaust is an entrance-ticket to Europe: it means that Roma share the memory of one of the most formative European events, thus, generally speaking, Roma are part of European history. The Holocaust discourse created situations, concepts and ideas, as well as established positions through which the past was able to be shared and endowed with meanings. These meanings have been important for both the Roma communities, to understand and expose their fate, and for the non-Roma (especially intellectuals) to include Roma in the established narrative about the past.

This volume mainly uses the term "Roma/Romani Holocaust" to describe the fate of the "Gypsies" under Nazi oppression. This is the term that the Roma civil rights movement and its national initiatives and organizations used in the 1970's, when first claiming recognition for the Roma victims of the Nazis as part of an attempt to ensure dignity and recognition for Roma. Gergely Romsics, in this volume, persuasively argues for the usage of the term "Roma Holocaust". He claims that "the Holocaust as a signifier also references, through the imperative of 'never again', the normative core of a European community based on rights, democracy and peace.

3. The art of victimhood

The researcher's task is enormous in regard to the experience of Roma Holocaust: power structures, and their relation to the memory of the event, have to be taken into consideration before one explores the topic. Attention shall be shifted from textuality to other, less mainstream forms and carriers of memory since Roma (or other minorities) might have difficulty in gaining access to knowledge, being regarded as legitimate speakers, or being incorporated into the canon. Therefore it important to acknowledge that the memory of Roma Holocaust is often represented in other media than "text", and these various representations introduce the researcher to an equally exciting field of analysis.

In 2004, at *The Hidden Holocaust* exhibition at the Kunsthalle in Budapest, Tibor Balogh,[9] a contemporary Roma artist, exhibited a work entitled *Rain of Tears*. As the description of his project says:

> A booth will be built, with a 100x100 cm floor and a 230 cm ceiling. (Ergonomics tells us that the smallest room a human feels comfortable in is 110x110 cm in size.) Inside, the booth is lit by a bare bulb. The walls will be papered with (photocopies and prints of) shocking and

[9] See "Tiszadobtól Velencei Biennáléig Balogh Tibor képzőművész," http://www.frokk.hu/rendezvenyeink/2007/15-kiallitasok/58-baloghtibivelriportvelencebiannale; "Balogh Tibor," http://baloghtibor.hu/eletrajz_balogh.html

> disturbing documents and photos related to the Roma Holocaust and the continuous discrimination that has been the lot of the Roma ever since. Once inside, you cannot ignore the documents, wherever you look, you see these. Outside the booth you find small test tubes (like the ones used for urinalysis in hospitals), while the instructions are to be found inside. Once you read the instruction, the action begins.[10]

Thus one shall imagine a booth with an open door in the museum space, and its inner space is slightly lightened and covered with Roma-related news. The visitor shall take a test tube and go inside the booth, only one person at a time, and close the door. The space seems big enough but still uncomfortably small. The light invokes the atmosphere of an archive, while the visitor is overwhelmed by the presence of the documents. However, this situation does not offer the freedom of research archives: In this booth one reads what is papered on the walls, nothing less and nothing more. The instruction is as follows:

> You take a phial, step inside the booth and spend there as much time as you like. You collect your tears in the phial, then cap it when you are finished and mark it with your name using the pen in the booth. You place the phial on a small shelf on the inside; the artists will take it and hang it outside the booth and turn it into a drop of rain

Accordingly, the act of reading, in that intimate space, shall give rise to tears, which shall then be collected in that test tube, and placed on a shelf after you leave. If visitors take the time, attempt to attribute certain meanings to this installation, or seek to unfold its deep-seated messages they may encounter an avalanche of themes and ideas.

Instead of taking that path and dwelling deeply on the analysis of Balogh's project we merely wish to highlight one segment of it, that is the *notion of victimhood*. As his work suggests, the act of crying is a learned and collective manifestation of mourning. Instead of its natural essence, the artist focuses on its learned aspect, that is crying is a performative reaction to loss, to trauma. Balogh creates an environment that guarantees privacy; however, the more time the visitor spends in the box, the more clear the link between the Nazi genocide and present-day racism becomes, emphasising not only how thin the border between the two actually is, but also the necessity to learn about, and remember the past in order to prevent racism. The position in which the artist invites the visitor to be, as well as the ways in which the memory of the Roma Holocaust is positioned, is the position of the victim, the traumatized. Through the production of a community, by the common experience of crying, that is based on the re-experience of traumatic past events, Balogh emphasises the need to establish an official memorial for the Roma Holocaust.

As Jeffrey C. Alexander explores in his writings, during the Eichmann trial in the 1960's, the experience of the Holocaust became the focus of attention, and as a result, genocide as a framework of interpretation came into the limelight. The persecution of the Jews was aimed at their biological destruction and reached genocidal proportions, and these traumas were

[10] Tibor Balogh, "Untitled," in *The Hidden Holocaust catalogue* (Budapest: Műcsarnok, 2004).

descried by survivors of the Holocaust. The trial evoked "the trauma of such enormity and horror that it had to be radically set apart from the world and all of its other traumatising events, and which became inexplicable in ordinary, rational terms."[11] In fact the Western Jewish narrative of the Holocaust has become the model for remembering, and places significance exclusively on the victims and their testimonies. In other words, the legitimate speaker who provides an authentic, and therefore true account of the past, is the traumatised victim.

Thus, in order to obtain recognition of the memory of the Roma Holocaust, one must speak a language that can be heard and is labelled as legitimate: from the victim's position, this means using the language of trauma. Roma will gain a legitimate place in Europe via recognition of their suffering in European history's most shameful event, by engaging in the discourse on the Holocaust, and speaking from the victim's point of view.[12]

4. Resistance

The art of resistance

Let us tell the story of József Kakuczi, who was employed by the Hungarian Gypsy Cultural Association as a lecturer.[13] He visited Roma settlements, talked to people, held presentations and wrote reports on the circumstances and health of community members, as well as the arbitrariness of both the gendarmerie and the local Roma leader (Vajda). He served in the army, but was discharged due to an illness,. During the 1940s he was in a state of "constant escape". As he explains:

> I was drafted in 1937 and was taken to the Count Ortutay military base. (…) Military service was extremely hard. As a matter of my discretionary leave Defence law condemned me to six

[11] Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma," in. Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity ed. Ron Eyerman (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004), 1–30.

[12] See for instance Annette Wieviorka, *The Era of the Witness. Cornell University Press* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006); Huub van Baar, "From »Time-Banditry« to the Challenges of Established Historiographies. Romani Contributions to Old and New Images of the Holocaust," in *Multi-disciplinary Approaches to Romani Studies,* eds., Michael Stewart and Rövid Marton (Budapest: CEU Press, 2010).

[13] The Hungarian Gypsy Cultural Association was established in 1958 and existed until 1961. Its first leader was Mária László, and its primary goals were to contribute and promote the betterment of Roma; to provide cultural rights; to cooperate with the state in order to improve health, education, housing or employment conditions; as well as to educate the people. Its most important mission was to protect and cultivate Roma culture with the belief that culture is not only the essence of a community but also a weapon, a tool to fight against marginalization. The Association was also a legal forum and offered assistance in legal procedures, cases. Its documentation is deposited in the Museum of Ethnography among which one can find hand-written letters which tell stories, lay complaints about the every-day life of the Roma. The narrative of József Kakuczi was found among those letters. (Deposited in the Museum of Ethnography, Mária László inheritance, 5.box)

> weeks imprisonment. They came because I could not take that many slaps. (…) we attempted to escape. Three of us. In great despair in 1937. In 1938 I became sick and suffered for two years and there are still visible signs on the left side of my neck and the right of my face. In 1939 I gave up arms (…) and as a sick person I was carried home, upon request, to be allowed to die at home. (…) In 1940 I was asked to participate in a 30-day long combat practice. I left the army in 1940 as a discharged service-man. (…) In 1942 I received a draft call to which I did not respond because then my type [fajta] of people were deported too. So I couldn't be a patriot only a military fugitive. I was on the run till 1943. In 1943 I lived in the same household as Rozália Sárközi, who now lives in Esztergom, then with Zsófia Horváth. With Rozália Sárközi they supported me financially. (…) In September 1944 I stayed near Pesthidegkút and in the early hours of the morning a gendarme woke me up from my deep and tired dreams. Zsófia Horváth was with me of course. My hands were shackled and I was led away and taken to Pestszentlőrinc. In Pestszentlőrinc there were already many Gypsies rounded up. From Lőrinc I was taken to Lajosmizse, it might have been the middle of October, then the Glorious Red Army was approaching and we had to run away. I escaped. I found my way to Esztergom. In Esztergom I was arrested by the Arrow Cross and was about to be taken to Komárom where the others were. There were other Hungarians, Gypsies with us, we were mixed, but on the way I escaped. I wanted to go back to Esztergom but they caught me again and just about managed to put me on their truck (…) and there the Glorious Red Army caught us. It might have been the beginning of the fourth month, in 1945. The glorious army set everyone free. There were so many people that they (…) could not fit in. I went to Pesthidegkút but I was so shattered that I could not stand on my feet.

The act of reframing memories, which have been carefully worked into the contemporary collective memory of the Holocaust, would open a fascinating window onto the agency of the Roma. Evidence from survivors, the cultural memory of the Roma Holocaust that is based on the notion of victimhood and narrated from the traumatised victim's position, may be (re)explored by challenging this narrative. The subaltern, the powerless may also be able to dissent from official power relations and generate practices or rituals of resistance.

These acts of resistance might not be visible or self-evident and require the alertness, courage and capability of the reader/researcher to excavate, analyse or dispute the memory to provide a different, and deeper understanding of the past, as well as of the operation of power and the ways in which it is contested.

Returning to Kakuczi's testimony, we wish to highlight the role of women. Rozália Sárközi and Zsófia Horváth seem to appear in the text as agents. In their invisibility and position at the lower end of the hierarchical strata, they are, to a certain extent, not bound by social conventions and are capable of an original attitude towards accommodation, opposition and self-definition. Their resistance was not exclusively a fight for life, but small sets of activities motivated by love or by conscious attempts to defy the Nazis and save the life of József Kakuczi.[14]

[14] Szász, "Memory emancipated."

What we wish to argue is the necessity of epistemological openness towards the memory of Roma persecutions in order to investigate relations of resistance. That is to say, each manifestation of the memory of the Roma Holocaust may be considered as an imaginary narrative, as a product of an individual. However, in a given social and historical context, both the individual (with his or her private experience) and the collective domain— the cultural memory— define that trace of memory. These narratives will be carefully looked at in order to understand the intersections of the above realms and challenge the hegemonic interpretations of the past.

Acts of resistance

When the discourse on the Roma Holocaust emerged in the scientific historiographical context it focused exclusively on the precise number of Roma victims. As Jeffrey C. Alexander succinctly points out:

> When the trauma process enters the scientific world, it becomes subject to evidentiary stipulations of an altogether different kind, creating scholarly controversies, "revelations," and "revisions." When historians endeavor to define a historical event as traumatic, they must document, by acceptable scholarly methods, the nature of the pain, the victims, and responsibility.[15]

Due to the lack of reliable documents and acceptable scholarly methods, the estimation of Roma victims varies from 96,000 to 500,000.[16] The exclusive focus on the number of victims and "fact checking" raises the issue of victim competition, namely who was targeted and suffered more, and who are the legitimate victims of the Holocaust, the most tragic event in Europe. As one of the most tragic historical events, it has a significant and unique influence on how violence is conceptualized and analyzed sociologically or historically.

As Slawomir Kapralski explains,[17] the long period of silence regarding the murder of approximately half a million Roma is due to a number of reasons. According to him, the particularities of the Roma persecution have been largely undocumented and the incorporation of Roma into the widely shared Holocaust narrative remains one of the greatest challenges in academic scholarship. This volume attempts to offer a new theoretical concept—the issue of resistance—which serves as an overarching theme connecting the various chapters.

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[15] Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma," in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* ed. Ron Eyerman (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004). 18.

[16] Weiss-Wendt, ed., *The Nazi Genocide of the Gypsies: Reevaluation and Commemoration* (New York-Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2013), 1.

[17] Slawomir Kapralski, "The Aftermath of the Roma Genocide: From Implicit memories to Commemoration" in *The Nazi Genocide of the Gypsies: Reevaluation and Commemoration,* ed. A. Weiss-Wendt (New York-Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2013), 229-252.

Resistance is an under-theorized concept in relation to the Holocaust and its aftermath. Szász,[18] for instance, explicitly uses resistance based on the Foucaldian approach posited on a relation of dominations, which are always in a dialectical relationship with resistance. Moreover, based on a Foucaldian thesis, the multiplicity of power always provokes resistance that eludes power and creates frustration.[19] The existing literature attempts to institutionalize the narration of Roma Holocaust, characterize the memory of Roma as "silenced",[20] "forgotten and unnoticed",[21] "hidden",[22] "muted",[23] "implicit",[24] "non-memory that is not forgetfulness".[25] However, Isabella Fonseca approaches the memory of erasure through the concept of the "art of forgetting"[26] which can be viewed as an alteration of resistance. These expressions suggest that the fragmented narration of Roma Holocaust is locked into a dialectical struggle where conditions are created by those who have an epistemic power to legitimate and "scientifically validate" the experience of the Nazi genocide of Roma. Occasionally, this narrative is resisted and challenged by Roma and pro-Roma scholars and activists. The first, and most important, face of resistance is, therefore, a confrontation with the historical narratives that construct Roma as victims, agentless and muted during the Holocaust and its aftermath.

The productive and constructive resistance has been attested by several Romani and pro-Romani intellectuals' scholarly work, including Ian Hancock, Ágnes Daróczi, and János Bársony.[27] Their audacious writings challenge the dominant narratives of Roma Holocaust,

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[18] Anna Lujza Szász, *Is Survival Resistance? Experiences of Roma Women under the Holocaust* (Saarbrücken, Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing, 2012). Szász was inspired by a lecture by Lenore J. Weitzman, on Jewish women's resistance in Poland's Grodno and Bialystok ghettos during World War II. She approached the Nazi genocide of Roma through the various forms of resistance that challenged every abuse of power. She analyzed interviews with Romani women survivors and relatives of the victims. They demonstrated a different notion of resistance that manifested in a daily struggle with "silent and offstage discourse". Szász, in her research, conceptualizes resistance as fantasy, courage, oral culture, language, which are the basic elements of Romani resistance during the Holocaust and in its aftermath.

[19] Brent L. Pickett, "Foucault and the Politics of Resistance," *Polity,* 28/4 (Summer, 1996):445-466.

[20] Katalin Katz, *Visszafojtott emlékezet: a roma holokauszt emlékezete* (Pont Kiadó: Budapest, 2005).

[21] János Bársony, and Ágnes Daróczi, eds,. *Pharrajimos: The Fate of the Roma During the Holocaust* (New York: Idebate Press, 2008). See also Jan Yoors, *Crossing* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 1988 [1971]), 38.

[22] The title of the exhibition in 2004 at the Műcsarnok in Budapest: "The Hidden Holocaust".

[23] Kapralski, "The Aftermath of the Roma Genocide," 229-252.

[24] Michael Stewart, "Remembering Without Commemoration: The Mnemonics and Politics of Holocaust Memories Among European Roma," *Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute* 10:3 (2004):561.

[25] Lech Mróz (2008) cited by Kapralski in "The Aftermath of the Roma Genocide,"232.

[26] Isabel Fonseca, *Bury Me Standing. The Gypsies and Their Journey* (New York: Vintage, 1996).

[27] Bársony and Daróczi, *Pharrajimos*. See also János Bársony and Ágnes Daróczi, *Kali trash – fekete félelem, Pharrajimos – szétvágatás, Samudaripen – legyilkolás. A romák sorsa a Holocaust idején Magyarországon, II.* (Budapest, Cigányságkutató Intézet: Romano Instituto, 2015.

and thus constitute acts of resistance that create new conditions and the opportunity to transform and examine existing knowledge production on the Nazi genocide of the Roma.

János Bársony and Ágnes Daróczi, among other Romani (and non-Romani) intellectuals, consider the Holocaust as a collective historical traumatic experience. It is a historical event that plays a crucial role in the construction of a collective identity for various Roma groups and in establishing Roma as a people with a history and collective memory in Europe. Bársony and Daróczi refute the historian, László Karsai's argument, who, like Lewy Guenter, questions the accuracy of a systemic genocide of Roma during the period of fascist regimes.[28] *The challenge of the master narrative of the Roma Holocaust constitutes an act of resistance.*

The second face of resistance is conceptualized as a transformation framework. It transforms the discursive cultural (at least the material) framework that maintains oppression, therefore foregrounds the responsibility and agency of the subjects. From the early 90s, the commemoration of the Nazi genocide of Roma became a site of resistance that attempts to transform the public discourse by focusing on collective actions, practices and expressions. As Daróczi comments: "2 August is a Memorial Day in the history of the Roma emancipation movement."[29] This productive resistance gives space to a new empowering perspective. It creates the conditions to induce a discursive shift from the image of the victim to an active actor with responsibility and agency that shapes history. This shift is crucial for fostering the dignity of, and respect towards Roma, which, in turn, is essential for fighting the discrimination and inequality Roma face in Europe today. Importantly, the acknowledgment of state and societal responsibility in the Roma genocide lays the foundations for dialogue and reconciliation.

5. Texts

With this volume, we wish to reinvigorate the dialogue about the Holocaust of Roma by providing some new archival and testimonial evidence. **Chiriac Bogdan's** chapter explores the various patterns of 'disobedient behaviour' displayed by the Roma deported to Transnistria between 1942 and 1944. This investigation provides a historical interpretation of acts of resistance by Roma deportees, ranging from writing letters of protest to the Romanian authorities, to organizing escapes from work camps, which involved challenging deportation measures or openly opposing the Romanian administration in Transnistria. **Lise Foisneau and Valentin Merlin** provide rich empirical evidence, based on systematically reviewed French administrative divisional archives about the French nomads' resistance from 1939 to 1946. **Joanna Talewicz-Kwiatkowska** exposes the historical significance that is assigned to

[28] László Karsai, *A cigánykérdés Magyarországon 1919-1945. Út a cigány Holocausthoz* (Budapest: Cserépfalvi Kiadó, 1992. See also Lewy Guenter, The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[29] Szász, "Memory emancipated."

the date of 16 May, which became Roma Resistance Day. This is the day in 1944 that Roma and Sinti, detained in the *Zigeunerlager* (the section for Gypsies at the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp) reportedly revolted against SS soldiers to defend themselves from death. Her chapter offers a comprehensive analysis of sources related to the events of 16 May, 1944 in the Roma-Sinti sub-camp and exposes some other, lesser-known, resistance activities that took place in Auschwitz. **Gergely Romsics** attempts to provide a comprehensive analysis of the representation of Roma memory within the context of the Holocaust. In so doing, he exposes the various shifts in its analytic focus covering Roma activism, memory work and identity politics in the arenas of interaction and contestation. **Éva Blénesi** reflects on the Roma Holocaust through the lens of two contemporary Roma artists, Katarzyna Pollok and Károly Bari, who deploy a variety of symbols and metaphoric language to preserve, resist and transmit the memory of the Holocaust.

Between survival and noncompliance: Roma 'acts of resistance' in Transnistria during World War II

Chiriac Bogdan[1]

1. Introduction

In the summer and autumn of 1942, while Romanian troops were fighting on the Eastern Front alongside the Wehrmacht against the Soviet Union, the Antonescu regime decided to put an end to the 'Gypsy question' in Romania and ordered the deportation of around 25,000 Roma[2] to the eastern province of Transnistria[3]. The deportation orders targeted those Roma classified by the Romanian authorities as 'dangerous and undesirable' on account of their nomadic lifestyle, extreme poverty and level of criminality, purportedly motivated by a pragmatic concern for maintaining public order and restoring 'social health'. In reality, the deportation of the Roma can be seen as part of a larger ethnic-cleansing programme imple-mented by the Antonescu regime, which affected in an uneven, but nonetheless destructive

[1] I owe a debt of gratitude to the staff of the Tom Lantos Institute in Budapest, the English language editors and the other participants involved in the research project 'Roma Resistance during the Holocaust and Its Aftermath. Research, Education, Remembrance' for all their warm encouragement and valuable advice. To all of them go my sincere thanks for helping me improve the original manuscript.

[2] Viorel Achim, *The Roma in Romanian History* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), 175 and Radu Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania: the destruction of Jews and Gypsies under the Antonescu regime, 1940-1944* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2000), 226.

[3] Transnistria was a province created in the temporarily occupied Soviet territory following the initial military victories of the Axis troops during Operation Barbarossa in 1941. Romania annexed the land between the Dniester, Bug, Liadova rivers and the Black Sea in August 1941 but was forced to abandon it in early 1944 due to the advance of the Red Army in the region. During this time, the Antonescu regime established a governorate in the new territory (its headquarters was eventually established in Odessa), and adopted a series of occupation policies that radically affected the lives of the local population, as well as the Jewish and Roma groups deported here from the Old Kingdom. For more details, see Dennis Deletant, *Hitler's Forgotten Ally. Ion Antonescu and His Regime, Romania, 1940 -1944* (Houndmills, Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 166-171 and Walter Laqueur and Judith Tydor Baumel, ed., *The Holocaust Encyclopedia* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 635-640.

manner, the lives of Jewish and Roma minorities, as well as several smaller non-Orthodox denominations, such as the Innochentists[4]. For the hundreds of thousands of people deported to Transnistria, this eastern province did not turn out to be a 'model colony', as Romanian wartime propaganda boasted, but a 'vale of tears', where they were exploited, abused and ultimately destroyed[5].

Despite the heavy death toll (almost 11,000 Roma deportees perished in Transnistria)[6] and the unspeakable trauma suffered by the survivors who managed to return to Romania in 1944, the wartime plight of the Roma has not received, until recently, significant attention, scholarly or otherwise, in Romania. The prevalent opinion being, that their wartime deportation was a social measure rather than one of a racial nature[7]. The publication of several pioneering studies in the last two decades has made several important corrections to this opinion by analysing deportations of the Roma within the framework of genocide and situating anti-Roma persecutions within the larger interwar eugenics research and wartime ethnic-cleansing policies[8].

Recent debates on the systematic nature and racial motivation behind the wartime persecution of the Roma in Romania have opened new avenues of research that promise to produce new insights, not only into their wartime victimization, but also into their resistance to persecution. The new archival material concerning the fate of deportees in Transnistria suggests that not all Roma remained passive in the face of persecution: some of them engaged in individual or collective actions of protest, escape or other patterns of disobedient and disruptive behaviour, as some members of the occupation administration noted with disapproval. This was neither unnoticed, nor unsanctioned by the central authorities in Bucharest. While their largely spontaneous nature makes the task of generalization difficult, these actions can be interpreted within the framework of 'resistance' by redefining this concept in a manner that pays more attention to non-armed, civilian struggle to resist state persecution and violence.

The present study pursues this path of investigation by exploring the various patterns of 'disobedient behaviour' displayed by the Roma deported to Transnistria between 1942 and

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[4] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea țiganilor în Transnistria* (Bucureşti; Editura Enciclopedică, 2004), 1: vii.

[5] The number of Jews, Roma and Innochentists who perished during World War II in Romanian-controlled territories (including Transnistria) has yet to be been determined with absolute precision and remains a controversial topic to this day. Some specialists estimate that between 280,000 and 380,000 Romanian and Ukrainian Jews, around 11,000 Romanian Roma and around 2000 Innochentists perished during the Holocaust in Romanian-controlled territories. For further details, see Tuvia Friling, Mihail E. Ionescu and Radu Ioanid, ed., *Final Report/International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania; president of the commission: Elie Wiesel* (Iași: Polirom, 2004), 381-382.

[6] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea,* 1: xx and Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania*, 235-236.

[7] Dorel Bancoș, *Social și național în politica guvernului Ion Antonescu* (București: Editura Eminescu, 2000), 216.

[8] See, for instance, Vladimir Solonari, *Purificarea națiunii. Dislocări forțate de populație și epurări etnice în România lui Ion Antonescu, 1940-1944*, trans. Cătălin Drăcşineanu (Iași: Editura Polirom, 2005), 245-268.

1944[9]. Drawing on Romanian archival materials and testimonies of Roma survivors, this investigation provides a historical interpretation of those activities initiated by the Roma deportees, ranging from writing letters of protests to the Romanian authorities to organizing escapes from work camps, which involved challenging the deportation measures or openly opposing the Romanian administration in Transnistria. In doing so, this article aims to determine the extent to which the said activities can be interpreted, not only as the outcome of the 'survival strategies' adopted by ordinary people confronted with extraordinary adversity, but also as 'acts of resistance' in the face of state persecution and violence. Such an interpretation starts from the premise that, in the case of the Roma deportees, 'survival' and 'resistance' represented two sides of the same coin because their continuous struggle to survive in Transnistria overlapped, in many cases, with their desperate efforts to ensure, despite all adversity and persecution, their safe return to Romania.

The main research questions that this study will address are related to the nature and specific forms assumed by the Roma 'acts of resistance'. What motivated certain Roma deportees to adopt non-compliant and disobedient behaviour towards the discriminatory and oppressive policies adopted by the Antonescu regime? What were the factors that favoured or inhibited the emergence of clandestine activities among the Roma deportees? In attempting to answer these questions, this study articulates its main arguments around four sections: First, the analytical framework and research methods, which discusses previous research on the topic and the key concepts and primary sources in the present study; second, the historical background which explains the circumstances that favoured or inhibited the Roma 'acts of resistance' in Transnistria; third, the analysis of the main types of clandestine activities undertaken by the Roma deportees; and, fourth, a concluding section that summarizes and discusses the key findings of the research.

2. Analytical framework and research methods: previous research, main concepts and primary sources

The resistance of the Roma deportees in Transnistria represents a relatively new area of research in Romanian historiography that has been studied neither independently nor

[9] The fact that the present article does not discuss Roma involvement in armed and organized forms of resistance does not derive from a narrow or reductionist perspective on the topic, but from the very limitations imposed by the scope and nature of the primary sources available at this time. The vast majority of the Romanian archival records and Roma survivors' testimonies provide details about non-violent ('civilian') forms of resistance, while the very few recorded cases of Roma violent ('armed') forms of resistance against oppression in Romanian-controlled territories render the efforts to generalize quite problematic. Conversely, the participation of Roma individuals in anti-fascist and/or Communist partisan movements in Romanian-controlled territories, apart from not being well documented in Romanian historiography, raises a different set of questions pertaining to the actual motivations (political persecution, ideological convictions and/or racial oppression) behind the decision to engage in such forms of organized resistance.

extensively, and is only occasionally discussed as part of the larger topic of the deportation of the Roma. Tracing the evolution of the historiographical discourse on this topic, as thin and disparate as it might be, from its earliest stages during the Communist period to the present day, would fall outside the scope of this article. Yet, it should be noted that the deportation of the Roma continues to represent a contentious and understudied topic, both inside and outside Romanian academia, due in part to the scarcity of primary sources, as well as to the difficulty of coming to terms with the country's 'problematic past' (Romania's participation in World War II and in the Holocaust) and the marginal role usually attributed to the Roma in mainstream historiography[10].

The controversy surrounding the Roma genocide is far from over, as the proponents of conflicting interpretations of the nature and motivations behind the deportations continue to argue over the responsibility of the Antonescu regime for the death of almost 11,000 Roma in Transnistria[11]. The opinion, according to which the deportation of the Roma simply represented 'a tragic chapter' in the wartime policies of population exchange implemented by the Antonescu regime in order to deal with a 'troublesome' social group and to maintain public order, still enjoys credibility in Romanian historiography[12]. It has taken the sustained efforts of Roma and non-Roma researchers alike to challenge this interpretation and advocate for the analysis of the wartime deportation within the framework of state-sponsored persecution and genocide, as it was epitomized in the *Final Report on the Holocaust in Romania*, published in 2004[13].

Although the recent publication in Romania of several collections of archival documents[14] and testimonies of Roma survivors[15] has made important contributions to our understanding of the deportation of the Roma, research on this topic is still in the developing stage. Several aspects of wartime deportation policies, such as the various censuses undertaken by the Romanian authorities between 1941 and 1942 in order to prepare lists of Roma deportees or the repatriation of the surviving deportees in 1944, remain largely understudied. The Roma 'acts of resistance' in the face of state persecution represent a case in point. One

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[10] Radu Ioanid, Michelle Kelso and Luminița Mihai Cioabă, ed., *Tragedia romilor deportați în Transnistria: 1942-1945. Mărturii și documente* (Iași: Polirom, 2009), 16-17 and Brigitte Mihok, "«Transferul unilateral»: deportarea romilor români în 1942-1944. Starea actuală a cercetării," in *Holocaustul la periferie. Persecutarea și nimicirea evreilor în România și Transnistria în 1940–1944*, ed. Wolfgang Benz and Brigitte Mihok, trans. Cristina Grossu-Chiriac (Chișinău: Editura Cartier, 2010), 271-284.

[11] This estimated number of Roma victims provided by Viorel Achim (*Documente privind deportarea*, 1: xx) is based on the surviving Romanian wartime records and can hardly be considered as precise or final. Other historians, such as Dennis Deletant, argued that the figure of 11, 000 Roma represents the minimum number of victims and provided a higher estimate (between 10,000 and 20,000 Roma). For further details, see Deletant, *Hitler's Forgotten Ally,* 4.

[12] Bancoș, *Social și național,* 215-237; Dumitru Șandru, *Mișcări de populație în România (1940-1948)* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 2003), 165-175.

[13] Friling, Ionescu and Ioanid, ed., *Final Report*, 223-243.

[14] See, for instance, Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea*, vol. 1-2.

[15] See, for instance, Ioanid, Kelso and Mihai Cioabă, eds., *Tragedia romilor.*

possible explanation for why the above-mentioned topic has received less attention than Roma victimization could be that the conventional understanding of 'wartime resistance' in Romania is still shaped by a biased interpretation. Official historiography from the communist era usually defined this concept primarily from an ideological and political standpoint, restricted it to active resistance (armed or otherwise), as opposed to passive opposition, against the forces of 'fascism and imperialism' and openly favoured class-consciousness over ethnicity[16]. As a result, the acts of resistance mounted in wartime Romania by members of ethnic minorities, including Jews and Roma, was either subsumed into the larger category of anti-fascist resistance or simply marginalized[17].

Working with such a restrictive definition of 'resistance' offers limited possibility for recognizing the Roma acts of noncompliance in Transnistria as anything more than minor, isolated incidents. A few scholars working outside Romania, such as Michelle Kelso[18] and Shannon Woodcock[19], on the other hand, have adopted a broader definition of the concept in their research on the Roma deportees' experiences in Transnistria. The innovative studies that they have published on this topic, although detailed, do not actually offer a comprehensive historical interpretation of Roma 'acts of resistance' because they either confine their analysis to a limited number of cases of Roma protests and clandestine escapes from Transnistria, or filter the information gleaned from archival sources through the concept of 'Țigan identity'.

The concept of 'wartime resistance' lies at the core of this investigation and thus, requires a number of preliminary clarifications in order to justify its usage as a historical concept in the analysis of the Roma 'acts of disobedience' in Transnistria. As is the case with most complex concepts, there is no shortage of definitions of 'resistance' in the specialized literature pertaining to World War II, each adopting a more or less normative approach in their attempts to identify the distinctive traits of this phenomenon and to determine which of the various forms of underground and clandestine actions against 'the enemy' and/or 'the oppressor' fall within its scope[20]. One type of definition, that may be conventionally labelled as

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[16] See, for instance, Gheorghe Unc et al., *Rezistența în Europa în anii celui de-al doilea război mondial, 1938-1945* (București: Editura Militară, 1976), 2: 7-8.

[17] See, for instance, Ionel Hagiu, *Rezistența antifascistă în Moldova (Pagini eroice din lupta Partidului Comunist Român*) (Iași: Institutul de Studii Istorice de pe lîngă C.C. al P.C.R. and Comitetul Județean Iași al Partidului Comunist Român), 135-136.

[18] "Gypsy deportations from Romania to Transnistria 1942-1944," in *In the Shadow of the Swastika. The Gypsies during the Second World War*, ed. Donald Kenrick and Karola Fings (Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1999), 2: 95-130.

[19] "Romanian Romani Resistance to Genocide in the Matrix of Țigani Other," *Anthropology of East Europe Review* 25, no. 2 (2007): 28-43 and "What's in a name? How Romanian Romani were persecuted by Romanians as *Țigani* in the Holocaust, and how they resisted," *Interstitio* 2, no. 4 (December 2010): 29-50.

[20] Alfred J. Rieber, 'Anti-Fascist Resistance Movements in Europe and Asia During World War II' in *The Socialist Camp and World Power 1941-1960s*, vol. 2 of *The Cambridge History of Communism,* ed. Norman Naimark, Silvio Pons and Sophie Quinn-Judge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 15-37.

'focused', tends to emphasize the similarities in nature, but not necessary in ideological convictions, among the local resistance movements that emerged in Axis-dominated Europe[21]. They revolve around a number of 'binary variables', i.e. violent or non-violent, organized or diffused, individual or collective forms, and focus primarily on politically-oriented and violent actions, which may prove too restrictive when examining passive or diffuse forms or non-compliance[22].

One possible solution to overcoming this limitation would be to provide a more 'flexible' definition, that recognizes the specificity of each form of resistance arising in various social and political contexts. At the same time, it could attempt to identify a series of common criteria for delimiting the wartime resistance activities, or movements, from other forms of non-compliance with the occupying or oppressing forces. Some scholars, such as O. Wieviorka[23], proposed three intention-related criteria, i.e. the intention to fight back, to take action and to challenge the order imposed by the oppressors, whereas others, such as D. Zbuchea[24] proposed, as a common denominator, not only intention, but also the level of visibility acquired by active resistance and the recognition they received from oppressing forces. One of the main advantages of this 'flexible' definition, apart from its inclusiveness, lies in its more balanced treatment of 'passive' resistance, which has traditionally attracted less scholarly interest than active forms of resistance.

These debates, surrounding the definition of the concept of 'resistance', have brought to the fore, amongst other things, the particular situation of racially persecuted minorities during World War II. In contrast to 'national'/'patriotic' resistance movements in occupied Europe that actively opposed the Axis occupation, primarily on political or ideological grounds, members of minority groups usually engaged in acts of resistance against their oppressors in order to preserve lives rather than bring about the fall of the oppressing regime or the defeat of the occupation forces[25]. Less politicized and less articulated in its organization, the struggles of the Jewish population in Axis-occupied Europe against its oppressors assumed a diversity of forms, from the refusal to cooperate with the occupying authorities to organizing daring escapes from camps and armed uprisings in the Jewish ghettos[26]. While some were armed and violent in nature, many more were clandestine and non-violent, focusing on

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[21] See, for instance, Henri Michel, *The Shadow War: European Resistance, 1939-1945*, trans. Richard Barry (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), 7-16 and Michel, *World War II. A Short History*, trans. Gilles Cremonesi (Hampshire: Saxon House, 1973), 25-29.

[22] Nechama Tec, *Jewish Resistance: Facts, Omissions and Distortions* (Washington D.C.: Miles Lerman Center for the Study of Jewish Resistance, 1997), 2.

[23] Olivier Wieviorka, *The French Resistance*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Cambridge, Ma. and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016), 2-3.

[24] Dan Zbuchea, *Proiecte de unificare europeană ale mișcărilor de rezistență din cel de-al doilea război mondial* (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărții de Știință, 2013), 15-18.

[25] Michael R. Marrus, "Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust," *Journal of Contemporary History* 30, no. 1 (Jan. 1995): 89.

[26] Patrick Henry, ed., *Jewish Resistance against the Nazi* (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of American Press, 2014), xv-xvi.

survival and escape and contingent upon factors such as geography, access to resources and the shifting Nazi policies[27]. Examples of non-violent forms of resistance intended to sustain life and promote solidarity in the Jewish ghettos of Eastern Europe include, but are not limited to, the following activities: smuggling in and sharing food, medicine and clothing, publishing underground newspapers, founding schools, caring for orphaned children or documenting one's tragic experiences in writing.'[28] It is important to stress, as Michael R. Marrus did, the centrality of the intention to resist in the study of Jewish resistance because what actually counted the most, was not 'the level of violence, but the motivation and objectives of the resisters.'[29]

One of the most original concepts developed in the studies of wartime Jewish resistance was 'the struggle for survival' in ghettos and camps as a *sui generis* form of resistance. Criticizing the idea of 'innate Jewish passivity' in the face of persecution, historians such as Yisrael Gutman argue that Jewish life in the ghettos during World War II was, in fact, characterized by a 'defiant struggle for survival' that took a variety of forms (usually non-violent), including 'setting up mutual aid, assisting the weak, maintaining a semblance of humanity, and upholding values to which their spirit and ideology committed them.' [30] Even though Jewish underground resistance movements and armed groups did mobilize their forces to fight against persecution, European Jewry, as a whole, was too deprived of military means and logistical support from the Allies to engage in large-scale armed resistance. Confronted with systematic persecution and (imminent) mass destruction, the majority of the Jews living in the ghettos struggled to ensure their physical and spiritual survival by any means necessary and this, in itself, was their own way of resisting[31].

The scope of this concept can be enlarged by applying it *mutando mutandis* to the analysis of clandestine non-violent activities organized by other persecuted minorities that were structurally different from the armed actions of the 'national' resistance movements in Axis-occupied Europe. The Roma deportees arguably represented one such minority, subjected to state persecution in Romania, whose bitter struggle to survive in the camps of Transnistria or escape from them by resorting to various clandestine and illegal means can be seen as an expression of their efforts to challenge the order imposed by the oppressors. Interpreting the deportees' struggle to survive, as a *sui generis* act of resistance is not without challenges, given the scarcity of primary sources (there is not enough data at this stage to speak of a structured 'Roma movement of resistance' in the camps in Transnistria, but rather of 'Roma acts of resistance'). Even so, such an approach will hopefully contribute to a better

[27] Ibid., xx-xxiii.

[28] Ibid., xx.

[29] Marrus, "Jewish Resistance": 92.

[30] Yisrael Gutman, "Reflections on Jewish Resistance," in *Jews and Violence. Images, Ideologies, Realities (Studies in Contemporary Jewry, vol. XVIII),* ed. Peter Y. Medding (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 112-113.

[31] Ibid., 123.

understanding of the relation between the form assumed by Roma 'acts of resistance' in Transnistria and the constraints posed by this oppressive environment.

In conclusion to the notions briefly discussed above, my interpretation of the concept of 'resistance' is directly influenced by more 'flexible' types of definition, because their broader focus can better accommodate the non-violent and diffuse forms of resistance organized by persecuted minorities such as the Roma. For the purpose of this study, I will operate with an expanded definition of 'wartime resistance' that includes any type of action, practice or form of behaviour that deliberately challenges, or does not comply with, the order imposed by an oppressing regime. The line between 'non-conformist' actions and 'resistance' can be difficult to distinguish when it comes to the everyday struggle to survive in ghettos and work camps. Without losing sight of this issue, I propose three criteria for identifying those brave, but rather mundane actions that can be arguably described as forms of resistance: intention (deliberate choice), discernable impact and level of recognition either from other oppressed members or the oppressing regime itself.

My investigation into the Roma 'acts of resistance' in Transnistria relies on two categories of primary sources that complement each other: Romanian official archival records dating from the war period and Roma oral histories collected in the last few decades. To a large extent, this article is based on official wartime records gathered from local[32] and national Romanian archives[33] that provide invaluable insights into Roma 'acts of disobedience' recorded by the Romanian police, the gendarmerie, the secret services, the occupation administration in Transnistria, and even the central authorities in Bucharest[34]. Various primary sources quoted in this article were published in Romania in several collections of documents pertaining either to the tragic plight of the Roma during World War II[35] or to the post-war trials of major war criminals in Romania[36].

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[32] Direcția Județeană a Arhivelor Naționale Iași (henceforth DJAN Iași), Fond no. 349 '*Circa a V-a Poliție Iași, ani 1935-1949*', Folder no. 5 'Dosar relativ la țiganii nomazi/ 1942', Files 1-57.

[33] Many of the Romanian documents concerning the fate of the Roma deportees to Transnistria are available in digital format at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C (henceforth USHMM). In this paper, I have made use of this collection, catalogued as RG-25.050M 'Selected Records from Various Archives of Romania Concerning Roma', which contains thousands of wartime Romanian documents, stored on 64 microfilm reels.

[34] The present article does not claim to be exhaustive and implicitly acknowledges the fact that there may be additional sources in the Romanian archives or the USHMM repository pertaining to other cases of Roma 'acts of resistance' in wartime Transnistria that have remained unexplored. Moreover, the corroboration of the information collected from the available Romanian primary sources with archival materials from Ukrainian and Russian archives would probably lead to a more nuanced understanding of this particular topic, particularly the involvement of Roma individuals or groups in the resistance activities organized by the local partisan groups in the temporarily Soviet-occupied territories.

[35] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea*, 2 vols. and Lucian Nastasă and Andreea Varga, ed., *Minorități etnoculturale. Mărturii documentare. Țiganii din România (1919-1944)* (Cluj: Editura CRDE, 2001).

[36] Marcel-Dumitru Ciucă, Aurelian Teodorescu and Bogdan Florin Popovici, ed., *Procesul mareșalului Antonescu. Documente*, 3 vols. (București: Editura Saeculum I.O. and Editura Europa Nova, 1997-1998). I have

The interviews recorded with surviving Roma deportees represent a second category of primary sources that casts a deeper and more personal light on the suffering of the Roma in Transnistria and the strategies they employed in order to ensure their survival or escape to Romania. Similar to most oral history sources pertaining to underground resistance activities, they document aspects not usually covered in official sources and allow us to gain a more nuanced understanding of the Roma deportees' attitudes and reactions to persecution, which were more than often distorted or obscured by the bureaucratic jargon of the Romanian official documents.

Interpreting these two categories of documents is not without challenges. To start with, most Romanian official documents routinely denied the importance of Roma 'acts of resistance' based on the fact that these largely uncoordinated, non-violent actions posed no significant, long-term threat to the Antonescu regime. This tendency to downplay Roma subversive activities, coupled with official censorship, only serves to reinforce the image of so-called 'Roma passivity'. In addition, many Roma survivors who testified about the horrors endured in Transnistria displayed a tendency towards elusiveness when it came to explaining their own survival, in the sense that they were reluctant to speak openly about their sufferings in Transnistria, preferring to shift the focus from tragedy and injustice to their capacity to endure and survive[37]. Many of their stories tend to focus on sufferings and sacrifices, rather than 'acts of heroism' and routinely invoke 'luck', 'fate' or 'divine intervention' to account for the narrators' own survival and/ or escape, although their resilience and resourcefulness must have played a significant role as well[38].

3. Historical background: the anti-Roma measures adopted by the Antonescu regime

Before getting to the heart of the matter, one needs to take a closer look at the historical context in which Roma 'acts of resistance' appeared in Transnistria in order to identify the underlying premises and factors that arguably hindered or facilitated their emergence. Like other forms of wartime resistance, Roma clandestine activities did not suddenly appear out of thin air, nor were they an entirely spontaneous reaction. They can, however, be interpreted

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also consulted USHMM, RG-25.004M 'Dosarul penal Ion Antonescu proces', Reel no. 24, Folder no. 36, Files 1-250, which contains various documents related to the investigation of General Constantin Vasiliu, the former Undersecretary of State at the Department of the Interior and General Inspector of the Gendarmerie, who supervised the Roma deportations in 1942.

[37] Delia Mădălina Grigore, "Deportarea rromilor în Transnistria în mentalul colectiv al rromilor supraviețuitori: ocultarea durerii ca lecție de supraviețuire sau viziunea unui Holocaust etern," in *De ce nu plâng?.. Holocaustul rromilor și povestea lui adevărată. Deportarea romilor în Transnistria: mărturii, studii, documente*, ed. Adrian-Nicolae Furtună, Delia Mădălina Grigore and Mihai Neacșu (București, 2010), 72.

[38] Ioanid, Kelso and Mihai Cioabă, ed., *Tragedia romilor*, 19.

as a deliberate response to the increasingly restrictive and oppressive anti-Roma measures, adopted by the Antonescu regime between 1941 and 1944 to find a new, radical solution to the so-called 'Gypsy issue'.

During most of the interwar period, 'the Gypsy issue' was not a matter of paramount concern for the Romanian political elite because the Roma were not recognized as an ethnic minority with specific political demands that posed a threat (real or imagined) to the post-war *status quo*. Commonly referred to as 'țigani' (Gypsies) in official documents and colloquial Romanian, the Roma were usually perceived by the majority population, through the lens of traditional negative stereotypes and prejudices, as a marginal and impoverished group, loosely defined in social and cultural terms, rather than explicitly ethnic ones[39]. According to the national census of 1930, they represented the sixth (or the fourth) largest minority in Romania, amounting officially to 1.5 % of the total population (262,501 people were registered as Roma) and unofficially to 3 % (around 520,000 people)[40]. Although the climate established in Greater Romania during the 1920s favoured the rise of a Roma elite, and non-governmental organizations militated for social and cultural emancipation rather than political rights, there were no heated public debates over the situation of the Roma comparable to those concerning the fate of the Jewish minority[41].

The situation began to show signs of deterioration in the late 1930s due to the erosion of the constitutional order and the rise of fascist political forces, such as the Legionary Movement, that propagated an ultra-nationalist, xenophobic and racial discourse, while militating for the creation of 'an ethnocratic state' that would establish ethnic Romanians, defined via kinship and Orthodox religion, as the dominant group, to the detriment of any other ethnic or religious minorities[42]. Simultaneously, certain bio-political theories, popularized by local specialists in eugenics such as Iuliu Moldovan[43], began to reach a larger audience. Concerned with the nation's well-being, which was defined in stronger racial terms, Romanian eugenicists played a key role in reframing the discussion around 'the Gipsy issue' in racial terms and advancing new solutions to what had traditionally been seen as a social problem[44]. Claiming

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[39] Achim, *The Roma*, 163.

[40] Ibid., 145-146.

[41] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea*, 1: ix and Solonari, *Purificarea națiunii*, 245.

[42] See, for instance, Nichifor Crainic, *Ortodoxie și etnocrație*. 2nd ed. (București: Editura Albatros, 1997), 245-247.

[43] Iuliu Moldovan (1882-1966) was a trained medical doctor and an influential promoter of eugenic research in Romania after 1918. He was a professor at the Faculty of Medicine (the University of Cluj/Kolozsvár) between 1919 and 1947, founded the Institute for Social Hygiene in Cluj in 1919 and initiated the publication of *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic* in 1927, an influential eugenic review in which many of his collaborators and disciples, such as Iordache Făcăoaru, published their radical articles. He also held a Cabinet position as Undersecretary of State at the Department of Labour, Health and Social Protection in 1930. It was this ministerial appointment and allegiance to the National Peasants' Party that prompted the Communist authorities to marginalize and imprison him after 1947. For more details, see Maria Bucur, *Eugenie si modernizare în România interbelică,* trans. Raluca Popa (Iași: Polirom, 2005), 55-63.

[44] Ibid., 220.

that the Roma represented a 'dysgenic factor' that threatened the purity of the Romanian race, some of Moldovan's more radical followers, such as Iordache Făcăoaru[45], rejected all 'assimilationist' solutions and proposed instead that the Roma should be isolated in special camps and forcibly sterilized[46]. These proposals, inspired by Nazi eugenic research, resonated with certain nationalist intellectuals and social scientists affiliated with the Legionary Movement, such as Traian Herseni, who wrote an article in January 1941 claiming that the racial purging of the nation was 'a life and death matter' that could no longer be delayed, and identified the Jews and the Roma as threats to 'Romanian racial purity'[47].

It was in this atmosphere, saturated with hostility towards minorities and anxiety about the course of the war, that the Antonescu regime began to explore 'new solutions' to the so-called 'Gypsy issue' in 1941. The influence exerted by the above-mentioned eugenic proposals over political decisions targeting the Roma population remains a controversial topic. Some of the terms employed by the Antonescu regime to describe the Roma population, i.e. 'social dead-weight', 'social plague' and 'elements of promiscuity', as well as some of the measures targeting this minority, such as internment in work colonies, do bear a striking resemblance to the racial categories used by local eugenicists and, respectively, their radical proposals for dealing with this 'problematic' ethnic group[48]. The most likely candidate to have influenced the Antonescu regime in this respect was Sabin Manuilă[49], a leading specialist in

[45] Iordache Făcăoaru (born in 1897) was a Romanian anthropologist and eugenicist who took his PhD in anthropology and racial hygiene at the University of Munich in 1931. Upon his return to Romania, he became a member of the Institute for Social Hygiene in Cluj and one of Doctor Iuliu Moldovan's most radical disciples in the field of eugenics. His research focused particularly on mapping the racial composition of the Romanian nation and the 'threat' posed to its 'racial purity' by non-Romanian ethnic minorities, particularly the Roma, whom he described as an 'inferior race'. He became the director of the bio-anthropological section of the Central Institute of Statistics in Bucharest and conducted anthropological field research in Transnistria in 1942. In parallel, he joined the Legionary Movement and was co-opted into the government (the Department of National Education) during the National-Legionary State (September 1940 -January 1941). For further details, see Bucur, *Eugenie și modernizare*, 70-72 and Solonari, "In the Shadow of Ethnic Nationalism. Racial Science in Romania," in *Racial Science in Hitler's New Europe, 1938-1945*, ed. Anton Weiss-Wendt and Rory Yeomans (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 268-273.

[46] Solonari, *Purificarea națiunii*, 249.

[47] Marius Turda, *Modernism and eugenics* (Houndsmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 114 – 115.

[48] Solonari., *Purificarea națiunii,* 249.

[49] Sabin Manuilă (1894-1946) was a leading specialist in statistics and demography and one of Iuliu Moldovan's disciples, who served as the director of the Central Institute of Statistics in Bucharest (1937-1947). He played a leading role in the conduct of several national population censuses and helped popularize the concept of 'population exchanges' with Romanian's neighbouring countries as a means of removing ethnic minorities from within national borders. During World War II, he became a close adviser to the Antonescu regime and, in his capacity as expert on population politics, was involved in the new regime's policy of 'ethnic homogenization' (a euphemism for either aggressive assimilation or ethnic purging). Influenced by the works of German and Romanian eugenicists, S. Manuilă made written recommendations to Marshal Antonescu in October 1941 for the 'unilateral transfer' (deportation) of the Jewish and Roma minorities. After the coup of August 23, 1944, he kept his position at the Central Institute of Statistics and continued to work with the new Sănătescu and Rădescu governments until early 1945. He was forced to resign from all public positions

demography who showed interest in the recent research in eugenics[50]. In his capacity as advisor to the Antonescu regime on issues related to population policies, Manuilă wrote a report in October 1941, claiming that the Roma were 'a dysgenic factor' and, therefore, represented Romania's 'greatest racial problem'[51].

However, the surviving archival documents related to the internal decision-making process of the Antonescu regime are fraught with deliberate omissions and 'euphemistic language', making it difficult to determine the extent to which these eugenic arguments legitimized the anti-Roma policies. The Romanian high-ranking government officials involved in the planning of the deportations of 1942 avoided using explicit racialised terminology in relation to the Roma, invoking the need to 'uphold public safety' and to 'restore social health' as the official reasons behind their ill-fated decisions[52]. Marshal Ion Antonescu[53], the country's *de facto* ruler, followed a similar line in his interventions in the Council of Ministers, denouncing the Roma as 'work-shy' and 'anti-social elements' whose regular involvement in street begging and criminal activities fell short of his ideals of social order, discipline and hard

in 1947 and fled to the United States in the same year. For further details, see Achim, "Romanian-German Collaboration in Ethnopolitics. The case of Sabin Manuilă," in *German Scholars and Ethnic Cleansing, 1919-1945,* ed. Ingo Haar and Michael Fahlbusch (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2005), 139-154.

[50] Achim, "The Romanian Population Exchange Project Elaborated by Sabin Manuilă in October 1941," *Annali dell'Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento / Jahrbuch des italienisch-deutschen Instituts in Trient*, XXVII (2001): 594-596.

[51] Solonari, "Ethnic Cleansing or Crime Prevention? Deportation of Romanian Roma," in *The Nazi genocide of the Roma: reassessment and commemoration,* ed. Anton Weiss-Wendt (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2013), 102.

[52] Achim, *The Roma*, 168-169; Achim, *Documente privind deportarea,* 1: xi.

[53] Ion Victor Antonescu (1882-1946) was a Romanian career officer who seized power by means of a coup in September 1940. Although Romania formally remained a monarchy ruled by King Mihai I, General Antonescu (promoted to the rank of marshal in August 1941) assumed full powers as Prime Minister, Supreme Commander of the Army and 'Conducător' (Leader) and was the *de facto* leader of the country from September 6, 1940 until August 23, 1944. He established an authoritarian regime (with fascist trappings) and veered Romanian politics in a new direction. In foreign affairs, he aligned Romania with the Axis by adhering to the Tripartite Pact (November 1940) and plunged the country into the war against the Soviet Union in June 1941. In domestic affairs, after the short-lived alliance with the local fascist movement (the Legionary Movement) ended in January 1941, he implemented an ambitious programme of 'national regeneration' that paved the way for the persecution, deportation and ultimately mass destruction of large segments of the Jewish and Roma minorities. Following his hesitation to extricate Romania from the disastrous war against the Soviet Union and to conclude an armistice with the Allies, King Mihai I and a coalition of local political leaders (the National Democratic Bloc) removed Marshal Antonescu from power and placed him under arrest on August 23, 1944. Afterwards, he was transferred into the custody of the Red Army and spent almost 18 months in Soviet captivity. He was returned to Romania in April 1946 in order to stand trial, together with some of his most prominent collaborators, for 'contribution to the country's disasters and war crimes'. He was brought before the Bucharest People's Court and, after an expedient, and highly popularized, political trial (May 6-17, 1946), was found guilty, sentenced to death and executed on June 1, 1946. For further details, see Deletant, *Hitler's Forgotten Ally* and Stelian Neagoe, *Oameni politici români. Enciclopedie* (București: Editura Machiavelli, 2007), 24-27.

work. He raised, for the first time, the issue of deporting the impoverished Roma who made a living from theft and begging in the streets of Bucharest during a meeting of the Council of Ministers held on February 7, 1941:

> All Gypsies residing in Bucharest have to be moved out. But before they are moved out we need to think where to take them and what to do with them. One solution would be to wait until the Danube marshes are reclaimed so we can make Gypsy villages there and have them occupied in fishing etc. Another solution is to negotiate with the large landowners. There has always been a scarcity of manpower in Bărăgan. Let us build villages -not very durable, just build some houses and huts with health facilities, accommodation, trade, pubs and so forth[54].

In a subsequent intervention in May 1941, Marshal Antonescu resorted to stronger 'medical metaphors', reminiscent of the terminology employed by eugenicists, to describe the Roma population as a 'plague' and 'an invading force' composed of 'syphilis-infected members' who threatened to corrupt the Romanian nation[55]. Thus, it can be inferred that his attitude towards the 'Gypsy issue', as much as it can be discerned from the existing records, was probably shaped by both explicit traditional stereotypes and implicit racial prejudices towards the Roma. Although he did not use explicit racial justifications in the official deportation orders, and would never admit it in public, not even in May 1946 when he was put on trial for war crimes and his contribution to the country's disaster, his decision to solve 'the Gypsy issue' in 1942 was shaped not only by social and public safety concerns, but also by 'bio-political aspirations', which were ultimately aimed at creating a homogeneous Romanian nation by expelling all other ethno-cultural groups from the country[56].

The first decisive steps towards solving the so-called 'Gypsy issue' were taken by the Antonescu regime in May 1941, in the context of the preparations for the Barbarossa Operation, when itinerant Roma, deemed as 'unreliable', were expelled from Bucharest and other Romanian cities and relocated in the neighbouring villages[57]. This forceful transfer from the urban regions to the countryside represented only a temporary solution until a more remote region would be secured. The annexation of the province of Transnistria in the summer of 1941, following the successful advance of the German and Romanian troops deep into Soviet territory, offered the much-needed solution for implementing the 'unilateral transfer', i.e. forceful deportation, of large segments of Jewish and Roma populations across Romania's border with the Soviet Union.

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[54] Marcel-Dumitru Ciucă, Aurelian Teodorescu and Bogdan Florin Popovici, eds. *Stenogramele ședințelor Consiliului de Miniștri. Guvernarea Ion Antonescu*, vol. 2 (January-March 1941) (București: Arhivele Naționale ale României, 1998), Doc. no. 8 (1941 February 7), 180 (unless otherwise noted, all the translations from Romanian to English are my work. The words enclosed in brackets are my own additions and were inserted to provide background information).

[55] Ibid., Doc. no. 3 (1941 April 4), 94-95.

[56] Solonari, *Purificarea națiunii*, 296-297.

[57] Nastasă and Varga, ed., *Minorități etnoculturale*, Doc. no. 146 (1942 May 27), 172; Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea,* Doc. no. 14 (1942 May 21), 1: 21.

The pretext invoked by the Antonescu regime for initiating the deportation of the Roma in 1942 was the need for additional labour in Transnistria to rebuild the war-torn province[58]. Acting under Marshal Antonescu's direct orders, governmental machinery initiated the necessary preparations for this massive population displacement. The logistical aspect of this task was entrusted to General Constantin Vasiliu[59], the head of the General Inspectorate of the Gendarmerie, and was divided into three stages. First, the local law enforcement agencies (the police and gendarmerie) conducted a national census of the Roma population on May 25, 1942 in order to identify those 'nomadic, parasitic and disorderly elements' within the areas that they policed. Second, approximately 11,500 nomadic Roma were rounded up at the beginning of June 1942 and transferred to Transnistria using their own means of transportation (horse-drawn wagons). And third, around 12,500 sedentary Roma, 'with a criminal record, without a source of income or a stable occupation', were put together in special trains bound for Transnistria in early September 1942. Smaller groups of Roma continued to be deported after this date, and, even though the total number of deportees remains controversial due to factual inconsistencies in official documents, it appears that at least 25,000 Roma were 'unilaterally transferred' to Transnistria[60]. The Antonescu regime was planning to deport a third wave of 'dangerous and undesirable' sedentary Roma (19,000 people)[61], but cancelled this initiative when it suddenly decided to halt any further Jewish and Roma deportations to Transnistria in early October 1942[62].

This large-scale operation, executed by the gendarmerie and the police forces in each and every Romanian county, sent shock waves through the entire Roma population. The secrecy and deception employed by the central authorities, coupled with the swift and brutal manner in which the local law enforcement agents executed the orders, were intended to prevent the Roma from mounting any large-scale opposition or attempting to flee *en masse*. Predictably, this deliberate mixture of surprise, deception and violence managed to achieve this objective to a large degree.

The element of surprise by the Antonescu regime was achieved by carefully censoring all information about forthcoming deportations and not revealing its true intentions until

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58 Ciucă, ed., *Procesul mareşalului Antonescu*, Doc. no. 7 (1946 May 7), 1: 246.

59 Constantin ('Piki') Vasiliu (1882-1946) was a Romanian general who was appointed as Chief Inspector of the Gendarmerie (September 1940) and Under-secretary of State at the Department of the Interior (January 1942) by Marshal Antonescu. In these new capacities, he was tasked, among other things, with supervising the deportation of approximately 25 000 Roma to Transnistria in the summer and fall of 1942. He was arrested shortly after the coup of August 23, 1944 and shared the same inglorious end as Marshal Antonescu (he was executed on June 1, 1946). For further details, see Alesandru Duțu, Florica Dobre and Leonida Loghin ed., *Armata română în al doilea război mondial (1941-1945). Dicționar enciclopedic* (București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1999), 389.

60 Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea,* 1: xii-xiv and Solonari, *Purificarea națiunii,* 254-262.

61 Ibid., Doc. no. 86 (1942 early September), 136-137.

62 Marcel-Dumitru Ciucă and Maria Ignat, ed., *Stenogramele ședințelor Consiliului de Miniștri. Guvernarea Ion Antonescu*, vol. 8 (August – December 1942) (București: Arhivele Naționale ale României, 2004), Doc. no. 10 (1942 October 13), 386.

the last moment, when things had already been set into motion. Only high-ranking state officials were privy to the logistical details of the deportation plans, while the secret order sent by Marshal Antonescu to the General Inspectorate of the Gendarmerie in late May 1942 to initiate the deportation of nomadic Roma demanded that "neither the deportees, nor the local Police and Gendarmes agents should know the ultimate goal of the current operations"[63]. General Vasiliu complied with the letter and told law enforcement agents under his command only what he deemed necessary for them to know in order to carry out the deportation order efficiently. This is how he described the measures he took in May 1942 to ensure the initial secrecy of the operation:

> In order to maintain the secrecy of the operation, the evacuation orders were issued separately to each regional Gendarmerie Inspectorate and the tasks were limited to their areas of operation, each Inspectorate knowing only that it was supposed to discharge to the neighbouring Inspectorate the Roma from their own circumscription. […] In doing so, only the Chişinău and Transnistria Inspectorates were informed of the ultimate purpose of the population transfer, while the rest of the Gendarmerie structures knew only that they were organizing local eviction operations […] [64]

Along with government secrecy, deception was another factor that prevented many Roma from opposing or escaping the gendarmes supervising the deportation convoys to Transnistria. The deliberate usage of 'euphemistic language' in the official orders and the dissemination of misinformation among the Roma population attest to the deceitful intention of the authorities to conceal the ultimate purpose of the deportation measures. At the central level, this can be discerned in the 'euphemistic language' used in the deportation orders, which made reference to 'colonization', 'eviction' or other similar terms in the initial stages of the operations, but began to speak of 'deportation' openly only after the population transfer to Transnistria had been completed. At the local level, some law enforcement agents, acting either under superior orders or on their own initiative in hope of achieving personal gains, began to spread false rumours about the allegedly favourable conditions in Transnistria, or the material advantages that 'the colonists' would enjoy there[65]. The rumour travelled fast and gained credibility especially among impoverished Roma who desperately clung to the belief that they would receive a house and a plot of land in Transnistria and offered little resistance when the gendarmes arrived to carry out the deportation orders[66].

The use of 'organized coercion and violence' probably represented the most efficient means for preventing any form of large-scale Roma resistance. The local police agents and gendarmes were given a free hand by their superiors in Bucharest in enforcing the deportation orders, they were presented with some general guidelines and asked for immediate

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[63] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea,* Doc. no. 6 (1942 May 22), 1: 9-10.

[64] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea,* Doc. no. 14 (1942 May 21), 1: 21.

[65] Solonari, *Purificarea naţiunii*, 257.

[66] Ioanid, Kelso and Mihai Cioabă, eds., *Tragedia romilor*, Doc. no. I (oral interview with Ştefan Moise), 82.

results, regardless of the obstacles encountered in the field. The roundup of the Roma did not always go smoothly, due to various unforeseen or unaccounted-for factors, so compelling some local police agents and gendarmes to improvise or use excessive force in the discharge of their onerous duty[67]. Although the level of violence varied in intensity from region to region, one recurrent problem that plagued almost every local deportation operation was the mobility of the Roma population. Tracking down and rounding up all the Roma registered on deportation lists was complicated by the fact that many were currently travelling around the region, to ply their traditional trades or in search of seasonal summer work. Realizing that some of the people they were assigned to deport were nowhere to be found, some Gendarmes rounded up Roma randomly in order to make up for the missing ones and 'meet their quota' of Roma deportees. Such abusive practices were sometimes accompanied by the use of violence, as those Roma arbitrarily included in the convoys headed for Transnistria protested as strongly as they could. Here is the testimony of a group of Roma bricklayers from Craiova who were forced to join a convoy of deportees in June 1941:

> […] In June, we, the above-mentioned [11 persons], were travelling with our families from Craiova to Mărășești, in Putna County, in order to work on an estate, having been given formal approval to do so by the Prefect of the Dolj County, which is annexed to this petition.
>
> While we were resting by the road, some Gendarmes, escorting a convoy of nomadic Gypsies passed us by and, on seeing us, told us to join the convoy and this is how we ended up in County [in Transnistria]. All nomadic Gypsies sent to Transnistria had been previously registered on lists, compiled and approved by the local Gendarme Legion. In our case, we were not subjected to any such formalities, but were forced into joining this convoy and taken away […][68]

This was not an isolated case and other Roma suffered similar abuse at the hands of the local Gendarmes, who showed an excess of zeal in their efforts to 'meet their quota' of deportees. On more than one occasion, the authorities in Bucharest noticed a discrepancy between the number of Roma included on the deportation lists and the actual number deported to Transnistria. When asked to explain why so many additional Roma were rounded up out of his "circumscription" (jurisdiction), the Inspector of the Timisoara Gendarme Legion provided the following candid justification:

> […] The [Bihor] Legion reported that the list of deportees included 27 Gypsies. Out of this total, 5 could not be evicted because some were either too ill to be moved, their current whereabouts were unknown or, in the case of one women, did not fulfil the specified criteria for deportation.
>
> Instead of the 5 missing Gypsies, the Legion, after conducting a new investigation, found another 5, bound by family ties, friendship or other interests with those originally listed for deportation, put their names on the deportation lists and evacuated them with the other [deportees]. In addition, the Legion evicted a Gypsy woman who lived together, without being

[67] Solonari, *Purificarea națiunii,* 259-260.

[68] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea,* Doc. no. 58 (1942 ante August 3), 1: 88.

> formally married with one of the evicted Gypsies, at her express request to join her concubine. This way, the Legion was able to meet its quota of 27 Gypsies established by the General Inspectorate of the Gendarmerie and evicted an additional Gypsy woman on the basis of the reason stated above […][69]

The side-by-side analysis of these type of testimonies can bring to light additional details about the abusive and arbitrary nature of the deportations. For some law enforcement agents, the evictions were a complicated logistical task that could likely turn into an 'administrative burden' because their superiors in Bucharest allowed very little room for error, threatening those who did not faithfully execute orders with severe disciplinary sanctions[70]. Still, the threats to sanction misconduct or negligence did little to prevent the violence and abuses perpetrated against the Roma by those local police agents, who harboured deep hostility towards this ethnic group and abusively equated 'Gypsy identity' with 'socially deviant or criminal type of behaviour'. The list of crimes routinely attributed to the Roma also included 'dabbling in the occult arts' and there was one case when a certain Roma fortune-teller was deported to Transnistria along with her 4 children due to the fact that she 'had no well-defined occupation, earning a living from scamming people, deceiving the local peasants with her fortune-telling and love potions'[71].

Despite the presence of all of these inhibiting factors, not all Roma remained passive in the face of the injustice and persecution they faced in the summer and autumn of 1942. After recovering from the initial shock, some Roma found the strength to protest the violence and arbitrariness of the law enforcement agents who carried out the deportation orders. Their initial reactions of deep discontent were largely spontaneous and, for a variety of reasons, were not typically manifested in a violent manner. On the one hand, the Antonescu regime mobilized significant forces and resources to ensure that the Roma targeted for deportation had no real opportunity to respond in an organized manner. This aim was largely fulfilled and many Roma were taken aback by the swiftness and brutality of these deportation operations (although their overall efficiency was far from exemplary) and had no clear understanding of their ultimate goal. The case of Roma Private Costică Sofronie, serving in the army, who agreed in writing that his wife, Elena and his three children should be evicted, alongside her brother, from Iaşi to Transnistria, serves to illustrate this point:

> I, the undersigned Sofronea Costică, aged 33 and residing in Iași, Vasile Lupu street no. 18, currently serving under arms in the 6th Mountain Huntsmen Regiment, I hereby declare my full consent that my wife Elena Sofronea, together with my children Gheorghe Sofronea, aged 13, Aurel, aged 3 and Verona, aged 10, should leave, with my authorization, together with her

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[69] Ibid., Doc. no. 139 (1942 September 21), 1: 218.

[70] Ibid., Doc. no. 147 (1942 September 25), 1: 228-229.

[71] USHMM, RG-25.050 M 'Selected Records from Various Archives of Romania Concerning Roma', Reel no. 4, Folder no. 196/ 1942, File 1224.

> brother, Sofronea Va[sile] for Transnistria and after my discharge from the 6th Mountain Huntsmen Regiment, I wish to be sent as well there to join my family.[…][72]

On the other hand, the Roma represented a heterogeneous minority, composed of various subgroups dispersed across the entire country and subject to specific patterns of integration into mainstream society[73]. They also lacked any form of legally recognized central leadership to defend their rights after the official dissolution of the General Union of the Roma in Romania in 1941[74] and had no strong assurance that they would receive any type of political support or humanitarian aid from outside Romania. Like most civilians in Romania, the Roma lacked direct access to means to protect themselves because the Antonescu regime introduced strict regulations after the Legionary rebellion of January 1941 that severely restricted the general population's access to firearms. In addition, offenses such as armed rebellion and treason were punishable by the death penalty in times of war[75].

Even in those dark, desperate times, in which armed resistance seemed impractical, if not unrealistic for most Roma given the wartime conditions, there was some glimmer of hope. The appearance of legality that the Antonescu regime tried to maintain, in spite of its dictatorial nature, ultra-nationalist discourse and repressive apparatus, induced many Roma who felt they had been wrongfully included on the deportation lists in 1942 to believe that this great injustice done to them could be remedied via official channels. Indeed, the deportation orders issued by the Antonescu regime were limited in scope (they officially targeted only certain groups of Roma, i.e. the nomadic Roma and the sedentary Roma with a criminal record and without a source of income, and listed among their explicit goals 'colonization', not 'physical destruction') and based the selection of the Roma deportees on 'non-explicit racial criteria' that were equivocal and prone to misinterpretation.[76]. Since their legal situation remained somewhat ambiguous throughout the war because they had not been formally stripped of their citizenship rights in 1942, many Roma deportees realized that they could petition for assistance, as paradoxical as this might sound, from the same Romanian authorities that ordered their deportation in the first place.

The fragility of the Romanian administration in Transnistria, routinely understaffed and overwhelmed by the war effort, represented a second factor that encouraged non-cooperation and even unrest among the Roma deportees. The occupation administration intended to use them as a cheap labour force, but lacked the appropriate resources and manpower to efficiently exploit or police them, and could hardly even provide appropriate housing and sufficient food supplies to the almost 25,000 Roma sent to Transnistria in 1942[77]. Its efforts to

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[72] DJAN Iași, Fond. No. 349 'Circa a V-a Poliție Iași, ani 1935-1949', Folder no. 5 'Dosar relativ la țiganii nomazi/ 1942', File 62.

[73] Achim, *The Roma,* 146-148.

[74] Ibid., 156.

[75] Deletant, *Hitler's Forgotten Ally*, 71.

[76] Solonari, *Purificarea națiunii*, 258.

[77] See, for instance, Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea,* Doc. no. 296 (1943 January 25), 1: 96.

restrict the mobility of the Roma by confining them to improvised work camps or evacuated villages quickly backfired due to the rapid spread of contagious diseases such as typhus, and to the deportees' constant need to forage for resources in the neighbouring villages. The inefficiency, brutality and corruption of the occupation administration forced the deportees to resort to a variety of non-violent tactics to ensure not only their survival in the face of adversity, but also their clandestine escape from this 'vale of tears'.

Since the resistance of Roma in Transnistria assumed a variety of forms, contingent upon the deportees' intentions and the circumstances in which they were thrown, in the next section I analyse the most representative of these separately, beginning with petition writing, moving on to non-cooperation, and closing with the escapes from Transnistria.

4. Protesting against injustice: petitioning the Romanian authorities for assistance

One of the most common non-violent forms of resisting the deportation to Transnistria was to write letters of protest or petitions to the Romanian authorities or public figures believed to wield enough political influence to help in this matter. These documents, written by Roma who found themselves in a very vulnerable position, either because they and their families had personally been subjected to deportation or feared that they would be forced to join the next convoy to Transnistria, reflected the desperate efforts of many Roma to draw attention to the great injustice done unto them, the dire threats looming over their families or the hardships they endured in Transnistria[78]. With some exceptions, their content usually revolved around a set of similar arguments attempting to invalidate the senders' abusive inclusion on the deportation list and justify his or her rights to reside in Romania. Given the nature of the deportation orders (based on secret high-level executive decisions rather than legal decrees that could be appealed in a court of law), these petitions were sent to various members of the Romanian administration in Transnistria or in Bucharest, political figures and even to Marshal Antonescu and King Mihai[79]. The analysis of these petitions and the bureaucratic 'paper trail' that they occasioned allow us to gain a better grasp of the Roma's individual reactions to the implementation of deportation orders and the 'array of arguments they used to challenge the criteria behind these measures.

Perhaps, the most passionate petitions were written by those Roma who had been deported to Transnistria in 1942 and who sought to have this expulsion measure rescinded by the Romanian authorities. Written individually or as a group, these petitions usually challenged the decision of the local enforcement agents to include him or her on the list of deportees, by claiming that it was the result of confusion, abuse or ill-will. In so doing,

[78] Solonari, *Purificarea națiunii*, 258-259.

[79] Woodcock, "Romanian Romani Resistance": 37.

the petitioners directly challenged the inconsistent implementation of deportation orders by the local police agents and gendarmes and indirectly contested the overgeneralized criteria behind the 'hierarchies of exclusion' embedded in the deportation orders, that disregarded regional specificities and local 'variables'. In addition, they were trying to define their ethnic identity in relation to their own social status, legal ownership of property, good behaviour and distinguished military service— the four criteria that refuted their criminalization as work-shy nomads, impoverished, delinquent and unpatriotic 'Gypsies'[80]. Here is a telling example of a petition written by Maria Dumitrache, originally from Galați in 1943:

> […] I, the undersigned Maria Dumitrache, with the greatest of respect and tears in my eyes come before you with this petition, I was evicted to Transnistria with my husband and my two children from the city of Galați and I have a son enlisted in the Army, named Dumitrache Const[antin], serving in the 3rd Platoon Border Guards [Grăniceri] in Negru-Vodă, the Constanța County.
>
> I beseech you to investigate in all seriousness what type of people we are, how we behaved in the past and the reasons why we were evicted from our old household and separated from our children, being traditional musicians.
>
> I beseech you with a heavy heart [to approve] our return to our beloved country, for which we have fought for generations and for our son to be returned to us. […][81]

The second category included petitions written by Roma men and women whose family members were deported while they were away from home, either plying their trades, visiting relatives or, in case of the men, serving in the army. Their letters, written in simple and direct words, capture the feelings of helplessness experienced by married women with children in their care, left to fend for themselves after they were suddenly separated from their husbands in 1942, or the emptiness felt by Roma husbands when they returned from abroad and saw their homes pillaged and deserted. The discursive strategies adopted by these Roma women or men tend to follow different 'patterns of protest'. For instance, the letters penned by Roma women were, in more than one case, addressed to Queen Elena, King Mihai's mother, and tended to stress the material difficulties they were experiencing as a result of the abrupt and painful separation from their children or their husbands, the main breadwinners in the family. Although Queen Elena had little influence over government decisions, the petitioners assumed that she would show more compassion for their problems. Elena Răducanu from Iași wrote such a petition to Queen Elena in May 1943, asking her to intercede in favour of her son, who had been deported by mistake:

> […] I, the undersigned Elena Răducanu, currently residing in Iași, Flueraș Street no. 6, beseech you with tears in my eyes and with a broken heart, I bow down before your Highness and ask

[80] Ibid.: 38.

[81] USHMM, RG-25.050M 'Selected Records from Various Archives of Romania Concerning Roma', Reel no. 4, Folder no. 89/1942, File 1121.

> you to intercede on my behalf that, as a mother, I am heartbroken because my mute and deaf son, Teodor Răducanu, aged 18, was taken by mistake in August 1942, at 1 AM, when the order came that all Gypsies be rounded up and sent to Transnistria and my son was taken without having any identification papers on him.
>
> I have also sent a petition to Marshal Ion Antonescu concerning this issue and it was approved, in that I received a notice from the Council of Ministers confirming the repatriation of my son. Five months have passed since then and I have received no news from my son, nor was he returned back to the country, as ordered. […][82]

Other Roma women chose to approach Romanian political decision-makers directly, writing compassionate letters to Marshal Antonescu himself, desperately pleading for the return of their children or husbands from Transnistria. Despite being similar in tone, these letters employ a larger array of arguments to plead their case, stressing not only the hardships the female petitioners had to endure in the absence of their husbands and children, but also the distinguished military record and patriotism of their deported male relatives. The letter written in October 1942 by Anastasia Burcea, a war widow from Pitești, pleaded for the repatriation of her mute son:

> […] During the implementation of the order issued by the esteemed Government concerning the colonization of Transnistria, Gheorghe Burcea, one of my sons and a carpenter by trade, and his wife were rounded up. Taking into account that our family was born and lives in Pitești, that my husband fell bravely fighting in the previous war, that one of my sons also shed blood for the Country, King, and Conducător and my other son is currently fighting in the first ranks side by side with our soldiers fighting in the Caucasus, I appeal to Your sense of righteousness and beseech you to order the return from the Oceakov commune, Transnistria of my son Gheorghe Burcea, the only one left to help me bear the burden of my 70 years […][83]

Petitions written by Roma husbands separated from their families during the police roundups in 1942 typically stand out, due to their deliberate efforts to adopt the tone and brevity specific to military reports. This comes as no surprise, given the petitioners' record of military service (many were World War I veterans or active duty army soldiers or gendarmes on leave) and the profile of the recipients (usually high-ranking Romanian officers or top government officials from Bucharest or Odessa). Most active duty soldiers could barely contain the disappointment they felt when they returned home from the front line and learned that their families had been deported to Transnistria, a place they had become familiar with during the military campaigns of 1941 or 1942, known for its cold climate and desolate war-torn landscape. Frustrated by the unjust treatment that their families were subjected to, despite their honourable military service and good social standing, some serving Roma wrote directly to Marshal Antonescu and asked permission to go looking for their families in

[82] Ibid., File 1260.

[83] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea*, Doc. no. 209 (1942 ante October 27), 1: 315.

Transnistria. The petition written in June 1942 by Gendarme Nicolae Moldovan, mobilized on the Eastern front, exemplifies this point:

> […] With tears in my eyes, I beseech you, Marshal Antonescu, to issue orders that grant me permission to travel and look for my relatives, knowing that they currently reside in the Golta County[in Transnistria] and, at the same time, authorize me to request the support of the local military and civilian authorities [in my efforts] to have my relatives returned to my beloved fatherland, for which I have fought since the beginning of the war until the present day.
>
> I await your superior orders granting me permission to fulfil my request, because my conduct both as a civilian and as a soldier has been beyond reproach, and my relatives deported in Transnistria do not have a criminal record and do not belong to the nomadic Gypsy groups. […][84]

The third group of petitions were drafted by groups of Roma who were exempt from deportations, but lived under threat of being forced to join deportees in Transnistria. Alarmed by the circulation of rumours about a new wave of deportations, fuelled discretely by corrupt local gendarmes and public officials seeking to gain some personal benefits, Roma groups from all over Romania began to write petitions to the local and central authorities and desperately plead their case. They were not short of persuasive arguments when it came to challenging their abusive categorization as 'impoverished and work-shy Gypsies' by claiming instead that they owned arable land and real estate, had a trade and a stable source of income, had no criminal record, were Christians and had done military service. In addition, they displayed 'ingenuity' when it came to describing their own ethnic identity (they routinely employed labels such as 'Romanian of Gypsy origin' or 'Romanianized Gypsy'), stressing their complete allegiance to the Romanian nation, the Crown or the current regime by describing the sacrifices made by their parents or their sons fighting for King and country [85]. Here is a fragment from the petition sent by Gheorghe Niculescu[86], the president of the General Union of the Roma from Romania, to King Mihai asking for his protection (to take the Roma under 'the Royal Shield') and even his intervention to stop the deportations:

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[84] USHMM, RG-25.050 M 'Selected Records from Various Archives of Romania Concerning Roma', Reel no. 4, Folder no. 89/1942, File 1226.

[85] Woodcock, "Romanian Romani Resistance": 38.

[86] Gheorghe Niculescu was a Roma flower merchant and activist from Bucharest who assumed the presidency of the Roma association *Uniunea Generală a Romilor din Romania* (General Union of Roma in Romania) in 1934. Under his leadership, the association became engaged in various initiatives intended to promote the social and cultural development of the Roma population and managed to expand its membership to approximately 800,000 members (according to the association's own estimates). The establishment of the Royal Dictatorship in 1938 and the outbreak of World War II forced G. Niculescu to reduce his public activity. The General Union of Roma in Romania formally ceased its activity in 1941, but was reactivated in 1945. After a short-lived period of collaboration with the Communist authorities, the association was formally disbanded in January 1949 and Niculescu was marginalized from public life on account of his 'bourgeois background'. For further information, see Achim, *The Roma*, 155-159.

> […] The parents, wives and children of the Roma men fighting on the front line or war invalids visit our association on a daily basis with tears in their eyes, telling us that they will be evacuated from the country and even more Roma families have already been forcefully evicted from their households and sent to Transnistria.
>
> Since most of the Roma mobilized on the front line, where they fight for our beloved Fatherland, King, Conducător [Marshal Antonescu] and the victory of the Holy Cross against our foes, and their families have a well-defined social standing, with stable places of residence, well-administered households established centuries ago, land owners, traders, craftsmen, musicians and so forth, who adequately fulfil their duties to the Country, have no quarrels with the law, are born in this country, baptized and wed according to Christian rituals, fought in past wars and have been assimilated into the Romanian nation for centuries.
>
> We respectfully ask you to take us under your Royal Shield, being completely confident in Your Superior benevolence and sense of justice and in ordering the suspension of these measures that bring only pain and despair to the hearts of all Roma. […][87]

Despite having a limited understanding of the ultimate goals of the Antonescu regime, in respect to the Roma population, most Roma grasped the fact that their chances of obtaining a reprieve or an exemption for deportation directly depended on proving their alleged 'usefulness' to Romanian society or, at least, to the local communities in which they lived. In order to achieve this purpose, they requested a number of benevolent Romanian neighbours, employers or municipal officials to write letters in support of their petitions. These letters usually took the form of 'certificates of good conduct' that confirmed the positive points already mentioned in the original petitions and stressed the importance of the Roma petitioners to the local economy. One such certificate issued by the mayor of the commune of Dăești, in Argeș County and annexed to the original request submitted by Ispas Neamțu, the local Roma blacksmith, stressed that the local village community 'absolutely needs' the services of said blacksmith.

> I, the undersigned, the mayor of Dăești Commune in the Argeș County, attest by the following certificate the veracity of the statement given by the Gypsy Ispas Neamțu, an inhabitant of this commune, in the request annexed above: the above-mentioned owns a house, is a good craftsman, he supports his family by what he earns from plying his trade, owns land, is of good conduct in the commune and the local community absolutely needs his services as a blacksmith.
>
> We also confirm that the above-mentioned has been living in this locality with his family since his birth and does not move from place to place [as itinerant Gypsies do] [88].

Looking at these petitions that attempted to question the validity or circumvent deportation orders, one cannot help but ask whether the Roma who wrote to the Romanian authorities actually 'tailored' their discourse to the demands of their exigent audience and resorted to

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[87] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea*, Doc. no. 91 (1942 September), 1: 142-143.

[88] Ibid., Doc. no. 182 (1942 October 10), 1: 273.

arguments that they believed would be most useful in advancing their cause. When attempting to provide a general answer, one should never overlook the fact that these petitions were usually sent by desperate people in desperate situations, who were currently facing or had already faced (imminent) expulsion from their native country and were doing their best to have deportation measures revoked or postponed. Presumably, their choice of arguments was more pragmatic than principled, often less provocative that it could have been, because they hoped against hope that by stressing their attachment to the Romanian nation and high degree of integration into mainstream society, they had a better chance of impressing their target audience.

5. Surviving exploitation: non-cooperation with the Romanian authorities in Transnistria

Only a small proportion of these petitions achieved the expected results and the vast majority of the Roma deportees had little choice but to find ways to cope with their new situation. Once they arrived in Transnistria after a long journey by wagon or freight car, they realized how hard it would be to accustom themselves to life in this war-torn and resource-depleted Eastern province, given the local authorities' general lack of preparedness to feed and house around 25,000 new deportees, the great scarcity of food, firewood and other vital resources, the inclement climate and the resentment of the local Ukrainian population, forced to share not only their meagre resources, but, in some cases, even their modest dwellings with the newcomers[89].

The Roma were subjected by the occupation authorities to forced labour[90], both inside and outside their newly assigned compulsory residences (usually small villages or work colonies overseen by gendarmes) located in the eastern regions of Transnistria, near the banks of the Bug river. But the local administration's plan to exploit them as farm hands in agriculture, wood cutters, craftsmen, road builders and so forth, outside their compulsory residences in exchange for meagre food rations encountered too many logistical and security challenges to prove effective by any production standard[91]. The difficulty of finding labour or food, combined with the cold weather, the spread of contagious diseases and the threat of immediate execution (for instance, the summary execution of 6,000 to 8,000 Roma in Golta County ordered by the local Romanian authorities[92] and the mass murder of Roma deportees in

[89] Ibid, xiv-xv.

[90] Achim, *Munca forțată în Transnistria. "Organizarea muncii" evreilor și romilor, decembrie 1942-martie 1944* (Târgoviște: Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2015).

[91] USHMM, RG-25.050 M 'Selected Records from Various Archives of Romania Concerning Roma', Reel no. 34, Folder no. 59, Files 113-122.

[92] *Procesul Marii Trădări Naționale* (București: Editura Eminescu, 1946), 305.

Trihati train station, near Oceakov, in 1943[93]) turned everyday life in Transnistria into a struggle to survive. This is how Lucia Mihai, one of the fortunate Roma who survived Transnistria, described the hardships of everyday life in the camps:

> We stayed long in this place [in Transnistria], almost two years. We were most unfortunate. People went to the forest and brought firewood, as much as they could. The Gendarmes shot them, killed them because they attempted to steal corn from the fields in order to survive, they smashed and boiled the corn grains and fed them to their children for lack of anything else and to prevent them from starving to death. […] They would sneak into the cornfields and steal some corn cobs. Some got shot, others fled, some lived. Others would die. [It became] a death camp…[94]

Starvation, cold, illness, together with the guards' brutality pushed many Roma deportees to take desperate measures in order to survive. Although their freedom of movement was seriously limited and the threat of reprisals loomed over their heads, many Roma engaged in small-scale clandestine actions, mundane in nature but branded as 'illicit' by the local authorities, which defied existing orders and camp regulations in order to provide for their families[95]. Therefore, one can argue that the deportees' constant struggle for survival acquired some of the traits associated with 'non-violent resistance' because it involved a number of actions of non-compliance that not only helped the Roma 'keep body and soul together', but also frustrated the local administration's efforts to segregate and exploit them as forced labour. Although the fragmentary nature of the primary sources renders generalization difficult, the information currently available indicates at least two patterns of non-compliant behaviour among the Roma: procuring food by illicit means and refusing to work in the labour detachments.

The first pattern included a wide range of 'illicit activities' aimed primarily at securing food and firewood, ranging from petty theft, crafting wood and horn utensils to barter with the locals, working as day labourers in agriculture for the locals in exchange for food or clothes and so forth[96]. Here is how the same Roma survivor, Lucia Mihai, described her mother's activities:

> […] My mother had [some Romanian] clothes. She would steal into the [neighbouring] villages to meet Russian women and sell them clothes. They would speak with the Gendarmes, the Romanian Gendarmes who oversaw us, and give them gold coins and they would allow them to go outside [the camps] into the villages. They would walk for 20 or 30 kilometres to reach the village. My mother went there and sold shirts, skirts to the Russian women and brought back to

[93] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea*, Doc. no. 383 (1943 May 18), 2: 197.

[94] Ioanid, Kelso and Mihai Cioabă, eds., *Tragedia romilor*, Doc. no. III (oral interview with Lucia Mihai), 105-106.

[95] Ibid., 107-108.

[96] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea*, Doc. no. 563 (1943 December 17), 2: 405-406 and Doc. no 564 (1943 December 1943), 2: 407-408.

> us [her little children] food to eat. Those Russian women gave her in exchange flower, cheese or meat and this is how our mother nourished us and prevented us from starving to death. […][97]

Whereas this first pattern of non-compliant behaviour was routinely treated as a 'nuisance' rather than a threat because it frustrated efforts to control either the circulation of the Roma deportees in the countryside or their interaction with local Ukrainians, the deportees' refusal to work posed a more serious problem for the local administration[98]. The exploitation of Roma forced labour in work sites outside their compulsory residences proved rather unproductive and posed a security risk, due to the shortage of gendarmes needed to supervise the deportees. The Romanian administration tried to regulate this aspect in December 1942[99], but results fell short of expectations, as Colonel Lucian Ivașcu aptly noted in his report investigating the merits of the complaints made by some sedentary Roma deported to Transnistria. According to him, some Roma refused to comply with the order given by the gendarmes and, 'when included in work details usually ran away because they refuse to work. From now on, it will be even harder [to make them comply], because they are entirely unclothed and undernourished'[100].

The Roma acts of non-compliance were described in more detail by Lieutenant-Colonel Vasile Gorsky, the former Prefect of Oceakov County in Transnistria, in a statement given in 1945. He claims that upon arriving in Transnistria, some of the Roma he spoke with 'were outraged, cried, shouted, cursed because they were forced to leave their homes and sent to Transnistria.' He continues by describing how the hunger, cold and violent reprisals pushed some deportees to clandestine actions, refusing to work in the collective farms ('kolkhoz') and 'demanding to be sent back home'[101]. His colleagues, however, showed far less understanding towards these acts of non-compliance and chose to explain them away as expressions of 'Gypsy laziness' or 'delinquent nature'. For instance, C. Sdrobici, the Director of the Labour Division of the Governorate of Transnistria, wrote a report to Governor Gheorghe Alexianu[102] in July 1943 describing some of these 'illicit acts' in a more dismissive tone and stressed the need to adopt stricter measures against those Roma deportees who refused to execute the work tasks assigned to them. Claiming that 'the Gypsies, especially the nomads,

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[97] Ioanid, Kelso and Mihai Cioabă, eds., *Tragedia romilor*, Doc. no. III (oral interview with Lucia Mihai), 107-108.

[98] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea,* Doc. no. 350 (1943 March 23), 2: 157.

[99] Ibid, Doc. no. 268 (1942 December 18), 2: 54-56.

[100] Ibid, Doc. no 267 (1942 December post 17), 2: 54.

[101] Ibid., Doc. no. 641 (1945 April 15), 2: 498.

[102] Gheorghe Alexianu (1897-1946) was a legal scholar and professor of law who held the office of civilian governor of Transnistria from August 1941 to January 1944. This appointment afforded him a privileged position in the Antonescu regime and considerable influence over the Governorate of Transnistria (the Romanian administration in the province). The corruption and inefficiency that marked his tenure as governor directly affected not only the local population, but also the Jewish, Roma and Innochentist deportees from the Old Kingdom, who were subjected to systematic exploitation, persecution and mass murder. He was arrested after the coup of August 23, 1944 and shared the same inglorious end as Marshal Antonescu (he was executed on June 1, 1946). For further details, see Deletant, *Hitler's Forgotten Ally*, 167-168.

are averse to any sense of discipline, order and precaution', he recommended that the gendarmes should increase their vigilance towards the deportees and make an example of 'the repeated offenders' by having a few of them executed[103].

6. Fleeing from hunger, cold, diseases, abuse and death: Roma escapes from Transnistria

The unspeakable deprivations and abuses suffered in Transnistria, coupled with the looming threat of immediate execution in case of non-compliance with orders issued by the Romanian gendarmes, forced a number of Roma deportees to seek deliverance in more extreme and dangerous actions, such as attempts to escape and return to Romania[104]. The long list of risks associated with such a perilous enterprise could not always deter the deportees from attempting to escape the vigilance of the gendarme units overseeing the Roma work colonies or villages, brave the cold weather and the long distances, clandestinely board freight trains bound for Romania or to slip through military units patrolling the border region. Convinced that they could not survive another harsh winter in Transnistria and determined to see their homes in Romania once more, a growing number of Roma engaged in the clandestine crossing of the Romanian Eastern border in 1943. The fragmentary information available indicates that the deportees usually attempted to escape in small groups, rather than individually, and did so either according to spontaneous initiative or a plan sketched in advance. In either case, improvisation and chance played a large role in the success of the operation.

Individual escapes were less common, but not completely isolated among Roma deportees who somehow got separated from the rest of their families and friends during the deportation operations in 1942 or lost almost all their relatives in the work colonies. Such is the case of Veli Ibrahim, a Muslim Roma from Tulcea who was deported, together with his family in September 1942, but was forced by 'the cold and hunger' to make a daring individual escape attempt, which proved successful. He could not stay long in Romania and crossed the Dniester again into Transnistria to find his family, was briefly reunited with them, but failed to bring them with him because he lacked 'an official permit' authorizing their return to Romania[105]. Others, like Ștefan Moise from Iași, made the painful decision to leave his family behind in Transnistria in an attempt to reach Romania and search for help. Here is how he described his 'lucky escape':

> […] We left, we took a long detour, because you could not simply walk away, and made it to the train station in Trihati. It was not like last time, how can I put it, there were more people coming and going, more soldiers and nobody took any notice when we entered the station.

[103] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea*, Doc. no. 409 (1943 July 4), 2: 236.

[104] Mihok, "«Transferul unilateral»," 283.

[105] ., Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea*, Doc. no. 404 (1943 June 24), 2: 222.

I was with another person. Nobody paid any attention to us. It was also dark and the train was already pulled into a siding, it probably arrived from Nikolayev. This train also had freight cars and a few passenger-cars-those third class type, as it was back then. […] We boarded the train and crouched in a corner. The train departed and we left. The train rolled down the tracks, the freight car was not opened, nobody asked us anything, we sat in it undisturbed. […][106]

Outside help represented another factor that influenced the success or failure of these daring escape attempts in a decisive manner. For many Roma escapees, securing the help of benevolent Romanian soldiers on leave, who were transiting through Transnistria, or sympathetic local Ukrainians, meant gaining access to forged transit passes, train tickets, clothing and food. Here is how Ioan Marin from Bucharest described the crucial role played by a group of Romanian soldiers who were returning from the front line and heading to Romania in helping his brother escape:

– Was there anyone who tried to escape [from the camps in Transnistria]?

– Many escaped and many more returned [to Romania] along the way. One of my brothers, a very smart and intelligent man, Marin Constantin […] who was a kind of a headman, a group leader who oversaw and coordinated our activity; he did not spend more than a month, a month and a half and [escaped] with the help of some fellow soldiers [who] gave him a military uniform to put on, had some forged papers made in his name and shipped him back to Romania.

– And he wasn't caught?

– No, because he was dressed in a military uniform and he was travelling with a group of soldiers who were returning to Romania'.[107]

Group escapes tended to be better organized and relied more on planning than improvisation especially when it came to choosing the possible means and route of escape. Improvisation was never absent from their plans, but not everything was left to chance, as one can discern a certain level of preparation when it came to pooling resources for bribing camp gendarmes or train conductors[108], finding ways to procure forged travel papers and permits[109] or seeking shelter from police raids through their network of relatives and friends once they had reached Romanian soil. Sadly, not everything went according to plan and escaped deportees arrested by gendarmes patrols in Romania were usually sent back to the work camps in Transnistria, where they were subjected to disciplinary measures. Some of the Roma were not deterred by these reprisals and made repeated attempts to escape from Transnistria, to the frustration of

[106] Ioanid, Kelso and Mihai Cioabă, eds., *Tragedia romilor*, Doc. no. I (oral interview with Ștefan Moise), 107-108.

[107] Năstase and Varga, ed., *Minorități etnoculturale*, Annex no. I, (oral interview with Ioan Marin), 611.

[108] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea,* Doc. no. 535 (1943 November 13), 2: 372 and Doc. no. 542 (1943 November 19), 2: 378.

[109] Ibid., Doc. no 290 (1943 January 20), 2: 89-90.

the local authorities[110]. It is important to note that, despite all the variations in their personal circumstances, most of the escapees apprehended in Romania, including Florea Vasile, the members of a group of 13 Roma who tried to escape from Oceakov County, identified cold, hunger and ill-treatment undergone in Transnistria as the main reasons behind their collective escape attempts:

> […] I was evacuated to Transnistria in 1942, together with the rest of the Gypsies from all around the country, without knowing the reason why, because I was never prosecuted or convicted, I had the means to earn my living and support my wife.
>
> Due to the ill-treatment we were subjected to in Transnistria, in the place where we were evacuated, we boarded a train in Grigorești station, Oceakov County on the evening of September 21, 1943 and begged the soldiers on board, who were assigned to [guard the] transport [of] an airplane, to allow us to come aboard, but we were arrested at the Barboși station by a Gendarme patrol.[111]

For some Roma, the thought of having to return to work camps in Transnistria after having successfully escaped and enjoyed for a brief moment 'the taste of liberty' in Romania was too much to bear. Rozalia Dondoczi, a Roma escapee who was arrested in Romania by the local gendarmes, chose to take her own life by jumping in front of a moving train rather than return to Transnistria. The report which confirms her 'death by unnatural causes' (dated August 2, 1943), although written in a cold and formal language, serves as a chilling reminder of how far some Roma deportees would go in their desperate efforts to avoid ever seeing the inside of a work camp in Transnistria:

> […] We have the honour to submit to you the present report, informing you that today, at the above-mentioned date, 16:45 hours, while the Sargent Gendarme Barbu Gheorghe of the [Cluj-Turda] Legion was in this station awaiting the arrival of train no. 7009 destination Odessa, the Gypsy he was escorting, Dondoczi Rozalia, took advantage of the commotion created near the train platform and jumped in front of the train engine, which led to her mutilation and passing away, thus preventing the Gendarme who escorted her from doing anything to save her.[112]

7. The impact of the Roma 'acts of resistance' in Transnistria

One can safely assume that these Roma acts of resistance in Transnistria went neither unnoticed, nor unpunished by the Romanian authorities. However, it is difficult to measure

[110] Ibid., Doc. no. 300 (1943 January 28), 2: 99-100.

[111] Ibid., Doc. no. 493 (1943 September 29), 2: 324.

[112] Ibid., Doc. no. 442 (1943 August 2), 2: 270.

the impact of these 'individual dramas' upon the life-and-death decisions taken by the Romanian administration and law enforcement agencies, whose members were, with some exceptions, steeped too deeply in their bureaucratic mentality and anti-Roma prejudice to see little more than the additional costs carried, or threat posed, by the increasing number of escape attempts from Transnistria[113]. For instance, the Gendarme Legion in Chișinău reported the apprehension of 209 escaped Roma in the month of August 1942 alone, who were returned under escort "to the work colonies and those responsible were sanctioned."[114] In addition, the Gendarme Legion in Balta Country reported that, by December 1942, the local patrols had apprehended around 2000 Roma deportees who were attempting to cross the border into Romania illegally[115]. The Inspector of the Gendarme Legion from the same county travelled to Golta in Transnistria to investigate the wave of recent clandestine escapes and made the following remarks about the 'ingenious means' used by the Roma deportees to further their 'nefarious purpose' of escaping from work camps:

> […] The result of this state of affairs was an appalling state of squalor that, when combined with the proximity of the front line and the Gypsy's well developed survival sense, led to the emergence of a tendency to escape at all costs from Transnistria by resorting to every available means to return to Romania. The Gypsies' resourcefulness is well known and always at work, promptly using even the slightest opportunity, from spreading rumours concerning an impending evacuation by the Germans, to procuring legitimate transport permits. The eviction of cars, agricultural equipment, cereals, cattle and so forth from Transnistria to Romania by individual freight cars or trainsets, sometimes due to lack of supervision or the dishonesty of the train controllers, was an opportunity of which they took abundant advantage. […][116]

The escaped deportees rapidly became a burden for the state administration due to the additional costs incurred by having to identify, arrest, process and re-deport them via train to Transnistria. One report written by a local police inspector from Vaslui in April 1943 requested instructions about how to handle escaped Roma deportees who "managed to return to Romania no matter how many times they were re-deported to Transnistria, a situation which places the local police in a permanent state of agitation and alert, disrupting its daily activity and, at the same time, wasting unnecessary amounts of money paying for their transport"[117]. In addition, the numerous petitions for repatriations submitted by Roma deportees claiming that they had no criminal record significantly increased the workload of the local police precincts. The General Inspectorate of the Gendarmerie routinely received such petitions from the Governorate of Transnistria and redirected some of these petitions

[113] Solonari, *Purificarea națiunii*, 262-265.

[114] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea,* Doc. no. 474 (September 4 1943), 2: 306.

[115] Ibid., Doc. no 553 (1943 December 9), 2: 392.

[116] Ibid., 393.

[117] USHMM, RG-25.050M 'Selected Records from Various Archives of Romania Concerning Roma', Reel no. 4, Folder no. 89/ 1943, File 941.

to the relevant local law enforcement agencies, instructing them to check their accuracy by comparing them to their criminal records[118].

However, it was the growing number of escapes from Transnistria that alarmed local law enforcement agencies. According to official reports, most of the Roma clandestinely returned to Romania caused the rapid spread of 'disturbing rumours' about the hardships they suffered in Transnistria, as well as about dangerous contagious diseases, such as typhus[119]. This type of clandestine action reached such disturbing proportions that it could no longer be dismissed as a mere 'nuisance', but became associated in some official documents with a form of 'Gypsy resilience', vaguely situated somewhere between 'noncompliance' and 'defiance', that needed to be dealt with immediately[120]. The alarming reports sent by the local police officers eventually made their way to the top of the hierarchical chain in Bucharest, and, in September 1942, General Vasiliu ordered the exemplary punishment of all 'bandits' and Roma who attempted to escape from Transnistria:

> […] Following the conference presided on by Marshal Antonescu on September 13 this year, it was decided that all the bandits, attempting to flee while under escort from labour or concentration camps, should be shot after legal warning shots had been fired, and those captured should be transported across the Bug river, in the Ukraine. The Gypsies attempting to flee from places where they have been settled will be captured and sent back to the same places. […][121]

The issue of the petitions submitted to the Governorate of Transnistria by Roma deportees was also brought to the attention of the Council of Ministers on September 29, 1942 by Governor Gheorghe Alexianu in person. The latter provide some details about the 'special situation' of Roma war invalids, war widows and wives whose husbands currently served in the army who had been included on deportation lists, but was cut short by General Constantin Vasiliu' unfavourable comments, stressing the isolated nature of such cases and the high rate of delinquency' among the Roma deportees (all of them had criminal records, according to him). In the end, the Council decided that these petitions should be reviewed on a case by case basis and prohibited any further deportations of Roma soldiers and their families or sedentary Roma who have 'a well-established and useful trade'[122].

The situation of the Roma deportees was discussed again in the Council of Ministers on October 10, 1942, when Vice Prime-Minister Mihai Antonescu[123] announced an official

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[118] Woodcock, "Romanian Romani Resistance": 37.

[119] USHMM, RG-25.050 M 'Selected Records from Various Archives of Romania Concerning Roma', Reel no. 4, Folder no. 88/ 1943, File 877.

[120] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea,* Doc. no. 569 (1943 December 26), 2: 415.

[121] Ibid., Doc. no. 142 (1942 September 21), 1: 223.

[122] Ciucă and Ignat, ed., *Stenogramele ședințelor Consiliului*, Doc. no. 6 (1942 September 29), 8: 228-229.

[123] Mihai Antonescu (1904-1946) was a practicing lawyer and professor of law at the Bucharest University who had close ties with General Antonescu. He was entrusted with key positions in the wartime Antonescu cabinets, coordinating simultaneously the Department of National Propaganda and Foreign Affairs (June 1941-August 1944), while presiding over, in Marshal Antonescu's absence, the cabinet meetings as deputy

termination of deportations to Transnistria. He did not care to explain in detail the underlying reasons behind this sudden change in state policies regarding the unilateral transfer of the Jewish and Roma population. Combining half-truths and a certain measure of hypocrisy, he made the following comments about the long list of abuses and acts of violence associated with the implementation of deportation orders, which were possibly brought to his attention by the equally long list of petitions submitted by Roma and Jewish deportees:

> […] I have issued an order last evening to stop, for the time being, any transport of Jews and Gypsies, in any case of Jews from Bucharest and the cities from the Old Kingdom due to the disorder and the acts of dishonesty and anarchy that had accompanied them and the measures taken so far, which only [had the opposite effect] by turning against us and rendering ridiculous and dishonest an operation that was supposed to be based on honesty and order!
>
> On the other hand, a number of silly excesses were made that determined even the Germans to draw our attention to what was happening in this situation […][124]

Following the decisions taken during these two cabinet meetings, General Vasiliu was ordered to adopt measures intended to deal with the protests, non-compliance and clandestine escapes of Roma deportees. At the risk of over-generalization, the measures that the General Inspectorate of the Gendarmerie adopted in order to stabilize the situation can be divided into two categories: 'corrective' and 'preventive'. The first category included the issuing of a new set of instructions ordering the establishment of commissions in Transnistria to examine on a case by case basis the numerous complaints lodged by the Roma deportees who claimed they had been abusively evicted to Transnistria in 1942. In addition, instructions were also issued to the local authorities in Transnistria to provide preferential treatment to those families of Roma soldiers who had been deported in 1942[125]. Although he never assumed responsibility for the inconsistencies in the implementation of deportation measures in 1942, General Vasiliu reluctantly accepted that mistakes were made when his subordinates, in 'an excess of zeal', deported the families of many serving Roma soldiers and, pressed by the Council of Ministers and the Army General Staff, sent instructions that explicitly forbade further deportations of Roma families which fell into this category[126].

The second category of instructions he issued (labelled 'preventive' for lack of a better term) in early 1943 ordered local law enforcement agencies to perform a new country-wide census of the Roma population in order to identify and immediately apprehend escapees

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prime-minister. The coup of August 23, 1944 led to his arrest and imprisonment in the Soviet Union, alongside Marshal Antonescu. He was also returned to Romania in April 1946 and was tried for 'contribution to the country's disasters and war crimes'. Found guilty, he was sentenced to death and was executed on June 1, 1946. For further details, see Neagoe, *Oameni politici români*, 27-29.

[124] Ciucă and Ignat, ed., *Stenogramele ședințelor Consiliului*, Doc. no. 9 (1942 octombrie 10), 8: 341.

[125] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea*, Doc. no. 203 (1942 October 23), 1: 302-303.

[126] Ibid., 303.

from Transnistria[127]. Still, several special provisions were included to exempt Roma men fit for military service and their wives and children, even if they were not legally married. One order issued by the Iași Regional Inspector of Police stated that local police agents needed to take into consideration the widespread 'Gypsy custom of not contracting a legal marriage' and act accordingly, meaning that 'those women who lived or continue to live together with conscripted Roma men or those fit for military duty without being legally married, and the children resulting from these illegitimate unions will benefit from the provisions included in the laws, namely they will be exempt from evictions.'[128]

The increase in the number of escapes from Transnistria also had a noticeable impact upon the Roma population exempted from deportation orders. Even though they were not evicted, and their properties were not confiscated by Romanian authorities, many of the local Roma were alarmed by the new census carried out by local law enforcement agencies in 1943, and lived in fear that they would be included on new deportation lists. Their state of anxiety was heightened by the clandestine return of some of their relatives, friends or acquaintances who had been deported to Transnistria in 1942 and who barely made it back to their home towns or villages. Their weak physical state and the stories they had to tell about the horrors endured in the work camps dispelled any lingering vestiges of official state propaganda that depicted Transnistria as 'a model colony'.

These stories spread fast among the Roma communities and eventually caught the attention of the local police agents, who discounted them at first as 'rumours' spread to undermine morale, but were not easily able to ignore their detrimental effects on the morale of the population. A report sent by the Argeș Gendarme Legion goes as far as to label the stories spread by the Roma escapees from Transnistria as "hostile propaganda against the measures adopted by the Government"[129]. Some Roma started to sell their properties in anticipation of a new deportation order, whereas others abandoned any attempt to make provisions for the coming winter because they were making desperate plans to flee to Hungary, as far as possible from Romania's Eastern border and the dreaded protectorate of Transnistria. A police officer from Galați wrote the following in his report about the morale of the local population:

> […] the Gypsies who escaped from Transnistria and made it all the way to Galați informed the locals of the great squalor and misery in the Bug region and that people are dying of hunger and diseases there. Due to these rumours, the local Gypsies are very discontent, claiming that they would rather get shot than be evicted [there].[130]

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[127] Ibid., Doc. no. 272 (1942 December 22), 2: 66-67.

[128] DJAN Iași, Fond. no. 349 'Circa a V-a Poliție Iași, ani 1935-1949', Folder no. 5 'Dosar relativ la țiganii nomazi/ 1942', File 55.

[129] Achim, ed., *Documente privind deportarea,* Doc. no. 181 (1942 October 10), 1: 272.

[130] USHMM, RG-25.050 M 'Selected Records from Various Archives of Romania Concerning Roma', Reel no. 4, Folder no. 196/ 1942, File 9.

As the tragic case of Rozalia Dondoczi (the Roma deportee who escaped from Transnistria and chose to take her own life rather than return to the camps in Transnistria) shows, such desperate words were not completely empty.

8. Conclusions

This study aimed to provide an analysis, by no means complete or without limitations, of the main patterns of 'non-compliant behaviour' adopted by the Roma deportees in Transnistria from the perspective of unarmed civilian resistance. The available primary sources, despite their scarcity and fragmentary nature, indicate that a significant number of Roma deportees engaged in various actions of protest and disobedience between 1942 and 1944 not only to ensure their own and their families' survival, but also to express their growing resentment and open opposition to the anti-Roma measures adopted by the Antonescu regime. With few exceptions, these actions were routinely carried out by individual or small groups of civilians in a clandestine, but not necessarily spontaneous, manner, and assumed a variety of non-violent forms, ranging from writing letters of protest to the Romanian administration to attempting to escape from the work camps in Transnistria.

The fact that many of these 'acts of resistance' assumed a non-violent and spontaneous form can be explained in relation to the structure of the Roma population and the wartime context in which they manifested themselves. As discussed in the section dealing with the historical background to the anti-Roma policies adopted by the Antonescu regime, the government decision to initiate the deportations in the summer of 1942 took many Roma by surprise. Lacking the protection afforded by the legal status of a recognized national minority, deprived of centralized political leadership, and with no direct access to military means to protect themselves, many of those Roma included on deportation lists had little choice but to comply with government orders. In addition, the political and social context in which the deportations took place severely limited the number of options available to those Roma. The significant resources mobilized by the state apparatus in order to ensure effective implementation of deportation policies, coupled with the effective use of propaganda and police repression, left little room for large-scale or armed opposition.

Despite the fact that they were in a situation of structural disadvantage, and were confronted with the daunting prospect of violent reprisals, some Roma deportees found the courage to petition state institutions for exemption from deportation or repatriation. The fact that they were writing letters of complaint to the very institutions that had been directly responsible for their forceful eviction to Transnistria and thus, risked further reprisals by exposing the abuses and corruption of local law enforcement agencies which implemented the deportation orders, did little to discourage them. Others summoned up the strength to openly disobey the occupation authorities in Transnistria by evading relentless efforts to police their movements and exploit them as unpaid and expendable labour. The escapes

from the work camps in Transnistria arguably represent the most daring instance of Roma clandestine activities. The intention to resist state oppression is probably best illustrated by the testimonies of those Roma escapees captured and interrogated by local police forces in Romania, who identified the injustice, brutality and deprivations experienced in the work camps in Transnistria as the main reasons behind their decision to flee.

The testimonies of those Roma who survived the horrors of the deportations offer a valuable insight into the main factors that prompted them to engage in such perilous clandestine activities. The oral interviews consulted in this study routinely bring into focus the deportees' daily struggle to keep their families alive and safe in Transnistria, as well as their refusal to succumb to the will of the Romanian authorities. In a sense, the Roma deportees' determination to ensure their survival, despite all odds, and their will to resist oppression often overlapped, but should not be seen as mutually exclusive because both were essentially directed towards the same ultimate goal: making it through the worst of the deprivations and oppression and return to a state of normalcy after the war. Without sounding too apologetic, the fact that almost half of the Roma deportees managed to survive in Transnistria and eventually returned to their homes in Romania represents in itself an act of defiance against Marshal Antonescu's plans of 'ethnically homogenizing' the country.

In the end, the Roma deportees' acts of resistance remained neither unnoticed, nor unpunished by the Romanian authorities. The deportees who managed to return clandestinely to Romania brought with them tragic stories about the many deprivations and losses they endured in Transnistria. These stories, dismissed as 'hostile propaganda' by local law enforcement agencies, increased the resolve of those Roma who remained in the country to resist deportation by all possible means. Alarmed by police reports that signalled the increasing state of discontent among the local Roma population, the Romanian gendarmerie and police adopted a number of repressive measures in order to curb what was perceived as a growing form of 'Gypsy resilience' to deportation policies.

Assessing the long-term impact of Roma acts of resistance remains a difficult task due to the many lacunae in the primary sources. Further research into this topic could bring to light new evidence that would allow the expansion of our current understanding of the impact of these *sui-generis* forms of civilian resistance by situating them in the context of the massive population displacements caused by the policy of ethnic homogenization implemented by the Antonescu regime and the large-scale destruction provoked by the war in the entire region.

French Nomads' Resistance 1939-1946

Lise Foisneau
Valentin Merlin

We are the hunters, not them.
Frédéric Dorkel, 2014.[1]

1. Introduction

"Our role in the Resistance has been ignored, even though I ran into many other *voyageurs* (travellers) during clandestine fights between 1944 and 1945."[2] This testimony of nomad and resistance-fighter Raymond Gurême well illustrates the issue addressed in this paper. While making "nomads"[3] the subject of compulsory residence orders and sending them to internment camps, following the decree of April 6, 1940, have been studied by French historians, nomads' reactions to such policies have been persistently neglected. The result is that a selected focus on persecutions by the Vichy regime and the German occupier assigns nomads a victim role.[4]

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[1] "*Les chasseurs, c'est pas eux, c'est nous.*" Line from the movie by Jean-Charles Hue, *Mange tes morts. Tu ne diras point*, 2014.

[2] Raymond Gurême, *Interdit aux nomades* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 2011), 156.

[3] We are using the term "nomad" referring to an administrative category implemented by the July 16, 1912 Act, relative to the exercise of itinerant trades and the movement of all types of travelling persons. This law created three categories: itinerant merchant, "*forain*" and nomad. The difference between the *forain* and the nomad categories lay in the recognition, in the first instance, of the fact that *forains* have a "proper occupation". The nomad category was created by the French legislator, to refer to a specific population, without using racial criteria. In this category, one could include *Manouches*, *Yéniches*, *Sinté*, Roma, Catalan Gypsies, French Travellers, but also non-Roma individuals who were included in that category because of their poverty. Using the term "nomad" allowed us not to use other ethnic names, the use of which would be anachronistic.

[4] For example, see Emmanuel Filhol and Marie-Christine Hubert, *Les Tsiganes en France. Un sort à part. 1940-1946* (Paris: Perrin, 2009). See also Denis Peschanski, *Les Tsiganes en France, 1939-1946* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2010).

However, anyone wishing to change this perspective faces the obstacle of making a too sharp institutional break between the Third Republic and Vichy France, whereas there is a continuity in the application of administrative procedures affecting nomads during the two periods.[5] As a matter of fact, under the 1912 Nomad Act, the Third Republic put in place a strict oversight regime including inter alia restrictions on the movement of nomads, an obligation to conform to the model of nuclear family, surveillance of hygiene conditions, and a requirement to carry special travel documents (anthropometric identity notebooks). In September 1939, after the declaration of war, the French government relied on the existing administrative regime for nomads to impose internment to some of them and compulsory residence to others. Those decisions provoked different forms of reactions among the so called nomads, and some of those reactions can be described as acts of resistance. But resisting the French administration was not a new thing.

Indeed, research into administrative divisional archives reveals that tactics used by the nomads against the French administration after 1912 were later used against the German occupier and the Vichy regime. During World War II, nomads' resistance also clearly focused on the occupier and took the form of armed struggle, thus bringing in line these tactics and their target with those of other part of French *Résistance*. Circumvention [*contournement*] of the administration was to a certain extent a "survival strategy", but it was not only that. Its aim was also clearly a political protest. But while the French *Résistance* contributed to bring people of different origins together, the participation of the nomads was not enough to transform in the long run their relationship with the rest of French population and French administration. Tragic events that took place during the liberation show how nomad families were unjustly accused, and also explain the absence of recognition of nomads' actions in the Resistance afterwards.

This paper aims at contributing to the knowledge of a particularly complex period in the history of nomads in France. Apart from scattered information in books that do not relate directly to the issue at hand[6], only a few articles or books deal with the resistance of nomads. They can be cited in chronological order by publication date: a document on Tikno Adjam, a member of the Ardennes *maquis*, written by Father Fleury after the war;[7] the account of Jan Yoors who acted as a liaison between the Resistance and the Gypsies;[8] an article by Joseph Valet who gathered testimonies about the role of Auvergne's travellers in the Resistance;[9] and Raymond Gurême's memoirs recounting his political activity

[5] We refer here to the continuity between the Vichy policies (July 10, 1940 – August 20, 1944) and the control mechanisms put in place by the Third Republic (1870–1940)—particularly with regard to the status of "nomads" that was established by the law of July 16, 1912.

[6] Donald Kenrick and Grattan Puxon, *Destins gitans* (Paris: Gallimard, 1995).

[7] DA (Departmental Archive) Vienne, Archives of Father père Fleury, 82 J 2. *Tikno the Gypsy, 1875-1948: biographie et anthologie d'œuvres de Tikno Adjam (in English, 110 fol.).*

[8] Jan Yoors, *La Croisée des chemins. La guerre secrète des Tsiganes 1940-1944* (Paris: Phébus, 1992).

[9] Joseph Valet, "Gitans et Voyageurs d'Auvergne durant la guerre 1939-45," *Études tsiganes*, no. 6, (1995): 211-219.

during the war.[10] Unfortunately even some of these very few documents are not solid historical sources. For instance, Tikno Adjam is probably an invention by Father Fleury in order to spread the Gospel amongst Travellers, as a proselytising tool, and Yoors' book has never been studied closely enough to declare whether it is fictional or not.

In order to overcome this scarcity of information, we have chosen to systematically review French administrative divisional archives that contain individual and group files relating to nomads. Indeed, these archives contain substantial information, because the law of 16 July, 1912 required prefectures to keep all information on people classified as nomads. The records of the period from 1939 to 1946 are particularly informative in administrative divisions where the nomads were forced to reside at home or in a restricted area. Such records include prefectural orders subjecting nomads to this "compulsory residence", censuses, various correspondence between the internees and the prefecture, notes from the intelligence services of the French police (*Renseignements Généraux)*, reports of violations of the decree of 6 April, 1940 delivery of identity documents (*carnets anthropométriques*), searches for missing persons, etc. Since some individuals were later involved in the justice system, there are case files, or other documents related to legal proceedings, that provide additional information on defendants and the conditions of their trial. We consulted 22 archives from administrative divisions, those with internment camps or compulsory residence for nomads, and those bordering the latter administrative divisions. On the basis of the information collected, we also contacted the descendants of people who appeared in the archives and conducted interviews with them, if possible.

The first part of this paper offers a perspective on legislation regarding nomads since the 1912 law. This explains why the reactions of nomads during the war period can only be understood as part of a longer history. The second part discusses various forms of resistance involving the nomads: (1) continuation of tactics already in place under the Third Republic (use of false identities, circumventing the law); (2) acts of protest, unrest, disturbances and plans for riots in internment camps for nomads; (3) camp escapes; and (4) forms of engagement in an armed struggle. The last part of this paper describes the treatment of nomads during the summer of 1944, particularly by groups of *résistants* (members of French resistance movements), which often included summary executions and arrests. This phenomenon was not denounced by the victims, probably because of the antipathetic nature of the charges against them and the difficulty of defending oneself in a national liberation context. With the restoration of the Republic, everyone resumed one's place in society. Thus, the heroic actions of so called nomads were never recognised, and their role in French history during WWII has remained marginalised.

[10] Gurême, *Interdit aux nomades, op. cit.*

2. Being classified as a "Nomad" during World War II

Laws and legislation on nomads

Institutionalized discrimination against Romani populations in France during World War II was not a novelty of the Vichy regime or the German administration in occupied France, and it did not cease after its liberation.[11] However repressive they were, the first policies of the Vichy government related to the Romani populations, including compulsory residence and internment, were only a continuation and aggravation of an already restrictive and discriminatory policy.

At the end of the 19th century, parliamentarians of the Third Republic had already discussed the possibility of having a specific law focusing on the *Romanichel* or Bohemians. However, the process of adopting such legislation was hampered by the difficulty of identifying the criteria to define the population concerned.[12] The characteristics discussed in the Chamber of Deputies (the lower level of parliament) in 1907 reflected existing stereotypes. References to the Bohemians included: "those who do nothing"; "in the winter they are to be found in the South, and in the summer in the North"; "who have no fixed nationality or civic identity, no profession and no home".[13] Up until the vote on the law on 16 July, 1912, the deputies continued to elaborate on a "proper" administrative category. Avoiding explicit reference to racial criteria, the new category focused on the supposed nomadism of Bohemians and presupposed that these individuals were dangerous.[14] The term "nomads" which, the French administration used until 1969, was defined as follows:

> Nomads generally live in caravans and have no domicile, residence, or home. Most of them are vagrants, having ethnic character specific to the Romani, bohemians, Gypsies, travellers, who, under the guise of a problematic profession, walk along the roads without concern for hygiene or legal regulations. They have, or pretend to have, a proper occupation. They say they are tinsmiths, basket-makers, chair repairers, or horse-dealers. Nomads live throughout France in miserable conditions in caravans which contain large families[15].

Individuals falling under this new administrative category were required to carry an "anthropometric" card and their movement was monitored. After France's declaration of

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[11] Henriette Asséo, "Pourquoi tant de haine ? L'intolérance administrative à l'égard des Tsiganes de la fin du 19e siècle à la veille de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale," *Diasporas, Histoire et Sociétés*: *"Haines ",* Patrick Cabanel no. 10, 1er trimestre (2007): 50-67.

[12] Question by Mr. Jourde to Fernand David, *Chamber of Deputies, France,* 29 October, 1907

[13] Ibid.

[14] Félix Challier, "La Nouvelle loi sur la circulation des nomades: loi du 16 juillet 1912," [(Phd Diss., Université de Paris, 1913), 318.

[15] 3 October , 1913 Decree regarding the 16 July, 1912 Law. From that time on the French authorities used the term "nomads" to refer to Roma and "gypsies" of all kinds.

war on Germany, they were subjected to further constraints. The 22 October, 1939 military decree prohibited nomads from travelling in eight administrative divisions in the West of France. The 18 November, 1939 decree on the internment of French illegal "undesirables" foreshadowed the April 6, 1940 legislative decree requiring nomads "to live under the supervision of the police". This decree aimed at limiting the movement of nomads because they "constituted a danger and had to be contained for national security reasons".[16] It was argued that the nomads and their "incessant movements" were likely to "surprise troop movements, [lead to the discovery of] troop settlements, [and the identification of] exact locations of defence operations" and they would "communicate that information to enemy agents". The nomads were seen as a nation within a nation and were suspected of a lack of loyalty towards France.

The 1940 decree applied "to all individuals, whatever their nationality, who were subject to the provisions of Article 3 of the 1912 Law".[17] The minister of interior authorized prefects to decide whether to opt for imposing compulsory residence orders on nomads or intern them in already built camps. Nevertheless, the decree established a preference for subjecting nomads to compulsory residence orders, because it allowed for the continuation of the Third Republic policy of separating, rather than bringing together, extended families. For example, a circular from March 1935, supplementing the 1912 Law, stated that the 57 persons belonging to the Demestre family group no longer had the right to travel together. The group was hence divided into four subgroups and were assigned to separate administrative divisions. Thereby they could travel, but were not allowed to come into contact with each other. The compulsory residence orders also had the advantage of accelerating nomads' settlement. [18] On the other hand, the state of emergency imposed during wartime allowed actions that the Republic could not have otherwise implemented for constitutional reasons. As the Sub-Prefect of the Loire-Inférieure wrote on 13 April, 1940, "I had already suggested that they [the nomads] be sent to guarded camps, but at that time the legislation did not allow such a step to be taken. The decree of April 6, 1940, however, made this possible".[19]

However, the German occupation added a new element to the legislative arsenal already in place. On October 4, 1940, a German military administration ordered the internment of "Gypsies" in the occupied zone.[20] Concerning nomads, France had made similar decisions during World War I, but those measures were then limited.[21] Internment in the occupied territory was also linked to other measures: i.e. formerly authorized professions were banned and punishable by internment. Thus the pace of internment accelerated, for example, when in January 1941, Germans prohibited, by order, the exercise of all travelling

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[16] DA Vienne, 4 M 1443 (6 April, 1940) decree.

[17] DA Vienne, 4 M 1443 (29 April, 1940) decree.

[18] Ibid.

[19] DA Loire-Atlantique, 2 Z 140 (13 April, 1940) Letter from the sub-prefect to the Prefect of Loire-Inférieure.

[20] Filhol and Hubert, *Les Tsiganes,* 88.

[21] Emmanuel Filhol, *Un camp de concentration français. Les Tsiganes alsaciens-lorrains à Crest, 1915-1919* (Grenoble: Presses universitaires de Grenoble, 2004)

professions. In April 1941, this prohibition, however, was lifted for travelling merchants and *forains* (traders at markets and fairs),[22] but not for nomads whose movement remained strictly forbidden.

As stated above, in the non-occupied zone, the situation was different as prefects could decide to place nomads from their administrative divisions into internment camps or to impose compulsory residence orders on them. A large majority of prefects preferred to subject small groups of nomads to compulsory residence orders. On October 29, 1940, Cantal's prefect carefully created twelve groups ("the Weiss group", "the Hoffmann Philippe group", "the Lopez group", etc.) and assigned each one to a different hamlet.[23] Other prefects, such as in the Allier, through which the demarcation line passed, preferred to ban all nomads from their administrative divisions. Thus the nomads of Allier found themselves in compulsory residence in nearby Cantal. Some prefects sent the nomads to pre-existing internment camps that already contained different populations (i.e. Pyrénées-Orientales) or decided to open camps especially for nomads (Bouches-du-Rhône, Hautes-Pyrénées). As an example, on May 12, 1941, the Lannemezan camp (Hautes-Pyrénées) included more than 220 nomads above the age of 13 years, and, since those under 13 were not counted, the total population of this camp can therefore be estimated at around 350 people.[24]

Classification

The decree of April 1940 requiring internment and compulsory residence measures applied only to nomads as defined under the 1912 Law, and other persons usually associated with nomadic lifestyle, such as *forains* and groups coming from Eastern Europe, were not covered by the decree. However, the administration would later expand the initial category. The prefectures would reclassify these groups to include them in the nomad category.

Changing categories: Why some forains became nomads

On September 7, 1939, the Haag family of traders [*forain*] arrived in the village of Châteauneuf-sur-Charente. They were part of a group of refugees from the Moselle. A year later, the mayor of the village wrote to the prefect to point out that the family did not want to leave the village and suggested that he "order them to comply with measures applicable to nomads".[25] Following an investigation into the case, the gendarmerie concluded that they

[22] *Supra* note 3.

[23] DA Cantal, 2 SC 6 796 (29 October, 1940) Census of the nomads compelled to a compulsory residence in the Cantal.

[24] DA Hautes-Pyrénées, 321 W 117 (12 May, 1941) Census of the nomads compelled to compulsory residence in the Hautes-Pyrénées.

[25] DA Charente, 1 W 41 (6 November, 1940) Letter from the mayor of Châteauneuf-sur-Charente to the Prefect of Charente.

met "all conditions" to be included in the nomad category because they had "no domicile or fixed residence in France" and that "its members exercised no profession and do no work", thus they "can only be classified as nomads".[26] In December 1940, the prefect of Charente reclassified the Haag family as nomads, and they were then interned at the Alliers camp in Angoulême.

Such transfers from the category of *forain* to nomad would take place throughout the war, both in the free and occupied zones. For instance, in 1943, having already been subjected to compulsory residence the "Jean Schutt" and "Paul Hinderschied" families in a town of the Haute-Loire were reclassified as nomads because they lost their *forain* identity documents. The report by the gendarmerie concluded that they must be classified as nomads as they were "terrorizing the population", lived only from "rapine and poaching" and that "their children did not go to school".[27] Or in the case of the Chardelin-Capeleau *forains*, they were identified by the prefect of the Lot-et-Garonne as nomads in August 1943, with the "sole objective of making sure they were subject to compulsory residence order".[28] From correspondence between Alfred Capeleau and the prefect in 1945 it becomes clear that this re-categorization was the result of an "excess of zeal by a policeman", who pursued this family because one of their sons "was a member of the Resistance".[29] In December 1946, the sub-prefect of Marmande gave them back their *forain* identity documents.

However, many families would not be as fortunate as the Chardelin-Capeleau family and their transfer to the nomad category would be definitive. Such was the case of the family of Celestin Belloni, a World War I hero, honoured twice (*faits remarquables).*[30] In 1945, he unsuccessfully asked to be transferred back into the *forain* category. In 1947, he wrote directly to General de Gaulle, but once again his request was not granted.

An expandable category

The transfer from the *forain* to the nomad category was not the only way increasing the number of people subjected to constraints as a result of reclassifying them as nomads. Some people who lived neither on the road nor in caravans would still officially be classified as "nomads".

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[26] DA Charente, 1 W 41 (November, 1940) Report by the gendarmerie on the Haag family.

[27] DA Haute Loire, 451 W 9 (30 November, 1943) Report by the gendarmerie of Paulhaguet on the Schutt and the Hinderschied families.

[28] DA Lot et Garonne, 907 W 14 (August, 1943) Letter from the Prefect of Lot-et-Garonne.

[29] DA Lot et Garonne, 907 W 14 (18 July, 1944) Letter from Caplaud to the Prefect of Lot-et-Garonne.

[30] DA Cantal, 2 SC 7242. "Célestin Benoni, 2nd class soldier of the 1st Company of the 415th Infantry Regiment. Grenadier elite, with remarkable cold blood, able and willing for all perilous missions. On July 15, 1918, during action, at a critical moment, he armed himself with a machine-gun, whose gunners had fallen, and by his violent fire helped to stop the assailant in his tracks". Quote about Célestin Benoni by the Commanding General of the 12th Infantry Division,

In May 1940, the sub-prefect of Châteaubriant wrote to the lieutenant of the national police, saying that "evacuees from the Paris region" were in fact "Gypsies".[31] Since December 1939, many families from Paris had settled near Châteaubriant. These included Kalderash and Lovara Roma families. The prefecture of the Loire-Inférieure administrative division referred to them as "White Russians", even though some were Spanish. Of these 93 people, only 16 had French identity documents, while others had foreign identity documents. The sub-prefect of Marmande wrote that the latter "must be considered as nomads and subjected to compulsory residence".[32] He based this conclusion on "the diversity of the birthplaces of the different members of these families," "their clothing" and "their way of life".[33] Furthermore, he specified, that "the application of the decree of April 6, 1940 to these gypsies will be very well received in the region".[34] Another example is the Maximoff family, who were Russian nationals and received nomad identity cards from the prefect of the Hautes-Pyrénées in June 1941,[35] which would lead to their internment at the Lannemezan camp and allowed for their continued treatment as nomads until 1946.

Therefore, by the end of World War II the nomad category included sedentary as well as nomadic people, street vendors and *forains*, and anyone associated with a bohemian life-style. From the analysis of the administrative classification of nomads it can be concluded that actors in the French administration—including prefects, police officers, mayors and other officials—were granted great discretion in interpreting the 1912 Law. On the other hand, the subtlety of the law escaped the German authorities for the most part, thus, they could sometimes be convinced that certain people were wrongly interned as a result of their misclassification as nomads. For instance, Paul Demestre managed to be freed from the Linas-Montlhéry camp by explaining to the German authorities that he was mistakenly classified as nomad since: he was not a "Gypsy", but a rich travelling salesman.[36]

3. The context of challenging the administration

After this brief overview of the legal situation of those identified as nomads, we now consider the daily administrative constraints they faced. Indeed, if one wants to analyse the different forms of resistance, one must first understand the concrete situation in which the nomads had to confront the administration.

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[31] DA Loire-Atlantique, 2 Z 140 (May, 1940) Letter from the Sub-Prefect of Châteaubriant to the lieutenant of gendarmerie.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] DA Hautes-Pyrénées, 226 W 27 (June, 1941) Nomad identity documents of the Maximoff family.

[36] National Archives, AJ 40 552. Request for release from the Linas Montlhéry camp by Paul Demestre.

Complaints and petitions from neighbours

On April 13, 1940, the prefect of the Creuse issued a decree to gather nomads from across the administrative division into the La Chassagne camp. More than 110 people were interned in this place.[37] Four months later, the inhabitants of La Chassagne sent the prefect a petition to ask him to proceed with the "evacuation" of these nomads. They argued that "living in the proximity [of these nomads] had become disturbing," and their "idleness" generated "thefts, and degradations of all kinds, the damage of which could not be estimated".[38] Upon receipt of the petition, the prefect ordered an inquiry. The report of the Gendarmes' investigation stated that two of their horses had "wandered" onto the cultivated lands of a neighbour and that they were responsible for theft of potatoes, which the investigation did not confirm. One resident explained to the police officers that she "heard the neighbours say that the nomads were engaged in raiding and destroyed the hedgerow fencing on cultivated land".[39] There were many rumours but the police failed to confirm them with proven facts. Even though no guilt was established by the investigation, the prefect of the Creuse decided to have the nomads distributed into seven different localities, far removed from each other.[40]

In the same week in August 1940, in another town of the Creuse, the inhabitants resorted to the same method. The neighbours of Bourganeuf signed a collective complaint against "the *forains* and nomads who camped around Bourganeuf".[41] The proceedings of the investigation revealed a similar rhetoric to the one in the La Chassagne complaint: "I did not catch these people red-handed, but […]" the neighbours had heard many things. They were deeply convinced that the misdeeds that they themselves had not witnessed were the work of the nomads. However, no one was able to directly testify to a crime attributable to the nomads. Only one resident was certain of a precise fact: "In my absence, [the children] have fun in my meadow". Another resident complained about "the owners of a grey goat" which "wandered" onto his field. The proceedings concluded with the opinion of the mayor of Bourganeuf: "the *forains* had stayed here long enough and been the subject of frequent complaints from the inhabitants, so their departure would contribute to the maintenance of order." Following numerous petitions and complaints, the police commissioner of Aubusson recommended transferring the men to a work camp and women to the Argelès' internment camp"[42]

The prefect of the Creuse also preferred to disperse the nomads to various localities and encouraged local and national police to arrest all nomads who left their compulsory residence. In Creuse, from 1940 until the end of compulsory residence in 1946, the inhabitants of the towns to which the nomads were assigned constantly complained of their behaviour.

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[37] DA Creuse, 976 W 199 (13 April, 1940) Decree gathering 110 nomads into the La Chassagne camp.

[38] DA Creuse, 976 W 199 (5 August, 1940) Petition against the nomads from the inhabitants of La Chassagne.

[39] DA Creuse, 976 W 199 (12 August, 1940) Report on the petition against the nomads.

[40] DA Creuse, 976 W 199 (14 September, 1940) Letter from the Sub-Prefect of Aubusson to the Prefect of Creuse.

[41] DA Creuse, 976 W 199 (10 August, 1940) Report on the petition from the inhabitants of Bourganeuf.

[42] DA Creuse, 976 W 199 (14 November, 1940) Letter from the police commissioner to the Prefect of Creuse.

For example, the inhabitants of Chambon-sur-Voueize sent the prefect, in April 1943, a petition saying that they had been "subjected, for nearly three years, to the presence of the Adam tribe, […] it had not been possible to be free of their cumbersome presence, despite repeated complaints." This "tribe" was accused of being "a permanent danger […] from the point of view of both hygiene and public health". Moreover, this "red family of Spain" were "visited very often by many passers-by".[43] The prefect then made a request for internment of these nomads in the Saliers camp (Bouches-du-Rhône), but was informed that the camp was "full".[44] The prefect then assigned these nomads to residence in another town where they would be under police surveillance.

In the occupied zone the procedures of transfers to camps were accelerated, and sometimes provoked, by similar complaints from villagers. In April 1940, an inhabitant of Le Mans wrote to the mayor of the city who then informed the prefect of Sarthe that the nomads "are harmful to our neighbourhoods and I believe, even more harmful to national security."[45] The prefects of the occupied zone took these petitions very seriously. For instance, the prefect of the Loire-Inférieure wrote to the commander of the gendarmerie of Nantes to conduct "an investigation into the actions of these nomads" and requested that "if the charges against them prove well-founded, propose measures of internment [for them]"[46] In many cases, the documents indicated that if residents and mayors had not lodged complaints against the nomads they could have remained in compulsory residence without being sent to internment camps.

The day-to-day reality of compulsory residence

Until now, historiography has only studied the internment of nomads in detail and has left little room for the study of compulsory residence. Compulsory residence orders were implemented with great zeal, especially in the administrative divisions of the Massif Central: the families were broken up; spouses were often even assigned to reside in different localities because they did not have marriage certificates; authorizations for work outside the town were extremely rare, and some families did not even have a trailer for shelter and slept on the ground, suffering from cold and hunger, and were subjected to daily police checks.

On 7 September, 1942, four gendarmes checked the papers of a nomad named Wiastersheim. They searched him and found some ration cards in his possession that were not his. They then checked all members of the "Wiastersheim tribe" and realized that they had ten cards while there were only seven of them. The gendarmes carried out "searches near their dwelling" and discovered "a woman and two little girls hidden in the ferns". The 47-year-old

[43] DA Creuse, 987 W 51 (1943) File "Adam Tribe".

[44] Ibid.

[45] DA Sarthe, 4 M 144 (1 May, 1940) Letter from the mayor of Le Mans to the Prefect of Sarthe.

[46] DA Loire-Atlantique, 1694 W 34 (4 July, 1942) Letter from the Prefect of Loire-Inférieure to commander of gendarmerie.

woman, Marie Wiastersheim née Berger-Maillet, mother of seven children, had abandoned her compulsory residence to join the father of her children. Since they had been living together in cohabitation and were not married, they were not assigned to the same compulsory residence. In August, they officially married in order to ask for a common residence but this was refused by the prefect. Marie went "with two young girls, Marinette, 8, and Reine, 5, to be with her husband." Marie says that since her arrival in this town, she "lived in the surrounding woods for fear of being discovered by the police". The gendarmes called on a resident of the village to thoroughly search Marie Wiastersheim and arrest her, based on a violation of Article 1 of the Decree of April 6, 1940 then placed her in the cell of their barracks while waiting to be brought before the French state prosecutor at Gueret.[47]

The conditions of compulsory residence were such that, despite difficult beginnings solidarities did begin to form. Christophe Moreigne recalled an episode of compulsory residence in the Creuse, regarding the Fourmann family. One of the nomads became part of the local football team, the Fourneaux Sporting Club, and became one of its best players and, "in the autumn of 1942, the club's leaders won the award of 'a circulation card valid on Sundays and public holidays for the duration of the administrative divisional football season'".[48] These local co-operations would sometimes transform into co-operations of resistance, as described in the next section.

Compulsory residence was organized by the prefectures: it was they who decided on places of residence, composition of groups, and the granting of laissez-passes. They were helped by the police and the gendarmerie which controlled and stopped nomads. The nomads were very closely watched: if they did not respect their place of compulsory residence, they were sent to prison and, if they reoffended after serving their sentence, they were interned in disciplinary camps like Fort-Barraux, Nexon or Brens.

Arrests occurred daily. Reports from the gendarmerie reveal that some arrests did not go easily. On July 3, 1943, in the Lot-et-Garonne, two gendarmes received a complaint from a farmer who said he saw three young men eating plums in his field, adding that two of his poultry were taken by a dog the day before in the evening. The gendarmes note in their report that the *forains* who lived near the canal "have a yellow dog that, according to rumours, was trained to catch chickens".[49] The gendarmes then proposed that the farmer accompany them to the camp so that he himself could identify the young men he saw eating his plums. At the sight of the gendarmes, several young men fled the camp. Immediately, one of the gendarmes took out his weapon. As the *forains* did not respond to the order "Put your hands up", the policeman "fired, without however, shooting at them". The *forains* panicked and fled. The gendarmes then organized a search that lasted until two o'clock in the morning. The young men were arrested. One of them, who was 16 years old, said: "While passing a

[47] DA Creuse, 987 W 52 (7 September, 1942) Report on the arrest of Marie Wiastersheim.

[48] Christophe Moreigne, "Les Nomades dans la Creuse. Assignation à résidence et internement administratif. 1940-1946," *Mémoires 2013 de la Société des sciences naturelles, historiques et archéologiques de la Creuse (* (2012/2013) : 326.

[49] DA Lot-et-Garonne, 907 W 14 (3 July, 1943) Report regarding a theft of fruit and the rebellion of the forains Michel Chardelin and Paul Capleau.

plum tree my brother and my cousin picked some plums. As for me, I did not touch any of them. My brother gave me one that I ate. I did not notice if they picked up a lot, but I think they only took two".

Nomads arrested for various crimes, such as the theft of plums, were placed in cells before being tried by correctional courts that severely condemned their offenses. Thus, from 1939 to January 1944, Antonia Dour was sentenced 12 times for three minor thefts, no presentation of identity documents, and violations of the Decree of April 6, 1940. Over the course of four years, she spent more than twenty-two months in prison.[50] Here again, the disproportion between the offenses and the punishments is flagrant. However, French officials, officially subordinates of the Occupier, acted without strict supervision and were thus free to act on their own.

French staff in the internment camps

Internment camps for nomads were run by an entirely French staff: the camp leader was always French, as were the gendarmes and camp guards, the doctors and nurses. The reports from the camps were sent by the camp commander to the prefect, and not to the *Feldkommandantur*. However, the Germans, who had the right of review, intervened in certain cases that we will detail below.

Marie Reinhard, interned at the camp of Chateaubriant (Loire-Inférieure), was the only one to have declared, during an investigation in 1941 into the actions of the guards and gendarmes of the camp that members of staff "are not mean" and "even rather funny".[51] Other nomads' complaints and police reports suggest a rather different reality. The conditions of existence in the camps were unspeakable and the behaviour of the camp staff added to the suffering of those interned. Over a period of less than three weeks (January-February 1941) at Moisdon-la-Rivière camp, four very young children died. In two of these deaths, instead of referring to the hygiene conditions of the camp, three staff—the camp commander, a gendarme and a nurse—requested that "a case be opened against the parents of the deceased and their accomplices". They believed that the facts "clearly established the responsibility of parents who are guilty of homicide by negligence".[52] This rhetoric of a reversal of perspectives is representative of what regularly occurred in the camps: each time an adverse event occurred, the nomads were blamed. If they cut up a wooden bed, it would not be an act that demonstrated the extreme cold that camp residents suffered, but criminal damage to equipment. If an internee declared that her "moral forces began [to] abandon her", it was not a state of psychological suffering, due to poor living conditions, but the beneficial effect of the camp regime on amoral beings. "Given that nomadic moral forces should be characterized

[50] DA Lot, 1109 W 26 (9 July, 1944) Antonia Dour's criminal record.

[51] DA Loire-Atlantique, Chât 136. Judgement (10 July, 1941) Angèle Siegler.

[52] DA Loire Atlantique, 43 W 152 (11 January, 1941) Report from the director of the La Forge's internment camp for nomads, Moidson-la-Rivière.

as amoral or immoral forces, it seems that Society does not have much to complain about abandoning or diminishing said forces".[53]

Confinement to a camp thus constituted an intensification of the surveillance and harassment of the nomads by the administration. The primary concern of parents was a fear that their children would be taken away from them. The inhabitants of a town of the Loire-Inférieure wrote to the prefect of Nantes in 1943 to request the internment of a family under compulsory residence in their town and to "entrust the children of these same families to re-education centres".[54] Some internments would thus lead to the separation of children and parents. Whenever a family arrived at the Alliers camp (Charente), the Family Assistance office would ask the camp director the same question: "to make it known urgently, […] whether the children of the family [X] were still dependants".[55] Therefore, many children would be entrusted, by force, to the charity led by Father Le Bideau. This charity was recognized for promoting the public interest in 1945 as it welcomed Jewish children.[56] There is less emphasis on the fact that, in the case of Gypsy children, the children were taken away from their parents. Emmanuel Filhol and Marie-Christine Hubert have shown that the administration of the Saliers camp (Bouches-du-Rhône) entrusted about 200 children to secular or religious institutions.[57] These assignments, sometimes definitive, took place against the will of the parents. In December 1943, in the Jargeau camp, a baby was taken from its mother on the pretext that she had escaped during the bombing of the camp without her child. However, the records reveal that the mother went to the nursery to pick up her child but the nurse in charge refused to give him to her, saying that she would then have to return to the camp after her evacuation in order to see her child again. Despite letters of protest from the father of the child, who was interned in another camp, the parents were deprived of parental authority and the child placed in social care until he was 18 years old.[58]

In addition to the fear of seeing their children taken away, internees were subjected to mistreatment by guards. Punishments were common and included confinement with nothing but bread and water for several days. Guards also beat detainees. We learned about some of these cases because nomads wrote to the prefect denouncing the abuse they suffered. For example, at Coudrecieux camp (Sarthe) two guards "violently hit the nomad Michelet Joseph, after the latter was rendered immobile by handcuffs"[59] and a guard had a woman

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[53] DA Loire-Atlantique, 43 W 152 (21 January, 1941) Report from the director of the La Forge's internment camp for nomads, Moidson-la-Rivière.

[54] DA Loire-Atlantique, 1694 W 34 (15 June, 1943) Letter from the inhabitants of La Morinière to the Prefect of Loire-Inférieure.

[55] DA Charente, 9 W 4 (20 June, 1942) Note from the department of family assistance (Charente's Prefecture) to the director of the Alliers's internment camp.

[56] DA Charente, 1 W 126 (26 April, 1945) Enquiry regarding the charity "La Mère des Pauvres", run by Father Le Bideau.

[57] Filhol and Hubert, *Les Tsiganes*, 236.

[58] DA Loiret, 175 W 34106. Individual file of the internees of the Jargeau's camp.

[59] DA Sarthe, 653 W 59 (1 August, 1941) Letter from the Republic's Prosecutor of Le Mans to the Prefect of Sarthe.

run alongside his bicycle until total exhaustion.[60] These abuses were sometimes approved by the administration, which considered that nomads deserved punishment, especially if they tried to escape.

The Germans

As mentioned above, nomads, in both internment camps and compulsory residence, were confronted by the French administration and not by German occupiers. The decrees ordering their compulsory residence and internment were carried out by the French. The Germans were no less an enemy, but they were an abstract one, distant, and, in many cases, almost invisible. In fact, the correspondence between the camp chiefs and the prefects reveals the underhand action of the *Feldkommandanturs* (field commanders). These relationships were complex because the French and German administrations did not act in the same way: some decisions taken by one were contested by the other. Surprisingly perhaps, when it comes to nomads, it was not uncommon for the French administration to be more severe and repressive than the German one.

The administrative divisional archives of Charente offer us a rather surprising example of disagreements between the French and German administrations concerning the treatment of nomads. On December 12, 1940, the medical doctor of the *Feldkommandantur* of Angoulême, after a visit to the Alliers camp, wrote a report in which he pointed out "major defects in the accommodation and supplies for nomads".[61] He wrote that "the nomads were lying with their own insufficient clothes and blankets on wet and dirty ground" and that the "provisions were absolutely insufficient". He concluded that "a radical change" would have to occur in the sanitary conditions of the camp due to the risk of "constituting a danger of contagion for the civilian populations living near the camp".[62] The *Feldkommandantur* took the doctor's report seriously and the very next day the German colonel sent an "urgent" note to the prefect of Angoulême regarding "conditions of life contrary to human dignity at the concentration camp of the nomads".[63] He underlined the "scandalous situation" of the Alliers camp and ordered immediate changes while warning that a new inspection would take place shortly.

What emerged from examination of the twenty-two administrative divisional archives is that the prefectures and gendarmeries took advantage of the exceptional period of the occupation of France to intensify the severity of their treatment of nomads. While French Resistance was defined as all action taken against German occupiers, the resistance of the nomads went further and acted both in resistance to the Germans, as well as in resistance to

[60] DA Sarthe, 653 W 59 (4 June, 1941) Letter from the *Feldkommandantur* 755 to the Prefect of Sarthe.

[61] DA Charente, 1 W 41 (12 December, 1940) Report from the doctor of the *Feldkommandantur*.

[62] *Ibid*.

[63] DA Charente, 1 W 41 (13 December, 1940) Letter from the Commandant of the *Feldkommandantur* to the Prefect of Charente.

French authorities responsible for the application of internment and compulsory residence orders. The double dimension of this resistance could well explain the lack of official recognition of nomadic resistance after the war. Recognizing their fight against the German occupation would have led to the revelation of their acts of resistance against the French authorities as well, both during and before the war, and thus question the politics of the Third Republic.

The difficulty of analysing these resistance activities is illustrated quite well by the following anecdote. A group of nomads, musicians by profession, were allowed to go and play in the cafes and restaurants of Angouleme until a certain hour. One evening in May 1941, police surprised seven nomads from the Alliers camp playing music in a restaurant after the authorized time. When the police entered the establishment to interrupt the music and ask the nomads for their passes, a German in civilian clothes, accompanied by German soldiers, prevented them from doing so. The report of the police describes the scene thus: "one of the civilians […] violently wrung a nomadic identity card from his hands. Then he showed us the door telling us that this is not our concern". The report ends with the following consideration: the nomads "expressed joy at seeing us being put out the door".[64] It should be added that the archives of the Alliers camp reveal that these seven nomads were punished on their return to the camp and spent several days in a cell with only bread and water. For the nomads, the most immediate threat was thus represented by French officials, who applied legislation concerning the nomads with varying degrees of zeal.

4. Different forms of resistance

Uses of false identities

In a previous study, we showed that some Roma groups, especially the so-called Hungarian Roma, applied certain resistance strategies in an attempt to escape the control of the administration of the Third Republic.[65] These strategies, as detailed in the police and journalistic archives of the early twentieth century, included the use of false identities. Indeed, the most direct way of diverting regular identity checks was to have multiple identities: one would change his lineage, his place of birth, his first names and last names. These strategies allowed many Roma family groups to preserve certain family ties, travelling habits, and lifestyle practices.

This form of resistance continued in the 1940s. In November 1940, when the Sabas family was subjected to compulsory residence in a building in Le Croisic (Loire-Inférieure) with other families who had fled Paris, the police station of Saint-Nazaire began to keep files

[64] DA Charente, 1 W 41 (5 May, 1941) Note from the policemen to the director of the Alliers' camp.

[65] Lise Foisneau, "La crainte des Roms. Pratique romanès de la défiance," *Tracés*, no. 31 (2016): 87-108.

on everyone. The file reveals that these families of so-called "Hungarian" Roma had completely disguised their lineage and their places of birth so as not to be confused with French nomads. Rose Sabas said she was born in May 1899 in Toulon, child of Georges Sabas and Marie Charchouclaux and she travelled mostly in Spain with her late husband.[66] To claim that one is born in a big city makes it more difficult for the administration to find records of their civil status. In addition, the names of Rose's parents did not allow the administration to assign her to a known nomad family group. "Charchouclaux" is the name of Roma dish: Sour cabbage, *šax šuklo*. This process of concealing identity allowed the Sabas family to travel between France and Spain and obtain new identity documents every time they travelled around France.

The use of false identities also allowed some nomads to escape conscription at the beginning of the war. In 1942, a warrant for the arrest of a Eugene Michelet for insubordination was issued by the Toulouse Military Investigating Judge. Eugene's family was assigned to Bourganeuf in the Creuse. During a check in July 1942, as three gendarmes approached the camp, the following scene occurred: "At the moment we arrived at the last trailer, a man we recognized as the nomad Theodore Michelet rushed out and fled in the direction of the city".[67] A chase ensued, that ended without the man in question being caught. The gendarmes concluded that Eugene Michelet was hiding under the name of Theodore. But Theodore Michelet in fact existed: Eugene and Theodore were brothers. After an arrest warrant was drawn up in the name of Eugene, he had the prefecture of Montlucon deliver identity documents in the name of his brother, Theodore, early in 1942. The discovery of this trick earned Eugene three years of detention at Mauzac, a military prison camp in Dordogne.[68]

One of the most significant cases of false identities, which made headlines in the press, concerned the Demeters in the administrative division of the Loire from October 1942 to January 1943. Following a theft of gold coins and banknotes (the archives do not give any details on this), a section of the judicial police of Saint-Etienne was responsible for conducting an investigation into this "tribe". During simultaneous searches, the police found many identity cards: "Among the many identity cards found were false identity certificates, ration cards that were erased and falsified, Spanish passports for nomads named Suffert and Arneras-Sarguero."[69] The report notes that the latter managed to obtain identity documents "from the authorities in the four different places of France, including Toulouse, Marseille, Colmar, and Clermont-Ferrand". However, the police were not sure exactly why the Demeters had so many different identities. They assumed that these identities made it possible to evade laws on military recruitment, "to take advantage of benefits granted to large families"

[66] DA Loire-Atlantique, 2 Z 141. Nomad identity document of Rose Sabas.

[67] DA Creuse, 987 W 52 (22 July, 1942) Report giving information of the abandonment of assigned residency by the nomad Théodore Michelet.

[68] DA Creuse, 987 W 52 (25 May, 1943) Note by the Commandant of Bourganeuf's brigade on the nomad Eugène Michelet.

[69] DA Loire, 195 W 2 (9 January, 1943) Letter from the Prefect of Loire to the delegate prefect of Rhône.

and to escape "expulsion orders" to which some of them were subjected.[70] After several days of trial, the court still did not know for certain if these people were named Demeter, Romano, Suffert, Martinez, Pascual, Fernandez or Arneras-Sarguero; it did not also become clear whether these people were French or Spanish. More than fifteen members of these families were sentenced to several months in jail for "the use of false ration cards", "use of false passports", "false notarial acts", and "falsification of identity".[71] The rest of the family were under compulsory residence order in a commune of the Rhône. The trial and the convictions would not prevent these family groups from disappearing without trace in August 1943. The archives do not provide information allowing us to trace them during the last years of the war. However, we know that one of these young men, Antonio Fernandez, lost his life in a battle between the *maquis* and the Germans.[72]

Circumventing the law by finding loopholes

Using false identities was not the only way nomads attempted to circumvent the legislation. They also tried to negotiate their way out of the repressive measures or try to find loopholes in the law. For instance, in May 1940, a member of another Demeter family group, in compulsory residence in Loire-Inférieure, would try to negotiate the transfer of his family to the free zone. Serge Demeter managed to have the sub-prefect of Châteaubriant (Loire-Inférieure) write a letter to the prefect of Bouches-du-Rhône in which the former recounts the conclusions of the negotiation with Serge Demeter: if the prefect of Bouches-du-Rhone would agree to receive the Demeters, they pledge to renounce all state allowances and commit to finding housing through their own means.[73]

Negotiations were not always conducted outright. Most nomad family groups would learn to work around the legislation, exactly as they had already done under the Third Republic. The simplest means of avoiding internment was to own land. If the nomads were landowners, the Vichy State preferred to assign them to their homes instead of interning them. Thus, many families of nomads would acquire or rent plots of land starting in 1939.[74] For example, Nicolas Winterstein and Amélie Dessagne rented a house in Saint-Hilaire-de-Vouste (Vendée) in September 1943 to avoid being transferred to a nomad camp.[75] Unfortunately, the administration deemed land rental to be insufficient and arrested them, and transferred

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[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

[72] DA Lot, 1341 W 2 (6 October, 1945) Report regarding the authorization request for travel asked by the Amador tribe from Bagnac.

[73] DA Loire-Atlantique, 2 Z 140 (1 May, 1940) Letter for the Prefect of Bouches-du-Rhône.

[74] For more details on this point, see Jacques Sigot, *Des barbelés que découvre l'histoire. Un camp pour les Tsiganes… et les autres* (Bordeaux: Wallada, 2011).

[75] DA Vendée, 20 W 546 (2 September, 1943) Report on the arrest of Dessagne Amélie, wife of Winterstein, nomad.

them to a camp. Thomas Demestre bought a small property in Cellefroin in the Charente, but he and his family were also interned at the Poitiers camp.[76]

Another strategy for taking advantage of loopholes in existing legislation was to enter into a marriage. Just as the fact of being a landowner was supposed to allow for a dispensation from internment, marriage would allow a couple to remain together during internment or compulsory residence. It should be noted that the majority of couples in the nomad category were not married according to civil law. For example, the so-called "Hungarian" Roma groups would be married in a Roma fashion, that is to say before the Roma community, but never in front of the Mayor or the parish priest. The problem for these cohabiting couples was that the French state did not recognize their union. To avoid being separated, many couples would get married at the town hall: for example, Chinca Demestre married Rosa Carlos on May 22, 1940 in Pontivy. Some researchers have seen marriages in the camps as a way to have a celebration in spite of their situation, however this was not the case. It was rather a strategy of resistance to prevent family separations.

Anonymous letters and denunciation of abuse

Whilst using false identities and finding loopholes in the law were modes of resistance that go back to the Third Republic, the nomads also used new means to try to challenge the application of the law. The internees of the nomad camps were well aware of the hierarchy of administrations and could therefore sometimes navigate within them. For instance, in August 1941, Mr. Martin, a nomad imprisoned at the Coudrecieux camp wrote a letter to the Attorney General in Angers denouncing the ill-treatment of nomads, particularly by a certain camp guard. The prosecutor then wrote a letter to the delegate of the Ministry of the Interior, to inform him of Mr. Martin's complaint. The delegate wrote in turn to the prefect of Maine-and-Loire (even though the Coudrecieux camp was in the Sarthe): "The existence of this camp never having been reported to me, I request you inform me of the conditions under which it was created and is currently functioning".[77] In the response it was revealed that the department of the Sarthe had set up a camp several months previously that included more than 300 nomads. A woman internee in the Moidson-la-Rivière camp in the Loire-Inférieure wrote anonymously to the prefect of the administrative division to complain about living conditions in the camp.

> Forges, January 14, 1941
> Mr. Prefect,
> I do not know whether you are aware of the life we are experiencing in this camp, in terms of the manual labour that we endure by force majeure and especially the very little food we have,

[76] DA Vienne, 109 W 55 (4 July, 1944) Report on the arrest of Boboco Demestre's nomad family.

[77] DA Sarthe. 653 W 59. August 30, 1941. Letter from Mr. Martin, nomad, internee at the Coudrecieux camp, to the General Prosecutor of Angers.

> without heating; sometimes two days, three days without drinking, so that our physical forces and our moral forces begin to abandon us. I do not see why in this camp of Moisdon-la-Rivière, we do not have the same regime as the neighbouring administrative divisions: Sarthe, Vienne and Mayenne. We have nothing left to wear and we have our men who ask us for many things and we have no money to send them.[78]

On receipt of this letter, the prefect wrote to the camp chief at Moidson asking for details of the anonymous complaint he received. Without reading too much into these documents, the camp leader in his response appears deeply upset by this prisoner who exceeded his authority by speaking directly to his supervisor. He justifies himself to the prefect, saying that "if an investigation were carried out, it would certainly lead to the observation that more than 90 per cent of the internees are beginning to be satisfied with their situation … and would not want to go wander on the roads anymore."[79] In addition, he identifies the author of the letter who, according to him, is "one of the worst individuals in the camp", "an accomplished type of bitch and drunkard", she is "hated by all her peers, from whom she has already had to be protected." The camp commander also takes the opportunity to inform the prefect that it is not impossible that the prefect or the "occupying authorities" will receive in the coming days another letter of this type: "Jean Pougin wrote to the German authorities through the named Sauton (Pougin was illiterate) to denounce the 'atrocities' of which the nomads of Moisdon are victim."[80]

Indeed, internees did not hesitate to write directly to the German administration to complain about treatment reserved for them by the French administration. For instance, in the spring of 1941, André Legouas, interned at the Coudrecieux camp, wrote to the *Feldkommandantur* to denounce the poor living conditions in the camp. We have no record of exchanges between the *Feldkommandantur* and the prefect of Sarthe, but we found a letter from the prefect of Sarthe, in which he expresses his strong dissatisfaction to the camp commander of Coudrecieux. He asks that nomads who bypass the administration be "punished disciplinarily".[81]

Expressing discontent: Act of protest, insults, unrest, disturbances and riots

The archives of the camps that we uncovered have revealed that internees also engaged in more direct resistance acts, ranging from insult to insurrection.

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[78] DA Loire-Atlantique, 43 W 152 (14 January, 1941) Anonymous letter from an internee to the Prefect of Loire-Inférieure.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Ibid.

[81] DA Sarthe, 653 W 57 (24 June, 1941) Letter from the Prefect of Sarthe to the director of the Coudrecieux camp.

The Adam family was interned in the Kérangal street camp in Rennes at the beginning of 1942. The "head of the family" was a woman: Rosa Wiss, a widow aged 41 years old, she was accompanied by her thirteen children, aged from 1 to 23 years old. According to archival documents, on 3 March, 1942 the family "expressed their discontent about turning off the lights in the camp at 9 pm".[82] The elders of the family attacked staff switching off lights, and the guards on duty "had to intervene to restore order". They restored the lighting to try to find the culprits of this ruckus. One of the Adam sons then pulled the lead out of a socket to plunge the camp back into darkness. Internees then took advantage of this to insult the guards. Several offenses of contempt against a law enforcement officer were reported. The day after the event, the director of the camp asked that the Adam family, who, according to him, were responsible for the troubles of the previous day, be transferred to a camp with disciplinary premises available. The Adam family were transferred to the camp of Moidson-la-Rivière and the Prefect of the Loire-Inférieure explicitly asked the director of the camp "to tame their wild character".[83]

The gendarmes who guarded the camps were sometimes overwhelmed by the behaviour of some internees expressing discontent. In September 1943, the director of the Alliers camp (Charente) asked the prefect that the Demestre family be transferred to the camp of Poitiers, known for being more "severe". Interned at the camp of Alliers in November 1940, this family was allowed to leave the camp in August 1941 to reach a place of compulsory residence. As a result of complaints of "begging, theft and theft of ration cards"[84], the Demestres were interned again in February 1942, but escaped from the camp three times between 4 April and 5 May, 1942. In September 1943, 8 men, 7 women and 16 children from this family were arrested and returned to the Alliers camp. One of the reports of a gendarme of the camp explains that, upon their return, the Demestres "sought to make the nomads revolt"[85] and to provoke incidents with the personnel of the camp. In another report, it was written that "this family was defiant" and that the camp director took "severe measures […] against heads of families" and that they were "locked up in disciplinary premises".[86] To get these men out of the cells, a doctor intervened by writing medical certificates attesting to the fact that the disciplinary cells may have dramatic consequences on the health of some of these men.[87] The Demestre family was transferred to the Poitiers camp in November 1943.

On 21 March, 1941, at the Choisel camp (Loire-Inférieure), 20-year-old Angèle Siegler was queuing for the ration of sugar to which she was entitled for her infant. When her turn came

[82] DA Ille-et-Vilaine, 4 M 150 (4 March, 1942) Letter from the director of the internment camp for nomads (Rennes) to the Prefect of Ille-et-Vilaine.

[83] DA Loire-Atlantique, 1694 W 34 (26 March, 1942) Letter from the Prefect of Loire-Inférieure to the Prefect of Ille-et-Vilaine.

[84] DA Charente, 9 W 4 (28 February, 1943) Note from the director of the Alliers' camp to the Prefect of Charente.

[85] *Ibid*.

[86] DA Charente, 9 W 1 (30 October, 1943) Note on the Alliers' camp.

[87] DA Charente, 9 W 4 (29 September, 1943) Boboco Demestre's medical certificate.

and she saw the amount of sugar she was given, she preferred to throw it on the floor rather than agree to such a paltry amount. Accounts diverge as for what happened next: The gendarmes said they were insulted and beaten by Angèle and that she "tried, with some success, to convince other internees to revolt".[88] They claim to have been forced to incarcerate her in a cell because of "these calls to revolution". Angèle Siegler is said to have uttered the following: "You are a band of idlers, you have rotten blood, you cows, we will make a revolution in the camp and I do not care if I am sentenced to ten years in prison."[89] The gendarmes and the camp commander then decided to file a complaint against her for "verbal assault and rebellion, insults to officials in their service and incitement of prisoners to revolt."[90] During her first appearance in court, Angèle presented her version of the facts:

> I do not recognize the facts that are presented against me. I did not insult any gendarme. They were the ones who jumped on me, six of them together, when I had my baby in my arms and hit me, because I was asking them for a piece of sugar for my little girl. I refused to take the little sugar that the nurse gave me and I threw it on the floor. I did not insult the captain of the camp either. He insulted me and slapped me because I told him that he was not allowed to hit me.[91]

Despite her defense, Angèle Siegler was sentenced to one month in prison.

Another particularly illustrative example is that of the Laurot family, interned at the camp of Coudrecieux (Sarthe). The camp management monitored this family very closely because, according to them, "before the arrival of the Laurot families at the camp, there were from time to time a few hiccups between warders and internees", but since their internment, management has received "demands of all kinds."[92] The deputy director of the camp suspected the Laurots of creating "propaganda […] to inspire the internees to rebel". In September 1941, the Laurots were arbitrarily deprived of the right to "go out for the collection of wood." This decision led to a collective protest against the supervisors. Insults were exchanged and one of the guards heard one of the Laurots saying: "When we get out of here, if we find guards on our road, we will beat them up. Camp life is untenable, we will rebel."[93] Several guards seized Eugène Laurot, 24, who was perceived as the leader of this protest action. In the report which traces the events from the testimonies, Eugène Laurot did not try to justify his actions and said that "[he] admits to having said to the sous-chef of camp […] that he was a "bastard and a coward"[94] and that if he resisted the guards it was because he knew he would be hit by those same guards.

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[88] DA Loire-Atlantique, 43 W 152 (March, 1941) Monthly report on the Choisel camp.

[89] DA Loire Atlantique, chât 136 (1941) File on Angèle Siegler.

[90] DA Loire-Atlantique, 43 W 152 (March, 1941) Monthly report on the Choisel camp.

[91] DA Loire-Atlantique, chât 136 (1941) File on Angèle Siegler.

[92] DA Sarthe, 653 W 59 (18 September, 1941) Report regarding administrative information: Laurot's case [*Affaire Laurot*].

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid.

There were physical fights between individual internees and the French guards of the camps. For instance, Gabrielle Vichy did not hesitate to knock out the guard who accompanied her to run an errand in the village, in order to escape[95], just like a man named Lagrain, who promised to "punch two or three guards before running away from here [the camp of Coudrecieux]".[96] However, these individual actions were immediately put down by camp personnel, who locked these individuals up in detention rooms.

However, these mutinous acts of protest and disturbing behaviour would become more violent and individuals more determined after long months of internment. For instance, the internees of the camp of Coudrecieux (Sarthe) were transferred in mid-April 1942 to the camp of Mulsanne. (We did not find oral testimonies of the episode we describe, instead it was made possible by the camp's administrative documents, including daily reports.) Shortly before noon on Monday, 12 May, 1942, the internees protested against the fact that the food was insufficient. Some internees forced down one of the gates of the camp—the one near the guardhouse. The internees rushed to exit. The guards called for reinforcements and the soldiers of the Mulsanne gendarmerie station intervened to restore order.[97] The director of the camp immediately informed the prefect of what he called a "riot" and asked him to find an "urgent solution" to the question of food, because, he said, "other troubles are to be feared." [98] And, indeed, the very next day, the violence continued around 1 pm. Internees, presumably very determined, again knocked down the gate of the guard post, then reached the entrance gate of the camp that they also levelled. Once out of the camp, the internees threatened to "walk on to the village of Mulsanne".[99] On the pretext that the camp personnel were not armed, the management called the *Feldkommandantur* who sent about twenty *Feldgendarmen* to restore order. The report says that, rapidly, "calm was returned".[100] The administrative divisional archives of the Sarthe did not have other documents concerning this riot, and nor did we find a witness to the incident. However, it can be assumed that the internees were well organized, in order to come together to knock down the entrance gate of the camp. Contrary to police documents suggesting that this was a spontaneous action related to a simple food issue, we believe—in light of how revolts started in other camps—this was rather a riot organized to try to increase the power of the internees and escape the internment regime of the French State.

Although we did not collect direct testimony from actors who participated in such events, archival documents revealed that some internees had probably fomented plans for much larger revolts and also armed themselves For instance, when, on 21 March, 1941, Angèle Siegler was arrested for insulting guards and inciting detainees to revolt at the Choisel

[95] DA Sarthe, 653 W 57 (20 December, 1941) Note from the supervisor in chief to the head of the 2nd Division of Le Mans.

[96] DA Sarthe, 653 W 57 (8 July, 1941) Note from the supervisor in chief to the Prefect of Sarthe.

[97] DA Sarthe, 653 W 59 (12 May, 1942) Report on the camp.

[98] Ibid.

[99] DA Sarthe, 653 W 59 (13 May, 1942) Report on the camp.

[100] Ibid.

(Loire-Inférieure) camp, she was interrogated by gendarmes threatening her, and she claimed to have been hit. Following her interrogation, a search was organized in the camp: Angèle Siegler, undoubtedly under pressure, revealed that several camp internees were hiding weapons. The director of the Choisel camp wrote that it was because she thought she was "able to have clemency" if she betrayed her fellow prisoners.[101] Angèle Siegler knew who had weapons and where the weapons were hidden in the camp. The camp staff then discovered three hunting rifles, another rifle and a revolver. The owners of the weapons were handed over to the German authorities, who also searched the barracks, trailers and the internees themselves. The four bearers of arms were taken by the Germans and brought before the German Military Tribunal. They were Alphonse Evin, 33, Jean Pougin, 33, known for his communist activities, Ernest Pougin and Voscho Demestre, 44 years old. The director of the camp noted, that "the confiscated weapons were not concealed in order to make use of them against the Germans, but against the guards and administrative staff of the camp".[102] Shortly after the departure of the four men, a gendarme noted "certain disturbances in the camp"[103] and informed his superiors that a "fight" broke out in the evening between "two clans". The main antagonists were "a Siegler woman" and "a Schmitt". It can be assumed that the internees turned against the family of Angèle Siegler, who was responsible for the discovery of the weapons. After this incident, the director of the camp remained convinced that other weapons were still hidden in the camp. He informed the sub-prefect that "new, more dangerous weapons could be brought into the camp either by visitors, in packages addressed to internees, or by internees themselves"[104] and asked that visits and exits be stopped. The German Military Tribunal sentenced the four gun holders to four months in prison. This event illustrates, not only were nomads in the camps organized, but also that the camp administration was aware of it and took steps to pre-empt collective resistance actions.

Escape attempts

This scale of organization among nomads interned in the camps is also evident when one studies various escape attempts. There were numerous cases of nomads escaping from internment camps. Joseph Valet noted that it would be possible to write a great deal on escapes, "since oral testimonies and newspaper articles testify to the number of times Gypsies succeeded in escaping [their camps]". [105] For example, 66% of the nomads (884 out of 1334)

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[101] DA Loire-Atlantique, 43 W 152 (May, 1941) Monthly report on the Choisel camp.

[102] *Ibid*.

[103] DA Loire-Atlantique, 2 Z 140 (26 March, 1941) Report from the commandant of gendarmerie.

[104] DA Loire-Atlantique, 43 W 152 (22 March, 1941) Report from the director of the Choisel camp to the Sub-Prefect of Châteaubriant.

[105] Joseph Valet, "Gitans et Voyageurs d'Auvergne durant la guerre 1939-45,"*Études tsiganes*, no. 6 (1995): 211-219.

in the Rivesaltes' camp escaped at least once.[106] Thus specific devices to prevent recidivists from escaping would be set up in France: These people would be isolated in so-called "disciplinary" camps. Systematic escape attempts seem to suggest that interned nomads organized themselves in a network, including some people also outside the camp to aid their escapes.

Escaping as a family

When we consult the records from the different French internment camps for nomads, we realize that escape attempts were regular and that, unlike escapes from prison camps, they were often accomplished as a family. Internees escaped most often in a group, with their spouse, their parents and their children. It was not uncommon that, in one night, about twenty people making up a family group would try to escape. At the Poitiers camp, on the night of 9 to 10 September, 1941, Jean Reinhard, 31, and Frédéric Reinhard, both 21, accompanied by ten members of their family, tried to escape by climbing over the fence, without cutting the barbed wire. They were arrested by the German authorities, as they crossed the demarcation line illegally.[107] The German authorities refrained from bringing them before a court but demanded a sanction as deterrence.

As already mentioned, thirty members of the Demestre family escaped from the camp of Alliers (Charente) on three separate occasions. Only after six months were some of them caught by gendarmes. When these same Demestres were transferred to the camp of Montreuil-Bellay (Maine-and-Loire), they continued to try and escape. A failed attempt took place during bombings on the night of 3 to 4 July, 1944. The next day, 34 members of the Demestre family were caught by gendarmes. Betini Demestre explained to the gendarmes that during the bombings, he crossed "the barbed wire that [he] flattened while climbing on it" and once outside, he took out his wife, his six children and "all the other members [of his family]". [108] Their intention was to go to their father who owned a property in Charente in order to "save [their] children from death".[109]

The monthly reports of the Alliers camp mentions censored letters or telegrams in which the senders asked the internees to escape to join family members.[110] For example, some people escaped from one camp to another camp where relatives were interned. The Reinhard children, in forced custody at Le Bideau, escaped to join their parents at the interned camp of Alliers.[111]

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[106] Alexandre Doulot, *Les Tsiganes au camp de Rivesaltes 1941-1942* (Paris: Lienart, 2015), 5.

[107] DA Vienne, 109 W 43 (1 September, 1941) Letter from the director of the Poitiers camp to the Prefect of Vienne.

[108] DA Vienne, 109 W 55 (4 July, 1944) Report regarding the arrest of a nomad's family.

[109] DA Vienne, 109 W 55 (4 July, 1944) Report regarding the arrest of Charles Demestre's family, escapee from the Montreuil-Bellay's camp.

[110] DA Charente, 9 W 1 (July/August, 1946) Report on the Alliers' camp.

[111] DA Charente, 9 W 4 (26 November, 1945) Letter from the director of the camp of the Alliers to the Prefect of Charente.

These family escapes, or those made to join family members interned elsewhere, show that the important thing was to stay together and not allow the system to break down family ties.

Individual escapes

Individual escape was sometimes a family strategy. Raymond Gurême wrote that his parents had decided that their children should escape one at a time: the family organized themselves, and first their daughter, Henriette, escaped with two of her friends. Raymond Gurême accompanied them to the garages until it was possible to escape and let them go. Only a few days later, he escaped with his brother. He says that the day after the escape of his sister, the director of the camp of Darnétal "blamed everything on a gendarme" and "claimed that this gendarme let the girls out". Raymond Gurême, who organized the escape of his sister, concluded, that "the archives can 'lie' when the people who write them have a particular interest".[112]

While some escape attempts were organized as part of a collective decision to escape, it did not prevent other internees from taking advantage of all opportunities to escape. On 11 May, 1942, 17-year-old André Adam, interned at the Choisel camp, took advantage of a chore in the woods to ask "permission to answer 'nature's call'" and thus escape.[113] Spontaneous escape was not only carried out by young people: Paolo Demestre, born in 1885, escaped alone from the camp of Coudrecieux (Sarthe) in March 1944. The authorities of the prefecture only became aware of his disappearance two months later when the nomads were transferred from this camp to the Montreuil-Bellay camp.[114] In some camps, escape attempts were so regular that the authorities put forward the idea that the camps should be guarded at night "by the nomads themselves, under the constant control of the guardhouse, and the men responsible for surveillance of the various sectors would bear responsibility [for escapes]".[115] Some internees escaped from camps and then came back to see their children. According to the commander of the Angoulême Brigade, Louis Dupuis was an "incorrigible recidivist" who spent his time escaping and returning, since his four children were also in the Alliers camp.[116] In May 1943, following one of his many escapes, Dupuis was finally punished: he was locked up for a period of fifteen days and then transferred to the Poitiers camp without his children.

Throughout the archives, profiles of men and women who were regularly involved in escape attempts emerged. Paul Schaenotz, born in 1883, was transferred to the Fort Barraux camp on 31 December, 1943.[117] Widowed, he was arrested for the first time in 1941, taken to

[112] Gurême, *Interdit aux nomades* , 88.

[113] DA Loire-Atlantique, 43 W 157 (12 May, 1942) Gendarmerie report on the escape of the nomad Adam André.

[114] DA Sarthe, 653 W 57 (27 April, 1944) Letter from the Head of the police department to the Prefect of Sarthe.

[115] DA Charente, 1 W 41 (17 May, 1941) Letter from the director of the camp of the Alliers to the Prefect of Charente.

[116] DA Charente, 9 W 4 (14 May, 1943) Report written by the Adjuvant Courcelle, Commandant of the Angoulême brigade.

[117] DA Isère, 15 W 222 and 17 W 136.

the Rivesaltes camp, transferred to the Barcarès camp and then to the Saliers camp, from which he escaped for the first time in August 1942. Returned to the camp, he escaped a second time in January 1943, then a third time in April 1943. He was then arrested six months later in Cantal and taken to Nexon's guarded residence centre, then transferred to Fort-Barraux in December 1943. Nomad men who escaped several internment camps and were suspected of political activities were sent to Fort Barraux in the Isère. Another example of a prisoner of Fort Barraux was Maurice Reinhart, born in 1892, whose wife was interned in the camp of Saliers. Following his escapes and his arrests, he was successively sent to the camps of Argelès, Rivesaltes, Saint Paul d'Eyjean, Saint Sulpice la Pointe, Noé, Nexon and Fort Barraux.

The escape attempts of nomads were taken very seriously by the various police services. On 30 December, 1942, François Hornberger, interned since the previous day at the camp of Saliers (Bouches-du-Rhone), succeeded in deceiving the watchmen and escaped during the night. A brigade was sent to find him: They searched the stations of Arles (Bouches-du-Rhône), as well as different cities of the Allier. On 2 January, 1942, at Commentry station (Allier) on an express train from Bordeaux, the brigade found François Hornberger who seemed to want to disembark in this city. The latter denied this and declared that he "had no intention of disembarking"; [he] was just looking for cigarette butts."[118] He then tried to justify why he spent his last three days on various trains, from Arles to Saint-Christophe-en-Bazeille in the Indre, Saint-Etienne, Roanne and to Commentry. The proceedings say nothing more, but François Hornberger had to answer these questions before the prosecutor of Guéret court of justice. He was interned at the camp of Nexon (Charente), then sent to the Ile of Ré to work on the fortifications. [119]

Escaping with help from people outside the camp

The last point about escapes that we must address is that of escapes accomplished with help from outside the camp. Victor Le Goff, interned at camp Coudrecieux, confessed in November 1941 that he fled three times in a row with the help of nomads from outside the camp who cut the barbed wire and later hid him in their trailer.[120] But this escape is far from being the most extraordinary.

On 11 June, 1944, the camp of Nexon (Haute-Vienne) was attacked by the *maquis* that allowed 53 internees to escape. The attack was likely planned and the internees had been informed, since some policemen had noted during their watch that, at 1:25 am, some internees "were dressed, with suitcases placed at the foot of their bed". When two armed individuals disarmed the police, the internees began shouting "Here is the *maquis*" and entered the

[118] DA Creuse, 987 W 52 (1 January, 1943) Report regarding the arrest of the nomad François Hornberger escapee from the camp of Saliers.

[119] Moreigne, "Les Nomades", 325.

[120] DA Sarthe, 653 W 57 (17 November, 1941) Note by the supervisor in chief to the director of the camp.

camp police station to collect their identity documents.[121] Among the internees who left that evening with the *maquis* were Michel Lafleur, 23, Albert Martin, 24, and two nomads who evaded their obligation to attend the Obligatory Labour Service (*Services du Travail Obligatoire,* or *STO)* François Steimbach, 35, and Noël Meinhard, 31 years.

Helping others outside and inside the camps

Before turning to acts of resistance outside the internment camps, we would like to return to two testimonies that seem important to us. First of all, it should be noted that, as early as 1940, some families of nomads or "*forains*" who were not yet interned or were in compulsory residence sought to make life easier for internees who were not necessarily nomads. Jean-Luc Poueyto recalls the testimony of relatives of Coucou Doerr who, while residing in Oloron (Pyrénées-Atlantiques), "went very often to the internment camp of Gurs to feed the prisoners through the wire mesh and barbed wire".[122] The second story is that of Father Fleury. Authorized to enter the area reserved for the nomads of the Poitiers camp, Father Fleury benefited from the help of nomad internees to deliver information to Jewish internees. In his unpublished memoirs, *Le difficile devoir d'être un homme* (The Difficult Duty of Being a Man), he tells how he succeeded in entering the "Jewish camp" more than two hundred times:

> I only want to express my gratitude to the Gypsies who encouraged my visit to this camp. I went more than two hundred times with the complicity of the nomads, always on the alert to tell me if the Germans were there, or to let me know, if I was already in the Jewish camp, that they had seen them arrive in the distance, through the barbed wire, on the vast bare plain. Immediately, I changed camps and took refuge among the Gypsies' barracks where the Germans, throughout the war, never set foot, as they were afraid of catching lice or epidemics. […] Also the bonds of friendship, already so solidly sealed with the Gypsies, took a turn of complicity, which one could call sacred, since by protecting me, they allowed me, without their direct recognition of the fact, to save many human lives.[123]

Several years later, Jacques Sigot collected the testimony of one of the internees who helped Father Fleury: José-André Fernandez remembers keeping watch to see if there were no guards while he was crossing the barbed wire.[124]

Turning now to archival testimonies of acts outside the camps, we discover that as early as 1941 some nomads were helping others. In August 1941, Michel Reinhard, Philippe

[121] DA Haute-Vienne, 185 W 3/67 (14 June, 1944) Letter from the National Police Inspector within the Nexon's camp to the director of Nexon camp.

[122] Jean-Luc Poueyto, *Manouches et mondes de l'écrit* (Paris: Karthala, 2011), 50.

[123] DA Vienne, Archives of Father Fleury. 82 J 1, Autograph manuscript. Le Difficile devoir d'être un homme.

[124] DA Vienne, Archives of Father Fleury. 82 J 8, *Le père Jean Fleury.* Alain de Survilliers.

Reinhard and Auguste Gimenez were interned at the Nexon Center for Undesirables for "trying to get foreigners over the border".[125] Their lawyer explained that Auguste Gimenez met two Belgians in a cafe in Lourdes and, overhearing their conversation, he heard that these two foreigners wanted to cross the border to reach Spain. After a while, Auguste Gimenez suggested that he could take them to people who would be able to cross the border for a sum of money. Philippe and Michel Reinhard went to an appointment with the Belgians, but the police report does not say what their alleged role was. Unfortunately, one of the Belgians confided in the secretary of the Director of the Belgian Office who denounced their plan to the authorities. The lawyer for the three men argued that his clients were "unable to organize any border crossing" and "unable to have any political opinion".[126] He also tried to argue that Michel Reinhard, born in 1890, did his military service in Pau, that six of his brothers fought in World War I and some in World War II, and that one of them, holder of the Croix de Guerre and the Military Medal, died in combat in 1916. However, the report from the gendarmerie, stamped "Secret", explained that other arrests would take place, in particular that of a fourth individual associated with the three others who was at the time of the arrest with his accomplices in Spain "presumably for the same reason."[127] The report says that it is "a real organization based in Lourdes" and that it is necessary to intern these people immediately so that they would not have time to transmit information.

Joining the Resistance

In June 1944, Raymond Gurême joined a French Forces of the Interior group which "acted in the sector Porte de la Chapelle, Saint-Denis, Enghien, Pontoise and Argenteuil."[128] He wrote that he wanted to join the Resistance "because I felt that I had not fought enough."[129] The testimony of Raymond Gurême is all the more valuable as he is the only one to clearly state the reasons for his commitment. For the others, whom we have encountered indirectly during archival research, often through the testimonies of their comrades, we do not have a direct source allowing us to precisely pinpoint their motivations. Without doubt they fought to preserve their lives and those of their loved ones in the face of an ever more present threat of annihilation. However, it is more difficult to conclude that they did so with the patriotic feeling of attachment to a country where they had lived for centuries like other resistance fighters. Moreover, their actions were not officially recognised after the war. We must, therefore, rely on testimonies which show that the actions of so called Nomads have not been forgotten by all.

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[125] DA Hautes-Pyrénées, 20 W 27, File "Reinhard/Gimenez ".

[126] DA Hautes-Pyrénées, 20 W 27 (13 August, 1941) Letter from the lawyer Lhez to the Prefect of Hautes-Pyrénées.

[127] DA Hautes-Pyrénées, 20 W 27 (6 August, 1941) Gendarmerie Report on the discovery of an organization of border crossing.

[128] Gurême, *Interdit aux nomades*, 150.

[129] Ibid., 149.

On 20 September, 2003, Rene Castille, member of the Resistance in the Creuse, spoke of a "Gypsy" fighter in a speech during the laying of a plaque in memory of two members of the Resistance. Describing the story of the 1st *Compagnie Franche*, led by Captain Louis Herry, who participated in the liberation of the Creuse, he says:

> The 1st Company Franche, like others but perhaps more than others, amalgamated volunteer fighters of all origins, Creusois and non-Creusois, French and Foreigners, including a Gypsy, and those of all denominations, Christians, Jews and atheists, those who believed in heaven and those who did not believe in it, all in love with the same idea of freedom.[130]

In the *maquis*

Being called in to Obligatory Labour Service (*Services du Travail Obligatoire,* or *STO)* was one of the reasons why nomads joined the Resistance movement (*maquis).* We have seen in some administrative divisions that a majority of nomads called up for the STO evaded the work service. This discovery corroborates the account of Joseph Valet who writes, in an article on Travellers in Auvergne during the Second World War, that his investigation revealed that very few nomads "went away on their own" and that "most of them hid".[131] Of the 15 nomads called into the STO in the month of 1943, in the administrative division of Creuse, ten would evade this obligation and some (we do not have the exact figure) would be deemed unfit for the service.[132]

The refusal to leave and travel to Germany was very strong, including in the internment camps. When the Germans came to the Poitiers camp on 21 May, 1942 to establish the list of Jewish and nomad internees who would leave with, a German organization using forced labour, Albert and Henri Reinhard burned themselves to avoid forced labour, while Clovis Orieux defied the German authorities, clearly expressing his refusal to leave, which would earn him several days of confinement.[133] Those evading the STO under compulsory residence hid each time the gendarmes came to check their place of residence. Sometimes they were found in a field adjoining the camp or even in caravans. Thus, Baptiste Offmann, Joseph Winterstein and Michel Lafleur, in compulsory residence in different towns of the Creuse, would be interned at the Nexon camp as STO deserters where they would join other nomads interned for the same reason. Others preferred to flee: Paul Michelet left with his belongings according to his STO order but never arrived at his post[134]; just like Christian

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[130] DA Creuse, Fonds René Castille 147 J 40, Discours de René Castille, Champredon (1ère Cie Franche), (20 September, 2003), 14.

[131] Joseph Valet, "Gitans et Voyageurs d'Auvergne durant la guerre 1939-45 ", *Études tsiganes*, no. 6, (1995): 211-219.

[132] DA Creuse, 41 W 25, Reports regarding the arrest of STO evaders.

[133] DA Vienne, 109 W 40, Lists of Jews and nomad internees in the camp of Poitiers.

[134] DA Creuse, 987 W 50 (2 October, 1943) Gendarmerie report on the search for Paul Michelet, nomad.

Fourman, who was supposed to have gone to work in Germany but never arrived, so the police continued to search his family's caravans.[135]

A number of these young men would then join the *maquis* around their places of residence. Christian Fourman, for example, was very active in the area around Chambon sur Voueize (Creuse). This *maquis* took the name of the Stoquer battalion and was part of the North-East Creuse Battalion Group. Following the end of August 1944, the captain of this battalion asked for an award for heroic deeds to be presented to Private Christian Fourmann.[136] Joseph Valet also collected testimonies from nomads who joined the *maquis* or had their brothers do so. Jacob Horn recounted that his brother Joseph was taken by force to Germany, while his brother Nicolas joined the *maquis*: "We had no news, we thought he was dead. We went to the leader of the *maquis* to find out if he had heard from him: "Your brother is not with us, but he is with a group, and still alive."[137] Elie Hoffmann, meanwhile, assigned to Mérinchal (Creuse), tells Joseph Valet that he should have gone to the STO, but hid instead, and that this is how he joined the Resistance.[138]

After the war, few men applied for certificate of recognition, and even fewer such applications were approved. In 1961, Henri Kling applied to the Office of Former Soldiers and War Victims (*Office National des Anciens Combattants et Victimes de Guerre, ONAC)* for recognition of his STO deserter status, but as he was slow to send the necessary documents his application was rejected.[139] Henri Kling also joined the *Maquis* in Bresse and participated in fights with the Loulou company from June to August 1944.[140] At the beginning of the war, his parents burned their caravans and rented a house to avoid internment. When Henri Kling was called up for the STO, his wife, Armande Schatz, was pregnant. The latter pretended to the gendarmes who came for Henry, that he had abandoned her and she did not know where he was.[141] Rejection of recognition for Henri Kling did not prevent him from talking to his children about this period and going regularly to visit his non-travelling *maquis* companions when he started travelling again after the war.

[135] DA Creuse, 987 W 51 (21 November, 1943) Report on the assigned residency of the nomad Christian Fourmann.

[136] DA Creuse, 147 J 319, Fonds René Castille, Thanks to Christophe Moreigne who showed us this specific archive.

[137] Joseph Valet, "Gitans et Voyageurs d'Auvergne durant la guerre 1939-45," *Études tsiganes*, no. 6 (1995): 211-219.

[138] Ibid.

[139] AD Côte d'Or, W 354 (2002) File Henri Kling.

[140] Henri Kling's diploma. Loulou Company (Saône-et-Loire) French Forces of the Interior, Personal collection of Marie-Madeleine Kling Riboteau.

[141] Personal correspondence with Mrs. Marie-Madeleine Kling Riboteau, daughter-in-law of Henri Kling (September, 2017).

Getting organized

The STO thus forced certain family groups to organize themselves in order to hide and feed those avoiding obligatory work service, including ones that were not nomads. These crimes of solidarity were very harshly condemned. Eugène Reinhard was interned in Fort-Barraux for "having knowingly housed his cousin Frédéric Reinhardt […] defaulter of the Obligatory Labour Service."[142]

One of the most remarkable examples we discovered of a network of those in compulsory residence was in the Lot Administrative division, near Cahors. Various families transmitted information, exchanged ration cards and hid young people (for political but also family reasons) with the help of a couple of *forains*. Louise Chevallier, born in 1870, and Eugene Segond, born in 1889, managed to escape compulsory residence by keeping their status of *forains* until 1945. This allowed them to move around in the administrative division without worry. In addition, the fact that they were older and that there were only two of them probably helped them avoid police suspicion. Louise and Eugene had a small house in Sauzet (Lot) and a trailer parked in another town in Saint-Cyprien (Lot), separated by 20 kilometres but sold some rags or rabbit pelts to justify their stay" in Lot.[143] In September 1945, gendarmes came to their home in Sauzet in connection with numerous thefts that had been committed in the canton: They wanted to check inside their house. Eugène and Louise, who thought the war was over, invited them inside to search their homes. The gendarmes described the place as "a storehouse of junk, rags, feathers and miscellaneous objects of all kinds and of more or less doubtful provenance". They then discovered a ration card belonging to the nomad Marie Loustalot-Nestour who was not related to the couple and who was under compulsory residence order in Lot. The gendarmes attempted to determine what this ration card was doing at the home. With a sense of pride and without believing they would be punished, the couple confessed their role in hosting nomads or *forains* who needed to hide or move away from their compulsory residence. The gendarmes concluded their report by writing that Louise and Eugene served "as a liaison between the various tribes of nomads who were in compulsory residence in the administrative division."[144] The gendarmes then sent the prefect a request to reclassify the couple as nomads, and to place them under compulsory residence order. In November 1945, Louise and Eugène lost their status as "*forains*" and were reclassified as nomads.

Without the testimony of the actors directly involved, it is difficult to identify in the archives those networks to which some nomads belonged. However, some documents do give information on these organizations. A note from the intelligence services in Limoges (May 1944) confirms that people were monitored due to their links with nomad groups. Leopold Marbois, a canvas merchant in Périgueux, housed Jewish people in his home in 1944 and

[142] DA Isère, 17 W 132.

[143] DA Lot, 1341 W 9 (September, 1945) Report regarding the *forains* Eugène Segond and Louise Chevalier.

[144] Ibid.

his main collaborator in his shop was a "Jew expelled from Germany".[145] He was known to the intelligence services for having travelled, during the Spanish Revolution, to the Spanish border in order to give weapons to "Spanish Gypsies". The intelligence services note in May 1944 that Leopold Marbois and his collaborator "an especially Gaullist Jew" continued their trafficking, but perhaps in the opposite direction.

Indeed, we found more than ten proceedings in administrative divisional archives stating that nomads, in compulsory residence, were in possession of weapons. In May 1943, during a search of the camp of the Kwig family, assigned to residence in the town of Monflanquin (Lot-et-Garonne), gendarmes discovered two revolvers in good working order buried in the ground, as well as four chargers and cartridges, corresponding to the revolvers, in a trailer. François Kwig explained that he found them in the forest of Mont-de-Marsan (Landes) in June 1940 and that he never declared them. He claimed that he did not know he had to hand them over to the mayor's office, but could not justify why these weapons were hidden in the ground. François Kwig appeared before the Agen Criminal Court, which then sent him to a special court.[146] Similarly, when the gendarmes searched the house of Ferdinand Debar in Estang (Lot-et-Garonne), they discovered a revolver hidden under the stairs. Ferdinand Debar explained that the weapon was already there when he moved into the house and claimed that the weapon was rusty. However, the gendarmes noted that the weapon was in working condition. Ferdinand Debar was also brought before Agen's special court but was released on bail on account of his large family.[147]

Testimony from nomads in the resistance shows that they were not simply in possession of firearms, but also that they made use of them. Tsigane Coussantien, confided to Father Valet that he had "shrapnel of a grenade in the leg"[148] from his time in the *maquis*. His family was under compulsory residency in the Creuse at Felletin: his father and his brothers worked in the forest to make charcoal. In April 1943, they clandestinely left their compulsory residence in the Creuse to go to Corrèze, in Tarnac, where a forest operator promised them work.[149] They were arrested on April 28, 1943 in Bugeat (Corrèze) by a patrol of the gendarmerie while they celebrated the baptism of one of their children with the Demestre family. The forest operator testified at their trial for abandonment of compulsory residence, and succeeded in having them released.[150] It was at this point that, according to Tsigane Coussantien, the *maquis* "mobilized all the men" of his family and that two of his brothers became involved.[151] As lumberjacks they were allowed to cut trees "to make dams": however, their actual intention was to block the Germans or the militia and then throw grenades at them.

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[145] DA Haute-Vienne, 1621 W 22 (10 May, 1944) Notes by the *Renseignements Généraux* on the people arrested in Périgueux.

[146] DA Lot-et-Garonne, 1737 W 12, File no. 794: François Kwig.

[147] DA Lot-et-Garonne, 1737 W 12, File no. 742: Fernand Debar.

[148] Valet, "Gitans et Voyageurs,"211-219.

[149] DA Corrèze, 3U3 143, File Coussantien.

[150] Ibid.

[151] Valet, "Gitans et Voyageurs , "211-219.

Armed combats

The administrative divisional archives allowed us to identify fights between nomads and Germans, as the archives kept records of those who lost their lives.

Those who Died for France (Morts pour la France)

Finding nomads who died for France during the fighting of 1944-1945 is much more difficult than it would seem since memorials do not record, sometimes knowingly, the names of dead or deported nomads. For example, the town of Maurs (Cantal) did not include the names of four nomads of the Demestre and Gorgan families on its plaque commemorating the roundup of May 12, 1944.[152] In other cases, the memorials mention names that do not mean anything to the inhabitants of the towns where their death occurred. This is the case of the commemorative plaque of Droué (Loiret) where a certain Bren appears in the last position on the plaque, shot August 2, 1944.[153] That day, the Germans "captured three members of the Resistance" and "shot them savagely after a brief interrogation."[154] Among these three men was Edouard Bren, 35, who was a *forain*, yet the newspapers of the administrative division labelled him a nomad when reporting the event.

Persons classified as a nomad or "*forain*" were shot by the Germans in retaliation for some actions of the Resistance without knowing for certain whether those shot were in the resistance or not. Antoine Lafleur was shot on August 20, 1944 in Saint-Astier (Dordogne) by German troops in the aftermath of a fight with the Resistance. In the same way, several members of the Demestre and Gorgan families assigned to Maurs (Cantal) would be taken hostage on 12 May, 1944, then deported by a regiment of the *SS Das Reich* division.[155] Local historians questioned the links that the Demestre and the Gorgan families maintained with the *maquis* of Luzettes.[156] The same suspicion hung over three families murdered by the Germans on St. Sixte's day: Why were they massacred? Were they armed, as claimed by the Germans?[157] It is only in memoirs written directly after the events that one can find mention of a nomadic family in which some members died for France. Emmanuel Filhol recalls that Jean Corriger in his book *The Liberation of St. Foy* tells how the Germans took prisoners and shot some members of the Tollet family:[158]

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[152] Manuel Rispal, *Chouette Noisette et Luzettes, 1940-Juin 1944*, (Ytrac: Éditions Autrement, 2014), 69.

[153] "François Bren, nomade resistant?" (29 October, 2017) http://filsduvent.kazeo.com/francois-bren-nomade-resistant-retrouve-fusille-a121152506

[154] DA Loiret, 274 W 60689.

[155] DA Puy-de-Dôme, 908 W 48.

[156] Manuel Rispal, *Chouette Noisette et Luzettes, 1940-Juin 1944* (Ytrac: Éditions Autrement, 2014).

[157] DA Lot, 1 W 417.

[158] Emmanuel Filhol, "Pouvoirs publics et tsiganes après la libération ", in *Roms, Tsiganes, Nomades, Un malentendu européen*, eds. Catherine Coquio and Jean-Luc Poueyto (Paris: Karthala, 2014), 219.

> On their way back to Eynesse, the same Germans catch a group of nine of our young people on a steep section of the road that leads to the Town Hall Square, whom they took as prisoner with them. They are five members of the same family: Eugène Tollet, 50: his two sons: Antoine, 21, and Joseph, 22, and his two brothers-in-law: Baptiste-Joseph, 29, and Baptiste-André, 26 years old.[159]

The administrative divisional archives also keep track of these fighters, but not where you would expect—for example in the requests for the honour "*Mort pour la France*" (Died for France). However, we find mention of these fighters in simple correspondence between families and the prefecture. On October 6, 1945, Jean-Joseph Amador, 73, in compulsory residence in Bagnac (Lot) asked permission to visit the administrative division of Haute-Loire "to transfer the body of my grandson Antoine Fernandez, who was killed in the *maquis*, in this administrative division and who was buried at the place where he fell".[160] Faced with a lack of response from the prefect of the Lot, the mayor of Bagnac wrote in turn to the prefect to attest to the veracity of the words of Jean-Joseph Amador. He confirmed to the prefect of the Lot that it was the prefect of the Haute-Loire who sent them a letter to pick up the body of the grandson who is currently in a mass grave.[161] It was only after investigation by the French intelligence (*Renseignements Généraux*) that the prefect of the Lot allowed Jean-Joseph Amador, accompanied by his nephew, also a former member of a *maquis*, to visit the Haute-Loire.

Soldiers with the Free France (France Libre)

The files of the administrative divisional archives contain numerous reports revealing the identity of nomad combatants in the years 1944-1946. On 16 April, 1946, Helene Winterstein, was arrested away from her compulsory residence. She explained that she accompanied "[her] cousin Bernard Winterstein, soldier with the 107th Infantry Regiment and currently on leave"[162] to Roumazières (Charente). Only after verifying the accuracy of Hélène Winterstein's comments did the gendarmes agree to let her go. Another record from July 1945 tells us that Georges Reinhardt joined the Resistance after escaping from the Allied camp where his parents were also interned.[163]

The census about nomads under compulsory residence and files of individual nomads also provide information on the military engagement of the men. For example, the status report on nomads of the Creuse in January 1946, mentions that Emile Duchêne was incorporated

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[159] Jean Corriger, *La Libération de Sainte-Foy* (Comité de Libération de Sainte-Foy-la-Grande, 1945), 30.

[160] DA Lot, 1341 W 2 (6 October, 1945) Report regarding a travel authorization.

[161] *Ibid*.

[162] DA Charente, 9 W 4 (29 April, 1945) Report regarding the arrest of Hélène Winterstein.

[163] DA Charente, 9 W 4 (13 July, 1945) Report regarding the arrest of Georges Reinhardt.

into a regiment in Brive and that Pierre Wiastersheim had just been demobilized.[164] Joseph Demestre's personal information sheet reveals that he was incorporated into the 13th Infantry Regiment from 1944 to 1945.[165] While their parents and their families were still under house arrest, the young men, who were part of the *Maquis,* were incorporated into different regiments. The group of Raymond Gurême was thus "in the barracks in Saint-Denis, in the Eastern fort East"[166] right after the liberation of Paris, but since the only prospect offered to him by the army was to return to Germany as a part of the occupation forces, he "climbed the wall with seven or eight friends"[167]and left the army.

On 6 May, 1944, Nicolas Dour, 21, and Joseph Toquard, 23, the former a nomad, the latter a *forain*, were arrested for armed robbery and possession of weapons. They were accused of having requisitioned farms in the administrative division of the Lot in the name of the *Maquis*. Nicolas Dour was assigned to a group of Cavaillon workers and never returned to his group after leave. Nicolas Dour and Joseph Toquard travelled through several hamlets of the Lot in late April 1944 asking for food contributions for the *maquis*. Informed by telephone of the presence of *maquisards* in a hamlet, gendarmes went and arrested Joseph Toquard. Nicolas Dour fled despite shots fired by the gendarmes. The gendarmes questioned the inhabitants of the hamlet who denied having been threatened by a weapon but who confirmed that they have given money and food to "those evaders". When Nicolas Dour was finally arrested, he denied being part of the *Maquis*, as did Joseph Toquard. However, the gendarmerie's investigation notes that there was a presumption that these two individuals were in fact a part of the Resistance movement, notably because of their discussion in one of the houses they requisitioned – about participating in the "sabotage of the Conduché tunnel […] and that they were in the fight of Carjac on 10 April, 1944".[168] On 9 June, 1944, the Cahors' Court of Appeal sentenced them to 15 months in prison.[169] A report from February 1945 tells us that the two young men escaped from the prison. The police and judicial documents that allowed us to trace these events do not clearly reveal whether Joseph Toquard and Nicolas Dour were truly members of the *Maquis*. Some elements seem to point toward this direction: The fact that Nicolas Dour deserted a group of workers and that their activities coincided with the sabotage of the Conduché tunnel (April 6, 1944) and the Battle of Carjac where eight *maquis* (Francs-Tireurs et Partisans) besieged the city.

[164] DA Creuse, 152 W 5 (17 January, 1946) Census of the nomads compelled to a compulsory residence at Châtelus-le-Marcheix.

[165] DA Haute-Loire, 332 W 123, Nomad identity document of Joseph Demestre.

[166] Gurême, *Interdit aux nomades*, 154.

[167] Ibid., 158.

[168] DA Lot, 1109 W 26 (8 May, 1944) Report on armed-theft and death threats.

[169] DA Lot, 1109 W 28 (22 February, 1945) Report on the arrest of the *forain* Joseph Toquard.

5. Liberation and summer 1944

The prolongation of the internment and compulsory residence of the nomads until the end of 1946 has been highlighted by Emmanuel Filhol and Marie-Christine Hubert's historical research. The system of control of the movement of nomads was set up by the last government of the Third Republic, reinforced by Vichy and extended by the Provisional Government in 1944. Therefore, on 31 August, 1944, during the Liberation of Angoulême (Charente), the various resistance groups did not free the nomadic prisoners in the Alliers camp. On the contrary, they reinforced the surveillance of the camp by installing a French Forces of the Interior (FFI) post.[170]

Despite the fact that a number of nomads were very active in the French Resistance, the "Liberation" did not extend to the nomads. Conversely, we will see that the summer of 1944 was one of the most painful and difficult periods for many interned nomad families (due to continued bombings), especially for those subjected to compulsory residence. Nomads were also the direct victims of extrajudicial purges[171].

Distrust and executions of nomads

Memoirs of *maquisards* and resistance fighters report the distrust surrounding nomad family groups. Louis Olivet and André Aribaud, in their book on the FFI in the north-east and north-west of the Tarn-et-Garonne, transcribe the following testimony of a member of the Bir-Hakeim maquis:

> *We are worried because we have been told that Gypsies saw our companions on the Dejean farm, then in Bretou. One is very wary of these Gypsies who go through the farms, identify the young people from the Resistance and then denounce them to the Germans. We are therefore obliged to leave.*[172]

What these memoirs do not mention is that such suspicions were the pretext for summary executions of nomads by the *maquis* and certain FFI and Francs-tireurs et Partisans (FTP) In the nine administrative divisional archives that we visited where nomads were subjected to compulsory residency during the war, at least eighteen nomads were executed without trial in seven of these administrative divisions.[173]

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[170] DA Charente, 9 W 1 (September, 1944) Monthly report on the camp of the Alliers.

[171] To have a more precise idea of the specific targeting of people belonging to the « Nomad » category, it is appropriate to compare for the same period the figure of nomad victims with the figure of victims in the general population.

[172] Louis Olivet, André Aribaud, *Avant que mémoire ne meure*, Garonne (29 October, 2017) http://resistance82.fr/le-maquis-bir-hakeim

[173] DA Puy-de-Dôme; AD Corrèze; AD Haute-Loire; AD Cantal; AD Lot; AD Haute-Vienne; AD Lot et Garonne; AD Creuse; AD Loire.

We were led to these summary executions by Joseph Valet's article on the Voyageurs d'Auvergne during the Second World War.[174] The latter collected testimonies and monitored local press of the time. He explains that at the time of the Liberation "the unjust suspicion, formulated in the decree [i.e. 6 April, 1940], that they [i.e. the nomads] were ready to collaborate with the enemy had not disappeared from minds".[175] Four years later, the suspicion that nomads collaborated with the enemy was still in place and prejudice towards nomads spread.

Joseph Valet writes that, on the day of the liberation of Issoire (Puy-de-Dôme), the Schutt family was driven in a van throughout the city before the men were summarily executed in the cemetery. Joseph Valet received this information from one of the girls in this family, who escaped death because another nomad couple pretended that she was their own daughter. Our investigation began with this information, and took us to the archival box in the administrative divisional archives of Puy-de-Dôme that stores documents relating to the *Tonte des femmes* (when women's heads were shaved at the Liberation). We found a note in the archival box, from the *Renseignements Généraux*. The note reveals that a group of liberators killed an entire family without trial and without any evidence that they gave information to the Germans.

> We have learned that the FFI executed by shooting on 2 September [i.e.1944], at 7 pm, at Issoire cemetery,
> SCHUTT François, born November 15, 1889 in Mancelle (Aveyron)
> Célestin, May 9, .27 in Vindien (Vaucluse)
> Henri, February 4, 1925 in … (Gard)
> Joseph, September 24, 1918 in Vic-le-Comte (Puy de Dôme)
> GIMET Jeanne, August 27, 1926 in Saint-Babal (Puy de Dôme)
> The Schutts worked as weavers. This is a father and his three sons.[176]

Joseph Valet recounts other types of executions by resistance groups. In Menat (Puy-de-Dôme), the resistance fired on the trailers of the H. family, killing two children. At Riom, "the brave father G. was accused of collusion with the Militia. He was shot and buried in the dump".[177] Did such executions remain isolated?

We found that the summary executions of nomads by "resistant" fighters took place both before and after the liberation of different cities. André Mourtier, Fanny and their three children were under compulsory residence order in the Creuse. On August 31, 1944, the gendarmes noted that André Mourtier had left his compulsory residence. Fanny declared to them: "My husband André Mourtier left me on 31 July, 1944 to join the French Forces of the Interior. Since then, I have not received any news from him and I do not know where he is

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[174] Valet, "Gitans et Voyageurs," *Études tsiganes*, no. 6 (1995): 211-219.

[175] Ibid.

[176] AD Puy-de-Dôme, 311 W 44 (9 September, 1944) Note by the *Renseignements Généraux* on the death of the Schutt family.

[177] Joseph Valet, "Le racisme anti-gitan ", *Monde Gitan*, no. 23 (1972): 1-6.

now".[178] A month and a half later, the gendarmes returned to check in on the Mourtier family and ask Fanny if she knew where her husband was. She answered: "As for my husband, nomad Mourtier (André), I have heard lately that he had been executed on 2 August, 1944, by patriots, I cannot tell you anything certain about his situation".[179]

These executions, and internment of nomad men, led to the creation of family groups entirely of women. In April 1945, in the Lot, a brigade was surprised by a family consisting only of three women, their children and a donkey. After investigation, they discovered that Virginie Fabre was the wife of François Steimbach, who was "suspected of anti-French actions, shot in July 1944 by a resistance security team, Castelfranc (Lot)" [180] and Julia Fabre, partner of Émile Capelot, imprisoned in Noé's camp for abandoning his compulsory residence. François Steimbach was not the only "bohemian" to have been summarily executed in the Lot. A police document taking stock of executions prior to August 17, 1944 by the maquis reads: "Carney – nomad; Lafleur, Antonin – nomad; Steimbach, François – nomad".[181]

The documents that note the summary execution of nomads provide almost no information on the justifications for these acts. When reasons are mentioned, they appear to be only "rumours". The archives of the Haute-Loire contain a document about the killing of two brothers in the Resistance noting that "the rumour accuses the inhabitants of a caravan of bohemians[182]". As a result of these rumours, "the chief of this tribe, a man named Blachon, was arrested and later shot by the *maquis* of Montbuzat". No further information about the event is provided.

Posthumous inquiry

No investigation was opened regarding these summary executions. One exception occurred in Haute-Vienne with the death of Emile Lafleur, 15 at the time of his execution by "a group of *maquisards* on the territory of the town of Château-Chervix, in August 1944.".[183] On 15 February, 1951, following a note from the Prosecutor of the Republic of Limoges an investigation was opened for "murder" of the persons of Sylvain Lafleur, Émile Lafleur and Georges Dorkel, whose corpses were discovered on the territory of the town of Château-Chervix (Haute-Vienne).

Sylvain and Émile Lafleur were father and son, George Dorkel was Émile Lafleur's cousin. These men were part of a family of *forains* who used to travel within the administrative divisions near Puy-de-Dôme. The inspector in charge of the case noted that Lafleur left Limoges when Emile was thirteen years old. In 1943, the family returned to Haute-Vienne where they were subjected to compulsory residence in the town of Pierre-Buffière. Émile's mother was

[178] DA Creuse, 152 W 5 (31 August, 1944) Report on André Mourtier.

[179] DA Creuse, 152 W 5 (19 October, 1944) Report on André Mourtier.

[180] DA Lot, 729 W 34 (14 April, 1945) Report.

[181] DA Lot, 1109 W 1009, List of executed persons in the Lot.

[182] DA Haute-Loire, 996 W 257, Report on war crimes in the Haute-Loire department.

[183] DA Haute-Vienne, 1517 W 510 (13 February, 1951) Report on Émile Lafleur.

punished once for petty theft. Aside from this, the family had never been the subject of complaints, until the night of 12 August, 1944, when a couple of farmers, the Benvegnu family, had their house burgled. Following the burglary, the FTP battalion in the area arrested six nomads: Marc Pique, Émile Dubois, Paul Sauzer, Sylvain Lafleur, Émile Lafleur and Georges Dorkel. They accused them of having participated in armed aggression, including against the Benvegnu couple and "of having tried to divert parachutes intended for the *maquis*.[184] On 15 August, 1944, the group presented these nomads to the Benvegnu couple, who, however, did not recognize to them. Marie Benvegnu said on 5 June, 1945 that she later learned that "three of the individuals arrested by the FFI. had been shot".[185] On 17 August, 1944, Émile Lafleur, Sylvain Lafleur and Georges Dorkel were shot by the same group of FTP.

During the investigation conducted in 1951, an inspector of the judicial police interviewed Jeanne Capelot who was the wife of Sylvain Lafleur, the mother of Émile Lafleur and the aunt of Georges Dorkel. She recounted the arrest of the men in her family and explained that she still did not understand the reasons for their execution since the burgled couple had not recognized any of the nomads arrested. However, she explained to the inspector that she knew three members of the *maquis* who arrested them and resided in the locality, contradicting the assertion of the mayor who claimed not to know any of the members of the battalion. These three members of the *maquis* were Roux, Leomont and Baudin. The inspector of the judicial police then proceeded to investigate who these people were and managed to question Albert Roux, who was 19 years old in 1944. He explained that on 14 August, 1944, under the orders of his group leader "Jojo", Joseph Claquin, he went to arrest several nomads, including women, and turned them over to his chief. He stated that from that moment on he had not dealt further with the matter. The young man denied having contact with these nomads, and did not say that he knew them. Jeanne Capelot testified to the fact that they lived in the same locality and that she knew them personally. The judicial police were unable to find Joseph Claquin, the so-called "Jojo", but collected information about him: he served in the navy until he committed a "deceitful act prejudicial to men under his command" and had to retire to Brittany. The investigation concluded that proof of guilt of the executors was never determined and that, even if it were to be proven, it is certain that these nomads had no relationship with the Occupation or the Militia and that they then acted solely out of "personal interest".[186]

Trials of nomads

While some nomads were the victims of summary executions, others were arrested in the early days of the Liberation. One of the first actions of some residents of the town of Blanzat (next to Clermont-Puy-de-Dôme) after the liberation (7 September, 1944) was to go collectively to the place where families of nomads were under compulsory residence.

[184] Ibid.

[185] DA Haute-Vienne, 1517 W 510 (5 June, 1945) Statement by Marie Benvegnu.

[186] DA Haute-Vienne, 1517 W 510 (6 September, 1945) Report by the judicial police.

These inhabitants, were accompanied by an FFI lieutenant and a sergeant major (92nd RI Riom), Maurice Beaujean, 34, and Fernand Diot, 23 years. They arrested seven men, all of whom were head of families: Charles Calpeau, Paul Pister, Jean Gargowitch, Antoine Ugargovitch, Henri Pister, Julien Peringale and Joseph Peringale. The FFI officers then took the persons under arrest to the barracks of the 92nd RIof Riom. There, the seven men were photographed: the archives contain two photographs in which these men can be seen lined up, with identification numbers from 1 to 7. These photographs served as a basis for the investigation conducted by the inspectors of the judicial police of Clermont-Ferrand who asked the inhabitants of various nearby towns if they recognized these men Of the 47 respondents, only one would say that he recognized one of them. However, all of those men were accused of "acts of plunder to the detriment of the small farmers" and of "participating in police operations carried out by the Germans and the militia."[187] Although the final indictment stated that these accusations were based only on "rumours that had been spread", this did not prevent the court from upholding the charge of "collaboration with the enemy." The seven men were first transferred from the barracks of the regiment to prison, and then to the Aigueperse camp where they would spend the next year awaiting their trial.

What evidence was there against these seven men? The mayor of Blanzat reportedly received "numerous complaints about theft of fruit, wood, vegetables" during the Occupation and the inhabitants of Blanzat complained about "fights that broke out in these tribes, without any respect for order, hygiene, modesty and dignity", and the young Charles Capleau, 19, was said to have travelled frequently "for periods of one to four days to unknown destinations". The indictments presented at their trial on 24 August, 1945 in the Riom Court of Justice, almost a year after their arrest, were based only on the reputation of those subject to compulsory residence in Blanzat. The proof of guilt of these men depended on a statement given by Charles Capleau, the youngest of the seven men, who, when arrested, admitted to having pretended to be a maquisard, to have been in contact with militiamen and gone in search of STO deserters. The trial in the Riom Court of Justice was based solely on this confession. However, as soon as the seven men left the barracks of the 92nd RI of Riom, Charles Capleau retracted his confession and "denied it entirely".[188] Indeed, it is very likely that Charles Capleau's confession was obtained under torture. Joseph Valet who spoke with these men, and knew them personally, explained that "they were implored to confess" adding that, "the youngest C. was burned on the back: thirty years later, he still has the marks".[189] Six men out of the seven arrested were tortured in the barracks, only one was not questioned there: Jean Gargowitch who was part of the 92nd RI Riom in which he had served in 1933 and had been mobilized again for five months in 1939-1940. Concluding that "their guilt is not sufficiently established", the Riom Court of Justice released the seven accused.[190]

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[187] DA Puy-de-Dôme, 107 W 259 (31 July, 1945) Final information laid out by the public prosecutor.

[188] *Ibid*.

[189] Joseph Valet, "Le racisme antigitan ", *Monde Gitan*, no. 23 (1972): 1-6.

[190] Ibid.

One month later (18 September, 1945), the same court would also issue a judgment in the case of Michel Horn, 19, accused of "conspiring with the enemy".[191] In 1943, Horn was suspected of providing his cousin of the same name, Michel Horn, 27, with information on the location of the Lezoux maquis, where the brother of the latter, Émile Horn, was hiding with others. Michel Horn, 27, and Émile Horn had an intense hatred of each other. Michel Horn, 27, reportedly threatened to kill his younger cousin Michel Horn, 19, if he did not reveal the place where his brother, Émile was hiding with the other resistance fighters. The elder Michel, "intended to send him [i.e. Émile] to Germany".[192] Michel Horn first admitted to what he was accused of, then, like Charles Capleau, denied having confessed to these accusations. When the inspectors from the judicial police, responsible for conducting the investigation, questioned Antonin Rondet, the former civilian leader in charge of the united groups of the resistance (*Mouvements Unis de la Résistance* or MUR), residing in Lezoux, he declared that "there was no expedition, neither by the militia nor by the Germans in the woods of Lezoux, since there were never any *maquis* before July 1944".[193] However, the trial of 19-year-old Michel Horn was based on the fact that he reported the location of the *maquis* of Lezoux, where his brother was in 1943, to the militia, and that this denunciation would have resulted in an expedition by the militia. On the day of the hearing, 18 September, 1945, the Commissioner of the Government acknowledged that the charges were not serious and that "no evidence exists proving Horn's guilt". After the deliberation of the jury, Michel Horn, 19, was released, "without penalty or court costs".[194]

The Riom Court of Justice would also hold other trials for nomads accused of conspiring with the enemy. The Horn, Lautrec and Bony families were accused of having murdered English parachutists, but, owing to the testimonies of former *maquisards* and English soldiers, it was discovered that the paratroopers were already dead before reaching the ground and the case against them was dismissed.[195] These trials hint at the fact that, in many cases, the accused were not only innocent of the charges against them, but also had links with several *maquis*.

However, some defendants were less fortunate, including those who were tried immediately after being arrested by a court martial. An entire family of nomads subjected to compulsory residency at Vic-le-Comte (Puy-de-Dôme), the Schutt family (probably related to the Schutts who were murdered in the cemetery of Issoire) were arrested on 10 July, 1944. Their trailer was searched and two rifles and a revolver were found. Catherine Horn, Joseph Schutt and their three children Nicolas, Jacques and Antoine, respectively, 21, 19 and 17 years old were accused of "robbery and receiving stolen goods" and "looting in a time of war". The three boys, one of whom was an STO deserter, were hiding in the woods with two other men, who were also deserters (but not nomads). Faced with such accusations, the Schutt family chose

[191] DA Puy-de-Dôme, 107 W 259, File "Michel Horn ".

[192] Ibid.

[193] DA Puy-de-Dôme, 107 W 259 (22 June, 1945) Hearing.

[194] DA Puy-de-Dôme, 1475 W 2.

[195] Ibid.

to "tell the whole truth" and admitted that the boys committed some petty thievery.[196] Antoine Schutt, 17, declared that "[we] all went together to the garden of Sir Montagnon where we stole a certain amount of artichoke heads and rhubarb […] my mother made jam with the rhubarb" he said. He confessed to committing other petty thefts including of "two rabbits in the hut of Mr. Goutbelle".[197] But these statements were not enough to condemn them. The report of Commissioner Albert of the Regional Police Brigade of the Police of Clermont then accused them of being responsible for 46 burglaries committed in the region and "having received a reward for having indicated a cache of arms that the Germans carried away". He declared, that "they [i.e. the Schutts] are all very badly considered in this region and that their arrest was greeted with great satisfaction by the respectable population of this town."[198] The court martial of Clermont-Ferrand sentenced them to 10 to 20 years of hard labour. On 8 June, 1945, a circular issued by the Directorate of Criminal Affairs stated that some trials conducted at the time of the Liberation were "illegitimate". The Schutts were "people who were sentenced after the liberation through such a trial".[199]

One wonders about the reasons for the large number of trials, particularly in the Puy-de-Dôme, indicting nomads following the liberation. A note from the prefect of Clermont-Ferrand provides some explanations. A father and his son, François and Charles Bony, both nomads, were also arrested following the liberation and interned as "dangerous for national security". They were arrested by a group of FFI. François Bony declared that he knew the men who arrested him and that the latter acted solely out of "personal revenge".[200] On 15 January, 1945, the prefect of Clermont-Ferrand asked that these two men be released immediately, disagreeing with the opinion, provided by a screening commission, that asked that these men be interned for a "long time". The prefect wrote that it was a "prejudice against the Bohemians that seems to have guided the screening commission."[201] However, this "prejudice against the Bohemians" did not only arise in the new institutions of Puy-de-Dôme, similar cases occurred in other administrative divisions as well. Thus, in Charente, twenty people of the Lenestour family were arrested by the FFI after the mayor of the town in which they were in compulsory residence reported them as "living from marauding".[202] They too were accused of conspiring with the enemy. While these families were interned as "dangerous" awaiting trial, the mayor wrote to the prefect that there was still a donkey in the field they occupied, that this donkey was doing damage, and asked for permission to get rid of it. The prefect of Charente then intervened in favour of the Lenestours, instructing the mayor not to touch the donkey, as he was in the midst of releasing the wrongly accused family.

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[196] DA Puy-de-Dôme, 107 W 381.

[197] Ibid.

[198] Ibid.

[199] DA Puy-de-Dôme, 107 W 376.

[200] DA Puy-de-Dôme, 311 W 15.

[201] Ibid.

[202] DA Charente, 1 W 91 (7 September, 1944) Letter from the mayor of Saint-Angeau to the Prefect of Charente.

This phenomenon of groups of liberators arresting nomad families seems significant in relation to the relatively small number of families in compulsory residence on French territory in 1944. But this phenomenon has not yet been studied as one of the consequences of uncontrolled purges. One can imagine that, those wrongly accused of conspiring with the enemy, often failed to pursue the matter further, given the serious nature of the accusations and the difficulty in incriminating members of the FFI, who were national heroes. Writer Matéo Maximoff was also incriminated by the FFI. During the night of 13 to 14 July 1944, he and his family, who were in compulsory residence in a villa in the town of Séméac (Hautes-Pyrénées), were shot at by a group of FFI. Maximoff discusses this incident in his book, *Routes sans roulottes* (Roads without caravans), stating that it was not the resistance fighters who attacked them.[203] However, in the archives of the Hautes-Pyrénées, information relating to this event, including a police report and a letter from the prefect of the Hautes-Pyrénées dating from July 1945, mention that the incident was an "attack against their [the Maximoff family] house" by the FFI. who suspected them of being linked to the Gestapo".[204] Certain FFI groups suspected the Maximoffs of collaboration with the enemy and profiteering during the Occupation. The archives of the Hautes-Pyrénées undoubtedly disprove the second accusation: The Maximoffs were interned in the Lannemezan camp until October 1943; and under these difficult conditions, Nicolas Maximoff, Matéo's uncle, sold some of the family gold to meet their needs. He was also fined for "trafficking gold" on 5 November, 1943 by the Bagnères-de-Bigorre Criminal Court[205]. The trial reveals that it was the jeweller of Lannemezan who took advantage of Nicolas's difficult situation to buy his gold below market value. Concerning the accusation of being linked to the Gestapo, the archives reveal that on October 2, 1944, Nicolas Maximoff, Jean Maximoff, Yvonne Maximoff, Carmen Sabas, and two people of the Filipoff family were arrested by the FFI in Paris, and interned at the Ger camp before being transferred to the Noé camp.[206] We have not found any evidence of a trial; they were released by administrative decree in April 1945. A document noting the release of Carmen Sabas suggests that the accusations against the Maximoff family were the result of prejudice: "the former internee is released. However, because of the rather particular manner of acquisition of French nationality, through marriage to a stateless person, he himself having been naturalized French, but of Russian origin and above all, a Gypsy, the former internee may legitimately be suspected of lack of loyalty to France".[207] The Maximoffs were released from the camp but would continue to be subjected to compulsory residence in their Montreuil-sous-Bois home (from May 1945 until an unknown date).

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[203] Matéo Maximoff, *Route sans roulottes* (Éditions Maximoff, 1993), 147.

[204] DA Hautes-Pyrénées, 226 W 27.

[205] DA Hautes-Pyrénées, 3U Bagnières (5 November, 1943) Nicolas Maximoff.

[206] DA Haute-Garonne, 5651 W 108, Individual form of the internees in the Noé camp.

[207] Hoover Institution Archives, Carmen Maximoff (née Sabas), Kurt Werner Schaechter collection, Box 6, Folder 7.

6. Conclusions

The release of nomads from internment camps and compulsory residence allowed these families to begin contemplating their next priorities in life. Often, their main priorities was to be reunited – despite six years of dispersion all over France – and to renew family ties, although family members were often missing. Raymond Gurême, for instance, did not discover the fate of his close relatives until 1950. It is only by chance, and after numerous encounters that he met someone who finally disclosed to him that his parents were living near Vielsalm in Belgium:

> About two kilometres from Vielsalm, I saw a young woman carrying a basket under her arm. Her gait seemed familiar to me. I turned around. She did too. Then I shouted, "Doll"! While she yelled "Raymond!" at the exact same time. She ran to throw herself into my arms, dropped the basket, letting all her things fall out on the road. It was my little sister Marie-Rose, whom we called "Doll" because she was so beautiful with her long hair. I cried like a child.[208]

However, some people were never able to find their relatives. Jean-Joseph Amador never saw his grandson again, discovering that he had died in Haute-Loire as a soldier. Edouard Bren's children would never find their father, who had passed away under similar circumstances. The nomads' world was constantly marked by family reunions and separations: Groups would come together, before being split up again. War did not only put an end to this cycle of separations and reunions, but also caused nomads' families to experience an increase in the loss of the loves ones. Instead of supporting the rebuilding of the nomads' life, post-war governments continued to enforce the law of 16 July, 1912. It was not until March 1964 that the circular of March 1935, which forbade the Demestre family from travelling together, was considered "no longer applicable".[209]

It was only long after the war that some of the nomads requested official recognition of what they had experienced during World War II, including internment and deportation, as well as for recognition of their participation in the Resistance or for simple acts of resistance. These requests often went without response.[210] Raymond Gurême burnt his FFI armband when his request for a political inmate card was denied under the pretext of an undetermined act of delinquency.[211] In 1972, after Bietschyka Gorgan requested to be recognized as an internee and deportee, the prefect of Cantal opened an inquiry to find out "under what administrative decision the Gorgan family had been placed under compulsory residence during the occupation of the municipality of Maurs". On 25 April, 1972, the French police replied to the prefect

[208] Gurême, *Interdit aux nomades*, 166.

[209] DA Hautes-Pyrénées, 349 W 75.

[210] Emmanuel Filhol, *La mémoire et l'oubli: l'internement des Tsiganes en France, 1940-1946* (Paris, L'Harmattan, 2004)

[211] Raymond Gurême, *Interdit aux nomades* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 2011), 121.

that they could not find "any trace of an administrative decision of compulsory residency […] concerning the Gorgan family" and that their "Israelite origin" probably explains why some of them were deported.[212] However, the Gorgans are not of "Israelite origin" and the Cantal administrative divisional archives contain much information on the house arrest of the Gorgan family. One can find in the very same file, both the compulsory residence orders, as well as the refusal to recognize the Bietschyka Gorgan family as former internees, on the grounds that they were never subjected to compulsory residency. Furthermore, although the French police acknowledged that the "Maurs roundup", following which Bietschyka Gorgan was deported to Buchenwald, was an "anti-*maquis*" operation "carried out by the Das Reich SS Division"[213], it also stated that it did not appear that B. Gorgan had belonged to a resistance organization.[214] Our paper seeks to demonstrate that nothing justifies such a statement, and instead asserts that, like Raymond Gurême, Henri Kling and many others, Bietschyka Gorgan's status as a "nomad" overrode his role in the Resistance, and explains why is participation in the Resistance was never recognized.

Official recognition of the French administration's participation in the internment of nomads during World War II only occurred many years after the war (2016), and was also marked by a refusal to recognize the important role "nomads" played in the French Resistance. Many actions which took place at the time of the Liberation even showed that the 1940 charges of conspiring with the enemy – that served to legitimize the nomads' internment – were brought up again by the FFI five years later, resulting in savage executions for collaboration or looting. There is no doubt that internment and compulsory residence, as well as the refusal by the Office of Veterans and War Victims[215] to recognize nomads as Resistance members or STO deserters, could partly explain the reluctance of historians' to use the word "resistance" when discussing certain actions carried out by the nomads.

This reluctance could also come from the widespread idea that the nomads would not concern themselves with the conflicts of *gadjé*[216] ("This is not our war", one "Gypsy" is reported to have said). Is this prejudice, real malevolence or just ignorance? The involvement of nomads' in combat was not rare. They can count their heroes in every single European war. These multiple acts of resistance were not simple "survival tactics". The nomads actively fought against policies that negatively affected them. Since the Nazi Occupation of France was a direct threat to nomads, it is without doubt that they fought against it.

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[212] DA Cantal, 2025 W 61, File no. 7988: Bitschika Gorgan.

[213] Ibid.

[214] Bietschyka Gorgan has been photographed by French photographer Mathieu Pernot. See, Mathieu Pernot, *Tsiganes*, Arles, Actes Sud, 1999.

[215] *Office National des Anciens Combattants et Victimes de Guerre* or ONAC.

[216] Romani word for non-Roma people.

Research report

Resistance and Survival of the Roma and Sinti in Auschwitz-Birkenau

Joanna Talewicz-Kwiatkowska

1. Introduction

Discussion of the Roma and Sinti[1] Holocaust[2] in public and scientific debates, as well as in mass media, is a relatively new phenomenon. Sławomir Kapralski underlines that both experts active in the field of Holocaust and researchers focusing on Roma and Sinti issues did not generally consider Roma and Sinti to be victims of genocide. They were viewed as a group with a separate ethnic identity that is not influenced by historical events, and it was emphasized that the past was not significant for the Roma. [3] In Kapralski's opinion this is a symptom of the marginalization of Roma and Sinti in historiography.[4] This marginalization contributed to the fact that the annihilation of Roma and Sinti *became an almost forgotten annotation to the history of the genocide carried out by the Nazis*.[5]

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[1] In this paper, I alternatively use three terms referring to the community being described. These are *Gypsies, Roma* and *Sinti*. The word *Gypsy* is an egzoethnonym (a name of an ethnic group used by others) and has been adopted and used by members of some groups as a proper name. The word *Rom* is an endoethnonym (a proper name of a group) and it means *human being* (*Roma* in plural) in Romani language. The name *Sinti* occurs with reference to the community living in Germany and German-speaking countries. It is distinguished in this text because of its occurrence in various materials, publications, etc., related to the subject. Though we can recently observe the trend to use the term *Rom,* as the term *Gypsy* has negative connotations, I did not decide to stop using it. This applies to the history-related part (in materials and historical documents we can find the name *Gypsy* (*Zigeuner* in German), whereas the terms *Roma* and *Sinti* appear when referring to contemporary topics, as well as in the quotations of authors and statements made by respondents.

[2] In this paper I use the terms *Holocaust*, *extermination* and *annihilation*, when referring to the experience of Roma people during World War II, whereas I do not use the term *Porajmos*, as in some Romani dialects this word has sexual connotations.

[3] Sławomir Kapralski, *Naród z popiołów. Pamięć zagłady a tożsamość Romów* (Warszawa:Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2012), 208.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Gabrielle Tyrnauer, "Mastering the past. German and Gypsies," in *The history and Sociology of Genocide. Analyses and Case Studies,* eds. Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 336.

The topic's growing presence in public debate, *inter alia*, is the result of the popularization of Holocaust discourse[6] and an increasing historical awareness about the Roma and Sinti, for whom the issue became a crucial factor of social memory.[7] These led to a greater interest in the war-time history of Sinti and Roma and shed light on the need to, and importance of, conducting more detailed in-depth research on lesser-known or unexplained aspects of the situation of the Roma and Sinti during the Nazi period, including their internment in the Auschwitz-Birkeneau camp. A particular significance is assigned to the date of 16 May, 1944, when Roma and Sinti detained in the *Zigeunerlager* (the section for Gypsies at the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp) reportedly revolted against the SS soldiers to defend themselves from death.

This paper summarizes the key findings of my research, conducted between April and October 2017, the aim of which was to offer a comprehensive analysis of the events of 16 May, 1944 Auschwitz as well as to discover possible other, lesser-known, resistance activities that took place in the Roma-Sinti sub-camp.

2. Historical Context and the Roma Holocaust

The "Gypsy question"

Before presenting and analyzing the research findings, I will briefly describe the plight of the Roma and Sinti under National Socialism to place the events in context. It has been argued by prominent scholars that the origins of Nazi persecution of the Roma and Sinti may be linked to processes of modernization in Europe.[8] Their culture was viewed as contrary to modernity, and, as a result, they were oppressed and forced into the margins of society. When it comes to their treatment; assimilation, marginalization and persecution were the norm. As the Nazis came to power in Germany and began to implement the idea of establishing a strong Reich and Europe, they eagerly made of use of 19th century racial theories. Therefore, despite a long history of persecution and discrimination of Roma and Sinti, the policies and actions of the Third Reich represented a new type of persecution, aimed at the total annihilation of this community.[9]

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[6] This situation was linked, inter alia, to the late wave of war criminal processes. See Kapralski, *Naród z popiołów*, 270.

[7] Ibid., 268-270.

[8] Herbert Heuss, "Anti- Gypsyism research: The creation a new field of study," in *Scholarship and the Gypsy Struggle. Commitment in Romany Studies:A collection of papers and poems to celebate Donald Kenrick's Sevetieth Year,* ed. Thomas Action (Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press 1988), 58. See also Kapralski, *Naród z popiołów*, 140.

[9] Gabrielle Tyrnauer, "Gypsies and the Holocaust," in *Papers from the Sixth and Seventh Annual Meetings, Gipsy Lore Society, North American Chapter*, ed. Joanne Grumet (New York: Gypsy Lore Society, North American Chapter, 1986), 160-163.

In 1933, the National Socialist party won the German elections and set the solution of the "Gypsy question" as one of its goals. The so-called "Gypsy question" was no longer viewed merely as a fight against crime but was rather deemed a racial issue.[10] Initially, the Third Reich sought to lower the birth rate of Sinti and Roma through forced sterilization based on the *Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring (Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses)* enacted in July 1933[11]. Roma and Sinti, in fact, constituted 94% of those subjected to forced sterilization during the National Socialist regime.[12] In 1937, the Institute for Research on Racial Hygiene and Population Biology (*Rassenhygienische und Bevölkerung Biologische Forschungsstelle*) was established in Berlin. It was a branch of the Reich Health Department, headed by Robert Ritter, an anthropologist and specialist in neurological disorders, who had been working on a system to classify such disorders[13] and establish connections between ancestry and criminality. The research carried out under his supervision[14] involved the use of genealogical tables, fingerprints, and anthropometric measurements. The goal was to identify racially pure Gypsies (including the Sinti and Lalleri groups), for whom *Reichsführer* of the SS, Heinrich Himmler, planned to build reservations, where they could undergo scientific studies.[15] Furthermore, mixed-blood Roma were to be exterminated, since, according to Ritter, they were the most susceptible to criminality (two of a person's sixteen great-grandparents sufficed for categorization as a 'mixed-blood Gypsy').[16] A Decree on Combating the Gypsy Plague (*Bekämpfung der Zigeunerplage*) was issued in 1938, under which the classification of an individual as a Gypsy,

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[10] Georg Nawrocki, one of National Socialist German Workers' Party spokespersons, wrote in *Hamburger Tagesblatt* that one of the Weimar Republic weaknesses was its insufficient activities with regard to the final solution of the "Gypsy question", and that the problem was defined only in the context of fight with criminality. Nawrocki underlined that the National Socialist Party was going to refer to the "Gypsy problem" as a question of racial purity See Michael Zimmermann, *Verfolgt, vertrieben, vernichtet. Die nationalsozialistische Vernichtungspolitik gegen Sinti und Roma* (Essen: Klartext-Verlag, 1989), 82-83.

[11] Michael Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie und Genozid: die nationalsozialistische "Lösung der Zigeunerfrage"* Volume 33 of Hamburger Beiträge zur Sozial- und Zeitgeschichte (Hamburg: Wallstein Verlag, 1996), 87.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Robert Ritter classified Gypsies as follows: Z – pure blood Gypsy; ZM+- more than half-Gypsy; ZM- Gypsy cross-breed; partial Gypsy; ZM 1- half-Gypsy, half-German; ZM 2- half ZM 1, half-German, ZM- more than half-German; NZ- none-Gypsy. See Donald Kendrick and Grattan Puxon, *The Destiny of Europe's Gypsies*, (Chatto; Heinemann Educational for Sussex University Press, 1972), 85.

[14] Robert Ritter's assistant was Ewa Justin, who had been interested in Roma and Sinti for a long time. She knew basics of the Romani language, and she started visiting Gypsy camps inquiring them about their families and ancestors in 1933. In 1943 she got her doctorate in anthropology. One of her examiners was Ritter. Her dissertation was based on observation of Roma children forcibly settled in a Catholic orphanage (their parents were at concentration camps). On the basis of her research Justin concluded that, though being brought up outside of the Gypsy community, children's behaviour did not change. See Kazimierz Smoleń, "Nie wolno zapomnieć o holokauście Romów: Naziści-Romowie-zagłada," in *Dialog-Pheniben*, no. 2/3 (1997): 48.

[15] Rudolf Höss and Anna Grzybowska, *Autobiografia Rudolfa Hössa komendanta obozu oświęcimskiego* (Kraków: Wydawn Prawnicze, 2003), 87.

[16] Agusta Fraser, *Dzieje Cyganów* (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 2001), 190.

or mixed-blood, was left up to the police on the basis of an expert opinion.[17] At the same time, calls were already being made proclaiming that efforts to resettle Gypsies should be abandoned and that the "Gypsy question" should be solved in its entirety according to racial criteria.[18]

1939 and the outbreak of the World War II marked the beginning of the most dramatic chapter in the history of the Sinti and Roma.[19] Racist and discriminatory legislation, such as the Nuremberg Laws of September 15, 1935 *on the protection of German blood and German honour and on the Reich Citizenship Law*, were passed in territories governed by the Third Reich. The commentary to the act stated that Jews and Gypsies were considered people of alien blood *(artfremdes Blut)* and, therefore, could not have the rights of German citizens,[20] or marry people of German bloo.[21] A telegram dated 17 October 1939 from the Reich Main Security Office (*RSHA, Reichssicherheitshauptamt*) announced that, based on a decision by Heinrich Himmler (*Festschreibungerlass*), Gypsies were forbidden to leave their current place of residence or would face internment in a concentration camp.[22] Since 1940, Roma and Sinti from Germany had been deported to occupied Poland. Outside the Third Reich their fate often depended on the country they lived in. Sinti and Roma from many European countries were brought to camps in Natzweiler and Alsace. The Roma community was exterminated in the German Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, where only about six hundred people survived of the eight thousand Roma living there before the war. From France, they were deported to camps in Dachau, Buchenwald and Ravensbrück. In addition, Roma from countries occupied by Germany were transported to Poland and Germany, forced into slave labour, and then sent to death camps.[23]The fate of the Sinti and Roma was sealed by Himmler's decision of 16 December, 1942 which ordered the deportation of all *mixed-blood Gypsies, Gypsy-Roma and also Gypsies of Balkan origins*[24] to

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[17] Kenrick and Puxon, *The Destiny of Europe's Gypsies,* 75.

[18] Ian Hancock, *We Are Romani People. Ame sam e Rromane dzene* (Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2002), 38.

[19] It must be mentioned that persecution of the Roma did not start as National Socialists seized power in the 1930s in Germany. Persecution had started much earlier, when Roma communities arrived in Europe. See Gabrielle Tyrnauer, "Gypsies and the Holocaust," in *Papers from the Sixth and Seventh Annual Meetings, Gipsy Lore Society, North American Chapter*, ed. Joanne Grumet (New York: Gypsy Lore Society, North American Chapter, 1986), 160-163.

[20] Kazimierz Smoleń, "Cyganie w KL Auschwitz-Birkenau," in *Los Cyganów w KL Auschwitz-Birkenau* ed. (Oświęcim: Stowarzyszenie Romów w Polsce, 1994), 86.

[21] Michael Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie und Genozid: die nationalsozialistische "Lösung der Zigeunerfrage"* (Hamburg: Christians Publishing House, 1996), 89.

[22] Kazimierz Smoleń, "Nie wolno zapomnieć o holokauście Romów. Naziści-Romowie-zagłada," in *Dialog-Pheniben*, no. 2/3 (1997): 48.

[23] Ibid, 86.

[24] Ibid, 48. See also Wspomnienia Rudolfa Hössa in *Oświęcim w oczach SS, Rudolf Höss,* ed, Pery Broad, and Johan Paul Kremer, (Oświęcim 1976), 60-61.

concentration camps. The executory order of 29 January, 1943[25] specified that this camp was to be KL Auschwitz.[26] Neither the criteria developed by Ritter (which would have excluded so-called "racially pure Gypsies"), nor provisions not to arrest persons with permanent jobs and residences and those living 'social-friendly' lives, were considered[27]. This meant that basically all Roma and Sinti were deported, including former Wehrmacht soldiers and decorated Roma veterans of World War I.[28]

The Zigeunerlager

Sinti and Roma from all over Europe were brought to the separate camp especially established for Gypsies in KL Auschwitz, the so called *Familienzigeunerlager* (Gypsy camp for families), since early 1943, which became the site of their largest mass annihilation. The first Roma deportees arrived in Auschwitz II-Birkenau on 26 February, 1943. At that point the camp was still under construction, and those interned there found themselves facing exceptionally difficult conditions. The *Zigeunerlager* was established in a specifically designated area in segment BIIe and was the first camp located in segment BII.[29]

As time went by, Sinti and Roma were deported from all over occupied Europe. Roma and Sinti from Germany and Austria dominated the *Zigeunerlager*, as they constituted almost two-thirds (over 14,000 people) of all people deported to the camp. The second most populous group consisted of Roma from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (4,500 people),

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[25] APMO D-RF-3/RSHA/118/4. Erlasssammlung RKPA,. 333-334.

[26] Franciszek Piper, "*Cyganie,* " in *Auschwitz 1940-1945. Węzłowe zagadnienia z dziejów obozu. Zagłada*, in Wydawnictwo Państwowego Muzeum eds. W.Długoborski, F.Piper, (Oświęcim-Brzezinka, 1995), vol. III, 45.

[27] Excerpt from SS-Rottenführer Pery Broad's memoirs: „Detailed orders were sent later in March in the form of express letters with black edging. They said that on a Reichsführer order [Heinrich Himmler – author's note] all Gypsies were to be transported for labour purposes to concentration camps, "regardless of the level of blood purity or impurity". The exception was to be applied only to those Gypsies and Gypsy cross-breeds that had permanent domicile addresses, served their communities well and had permanent occupations. However, this clause was applied only in theory and was not observed anywhere. As these Gypsies were those that could be most easily captured, they constituted the largest percentage of those incarcerated in the camp (…) see Pery Broada, "Wspomnienia" in *Oświęcim w oczach SS,* (Oświęcim 1985)*,* 179-180.

[28] Rudolf Höss mentions this in his autobiography: " Guidelines, on the basis of which arrests were performed were not precise enough. Certain criminal police units interpreted them differently, so as a result there were arrests of people that should not have been included among the imprisoned at all. It was very common that of those arrested there were soldiers on holiday leave from the frontline, with high ranking awards, multiple combat wounds, whose father or mother, or grandfather, etc. was Gypsy or Gypsy cross-breeds. Among them there was an old party member, whose grandfather came to Leipzig as a Gypsy. This soldier owned some large enterprise in Leipzig and had multiple awards from World War I. Another one was a student, the leader of the League of German Girls." *See Autobiografia Rudolfa Hössa*, 88.

[29] Testimony of Tadeusz Joachimowski APMA-B, Testimony Unit, vol. 13, 56-80; testimony of Tadeusz Śnieszko APMA-B, Testimony Unit, vol. 15, 52-60; Irena Strzelecka, *Odcinki BII i BIII w Brzezince jako obozy męskie, familijne i przejściowe*, in Waclaw Długoborski, Piper, *Auschwitz 1940-1945,* 72.

whilst the third were Roma from occupied Poland (1,300 people).[30] This number is increased by 1,700, to include Roma from Białystok, who were not registered, as they were murdered in gas chambers almost immediately upon arrival in the camp. In total, by the end of 1943, 18,736 people had been transported to the *Zigeunerlager*, while by 1944, a further 2,207 people were deported to the camp.[31]

The rules at the *Zigeunerlager* were different from those in other parts of the camp. Most importantly, families were not separated, so women, men and children stayed together. They were not deprived of clothes, money and luggage, and, initially, their heads were not shaven. They did not wear striped uniforms, however, pieces of linen forming an upside down black triangle that indicated they were asocial, was sewn onto their clothes on the left, with a letter Z— i.e. *Zigeuner* (Gypsy)—to the right of the triangle.[32]

Hygiene conditions in the camp were appalling. Initially, there was no running water; it had to be delivered to the camp in barrels. Bad conditions caused an increase in illness among detainees. Due to this, by March 1943, it became necessary to set up an infirmary[33]. The chief medical officer was Josef Mengele, known for his pseudo-medical experiments. Sinti and Roma living at the *Zigeunerlager* were among his victims[34] Mengele performed experiments on them almost every day. Moreover, according to Mengele's guidelines, camp-doctors performed anthropometric and serologic measurements of children. After completing tests, their bodies were subjected to autopsies in order to compare certain organs.[35]

The *Zigeunerlager* was liquidated at night on 2 August, 1944. After the evening roll call, around three thousand Sinti and Roma remaining at the camp (mostly women, children and elderly people) were brought on trucks to the gas chambers of crematorium no. 5, where they were murdered. Their bodies were incinerated in pits near the crematorium.[36] At least

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[30] Though occupied Poland became the main location of the annihilation of Roma and Sinti from all over Europe, Roma people were killed mostly outside camps, particularly in the territories of Ukraine, Belarus, former Yugoslavia and Poland. Extermination outside camps took the form of on-the-spot killings of Roma people in the very locations they were captured (troops of Wehrmacht and SS – particularly Einsatzgruppen). Entire groups were killed and their bodies were buried in woods. According to research results, in the General Governorate itself there are ca. 200 documented locations where Roma were murdered see Kapralski, *Naród z popiołów*, 163. See also Hancock, *We Are Romani People,* 111.

[31] Waclaw Długoborski, "Zarys historii obozu dla Cyganów w Auschwitz-Birkenau," in Jan Parcer ed., *Memorial Book. The Gypsies at Auschwitz-Birkenau- Księga Pamięci. Cyganie w obozie koncentracyjnym Auschwitz-Birkenau-Gedenkbuch. Die Sinti und Roma im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau* Vol 1. (1993): 9.

[32] Testimony of Jerzy Adam Brandhuber APMA-B, Testimony Unit, vol. 95, 218.

[33] *Wspomnienia Rudolfa Hössa*, 133.

[34] Joanna Talewicz-Kwiatkowska, "Romowie i Sinti w KL Auschwitz," in *Głosy Pamięci 7.Romowie w KL Auschwitz,* ed. Sławomir Kapralski, Maria Martyniak, and Joanna Talewicz-Kwiatkowska, (Oświęcim: Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, 2011), 25.

[35] Ibid., 22-25.

[36] Danuta Czech, *Kalendarz wydarzeń w KL Auschwitz*, (Warszawa:Wydawnictwo, Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimiu-Brzezince, 1992) 722-723; Kazimierz Smoleń, *Nie wolno zapomnieć o holokauście Romów, Naziści-Romowie-zagłada,* s.54.

21,000 Sinti and Roma from twelve countries died in the Auschwitz-Birkenau.[37] They met the same fate in other death camps. Estimates about the total number of Roma victims vary significantly. Due to the fact that most Roma and Sinti died in mass executions outside camps, it is extremely difficult to calculate the number of victims precisely. Nevertheless, in official documents and literature on the subject, it is generally assumed that about half a million Roma were murdered during World War II.[38]

The Commemoration of the Roma genocide

Though this was the most comprehensive annihilation of Roma people in history, the Sinti and Roma genocide has largely been ignored and marginalized. Whereas the newly established Federal Republic of Germany recognized Jewish victims quite soon after the war, the Roma genocide was ignored for decades, and people who were victims of atrocities during the war were not granted the right to pursue compensation claims.

A breakthrough with respect to the commemoration of the Sinti and Roma genocide came in the early 1970s, when, as a result of the efforts of the First Romani Congress in 1971, the first publication about the extermination of Sinti and Roma, entitled *The Destiny of Europe's Gypsies,*[39] was published in the United Kingdom in 1972 by Donald Kenrick and Grattan Puxon. Following this, Roma and Sinti began organizing events aimed at commemorating the genocide committed against them.

In Poland the main development came in 1991 with the international scientific conference, *Sinti and Roma in KL Auschwitz-Birkenau and their fate in years 1933-1945,* organized by Wacław Długoborski and the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. Two years later, a ceremony commemorating the liquidation of the *Zigeunerlager* was held for the first time. Although commemoration ceremonies organized by the Roma and Sinti[40] community did not initially draw significant attention from the public, they have become official events over the years, attended by representatives of state authorities, international institutions and participants from across Europe. The involvement of Roma and non-Roma organizations from various countries in commemoration events is also an important facto;[41] educational activities have been initiated as well. International commemoration activities have also been held in other

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[37] "AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU," Strona Główna, accessed 20 March, 2018, http://www.auschwitz.org/historia/rozne-grupy-wiezniow/romowie/.

[38] Sławomir Kapralski, «Dlaczego warto uczyć o zagładzie Romów,» in *Dlaczego należy uczyć o Holokauście?*, ed. Jolanta Ambrosiewicz-Jacobs and Leszek Hondo (Kraków: Center for Holocaust Studies of the Jagiellonian University, 2005).

[39] Douglas Kenrick and Grattan Puxon, *The Destiny of Europes Gypsies,* (Chatto: Heinemann Educational for Sussex University Press, 1972).

[40] The commemorating events held on 2nd August at the former *Zigeunerlager* are organized by the Association of Roma in Poland and the German Sinti and Roma Documentation Centre.

[41] For example Roma Youth Network and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

places apart from the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, such as the unveiling of a monument in Berlin.[42]

Despite many efforts to promote the commemoration of the Roma genocide, the process is still unfinished. Firstly, it is very important to initiate in-depth research in countries where mass executions of Roma took place. While 200 mass graves have been documented in Poland, insufficient research has been carried out about such sites. Secondly, it is necessary to hold commemorations in other places where executions took place but have not been commemorated in the past. Thirdly, activities aimed at introducing the subject of the Roma and Sinti genocide into schools should be ramped up. Until now, educational programmes have barely dealt with this subject or have failed to include it at all.[43] Finally, contentious issues related to the genocide of the Roma and Sinti should be addressed using new research. One such issue is the topic of Roma and Sinti resistance during World War II. Since this paper focuses on different forms of Roma and Sinti resistance in the *Zigeunerlager* at the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, it represents an important addition to existing knowledge on this subject. Moreover, it may serve as a basis for further research into this relatively overlooked and under-researched topic.

3. Analytical framework, research methodology and sources

Conceptual issues

As a starting point for the analysis of the research and its conclusions, it is necessary to operationalize the concept of resistance. Resistance studies is a relatively under-researched, fragmented and still emerging interdisciplinary field of social science, within which there is a plurality of concepts and definitions of resistance.[44] However, two broad definitions of resistance dominate the discussion within the field. The first definition is the one naturally

[42] The inauguration ceremony took place on 24th October when Chancellor Angela Merkel said, that "this monument commemorates the victims who have not been recognized for too long, whose lives were destroyed by the inhuman racial policy and the national socialist regime of terror. This monument reminds us of the unimaginable harm done to them". The ceremony was broadcasted by journalists from many countries, and it was also attended by President Joachim Gauck, the mayor of Berlin, several politicians, diplomats and the Roma community from various European countries. See Bartosz T.Wieliński, "Nieskończona głębia żalu," in *Dialog-Pheniben*, no. 8 (2012): 8.

[43] *Teaching about and Commemorating the Roma and Sinti Genocide Practices within the OSCE Area*, (Warszawa: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 2015.) The report is available at: http://www.osce.org/romasintigenocide?download=true.

[44] Mikael Baaz, Mona Lilja, Michael Schulz, and Stellan Vinthagen, "Defining and Analyzing 'Resistance': Possible Entrances to the Study of Subversive Practices" in *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political 2016*, Vol. 41(3): 137-153,137.

connected with resistance: confrontational and organized public challenge against power.[45] However, owing to the seminal work of James Scott[46] on everyday resistance, there is another understanding of the concept: informal, hidden, non-confrontational forms of disguised individual or collective resistance acts. [47] In addition, there are definitions that take into account not only the intention of the resister but also the perception of the targets of resistance.[48] For instance, Moore defines resistance as: "any activity designed to thwart German plans, or perceived by the occupiers as working against their interests". [49] While recognizing that numerous definitions and concepts[50] of resistance exist, I based my analysis on Moore's definition of resistance.

Research Methodology and Sources

In addition to presenting the historical and conceptual background, it is crucial to also detail the methodology and sources used in my research. Although the events of 16 May, 1944 have been described in some sources,[51] they have enjoyed very little scholarly attention. In light of this, it was necessary to conduct research aimed at analysing source materials found in archives in order to try to reconstruct the events. With this in mind, I decided to use qualitative methods to analyse the data collected, which can be divided into five categories:

1. Roma and Sinti survivor testimonies, witness testimonies, testimonies of camp staff and authorities (e.g. commander, guards, infirmary employees, camp report writers etc.) Most of them were found in the archives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, but some were also collected via research in various other institutions, including the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma in Heidelberg, the Roma People Association in Poland (Oświęcim), and the Shoah Foundation in Los Angeles.
2. Memoirs related to the time-period and the annihilation of the Roma and Sinti
3. Official records describing how *Zigeunelager* functioned, found in the archives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum.

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[45] Ibid., 143.

[46] Scott argues that class resistance, which is his main interest, "includes any act(s) by member(s) of a subordinate class that is or are intended either to mitigate or deny claims (for example, rents, taxes, prestige) made on that class by superordinate classes (for example, landlords, large farms, the state) or to advance its own claims (for example, work, land, charity, respect) vis-à-vis those super-ordinate classes." See James Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

[47] Ibid,.

[48] Baaz, Lilja, Schulz, and Vinthagen, "Defining and Analyzing 'Resistance'," 142.

[49] Bob Moore, *Resistance in Western Europe*, (Oxford: Bloomsbury Academic, 2000), 2.

[50] For instance, "disguised resistance", "critical resistance", "off-kilter resistance" or "civil resistance".

[51] Maria Martyniak, "Deportacje Romów do KL Auschwitz przed utworzeniem tzw. Zigeunerlager w świetle zachowanych dokumentów," in *Głosy Pamięci7.Romowie w KL Auschwitz*, ed. Sławomir Kapralski, Maria Martyniak, and Joanna Talewicz-Kwiatkowska. Block no. 13 at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum.

4. Three additional personal interviews with Roma and Sinti survivors.
5. Selected publications related to the annihilation of the Roma and Sinti, as well as information published on websites of certain institutions, including the memorial sites of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum and selected Romani organizations.

When dealing with the analysis of testimonies, crucial attention was paid to those that mention the date of 16 May 1944, or other acts of resistance. When assessing the testimonies, the following factors were taken into account: the period (date), when a testimony was provided, age of the person providing testimony, whether the person giving testimony was a direct witness to events, whether the information provided can be confirmed by other documents or testimonies.

The first testimonies analysed were those filed in the State Archives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum. The State Archives began regularly collecting primary sources, namely testimonies and interviews, following its establishment in 1957. To date, 159 volumes of testimonies (in total 3,760 testimonies)[52] have been collected. They include 9 testimonies of Roma people in Polish, German and Czech. The earliest ones date from 1958 and 1959. Additionally, the archive files contain 14 testimonies of former prisoners from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. They were sent to the Museum from Czechoslovakia in 1988. Therefore, there are 23 testimonies of Roma and Sinti in the archive files of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, most of which are in volume number 121. Aside from direct testimonies of Roma and Sinti, there are 202 references about them in testimonies of non-Roma internees. It was possible to search through these testimonies using the subject index available to employees at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum. The following entries were entered into the browser: Roma, Gypsies, Sinti and letter Z. The references to Roma in non-Roma testimonies, all referred to the *Zigeunerlager*, as they were found due to entering the letter Z into the browser.[53] The testimonies filed in the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum were collected by its employees (interviews with former internees were conducted by historians) and also provided by institutions and organizations from various countries. It should be noted that is extremely difficult to assess the scope of information included in these testimonies because it often concerns information about camp conditions not included in other types of sources about Auschwitz, resulting in verification-related difficulties.

Aside from the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, other crucial archives included the Roma Historical Institute established in 1996 by the Roma People Association in Poland at Oświęcim. The archives of this organization contain a significant set of files (652 testimonies of Holocaust Roma witnesses), which have been catalogued in inventory ledgers, indexed with scientific index and internal guidelines. Additionally, a database contains the

[52] Personal interview conducted by the author with Szymon Kowalski employed at the State Archives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum on 18 September 2017.

[53] Letters Z (Zigeuner) were located before tattooed camp numbers of Roma and Sinti deported to Zigeunerlager.

electronic versions of the ledgers and index records. Interviews with survivors were conducted by historians and Romani speakers, associated with The Roma People Association in Poland.

Another important organization that collects testimonies from former Auschwitz Roma internees is the Documentation and Cultural Centre for German Sinti and Roma, whose archives contain 114 testimonies of German Sinti. In addition, 20 video interview testimonies were found in the archives of the USC Shoah Foundation. 94 audio interviews were also used as testimonies. The interviews were conducted by employees (mostly historians) of the Documentation Department (where testimonies are stored) operating within the Documentation and Cultural Centre for German Sinti and Roma. Contact was also established with the Museum of Romani Culture in Brno, where there are testimonies of approximately 30 Roma people from the Czech Republic and Slovakia, as well as with the USC Shoah Foundation located in Los Angeles, which stores 55,000 video testimonies of Holocaust witnesses, including 407 Roma and Sinti, collected in eighteen countries from 1995 to 1999. Most of the testimonies are from Poland (164), Ukraine (98) and Russia (37).[54] All institutions and organizations, the archive files of which I used, adopted the rule of not interfering with the text of a testimony in any way, thus interpreting the information contained in the testimonies is left to researchers who use it in their work.

Memoirs were also used in the research process as a separate category of sources.[55] A large number of memoirs were published in the years directly after World War II when memories of traumatic experiences were very recent and strong. Of course, this does not mean that memoirs published after a more significant period of time are of lesser importance and source value to researchers. Indeed, distance often allows for deepened self-analysis, meaning that these memoirs might prove to be very valuable, by creating an opportunity to examine human interactions and providing extraordinary material for research on human attitudes and behaviour in extreme conditions. This is important in the current case, as

[54] Personal interview conducted by the author with Jana Horváthova, the historian from the Museum of the Romani Culture in Brno on 2 August 2017 and 23 October 2017.

[55] Lucie Adelsberger, *Auschwitz. Ein Tatsachenbericht. Das Vermächtnis der Opfer für uns Juden und für alle Menschen*, (Berlin: Bouvier Verlag, 1956). See also Kazimir T. Czelny, *My Journey from Auschwitz to Buckingham Palace*, (London: K.T.J. Czelny, 1994), and Karin Bott-Bodenhausen and Hubertus Tammen, *Erinnerungen an "Zigeuner". Menschen aus Ostwestfalen-Lippe erzählen von Sinti und Roma*, (Düsseldorf: Der kleine Verlag, 1988). See also Jan Maria Gisges, "Stacja płonącej nocy," in *Wspomnienia więźniów obozu Auschwitz*, eds. Jadwiga Mateja, Teresa Świebocka (Oświęcim: Państwowe Muzeum, 1995), 269-292. See also Hermann Langbein, *Menschen in Auschwitz*, (Wien: Europaverlag, 1972). and Hermann Langbein, *Die Stärkeren. Ein Bericht aus Auschwitz und anderen Konzentrationslager*, (Kö1n: Bund-Verlag GmbH, 1982). See also Ch. Liblau, *Les Capos d'Auschwitz*, (Paris 1974), and Oliver Lustig,"Das Zigeunerlager von Auschwitz-Birkenau aus den Erinnerungen eines Rumänen, " *Gießener Hefte für Tsiganologie*, no. 4 (1985): 16-19. See also Henryk Mandelbaum, "…I przydzielono mnie do Sonderkommando," in *Wspomnienia więźniów obozu Auschwitz*, eds. Jadwiga Mateja, Teresa Świebocka (Oświęcim: Państwowe Muzeum, 1995), 261-268, and Simon Wiesenthal, *Doch die Mörder leben*, (München-Zürich: Book Club Ex Libris, 1967). See also Simon Wiesenthal, *Recht nicht Rache. Erinnerungen*, (Frankfurt aM-Berlin: Book Club Donauland, 1988).

source testimonies by the Roma and Sinti community are quite limited and mostly pertain to German-speaking areas.[56]

My research also included an analysis of official records referring to the *Zigeunerlager*, collected by the State Archives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum. Among these documents there are, inter alia, registration books of the *Zigeunerlager,*[57] death certificates, files from the SS-Hygiene Institute, reports on prisoner conditions, lists of internees arrivals, registration cards, reports of SS officers, telegrams from the Reich Main Security Office, reports of the camp resistance movement, and SS orders. Great efforts were made to destroy this documentation during the planned evacuation of the camp, therefore it is difficult to estimate what percentage of these records survived; however, conservative estimates put it around 10%.[58] Official documents related to the organization and operation of KL Auschwitz-Birkenau are an important source of information.[59] The archives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum contain very valuable files from various police units of the General Governorate and the areas incorporated into the Third Reich, which have been analysed as well.[60]

In addition, I also studied selected publications on the extermination of the Roma and Sinti, and information published on the websites of certain institutions, including the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, and selected Romani organizations. I also conducted interviews with *Zigeunerlager* survivors, other Roma survivors who were held prisoner at the Auschwitz main camp. The interviews were conducted during several meetings held

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[56] Marta Adler, *Mein Schicksal waren die Zigeuner. Ein Lebensbericht*, (Bremen: Schünemann, 1957). See also Alfred Lessing, *Mein Leben im Versteck. Wie ein Sinti den Holocaust überlebte*, (Düsseldorf: Schünemann, 1993), and T. Seible, *Aber ich wollte vorher noch ein Kind* no. 5 (Courage, 1981): 21-24. Also see Ceija Stojka, *Wir leben im Verborgenen. Erinnerungen einer Rom-Zigeunerin* (Wien: Picus Verlag, 1988) and Ceija Stojka, *Reisende auf dieser Welt. Aus dem Leben einer Rom-Zigeunerin* (Wien: Picus Verlag, 1988). See also Karl Stojka, *Ein Kind in Birkenau* (Wien: Stojka, 1990) and Karl Stojka, *Nach der Kindheit im KZ kamen die Bilder* (Wien: Vido 5 Palaver, 1992). Also see Franz Wirbel,"Die Rückehr von Auschwitz" *Pogrom Zeitschrift für bedrohte Völker* (1981): 80-8, and E. Witte, "Bin ich eine Sintizza?," in *Erinnerungen an "Zigeuner". Menschen aus Ostwestfalen-Lippe erzählen von Sinti und Roma*, eds. Karin Bott-Bodenhausen, Hubertus Tammen, (Düsseldorf: der kleine verlag, 1988), 90-93.

[57] E-mail correspondence with employees at the archives of the USC Shoah Foundation — The Institute for Visual History and Education on 12 September 2017.

[58] Jerzy Dębski and Joanna Talewicz- Kwiatkowska, *Prześladowania i masowa zagłada Romów podczas II wojny światowej w świetle relacji i wspomnień*, (Warszawa: DiG Publishing House, 2007), 26.

[59] Division I – Kommandantur (it was collecting e.g. personal files of SS crew and all regulations and decisions of superior authorities); Division II – Politische Abteilung (Gestapo camp unit); Division III – Schutzhaftlagerführung (camp management crew); IIIa Häftlingsarbeitseinsatz (forced labour); registration books of Häftlingskrankenbau (camp infirmary) – See Ibid, 26-29.

[60] The best preserved files are those from Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei und des Sicherheitsdienstes Radom, additionally, we should consider the importance of: Staatspolizeistelle Litzmannstadt (Gestapo Łódź), Staatspolizeistelle Hohensalza (Inowrocław), particularly of: Staatspolizeileitstelle Zichenau/Schrörsburg (Ciechanów/Płock). All listed files have been inventoried in the fonds called *Other fondsy*, because of the assignment method adopted in the Archives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum – See Ibid.

in conjunction with the ceremony commemorating International Roma and Sinti Holocaust Remembrance Day, held on 2 August where *Zigeunerlager* was located. I also conducted personal interviews with historians working at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum. As it is not possible to conduct interviews with every Roma survivor, or all academics involved in this topic, the respondents were selected on the basis of subjective sampling.

4. Research Findings

Escape attempts

When talking about individual acts of resistance, one cannot ignore the topic of escapes of Roma and Sinti prisoners. Despite the extremely severe living conditions in, and strict surveillance of, the camp, some escapes were attempted. Conditions resulting in hunger and fear, may serve as motivation to undertake risky actions and resist oppressors in order to survive.

The first official documents containing information on Sinti and Roma escapes from the camp come from 1941, i.e. before the *Zigeunerlager* was established.[61] On the basis of these documents, it can be concluded that spontaneous escape attempts from Auschwitz I generally ended tragically.[62] Captured prisoners were often executed at the Death Wall, and their bodies, ridden with bullet wounds and dog bites, were paraded through the camp in order to deter other prisoners.[63]

The first Roma prisoner who managed to escape from KL Auschwitz was Vinzenz Daniel (camp number: 33804). He was deported to the camp from Brno in April 1942 and escaped from the Buna-Werke kommando on 27 May, 1942.[64] Details of his escape and eventual fate could not be determined. [65] In the spring (April, May, June) of 1943, twenty-five Roma escaped from KL Auschwitz. Details of their escape and eventual fate could not be determined either. Sometimes members of the same family tried to escape, as in the case of two Polish Roma, Józef (Z-8) and Franciszek (Z-9) Kasperowicz. Their escape was unsuccessful.

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[61] Before the establishment of Zigeunerlager, Roma and Sinti were deported to Auschwitz I. First documents referring to their presence in the camp come from 1941. See Martyniak, "Deportacje Romów do KL Auschwitz przed utworzeniem tzw. Zigeunerlager w świetle zachowanych dokumentów,", 7-8.

[62] Jerzy Dębski, "Ucieczki Romów z KL Auschwitz" in *Dialog-Pheniben* no. 1 (Oświęcim, 2001): 4-14. See also Jerzy Dębski, Joanna Talewicz-Kwiatkowska, *Masowa zagłada*, 53-58.

[63] Testiomy of Maria Peter, in *Księga Pamięci. Cyganie….*, 1519 – 1520. See also Testimony of Jan Češpiva APMA-B, Testimony Unit, vol. 74, 32-35.

[64] Piotr Setkiewicz, *Z dziejów obozów IG Farben Werk Auschwitz 1941-1945*, (Oświęcim: The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 2006), 233.

[65] APMA-B. Other units. Gestapo Litzmannstadt, *Telegramy o ucieczkach*, vol. 3, file no. IZ-8.

They were captured and incarcerated in the bunker of the block 11. On June 1943, they were executed at the Death Wall.[66]

Escaping prisoners were predominantly men. Only two cases of women escapees are known; Stefania Ciuroń (prisoner number NN) on 7 April, 1943, whose subsequent fate is unknown,[67] and Weronika Walansewicz (Z- 9611), who escaped from the Zigeunerlager in February 1944, whose fate is also unknown.[68] In total, from 1941 when the first Roma were incarcerated in KL Auschwitz until the liquidation of the *Zigeunerlager* on 2 August 1944, thirty-eight Roma and Sinti escaped from KL Auschwitz.[69] Of them, thirty-one did not survive, while there is no information on the fate of the other seven people. We can therefore presume that they probably managed to escape successfully.[70] Thirty Roma were captured and executed at the Death Wall after being incarcerated in the bunker of Block No. 11. One man was shot dead during an attempted escape.[71]

Events of 16 May 1944 in the Zigunerlager

Testimony of Joachimowski

Reportedly, the most renowned act of resistance in the *Zigunerlager* was described by Tadeusz Joachimowski (camp number 3720), who served as a camp clerk (*schreiber*). According to his testimony (see Annex 1), the liquidation of the camp was planned for 16 May, 1944. The day before, Georg Bonigut, the last *Lagerführer* and *Rapportührer* in the Gypsy camp, told Joachimowski about the plans and asked him to inform internees (there were approximately 6,500 people in the camp). In the evening off 16 May 1944, trucks with several dozen SS members with machine guns pulled in front of the *Zigeunerlager*. Some of them entered the residential block shouting *los, los!* (go! go!). Roma and Sinti equipped with knives, shovels, crowbars and stones, barricaded themselves in the blocks. After some confusion, the SS members got on the trucks and left. The action was cancelled. The first attempt to liquidate the Gypsy camp was unsuccessful.[72]

Parts of Joachimowski's testimony, in particular those related to SS members planning to liquidate the camp even in May 1944, might find some support from information included in Rudolf Höss' autobiography. Höss mentions that the decision to liquidate the *Zigeunerlager* was made much earlier than 2 August 1944, as a result of the visit of SS commander

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66 Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium*, 454.

67 Jerzy Dębski, *Ucieczki Romów,* 8.

68 APMA-B. Other units. Gestapo Litzmannstadt, *Telegramy o ucieczkach*, vol. 3, file no. IZ-8.

69 Jerzy Dębski, *Ucieczki Romów,* 12.

70 Ibid, 12.

71 Dębski and Talewicz-Kwiatkowska, *Prześladowania i masowa zagłada Romów ,* 57.

72 Ibid, 6 -80. Also see Testimony of Tadeusz Joachimowski APMA-B, Testimony Unit, vol. 13; Annex 4.

Heinrich Himmler to the "Gypsy camp." During one of his last visits in 1943, Himmler saw overcrowded blocks, appalling hygienic conditions and the infirmary filled with sick people. After a thorough inspection of the camp, he ordered it to be liquidated.[73]

However, it should be noted that Joachimowski submitted his testimony three times, each time giving a different date for the events at the *Zigeunerlager*. Whilst recalling a date from the past may be a challenge for a person submitting a testimony, one needs to be cautious assuming that testimonies necessarily describe historical facts. It should be noted that, until now, no existing research could verify or disprove Joachimowski's story. Therefore, this research was meant as a first step towards reconstructing events connected to Roma and Sinti resistance in the *Zigeunerlager*.

A testimony describing an event, ideally, should be confirmed by official records, or two testimonies given by two separate persons that do not know each other should confirm the same events. Moreover, testimonies of people who were incarcerated in the camp as little children, or testimonies that are based on stories other people witnessed can be problematic. Therefore official records are important sources when it comes to the reconstruction of events from the past.[74] However, archival research in the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum suggests there are no testimonies of Roma and Sinti that describe resistance at the *Zigeunerlager*. There are no such testimonies provided by non-Roma internees or those employed in the *Zigeunerlager* either, nor any official record or document mentioning the event. As a result, the testimony of Joachimowski is the only one filed in the Museum archives that includes information on events that reportedly occurred on 16 May at the *Zigeunerlager*. Nor has any such information been found in memoir literature analysed within the framework of this research project.

Despite the problematic issues related to this single source, information on resistance at the *Zigeunerlager* can also be found in publications issued by the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum. For example, in an important publication authored by the Museum's employee Danuta Czech, entitled *Kalendarium wydarzeń w obozie koncentracyjnym Auschwitz- Birkenau 1939- 1945 (Timeline of the events in the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp from 1939 to 1945)*[75] and in the publication entitled *Głosy Pamięci 7. Romowie w KL Auschwitz* (Voices of Memory 7. Roma people at KL Auschwitz).[76] Similar references can be found in many academic works published by various institutions and researchers. For instance in Kapralski's book entitled *A Nation from the Ashes. Memory of Genocide and Roma Identity*.[77] He describes the deportation and history of the Roma and Sinti at the *Zigeunerlager* and recalls, invoking

[73] *Autobiografia Rudolfa Hössa,* 88-89.

[74] Personal interview conducted by the author with Dr. Piotr Setkiewicz on 13 October 2017.

[75] Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau*, (Reinbek bei Hamburg : Rowohlt 1989); Annex 8.

[76] Martyniak, Kapralski and Talewicz-Kwiatkowska, *Głosy Pamięci 7. Romowie w KL Auschwitz.*

[77] Kapralski, *Naród;* Annex 9.

Michael Zimmermann,[78] that there was an attempt to liquidate the *Zigeunerlager* in May 1944, however, alerted prisoners were ready to resist, forcing SS troops to change their plans.[79] Later the author explains his decision to pay more attention to this event by pointing out the growing importance of this date in the context of commemorations by Roma and Sinti communities. However, he also described the events at the *Zigeunerlager* on the basis of the testimony of Joachimowski and the fragment of the book entitled *Głosy Pamięci 7. Romowie w KL Auschwitz*[80] that Kapralski coedited, together with Marta Martyniak and myself. Indeed, almost all publications mentioning 16 May 1944 describe the event on the basis of Joachimowski's testimony or quote other authors who also relied on his testimony as a source.

As part of my research, I interviewed, Dr. Piotr Setkiewicz, the director of the Memorial Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau Research Centre. When it comes to controversies related to the testimony provided by Joachimowski and 16 May, 1944, he emphasized that the date was determined by Danuta Czech[81] on the basis of the first Joachimowski testimony. In his subsequent two testimonies, he identified this date to be mid-April or even a bit earlier. Setkiewicz also maintains that Joachimowski had probably been told to draw up a list of prisoners that were able to work and transferred to labour camps, and this could have been the cause of the outburst of panic at the *Zigeunerlager*. Internees might have assumed that the camp would be liquidated, especially as a similar situation occurred about three weeks earlier in the camp housing Jews from the Terezín ghetto, who were sent to gas chambers after having been put through a similar selection process. Since he maintains that there is no evidence that would suggest that that SS members had any plans to liquidate the camp on 16 May 1944, or earlier, he finds it difficult to accept that part of Joachimowski's testimony where he claimed that there was an order to liquidate the *Zigeunerlager* and this was the reason he had been told to draw up a list of those able to work. In Setkiewicz's opinion, if SS members had wanted to liquidate the camp, they would have done so, in spite of resistance from internees. They could have used the second platoon, for example. Indeed, Setkiewicz maintains that the fact that SS members were not armed at all seems to suggest that they did not want to liquidate the camp, but rather intended to conduct a selection of internees. When people incarcerated in the camp did not obey the order, SS troops withdrew and then asked Joachimowski and Roma and Sinti detainees to put together a list of those able to work. In the end, such a list was in fact drawn up, and the selected prisoners were sent to other camps.[82]

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[78] Michael Zimmermann, *Die deportation the deutschen Sinti i Roma nach Auschwitz- Birkenau. Hintergründe' und Verlauf,* with Waclaw Długoborski, *Sinti und Roma im KL Auschwitz-Birkenau 1943-1944. Von dem Hintergrund ihrer Verfolgung unter der Nazi herrschaft,* (Oświęcim: Verlag Staatliches Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau).

[79] Ibid.

[80] Martyniak, Kapralski and Talewicz-Kwiatkowska, *Głosy Pamięci 7. Romowie w KL Auschwitz.*

[81] Author of many scientific papers about the history of the Nazi concentration camp in Oświęcim, including a fundamental work entitled *Timeline of the events in the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp from 1939 to 1945,* Reinbek 1989. She was a respected and accomplished employee of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum for many years.

[82] Personal interview with Dr. Piotr Setkiewicz.

However, it should be noted that Setkiewicz's interpretation of events related to Roma resistance also remains merely a hypothesis, as it has not been confirmed by any documents. Moreover, despite controversies surrounding Joachimowski's testimony, Setkiewicz does not have a firm opinion suggesting that no event of a similar nature to the one Joachimowski described took place at the *Zigeunerlager*.

Additional testimonies and sources identified through the research

In addition to researching and analysing the sources filed in the archives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, I also studied the archives of Roma and Sinti organizations in Germany and Poland, the Museum of Romani Culture in Brno, and the USC Shoah Foundation. As a result of this research, two testimonies referring to resistance at *Zigeunerlager* have been discovered in the archives of the German Sinti and Roma Documentation Centre.

In his testimony, a German Sinti survivor, Walter Winter, (see Annex 2), provides many details referring to the resistance of the Roma and Sinti; however, he does not give an exact date, only mentions that the described events occurred in the middle of the year. According to Walter's testimony, Sinti and Roma incarcerated in the camp heard about the liquidation plans and decided not to obey orders when SS members demanded that internees form groups in front of the blocks. The testimony also contains information about the shovels and stones the camp internees were equipped with, as also described by Joachimowski. Winter also provides surnames of SS members present on that day at the *Zigeunerlager* and recalls that he saw their confusion through the hole in the roof, when Roma and Sinti did not leave the blocks after being told to do so. When SS troops left the *Zigeunerlager* blocks, the Roma and Sinti concluded the action had been called off.[83]

The part of the book written by another survivor, Otto Rosenberg, also provides a detailed description of these events[84] (see Annex 3). Similarly to Winter, he does not mention a specific date. According to his testimony, the Roma and Sinti anticipated that the camp would be liquidated, as they learned that Russian Roma had been murdered in gas chambers. Rosenberg describes how, shortly after being brought outside the camp, Roma and Sinti from the *Zigeunerlager* saw clouds of smoke floating over the crematorium and caught the smell of burning human flesh, thereby guessing that they would encounter the same fate. He asserts that the Roma and Sinti were warned by senior internees who told them about specific SS plans to kill the prisoners of the *Zigeunerlager*. Rosenberg and his cousin reportedly left their block and alerted other Roma and Sinti. Then Rosenberg writes that Schwarzhuber came into several blocks in order to inspect them, accompanied by dogs and SS. Rosenberg also recalls that the Roma and Sinti were equipped with shovels, hammers, pickaxes, hoes, forks and other tools used at work. He claims they were determined to fight, if necessary: "Alright, if they want to kill us, they will have to pay for it dearly. They will not take us alive. Maybe

[83] Ibid.

[84] Otto Rosenberg, *Das Brennglas*, (Frankfurt: Eichborn, 1998), Annex 6.

we can lay our hands on machine guns, then we will have a greater chance." Rosenberg also said that "Schwarzhuber inspected several blocks but then left as determined as when he had come in. He must have told himself, 'if we do this, there will be chaos and disorder and they will resist'. Maybe they would have killed fifty of a hundred of us but then we would have started a hunt for Schwarzhuber. He would not have stayed alive after this".[85]

It should be noted that both testimonies were provided in 2000, many years after World War II, which may prove problematic, when trying to verify the information as historically accurate. Moreover, historians at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum have not examined these sources yet because they were unaware of their existence[86] until recently, when they were passed onto the Museum's archives.

Another source uncovered during research is a recording of a conversation with Hermann Höllenreiner,[87] stored in the archives of the Association of Roma in Poland (see Annex 4). The conversation was part of youth educational workshops held in July 2017 at the International Youth Meeting Centre in Oświęcim.[88] The interlocutors focused on Höllenreiner's memories from World War II, particularly the period that he spent in the *Zigeunerlager* as a child. The person conducting the meeting mentioned the date of 16 May, 1944 and then described the events that reportedly occurred on that day. Then she specifically asked Höllenreiner to speak about these events and how his father and uncle participated in them. Höllenreiner responded that the Roma and Sinti anticipated the liquidation of the *Zigeunerlager* because they were aware of the fate of Jews. He also stated that the internees equipped themselves with shovels and knives, in anticipation of things to come. Contrary to Rosenberg's testimony, Höllenreiner stated that SS members did not enter the blocks: "We were really lucky, because had they entered and wished to conduct that operation against all odds, we would not have had a slightest chance. They had weapons and could shoot us on the spot. We were extremely afraid then, because we knew what awaited us, what could happen to us, if they conducted that operation".[89]

It should be highlighted though that Höllenreiner provided information in response to a question that presupposed such an event did in fact occur. Another problematic issue is the fact that Höllenreiner was a child when he was incarcerated at the *Zigeunerlager*, so his memories of past events may be based on what other people said, not on what he actually witnessed. Furthermore, the discussion referenced above was not an interview conducted by a historian or an expert trained in collecting testimonies. In light of this, there are serious

[85] Ibid.

[86] I passed on these testimonies to the State Archives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, in cooperation with the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma (in December 2017).

[87] Annex 7.

[88] The meeting was held as a part of workshops entitled 'Sinti and Roma in Europe – identity, history, remembrance' that have been organized since 2014 by the International Youth Meeting Centre in Oświęcim/Auschwitz, Roma Association from Poland and Alternatives Jugendzentrum Dessau. The meeting was led by Jana Müller from Alternatives Jugendzentrum Dessau and interpreted into Polish by Katarzyna Ciurapińska.

[89] Ibid.

limitations to recognizing this statement as a reliable source in determining whether the resistance of the Roma and Sinti on May 6, 1944 is historical fact.[90]

The testimonies and statements mentioned above were the only ones discovered during research that mention the resistance of the Roma and Sinti at the *Zigeunerlager*. The archives of neither the Museum of Romani Culture in Brno nor the USC Shoah Foundation contain any testimonies mentioning 16 May events. The interviews conducted with survivors have not resulted in any new information about this subject either. Neither the person incarcerated at KL Auschwitz I, nor the two former internees of the *Zigeunerlager,* mention anything about the resistance of the Roma and Sinti. It should be noted though that all three of them were in the camp as children, so it is possible that they simply do not remember all events that occurred in the camp.

16 May as Romani Resistance Day

Despite the many ambiguities related to the events of 16 May 1944 at the *Zigeunerlager*, the date is popularized by some Roma and Sinti organizations and leaders –as well as intergovernmental institutions— as the Romani resistance day. This can undoubtedly be linked to the fact that historical reconstruction is exceptionally important for the Roma and Sinti in shaping their identity via focusing on their extermination during the World War II.[91] A common experience of the Holocaust may be fundamental for such a diversified community, living in various countries and speaking different dialects, as it can potentially unite various Roma groups.[92] Some researchers[93] suggests that discourse on a Roma identity linked to the Holocaust is not acceptable to all Roma communities and is still more popular among leaders who refer to the past in order to fulfil political ambitions and legitimize their actions on behalf of the community they represent.[94] Yet it is undeniable that initiating

[90] This is the only fragment of the conversation that refers to resistance at the *Zigeunerlager*. Other parts of the interview detail the liquidation of the camp on August 2, 1944 and the experiences of Hermann ""Mano" Höllenreiner in the camp and after the war. It should be noted though that, in 2008 in Germany, Anja Tuckermann published the book entitled *Mano: Der Junge, der nicht wusste, wo er war* (The boy who did not know where he was). The book describes his story. It was also published in Polish as *Mano. Chłopiec, który nie wiedział gdzie jest*. In these publications, Hermann Höllenreiner does not mention the resistance of Roma and Sinti at *Zigeunerlager*, a significant fact with regard to subject of this paper.

[91] Kapralski, *Naród z popiołów.* See also Roni Stauber, and Raphael Vago, „The politics of memory. Jews and Roma commemorate persecution," in *The Roma. A Minority in Europe. Historical, Political, Social Perspectives*, ed. Roni Stauber, and Raphael Vago (Budapest-New York: CEU Press, 2007), 123.

[92] Slawomir Kapralski, "Kierunki transformacji tradycyjnych tożsamości romskich w globalizującym się świecie," in *Tożsamość Romów w procesach globalizacji,* ed. Tadeusz Paleczny, and Joanna Talewicz-Kwiatkowska (Kraków: Wydawnictwo UJ, 2008), 69.

[93] Kapralski, *Naród z popiołów*, 303. See also Helena Marushiakova, Veselin Popov, "Holocaust and the Gypsies. The reconstruction of the historical memory and the creation of new national mythology," in *Beyond Camps and Forced Labour. Current International Research on Survivors of Nazi Persecution*, eds. Johannes-Dieter Steinert, Inge Weber-Newth (Osnabrück: Secolo-Verlag, 2006), 825.

[94] Marushiakowa, *Holocaust,* 820-825.

annual commemorative events and various educational activities strengthens remembrance, blurs the boundaries between their diversified identities and creates a common vision of their own history.

Currently, aside from 2 August, when annual commemorative events related to the liquidation of the *Zigeunerlager* are organized, 16 May has also became a significant date in commemorating the extermination of Roma and Sinti during World War II. Roma and Sinti leaders have emphasized the importance of the resistance of internees at the *Zigeunerlager*.[95] The exhibition in Block 13 of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum[96] also plays an important role in drawing attention to this date, as it displays the history of the extermination of the Roma and Sinti during World War II.

Information on Roma and Sinti resistance is an integral part of this exhibition. It should be noted that, in most cases, governments are responsible for preparing exhibitions about their country's experience with respect to Auschwitz-Birkenau. However, in this particular case, Romani organizations, not a government, are responsible for the exhibition in Block No. 13. The German Sinti and Roma Documentation Centre worked on this, together with The Roma People Association in Poland, with the participation of the following Roma organizations: Cultural Association of Austrian Roma (Vienna), Landelijke Sinti Organisatie (Best), Museum Romske Kultury (Brno), Nagykanizsa Megyei Jogú Város Cigány Kisebbségi Önkormányzat (Nagykanizsa), Romano Kulturako Klubi (Beograd) and Igor Krikonow (Kiev).[97] While the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum provided the building, Block No. 13, for this exhibition, the primary organizer, the German Sinti and Roma Documentation Centre, is responsible for developing the substantive content, even though the exhibition is located on the Museum's premises.

Information on resistance at the *Zigeunerlager* can be also found on the website of the German Sinti and Roma Documentation Centre[98] but they are not the only Roma organization popularizing information about 16 May. For instance, the website of Romea, a Roma organization based in the Czech Republic,[99] also includes information on resistance at the *Zigeunerlager*, particularly focusing on the events of 16 May 1944. Moreover, commemoration of this date is becoming more and more important, not only for Roma leaders and organizations, but also for the public in general. Roma Resistance Day is held annually on 16 May.

In addition to the significance and role the past plays with regard to contemporary Roma and Sinti identities, we must also pay attention to other aspects of how the *Zigeunerlager* resistance can be important in this process. The development of a feeling of national/ethnic

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[95] For example Romani Rose during the commemoration ceremonies held on August 1-2, 2017.

[96] Romani Rose, ed., *Zagłada Sinti i Romów : katalog wystawy stałej w Państwowym Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau*, (Heidelberg-Oświęcim: Dokumentations- und Kulturzentrum Deutscher Sinti und Roma, 2003), Annex 1.

[97] Ibid., 323.

[98] "Extermination," Sinti und Roma – Extermination, accessed March 14, 2018, http://www.sintiundroma.de/en/sinti-roma/the-national-socialist-genocide-of-the-sinti-and-roma/extermination/resistance.html%20Annex%202.

[99] "The Romani Uprising in Auschwitz, 16 May 1944," accessed March 14, 2018, http://www.romea.cz/en/news/czech/the-romani-uprising-in-auschwitz-16-may-1944.

pride may become especially important, not only for leaders of Roma organizations, but also for young people. Heroic acts conducted by members of Roma and Sinti communities are not subjects frequently discussed in public discourse and the media, whilst the negative, stereotypical image of Roma and Sinti is well known. The popularisation of information about heroic events from the past provides some new context for the discourse about the Roma community, as new subjects related to bravery and solidarity emerge alongside negative ones referring to a status of being victims of National Socialism.

5. Conclusions

This research addressed the increasing interest in the subject of Roma and Sinti resistance at the *Zigeunerlager*, which is an important part of the history of this community. While the research itself might prove to be only preliminary, the analysis of the material presented allows us to draw several conclusions.

The first relates to the sources of the events that reportedly occurred on 16 May, 1944 at the *Zigeunerlager* and to the difficulties in confirming them as a historical fact. According to the aims of the research project, I performed a search query in the State Archives of the Memorial and Museum Auschwitz- Birkenau, when I was researching information on the resistance on May 16th, 1944. Apart from the testimonies of Roma and Sinti. I also searched for information in testimonies provided by former non-Roma internees, as well as by persons employed at KL Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, available in the archives on these events. This research resulted in the analysis of the testimony of Tadeusz Jachmowski, a Polish clerk at the *Zigeunerlager* camp, a source with which experts in the area, including myself, are already familiar. However, no other testimonies mentioning the revolt of the Roma and Sinti at the *Zigeunerlager* were found in the Museum archives.

Joachimowski's testimony, despite containing a relatively large number of details about the events of 16 May, 1944 is not considered reliable by many historians, including those working for the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum. Firstly, it is problematic that he gave three different dates for the day of revolt at the *Zigeunerlager*. Secondly, there are no official documents or other testimonies filed at the State Archives of the Memorial and Museum Auschwitz- Birkenau that could definitely confirm his testimony. Although historians are extremely careful in their attempts to reconstruct past events, it should be also emphasized that they had not had any access (until recently) to sources that might have provided some new perspectives on the subject. However, three new testimonies and statements given by German Sinti survivors were uncovered during research of archives outside of the Museum, which might provide partial support for information included in his testimony. These have been passed on to historians at the Museum and are awaiting analysis.

The analysis of memoirs, academic publications and websites did not lead to any new knowledge on the subject. Information about the events have been found in publications by

some authors conducting research on the annihilation of the Roma and Sinti, including in ones published by the Museum. It can also be found in Block No. 13 of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, and on the websites of international institutions and some Roma organizations. However, all of them rely on one single source only, the testimony of Joachimowski. Therefore, they add nothing new to research conducted on this subject already.

The other conclusion that can be drawn is related to the narration of the resistance of the Roma and Sinti at the *Zigeunerlager*. Some information describing the resistance at the *Zigeunerlager* is published on the websites of Roma associations, particularly in conjunction with events aimed at drawing public attention to the date of 16 May. Admittedly, there has recently been intensified activities related to the commemoration of the Roma Holocaust, initiated by Roma and Sinti communities themselves, that can be linked to growing historical awareness of the Roma and Sinti genocide, both among the public as well as the Roma and Sinti themselves. Increasing awareness about lesser-known aspects of the history of the Roma and Sinti under Nazism, in particular their resistance acts at the *Zigeunerlager* may play an important role, not only in confirming the fact that Roma and Sinti were victims of Nazism, but also in strengthening feelings of Roma national pride.

Despite the controversy surrounding the events and lack of evidence confirming their historical validity, 16 May 1944 is increasingly commemorated by Roma and Sinti as well as intergovernmental organizations. This makes it necessary for the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum to take a clear stand on this matter. Highlighting the problems with Joachimowski's testimony might result in more cautious attitudes towards citing this source. Currently, it is difficult to be certain whether the organizations and institutions are aware of these controversies. Moreover, while it is also difficult to determine whether the new material provided to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, namely the three testimonies mentioned above, will prompt historians from the Museum and other experts to conduct further research, it is also clear that more research is needed on the topic.

However, aside from the lack of sources, anyone researching this particular subject needs to face another important challenge: the passing of time. This obstacle is well-known to researchers investigating topics related to KL Auschwitz-Birkenau. Reconstructing a complex and difficult past is an extremely hard task, particularly if one needs to rely mainly on first-hand accounts of survivors. Preserved sources are not always reliable and witness testimonies sometimes contradict each other. Given that scientific research related to the experience of the Roma and Sinti during World War II has been marginalized for so long, unfortunately, it is possible that we might never find answers to the questions related to the resistance of Roma and Sinti at the *Zigeunerlager*, along with many other unanswered questions related to KL Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Annex 1[100]

Tadeusz Joachimowski:

Ostatnim Lagerführerem i równocześnie Rapportführerem w obozie cygańskim był Bonigut. Nie zgadzał się z taktyką SS. Był to bardzo dobry człowiek. W dniu 15 maja 1944 roku przyszedł do mnie i oświadczył mi, że z obozem cygańskim jest źle. Zapadło postanowienie likwidacji obozu cygańskiego. Obóz liczył wówczas 6500 Cyganów. Bonigut polecił mi zawiadomić o tym Cyganów, do których miałem pełne zaufanie. Następnego dnia około godziny 19.00 usłyszałem gong ogłaszający Lagersperre. Przed obóz cygański zajechały samochody, z których wysiadła eskorta ok. 50-60 esesmanów uzbrojonych w karabiny maszynowe. Esesmani otoczyli baraki zamieszkałe przez Cyganów. Kilku esesmanów weszło do baraku mieszkalnego z okrzykiem los, los. W barakach panowała kompletna cisza. Zgromadzeni w nich Cyganie uzbrojeni w noże, łopaty, żelazo, łomy i kamienie oczekiwali na dalszy bieg wydarzeń. Z baraków nie wyszli. Wśród esesmanów zapanowała konsternacja. Wyszli z baraku. Po krótkiej naradzie udali się do Blokführerstube do komendanta akcji. Po pewnym czasie usłyszałem gwizdek. Esesmani otaczający baraki zeszli ze swoich posterunków, wsiedli do samochodów i odjechali. (…) Następnego dnia (17 maj) przyszedł Lagerführer i powiedział do mnie, że Cyganie są na razie uratowani. Polecił mi sporządzić spis Cyganów, którzy służyli w wojsku niemieckim, byli odznaczeni. Spis obejmował również rodziny tych Cyganów, a także rodziny tych, którzy w dalszym ciągu przebywali w wojsku. Spis robiony był przez pisarzy ze Schreibstuby obozu cygańskiego. Sporządzony został w ciągu 3 dni i 3 nocy na podstawie zgłoszeń Cyganów. Następnie doręczyłem go Bonigutowi, który udał się z nim do oddziału politycznego. Spis zawierał około 3200 nazwisk – mężczyzn , kobiet i dzieci. Po paru dniach przyszła do obozu cygańskiego komisja składająca się z esesmanów z oddziału politycznego. W skład komisji wchodził również dr Mengele. Wszystkich Cyganów umieszczonych w spisie wezwano pod bramę wejściową. Pozwolono im zabrać cały swój dobytek, tj. odzież, garnki, itp. Cyganów ustawiono za bramą setkami, otoczono ich esesmanami i zaprowadzono do obozu macierzystego w Oświęcimiu I, gdzie umieszczono ich w bloku 10

[100] Testimony of Tadeusz Joachimowski APMA-B, Testimony Unit, vol. 13.

Annex 2[101]

Walter Winter:

One day it finally happened. It was sometime in mid-May 1944. We were warned as we had some contacts after all. The entire 'Zigeunerlager' was to be gassed. Lagersperre [ban on leaving the camp], giving personal records back. Now everything was in our hands. We decided that nobody was going to leave when told to. We were ready for everything. Everybody, able to do so, armed themselves with something, shovels and stones, anything they could find. We waited behind the barracks door. We heard the order to leave barracks: 'Raustreten! Marsch, Marsch!' [Leave! March on!] And once again: 'Sofort raustreten!' [Leave now!] We, from Barracks 18, did not make a move. One of us looked outside, once again, from the highest bunk. There was not a single prisoner outside, so in other barracks they did not observe the order either. I wanted to see what the SS would do and climbed onto the upper bunk. I could see them through a small cover in the roof. I saw Plagge, Koenig, Bainski, Broad and others. I could see them talking to each other and conferring. Of course, I could not hear them, but I think they were completely surprised that literally all prisoners in the 'Zigeunerlager' refused to observe the order. Then I saw some SS guard going to the room of the SS block leader. They were surely talking about what to do. Even if SS guards with machine guns had surrounded the camp, there would have been less of them to cope with all of us.

Nothing happened for a long time. Is that all? We did not dare move, all of us were waiting, motionless. I suddenly saw through a skylight that Plagge was coming back, driving his motorbike from the barracks supervisor room. He whistled, ordering the SS guards surrounding the camp to withdraw from their posts. The action was cancelled. We still waited. Nobody said a word. Even little children sat in complete silence. 500 prisoners in the barracks sat completely motionless and silent. The tension lasted for a while, then I looked at my sister sitting on her bunk. She rushed to me and hugged me. It was like a signal. People started to hug, some women wept with tears of joy, fear and relief. Other still sat silently and stared, motionless. Our resistance was successful, though we did not do anything, in fact. We just had courage not to do what they wanted us to.

[101] Karin Guth, ed., *Z 3105. Der Sinto Walter Winter überlebt den Holokaust* (Hamburg: VSA Verlag), 2009.

Annex 3[102]

Otto Rosenberg:

So we were completely deprived of emotions, though we did resist. We were supposed to be gassed, we, Sinti. All of us. Russian Sinti from Barracks 23 had already been taken and killed. We were told they had had smallpox and would have made us sick. In the evening, several trucks drove to the gate. SS guards with dogs and machine guns jumped off and forced people to get onto them, beating them severely. We heard those screams, this barking and noise. We also looked through sky-lights as there were no normal windows in the barracks.

The cars drove away, and then we saw flames floating from the crematorium chimneys and we smelled burnt human flesh. I do not know, whether those people were gassed or shot. In Auschwitz nobody paid attention to the noise of machine guns or shots anymore.

I had a friend in that barracks, a Roma girl who was a daughter of the kapo. His name was Didi. Her name was Sofie, I was at her place on that very day.

When barracks kapos found out that all Sinti and Roma were going to be burnt, they said – I must once again praise Hans Koch and that second kapo, Wally, he was a short, stubby blonde guy, a swine, though still turned out to be human, he was in a relationship in Sintezza, one of us – then they said:

- Watch out. The Lagerführer is going to come here and kill all the Sinti.

I was told to take a post at one side of the camp road close to the sauna, while my cousin Oscar, we went to school together, at another one.

The barracks kapo told us:

- When we give you a sign with torches, move and knock on all the barracks. They already know what is going on.

Had the SS guards seen us, we would have been shot. But they did not. When we saw lights flickering, we moved and when we knocked, kapos in certain barracks knew: Alright, they are going.

We sneaked back to our barracks. After only, a moment the deputy commander Schwarzhuber marched into the camp with his people, dogs on chains and machine guns. They inspected several barracks.

- The kapo reports the barracks no. 7, 350 prisoners! No new messages!

He went to our barracks for a while, too. He supposedly wanted to check personal records. A spot check.

We already knew what was going on. All of us were armed – with spades, shovels, hammers, pickaxes, hoes, forks, our working tools and whatever could be found. People talked to each other: Alright, if they wanted to kill us, they would have pay for this dearly. They will not take us alive. Maybe we can lay our hands on machine guns, then we will have a greater chance.

However, there were mostly kapos and functionary prisoners who were the strongest ones.

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[102] Otto Rosenberg and Ulrich Enzensberger, *Das Brennglas* (Berlin: Eichborn, 998), 76-80.

Schwarzhuber noticed that lights were lit in all the barracks, including the Polenlager [the camp for Poles] and the Judenlager [the camp for Jews] and that all of Birkenau was lit. Everybody waited attentively.

Many kapos were in relationships with our women. There were even children being born, so they did not want us to be annihilated. They wanted to fight on our side, so it was dangerous for the SS guards.

Schwarzhuber inspected several barracks and marched out with his people as determined as he had come in, because he must have talked to himself: If we do this, there will be chaos and disorder, they will resist. Maybe they would have killed fifty, out of a hundred of us, but then we would have started a hunt for Schwarzhuber. He would not have been alive after this.

All those people who had been living in Birkenau for two years, or even longer, simply knew what this all was about. They were not like Jews who just arrived and had their suitcases taken away. The action was cancelled and we stayed in Auschwitz.

Annex 4

Conversation with Hermann „Mano" Höllenreiner during the workshop in July 2017 at the International Youth Meeting Centre:

Jana Müller:

In May 1944, the camp SS troops attempted to liquidate the 'Zigeunerlager' for the first time. Previously they selected people able to work, they were mostly young men and young, strong women that were sent to other concentration camps in the Third Reich. However, you were still at the camp and it was you who they wanted to send to gas chambers on May 16, 1944 and on this day the unique resistance act organized by prisoners of 'Zigeunerlager' took place, that your father and uncles participated in. Can you tell us something about it?

Hermann „Mano" Höllenreiner:

Yes. We lived in the barracks in 27 in the 'Zigeunerlager' I suppose. We heard SS guards driving at the barracks, how they entered certain blocks. We knew what it meant very well, what was happening to people in Birkenau. For example, we always knew, when a transport with Jews arrived, because then the odour of burnt human flesh could be smelled in the entire camp. This is beyond words. Those SS guards were the worst people I have ever met.

Jana Müller:

What did you do in these circumstances? Your father, your uncle?

Hermann „Mano" Höllenreiner:

They armed themselves with shovels and knives and they waited. But suddenly the entire SS operation was cancelled. We were really lucky, because had they entered and wished to conduct that operation against all odds, we would not have had the slightest chance. They had weapons, they could shoot us on the spot. We were extremely afraid then, because we knew what awaited us, what could happen to us, if they conducted that operation.

The Roma Holocaust and Memory Games

The clash of governmentalities and Roma activism in an imperfectly Europeanized arena

Gergely Romsics

1. Introduction

On 27 January 2017, the Centre for Gypsy History, Culture, Education and Study of the Holocaust, located in the Csepel suburb of Budapest, closed its doors for good. This occurred 72 years after the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp and two and a half years after its opening. The Centre's genesis and failure to endure encapsulates key problems that continue to impact efforts at creating lasting representations of experience specific to Roma, both with regard to the Roma Holocaust and Roma history in general. The Centre came into existence with financial support from the conservative Hungarian government in office in 2014. At the time, the government sought to generate and support a broad range of representations of the Holocaust in Hungary on the 70th anniversary of the mass deportations. As the memorial year fizzled out in the wake of a series of controversies, so did, evidently, governmental and municipal interest in keeping the Roma-run institution afloat.

Ambiguities abound: The fact that the President of Hungary opened the institution on 2 August, 2014, 70 years after the elimination of the Roma camp at Auschwitz did signal the formal inclusion of Roma experience into the national canon of Holocaust remembrance. But what did lack of continued support – without significant controversy and any prior warning or criticism by the government – signify then? Did the Roma fall out of the remembrance canon? Did Holocaust memory work disappear off the government agenda on finding that one cannot engage with the memory of genocide against a minority and sustain the myths of majority victimhood? I argue in this paper, that both are part and parcel of an explanation. Taking both into account extends existing analyses of how Roma memory (understood as the mnemonic practice of Roma) remains marginalized and why Holocaust remembrance remains controversial, especially in post-communist societies and when Roma leaders claim the voice opportunities nominally accorded to them. The fact that institutions can "disappear" is in marked contrast to the global pattern of consolidation that characterizes Holocaust remembrance. Other institutions never came into existence in the first place, memory remaining displaced and plastered over by imprints of "normal"

(meaning majority-inflected, non-Roma) life, as in the case of the former Czech internment camps Lety and Hodonín.[1] Whilst the era when the genocide against the Roma was unacknowledged may have passed, an interpretation of the current struggles for commemoration highlights the limbo in which the memory of Roma victims has been placed. As I argue in the case study on Hungary, *acknowledgement* in the place of *representation* and *voice opportunities* can be deployed by disciplinary governmentalities to manage a marginalized population and prevent the emancipatory use of memory.

As the above formulation suggests, the following analysis embeds mnemonic production into a broader understanding of the operations of power in contemporary societies, based on a set of ideas borrowed from Michel Foucault. Without undertaking an explicitly Foucauldian critique of memory politics, the paper treats the production of "truth effects" as intrinsically linked to disciplinary power, power that orders and shapes subjects through capillaries in society with recourse to "knowledges" about governing and the governed. As a famous locus from a 1976 lecture argues:

> In a society such as ours, but basically in any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterize and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operates on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth.[2]

The discourses referenced by Foucault in the quote above represent and disseminate the truths which stabilize society through disciplining the subject with recourse to notions of appropriateness. In the subsequent analyses, this notion is applied to how such "power/knowledge" or "governmentality" can be viewed as incessantly operating to define and enforce niches within memory politics that may and should be inhabited by Roma. In the case study on Germany, the analysis reveals how governmentality works to separate transnational Roma concerns (such as the case of asylum seekers from the Balkans countries) in the present from compensation, both moral and material, accorded to German Sinti and

[1] The cases of Lety and Hodonín are discussed in Section VI. Despite plans to transform both into memorial sites and a policy push by the last Social Democratic government of the Czechia, as of fall 2017, both former camps remain symbols of memory that is both acknowledged and denied representation. This is reflected in how modest commemorative monuments not far from the sites had been constructed in the 1990s, while larger scale memorials have not materialized up to this date. Prague Monitor, "Hodonín Memorial on wartime camp for Roma to open in summer," *Prague Monitor*, 5 January, 2017. http://www.praguemonitor.com/2017/01/05/hodon%C3%ADn-memorial-wartime-camp-roma-open-summer. and Prague Monitor, "Roma Museum to operate new memorial in Hodonín near Kunštát," *Prague Monitor*, 19 September, 2017. http://praguemonitor.com/2017/09/19/roma-museum-operate-new-memorial-hodon%C3%ADn-near-kun%C5%A1t%C3%A1t.

[2] Michel Foucault, "Two Lectures," *Idem, Power / Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (Brighton: Harvester, 1980), 78-108. esp. 93.

Roma. This procedure subjectifies the German Roma, while shrouding the migrant multitude, severing ties between component parts of a transnational, European minority. The subsequent Hungarian case study suggests a governmentality at work that looks to fashion a "useful Roma" by disciplining the Roma subject inter alia through the appropriation and re-interpretation of Holocaust memory.

Foucault, in the same lecture, also remarked that this diffuse apparatus works "towards domination and the material operators of power, towards forms of subjection and the inflections and utilization of their localized systems, and towards strategic apparatuses," which compel us to "base our analysis of power on the study of techniques and tactics of domination." This paper focuses on strategic apparatuses, discoursive frames that discipline by projecting an image of an "ordered", "appropriate" organization of knowledges. Roma memory is bracketed or, more frequently, inflected in this mode of co-optation, where it is integrated with a normalizing vision as in the case of the "useful Roma" mentioned above. [3]

The loosely Foucauldian framework of analysis is also used in the following to identify the stakes of contemporary Roma struggle. This struggle is led by political and cultural activists who seek to subvert disciplinary power/knowledge to engender:

> An insurrection of subjugated knowledges … referring to the historical contents that have been buried and disguised in a functionalist coherence or formal systemization. … Subjugated knowledges are thus those blocs of historical knowledge which were present but disguised within the body of functionalist and systematizing theory and which criticism … has been able to reveal. [4]

Such insurrectionary knowledge, as argued by Foucault, is local and specific in character and needs to be first catalyzed through a re-framing to function as a catalyst for change itself. Roma activists and allies, when conducting memory work on the Holocaust, are deploying local knowledges about the past and exclusion to challenge both forgetting and contemporary "normalization" of this memory as remembrance of a time past. By re-affirming its validity, they are constructing a platform from which to address current practices of marginalization – very much as contemporary theorizing about the productivity (in and for the present) of mnemonic practice predicts.

Stories, like that of the Csepel Centre, are located at the intersection of the spheres of political action and civic activism, and represent the meeting of governmentality and local knowledges under transformation into emancipatory representation of the past. In this meeting of knowledges – mnemonic practices in the case at hand – governments still control key resources and distribute access to other resources. No matter how hard NGOs work at institutionalizing and disseminating mnemonic practices and knowledge, the "first tier" of public memory exists in Europe at the intersection of identities and interests. Consequently, it remains dependent on government or other political patronage that can only be partially

[3] Ibid., 102-107.

[4] Ibid., 81-82.

offset by other forms of support. As the section on Germany shows, even in a country with a strong civil society, it was interventions by political parties – especially in the key years of 1982-1985 – that lent decisive support to Sinti activists' demands for including them among victims of Nazi persecution. At the same time, the importance of NGOs should not be underestimated. It was an NGO-driven campaign— Roma activists, as well as their allies— that implemented a highly successful strategy of coalition-building, and "won over" previously insensitive elite groups in Germany.

Whilst supranational agents have made considerable efforts and have an impact on remembering – including Roma memory – transnational memory has failed to displace national grand narratives in most member states' societies. Activism, first on the part of the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and since the late 1990s also increasingly from European Union bodies, has shaped the arena of memory politics, creating pressures and offering incentives. However, especially in the new member states (where civil society is weaker and nationalist sentiment is more prevalent), remembrance is shaped by governments to a greater extent than any supra- or sub-governmental entity. In fact, supranational institutions have also become, at times, the battleground for various coalitions of members that seek to "internationalize" their memory politics and interpretations of history. The most significant example for this is the effort by East Central European (ECE) member states to codify the horrors of Soviet communism at a European level.

Remembering Roma victims of the Holocaust, and Roma memory at large, has remained peripheral in most national memory cultures. Some Roma activists have naturally turned to international organizations in the hope of creating a transnational Roma memory in tandem with the emerging common European memory space. They, as well as other activists active in domestic politics, have been challenging national governments. At the same time, minority memory politics at the domestic level can have distinct goals that do not tie in with transnational Roma memory work, touching upon how Roma identity can and should be accorded representation and a voice in majority societies. In the background there are often conflicting political goals of deterritorialized nation-building, on the one hand, and achieving real emancipation in a particular national society on the other.[567]

Furthermore, the alliance between supranational organizations and networks of Roma activism should not be mistaken for a natural and complete overlap of respective agendas. Emergent European memory is being emplotted as a "romance" – a story of tragic beginnings leading to redemption. This teleological bent indirectly threatens Roma identity politics and memory work, by closing down arenas of contestation and of emancipatory struggle through an imposed sense of triumph, i.e. through the imperative of announcing successful closure and a break with the past. Before accepting such a break with the past, Roma identity politics

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5 Nicole Gheorghe, "Roma-Gypsy Ethnicity in Eastern Europe," *Social Research* 27, no. 4 (1991): 840.

6 PER [Project on Ethnic Relations], *The Romanies in Central and Eastern Europe: Illusions and Reality* (Princeton: Project on Ethnic Relations, 1992).

7 Slawomir Kapralksi, "Identity building and the Holocaust: Roma political nationalism," *Nationalities Papers* 25, no. 2 (1997): 274.

needs to secure its inclusion in European politics and memory at all levels. Keeping these arenas of contestation open is crucial for the continued promotion of the viewpoints and interests of Roma. The hastily introduced European story of redemption threatens to render invisible, once more, those unlucky enough to be outside the redemption narrative.

This paper attempts to embed struggles to represent Roma memory in a discussion, within the context of the Holocaust, about the clash of agendas over public remembering. In so doing, it shifts its analytic focus away from the more frequently discussed subject matter of Roma activism, memory work and identity politics towards arenas of interaction and contestation. It is in these arenas where centres of power projection and knowledge production seek to shape and "discipline" identities. For the predominantly national-governmental power-knowledge, the resources to resist both grass-roots, and transnational, challenges to identity politics remain considerable. By investigating them and the interactions in these arenas, it becomes possible to ask questions about the fragmented memorialization of the Roma Holocaust in the context of national policies and majority discourses.

The following sections first situate the paper's theoretical vantage point with regard to the multidisciplinary field of memory studies and theories of normative change. I then proceed to contextualize Roma memory with regard to transnational and national frameworks of remembering and a survey of related memory work. A general introduction to Roma identity building through memory politics rounds out the survey, showing how transnational and local efforts tie in with non-Roma institutions of remembering. I show how conceptualizations of a transnational, European Roma identity have been tied up with remembering the Roma Holocaust as a shared experience of the many and diverse communities that live across Europe, ever since the beginning of activism in the 1970s.[8] The subsequent empirical sections provide insight into how NGO-driven memory work interacts with governmentalities that both accommodate and resist this challenge. The first look at the case of the institutionalization of remembering the Roma Holocaust in Germany, as an ambivalent, yet simultaneously paradigmatic phenomenon that unfolded in a largely national context. It became a model for post-1989 Roma activists in post-communist countries, who, however, operate in a different context. In order to highlight, and better interpret, this new situation, a second case study is juxtaposed with the German one. The far less researched case of Hungary sheds light on the post-communist constellation, where, despite increased transnational – European – synergies, national governments have retained more control over the process of memorializing the Roma Holocaust. This is evidenced by how progress was achieved through governmental norm entrepreneurship after 2000, and also by how this progress could be rolled back after 2010.

Apart from demonstrating how the aforementioned interactions of supranational and national political actors, transnational and domestic Roma activists shape remembering, the paper discusses two aspects of special significance. First, it investigates the role of introducing the notion of Roma resistance into the memory canon as an attempt to claim agency for communities seeking to transition away from positions of subalternity. This aspect highlights the "agency dilemma" in Roma memory work. Not unlike the case of

[8] Ibid., 273-274.

post-Holocaust Jewish identity, an active aspect is seen by many as crucial for reconceptualizing politically articulate, proactive Roma identities.[9][10][11] The second focus goes in the opposite direction: The preference of prevailing governmental logic to mark out a passive or pacified victim position for Roma on the peripheries of Holocaust memory. Through inclusion without genuine representation (e.g. lack of Roma voices narrating the past at official commemorations), Roma memory will be preserved at best as an inconsequential footnote in national canons of suffering. Re-centring memory around Roma participation in history would threaten national narratives of victimhood, as in the case of violence against Roma, where history at large and the Holocaust overlap most. This "de-centred" yet pan-European genocide[12] annihilated comfortable delineations between supposedly "foreign" perpetrators and "domestic" victims, which, from the vantage point of Roma remembering, are revealed as fundamentally false and unsustainable.

In view of the relative weakness of European agents of memory and the rush towards formulating the story of a "Europe redeemed", Roma activists and their allies remain the key actors in the uphill struggle to dislodge the national grands récits that enfold, and thus cover and hide, histories of persecution against, and resistance by, Roma. On the basis of the empirical sections, the conclusion also directs attention to the paramount importance of arguing with majorities, contesting power/knowledge centres in domestic settings, developing methods of pressuring political actors, over and beyond sustaining the already somewhat crystallized networks of NGOs and supranational partnerships. The case of Hungary demonstrates how norm entrepreneurship in the politics of memory arena can be reversed and morphed into a governmentality that allocates a place to Roma amongst victims but denies them a voice. In so doing, it prevents the memory of the Roma Holocaust from operating as a signifier of broader historical and present-day practices of exclusion, and as the source of a moral imperative to act against these practices. The Roma, included but not represented, are subjects of a re-colonization. The Hungarian government adopts their history of the Holocaust, while also separating it from any critical discourse about the present. This highlights the continued significance of interventions at the national level. European efforts towards a cosmopolitan and empowering memory culture are, at least in the case analysed here, deflected so as to have the opposite effect

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9 Gheorghe, "Roma-Gypsy Ethnicity," 842-844.

10 PER, *The Romanies in Central and Eastern Europe,* 20.

11 Ian Hancock, *The Pariah Syndrome: An Account of Gypsy Slavery and Persecution* (Ann Arbor: Karoma, 1987).

12 Anna Lujza Szász, "Memory Emancipated: Exploring the Memory of Nazi Genocide of Roma in Hungary," (PhD Diss., ELTE Faculty of Social Sciences, 2015), 5, 9-11. Empirical case studies from across Europe underpin this observation, notably ones collected in the 1999 volume edited by Donald Kenrick. In this regard, see the analysis in Giovanna Boursier, "Gypsies in Italy during the Fascist dictatorship and the Second World War," in *In the Shadow of the Swastika: The Gypsies during the Second World War*, ed. Donald Kenrick (Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1999), 13-36. On Italy and Austria, see also Erika Thurner, "Gypsies in the Austrian Burgenland: The Camp and Lackenbach," in *In the Shadow of the Swastika*, 37-58, providing evidence of local/national initiatives. They do not diverge from Eastern European accounts found, inter alia, in Michelle Kelso's chapter on Romania. See Michelle Kelso, "Gypsy deportations from Romania to Transnistria, 1942–44," in *In the Shadow of the Swastika*, 95-130.

–reinforcing asymmetrical status relationships between the majority and the Roma minority. And, as long as cultural violence is enacted predominantly through capillaries of domestic politics, domestic politics remains a key arena of contestation.[13]

Finally, a note on the terminology: despite the recurring call that the Holocaust "ought to refer exclusively to the Jewish victims of the Nazi German state (and not, also, for example, to the Roma or Gypsy people of whom it has been claimed suffered a fate much like that of the Jews)"[14], this paper refers to the mass persecution of Roma and culturally related communities (Sinti, etc.) during World War II as the Roma Holocaust and as genocide. This is done without thereby making a statement about the possibilities and potential conclusions of comparing the genocide against Jews and the genocide against Roma. The choice of terminology is grounded in the simple assertion that the Roma were targets of genocide, persecuted by the same power operators as the Jews in the same period[15], even if the persecution of the former was more de-centred and co-driven by local agents in many places.[16] The Holocaust as a signifier also references, through the imperative of "never again", the normative core of a European community based on rights, democracy and peace. It is therefore all the more important, writing from the position of a European non-Roma, not to assimilate the terminology of this paper into traditions of exclusion and rendering invisible. Terms such as "mass murder" are therefore not used as euphemistic synonyms. It is also with regard to this European and universal linkage, as well as the desire to not usurp voices of the community that I do not use community-specific terms such as Pharrajimos/Porrajmos or Samodaripen – without implying any prejudice against these.

2. Theoretical Background

New Directions in Memory Studies

Memory studies experienced an explosion of theoretical contributions around the new millennium. Some of the most significant of these reflect a shared claim that the original framework, adopted by many in the fields of history and the social sciences for the study

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[13] Johan Galtung, "Cultural Violence," *Journal of Peace and Resarch* 27, no. 3 (1990): 291-305.

[14] Alan Rosenbaum, *Is the Holocaust unique? Perspectives on comparative genocide* (Oxford: Westview Press, 2009), 13.

[15] János Bársony and Ágnes Daróczi, *Pharrajimos: The Fate of the Roma during the Holocaust* (New York: Idebate Press, 2008), 2.

[16] Cf. Szász, "Memory Emancipated," 9-11. For the difference between strict intentionalist and broader definitions of genocide in the context of the persecution of Roma during World War II, cf. Ann Curthoys and John Docker, "Defining Genocide." in *The Historiography of Genocide*, ed. Dan Stone (Basingtoke-New York: Palgrave Macmillan,2008), 9-41, Riccardo Armillei, "Forgotten and Concealed: The Emblematic Cases of the Assyrian and Romani Genocides," *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 10, no. 2 (2016): 98-120.

of collective memory, proposed by Maurice Halbwachs in the interwar period, had a structural bias.[17] According to this criticism, the original and then revolutionary Halbwachsian understanding did not provide sufficient tools to investigate agencies that shape memories. The shift away from memory towards remembrance represents moving the focus from the exploration of the "contents" of memory towards its "makers" and "uses". Through this shift, memory has come to be seen as performative, as the sum of "mnemonic practices"[18], which are also instances of communicative action through re-enactment and/or commemoration.[19] While memory has become "understood as denoting an object", "remembrance" designates "a process" that may be investigated in an interaction-focussed framework, where participants are seen to be creating narratives to shape "social realities".[20] As Jeffrey Olick summarized the essence of this change of perspective, memory has come to be seen as "construct" that references itself and practices in the present, rather than the past.[21]

The above shift has propelled to the fore a series of considerations that render notions of remembering simultaneously more complex and indirect than previously conceptualized. These include, famously, the notion of post-memory. Post-memory also includes, beyond the acknowledgement that through transmitted (familiar, cultural) memory we remember that which we have not lived through, an emphasis on the *work* done by subsequent generations. This work is one of rounding out, interpreting, ordering that which was possibly passed on in fragments as a result of trauma or forced silencing. As Marianne Hirsch, who coined the term, argued: "[p]ost-memory's connection to the past is thus actually mediated not by recall, but by imaginative investment, projection and creation."[22] The continuous reshaping of the object of remembering also holds the promise of moving beyond strongly institutionalized, predominantly national mnemonic practices. In this context, Roma memory work, at first sight, fits squarely into a future, post-national community of remembrance, along with factors such

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[17] Maurice Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective: Edition critique établie par Gérard Namer* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1997), 96-160.

[18] Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins, "Social Memory Studies: From 'Collective Memory' to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practice," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24, no. 2 (1998): 105-127.

[19] James Fentress and Chris Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992). See also Jay Winter, Frank van Vree and Karin Tilmas, *Performing the Past: Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010); Yifat Gutman, Amy Sadoro and Adam Brown, *Memory and the Future: Transnational Politics, Ethics and Society* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

[20] Chiara Bottici, "European identity and the politics of remembrance" in *Performing the Past Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe*, eds. Jay Winter, Frank van Vree and Karin Tilmas (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 342. See also Chatherine Guisan, *A political theory of identity in European integration: Memory and policies* (Abingdon-New York: Routledge, 2012), 196; Sara Jones, "Memory Competition or Memory Collaboration? Politics, Networks, and Social Actors in Memories of Dictatorship," in *The Changing Place of Europe in Global Memory Cultures: Usable Pasts and Futures*, eds. Christina Kraenzle and Maria Mayr (Houndsmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 72.

[21] Jeffrey K. Olick, *The Politics of Regret: On Collective Memory and Historical Responsibility* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

[22] Marianne Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory, Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 4-5.

as "[g]lobalized communication and time-space compression, post-coloniality, transnational capitalism, large-scale migration, and regional integration" which means that "the national … cease[s] to be the inevitable or preeminent scale for the study of collective remembrance".[23] The post-memory of present-day Roma intellectuals and activists should be expected to work in tandem with the forces of globalization in this ongoing process. Its study therefore, should constitute an instance of "genuine investigation of transnational memory linkages on the European level, comprising the analysis of cross-border social relationships of non-state and other actors" that has been identified as under-researched in academic exchanges.[24]

Roma post-memory of the Holocaust, as the sum of relevant mnemonic practices, would also represent the kind of "entangled" and "multidirectional" remembering that is, by virtue of its inherently transnational character, simultaneously post-national and self-liberating. It points to multiple linkages in the experiences of geographically and politically distant, yet culturally connected groups.[25] The memory of the Roma Holocaust, if developed, would function as a knot (*noeud*) of memory, i.e. sustaining a "rhizomatic network[26] of temporality and cultural reference", and already does so to an extent.[27] It is re-enacted by the caravan revisiting Polish memorial sites[28], especially Szczurowa, every year[29], permanently inscribed into the text of Auschwitz memory by the Roma exhibition[30], commemorated with divergent and local meanings in EU member states on 2 August, as well as on 16 May, with an emphasis on resistance, and increasingly discussed in school projects, especially in Germany where its institutionalization is most advanced.[31]

Understood – in the Deleuzian manner – as an excess of national memory, Roma remembering would form a part of the self-transforming "national and ethnic memories … in the

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[23] Chiara de Cesari and Ann Rigney, *Transnational Memory, Circulation, Articulation, Scales* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 2.

[24] Aline Sierp and Jenny Wüstenberg, "Linking the Local and the Transnational: Rethinking Memory Politics in Europe," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 23, no. 3. (2015): 323.

[25] Sebastian Conrad, "Entangled Memories: Versions of the Past in Germany and Japan, 1945–2001," *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 1. (2003): 86. See also Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2009).

[26] Rothberg adopts Deleuze's and Guattari's term (rhizome) which signifies non-hierarchical constellations with multiple entry points (for interpretation, participation, etc.).

[27] Michael Rothberg, "Introduction: Between Memory and Memory: From Lieux de Mémoire to Noeuds de Mémoire," *Yale French Studies*, no. 118/119 (2010): 7.

[28] http://www.romea.cz/en/news/world/poland-roma-caravan-commemorates-holocaust.

[29] Peter Vermeersch, "Exhibiting Multiculturalism: Politicised Representations of the Roma in Poland," *Third Text* 22, no. 1. (2008): 362-369. See also Tarnów Regional Museum, "Roma caravan commemorates holocaust" (2015), www.romea.cz, 10 July, 2015, http://www.romea.cz/en/news/world/poland-roma-caravan-commemorates-holocaust.

[30] Huub van Baar, "From 'Time-Banditry' to the Challenge of Established Historiographies: Romani Contributions to Old and New Images of the Holocaust," in *Multidisciplinary Approaches to Romani Studies*, eds. Michael Stewart and Marton Rövid (Budapest: CEU Press, 2010).

[31] Herbert Diercks, *Die Verfolgung der Sinti und Roma im Nationalsozialismus* (Hamburg: Temmen, 2012).

age of globalization", on the road to a cosmopolitan memory culture that can accommodate the surplus, while connecting the respective geographically fixed (national) frameworks in the process.[323334] It was in this vein in the 1990s that leading activists of deterritorialized Roma nation-building, such as Andrzej Mirga and Nicolae Gheorghe conceptualized the place and status of the Roma Holocaust within a global remembrance culture. It is still the vantage point that informs recent contributions to the field, from Huub van Baar to Anna Reading and Anikó Imre.[35]

Throughout this paper and in line with the above, I consider Roma memory as post-memory being constructed through the activism of transnational and domestic NGOs with the support of supranational organizations, whilst seeking to link up with an emergent cosmopolitan and emancipatory memory. At the same time, I argue that perspectives that prioritize only the transnational aspect of remembering, by their built-in bias of focusing on the post-national and the transgressive, simplify, and ultimately cover up, the parallel operations of national memory, sustained by socially embedded and continuously performed narratives about geographically, and often ethnically, distinct pasts. The latter tend to be highly controlled, allowing for little variation. In stark contrast to transnational Roma remembering, these represent closed texts until subverted by Roma or other transgressive memory work.[36] As such, they offer an illustration of the resistance of (certain) mnemonic practices to globalization, and represent obstacles to integrating Roma and other previously unrepresented memory into these national contexts.[37] National contexts also continue to diverge from each other, and differ in the extent to which transnational Roma remembering can be brought to bear on them. Resistance within these frameworks may be provoked, *inter alia*, by the aforementioned threat to the established distribution of perpetrator and victim

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[32] Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2006), 3.

[33] Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory,* 20-22.

[34] Gregor Feindt et al, "Entangled Memory: Toward a Third Wave in Memory Studies," *History and Theory* 53, no. 1 (2014): 24–44.

[35] Nicolae Gheorghe and Andzej Mirga, *The Roma in the Twenty-First Century: A Policy Paper* (Princeton: Project of Ethnic Relations, 1997). Huub van Baar, "Romani identity formation and the globalization of Holocaust discourse," in *Representation matters: (Re)articulating collective identities in a postcolonial world*, eds. A. Hoffmann and E. Peeren (Amsterdam: Rodopi Press, 2010). Huub van Baar, "Enacting memory and the hard labor of identity formation," in *The Identity Dilemma: Collective Identity and Social Movements*, eds. Aidan McGarry and James Jasper (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2015). See also Anna Reading, "The European Roma: An Unsettled Right to Memory," in *Public Memory, Public Media, and the Politics of Justice*, eds. Philip Lee and Pradip N. Thomas (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012), 121-140., and Anikó Imre, *Identity games: globalization and the transformation of post-Communist media cultures* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009), 95-127.

[36] Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad, *Memory in a Global Age: Discourses, Practices and Trajectories* (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 49.

[37] Jan Assmann, "Globalization, Universalism, and the Erosion of Cultural Memory," in *Memory in a Global Age: Discourses, Practices and Trajectories*, eds. Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 134.

roles in national memory, which is implicit in memorializing Roma victims. In the operations of specific governmentalities, the re-disciplining and "pacification" of Roma memory is achieved by insulating it within national memory. This severs its ties with a broader European memory culture, and ruptures its functioning as a node, where national legacies of perpetratorship and dispersed, quasi-permanent violence against the minority could be connected to an emergent European culture of contrition. Evaluating European memory practices and interactions between levels of remembering, Pakier and Strath conclude that the drive "to make ex post the commemoration of the Holocaust a foundation myth of the European Union has remained an illusion", an insight this paper largely corroborates through analysis of how in Hungary successive governments have managed to control core dimensions of memory work.[38]

To analyze the above complex dynamic, this paper relies on the notion of "memory games" as developed by Georges Mink, adapted to current European trends by Mink and Neumayer. The term summarizes the engagement of strong political actors shaping arenas of memory and emphasizes the opportunistic component in how memorialization is shaped by them. Political actors pick and choose, and, even more importantly, inflect meanings and referent objects, accomplishing the co-optation of memory in the process.[39]

In the most recent iteration of their approach, Mink and Neumayer also observe the "international circulation of grammars of reconciliation", and what amounts to "intensive reconciliationism" in the aftermath of 1989. This is a reminder that national memory games can be impacted from the outside. It is also clear, however, that established practices of power-knowledge have responded to these challenges by adapting, whilst also continuing to reproduce themselves through memory. Recent years have seen both the "proliferation of memory policies" and the "shifting of memory games" from the national framework to extranational arenas, in an attempt to combine various political resources for partisan competitions by making use of new international norms and the normative conditionality developed by the EU and the Council of Europe" (CoE).[40]

The general thrust of the concept of memory games directs any attempted empirical analysis to seek out the national remembrance agendas of the sovereign governmentality, even in par excellence transnational contexts, at the very least co-shaping institutional and other

[38] Malgorzata Pakier and Bo Strath, *A European Memory? Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 2-12.

[39] Mink and Neumayer do not use the term co-optation, but the Gramscian concept, whereby hegemonic elites include but also reshape extra-hegemonic elements in stability-oriented societal management, is a good approximation of the logic they reference. See Georges Mink and Laure Neumayer, "Europe: vision commune et conflits mémoriels: Grand entretien," *Savoir/Agir* 7, no. 1 (2009): 77-93 and Laure Neumayer, "Integrating the Central European Past into a Common Narrative: The Mobilizations Around the 'Crimes of Communism' in the European Parliament," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 23, no. 3 (2015): 344-363.

[40] Georges Mink, "Introduction – Géopolitique, histoire et jeux de mémoire: pour une reconfiguration conceptuelle," in *Le passé au present: Gisements mémoriels et actions historicisantes en Europe centrale et orientale*, eds. Georges Mink and Paul Bonnard (Paris: Michel Houdiard, 2010). See alsoGeorges Mink and Laure Neumayer, *History, Memory and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe: Memory Games* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 1-2. and Jones, "Memory Competition," 65-67.

outcomes. As Mink and Neumayer suggest, national actors, governments included, are even unlikely to take soft European norms head on (unless conflict and resistance to "foreign influences" becomes a political instrument in itself). The authors' strict transactionalism is nevertheless a strong corrective approach to focusing too much on relatively weak NGOs and supranational organizations when mapping the ongoing memorialization of a complex historical referent object – such as the Roma Holocaust. Relying on the concept of memory games, I attempt to show in the following sections how the "adaptive opportunism" of governments can operate with regard to the ongoing management of the potentially "dangerous" memory of the Roma Holocaust. In the post-communist setting especially, Roma suffering and resistance is not so much denied, as included without being represented in the national memory canon. It is a muted and peripheral inclusion that seeks to pacify challenges to the dominant national canon.

At one level, this warning simply serves to remind one of the cleavages between Westernized elite memory and national policies.[41] More importantly, the concept also serves as an instrument of critical analysis. For example: The Gdansk Museum of the Second World War has been discussed in relevant literature as an instance of transitioning from a Polish to a transnational perspective in interpreting World War II.[42] In this case, the memory games framework reminds us to ask the question whether the governmentality underwriting the transformation was not in fact seeking to accommodate emerging European norms, whilst also trying to transfer the "national history of suffering" to the European level. The empirics confirm the suspicion: The museum does represent a radical break with the traditional Polish national perspective, but preserves numerous elements which are re-embedded into a transnational grand narrative. The latter becomes, in this way, the carrier of mythologemes that would be challenged if organized into a closed, all too-Polish national narrative. Similarly, the accommodation and superficial acceptance of Roma perspectives do not necessarily represent an ongoing transformation of governmental memory politics. This form of adaptation, a kind of "mimetic compliance" avoids open conflict over norms by acknowledging them, often superficially, while reproducing the institutionalized narratives in a revised form.[43]

The concept of memory games provides a framework within which such manoeuvres in the arena of memory politics are open to interpretation. It represents a departure from agency-centred theories without eliminating agency from the analysis, by proposing a consideration of the multiplicity of agents in a given arena. As a result, it helps to avoid or mitigate the bias in theorizing that seeks to identify agency without inquiring about the environment in which it operates or treating the setting as a fixed, external variable.[44] In the case of this paper,

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[41] Christian Sieg, "Beyond Foundational Myths: Images from the Margins of the European Memory Map," in *The Changing Place of Europe in Global Memory Cultures: Usable Pasts and Futures*, eds. Christina Kraenzle and Maria Mayr (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 137-158.

[42] Stephan Jaeger, "Between the National and the Transnational: European Memories of World War II in the Twenty-First-Century Museum in Germany and Poland," in *The Changing Place of Europe in Global Memory Cultures: Usable Pasts and Futures*, eds. Christina Kraenzle and Maria Mayr (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 45.

[43] Jones, "Memory Competition," 65-67.

[44] Bottici, "European identity," 342.

such bias would be, for instance, to conduct an analysis of actions by proponents of a transnational Roma memory of the Holocaust (a group that certainly exists) without considering the variable geometries of their transactions with other, potentially more powerful, agencies. To understand the memory struggles unfolding in member states over the remembrance of the Roma Holocaust, it is important to remember analyses of East Central European (ECE) governmental and social resistance against what is seen as "imposed" memory, threatening the ECE subject with dis-identification.[45] The latter suggest that processes can be better interpreted by considering simultaneously the "activists" and those who seek to conserve various majority narratives. Thinking in terms of memory games, as conceptualized by Mink, enables us to interpret this type of resistance, highlighting its adaptable character and adjustments between positions. It allows us to consider how external incentives and normative shifts, as well as political competition amongst parties representing the majorities, can cause adaptation. Agents will seek to preserve their identity politics and their mnemonic practices, but they may change them partially in the face of various pressures and opportunities. At this more fine-grained level of analysis, it becomes possible to grasp the nature of memory games in post-communist countries (and elsewhere). Without it, research is bound to reproduce simplistic plots of heroic agents of change facing down structural evil, which will ultimately hamper efforts to influence society and institutions in the necessarily long and uneven process of subverting memory politics that exclude minorities and prevent movement towards emancipation.

Norm Entrepreneurship and Social Change

The constellations of "memory games" are most deeply impacted when social change occurs. Social change reconfigures the arenas of contestation, forcing new positions and tactics on the actors. Given the ambiguity of the concept and the multiple meanings it assumes in social science literature, no attempt at a comprehensive definition is made here. In the context of this paper, social change is understood as a shift in values and beliefs on the part of considerable segments of society, which also impacts the opportunity structure for all agents in affected policy arenas. Specifically, the question recurring in this paper is how and when societal attitudes change sufficiently to cause political actors to accept the inclusion of Roma memory in the mnemonic practices of majority society. In short, when was Roma experience acknowledged by non-Roma leaders as relevant for the identity politics of the majority? And, how can Roma historical experience be used to promote active and equal Roma citizens in society?

[45] Stefan Troebst, "Jalta versus Stalingrad, GuLag versus Holocaust: Konfligierende Erinnerungskulturen im größeren Europa," *Berliner Journal für Soziologie* 15, no. 3 (2005): 381-400. See also Stefan Troebst, "Halecki Revisited: Europe's Conflicing Cultures of Remembrance," in *A European Memory? Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance*, eds. Małgorzata Pakier and Bo Stråth (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 59-60; Chiara Bottici and Benoit Challand, *Imagining Europe: Myth, Memory, and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 71-81.

In keeping with the logic of memory games, a transactionalist perspective, informed by thick social constructivism and by critical theorizing about power, focuses on interactions in the relevant arenas- in this case that of mnemonic practices and identity politics. As "identities are … always an achievement of practice and thus the boundaries of the Self are in principle always at stake" in the course of transactions and the performances of identity which these entail, speech acts and other representations constitute interventions in these realms.[46] Talking about the past always necessarily shapes the present, and speech acts can be analyzed as "performed identities". The empirical sections that follow engage in such analyses, investigating how discourses of the Holocaust configure identities and one's place in society.

Regarding the possible sources of social change, two major directions of theorizing about norm diffusion and learning have emerged in international relations and Europeanization theories. International learning and socialization theories, as well as various adaptations of sociological institutionalism, emphasize the importance of environmental factors. Actors observe and learn: when domestic institutions are in crisis, when following foreign examples is incentivized or interactions between actors are intense, norm diffusion takes place.[47] At the same time, variation across many cases tends to be considerable, as history and path-dependency seem to play a large role in determining outcomes. National and ethnic political elites are efficient in "filtering" and bending international preferences and norms, capitalising on their quasi-monopoly as mediators.[48] Following high expectations around the turn of the millennium, at the time of the EU's Eastern enlargement process and the global expansion of democratic rule, recent developments have especially forced researchers to re-evaluate the abilities of domestic elites to preserve existing configurations of power and societal arrangements. Mimetic norm-following and other postures enable them to resist the spread and internalization of international norms, as well as sustain control over policy arenas once assumed to be under the sway of Europeanization. National political elites have preserved more power and control over resources than many expected a decade or two ago.

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[46] Tanja Aalberts, „The Future of Sovereignty in Multilevel Governance Europe – A constructivist View," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 42, no. 1 (2004): 37.

[47] Paul DiMaggio and Walter Powell, "The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields," *American Sociological Review* 48, no. 1 (1983): 150; Claus Offe, "Designing Institutions for East European Transitions," in *Strategic Choice and Path-Dependency in Post-Socialism: Institutional Dynamics in the Transformation Process*, eds. Klaus Nielsen, Bob Jessop and Jerzy Hausner (London: Elgar, 1995), 54. See also Klaus Goetz, "Making sense of post-communist central admnistration: modernization, Europeanization or Latinization," *Journal of European Public Policy* 8, no. 6 (2001): 1032-1051; Heather Grabbe, "How does Europeanization affect CEE governance? Conditionality, diffusion and diversity," *Journal of European Public Policy* 8, no. 6 (2001): 1015 and Ioannis Kyvelidis, "State Isomorphism in the Post-Socialist Transition," *European Integration Online Papers* (2000): 6, 20 March, 2018, http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2000-002.htm.

[48] Angela K. Bourne, "Introduction: The Domestic Politics of Regionalism and European Integration," *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 4, no. 3 (2003): 352-353. See also Thomas Risse, Maria Cowles Green and James Caporaso, "Europeanisation and Domestic Change: Introduction," in *Transforming Europe: Europeanisation and Domestic Change*, eds. Thomas Risse, Maria Cowles Green and James Caporaso (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 4-6.

A second potential source of social change is largely domestic and "eruptive". Perhaps influenced by the international environment, the process of norm emergence and adoption is more the outcome of contestations and campaigning at the national (or even local) level.[49] This agency-focussed approach considers the roles of "norm-entrepreneurs", actors who engage in persuasion within specific political communities. They are therefore promoters of "ideational change". As Bratberg observed, "[w]here ideational change occurs, and debates enter new territory (thus opening a space for policy change), agency can be traced back to such entrepreneurs."[50] Norm entrepreneurs have an especially crucial role as change-makers when cycles of the reproduction of historical memory need to be broken. Often such cycles are fed by competing claims of collectivities to have suffered, especially in the case of majorities seeking to distance themselves from perpetrator legacies.[51]

Norm entrepreneurship capitalizes on the performative aspect of language. It supposes the introduction into wide usage of discourses that reframe old issues, and persuasion occurs when this reframing is accepted by audiences. Reflexive processes, facilitated by domestic conditions and environmental effects such as international norms, can influence agents of change in shaping a discourse, but it is their role as efficient persuaders and disseminators that is crucial.[52] Such "eruptive" change upsets, through the cognitive challenge that it poses, existing power relations. It opens new options for societal management by spreading, ideally, from innovators across relevant bureaucracies, NGOs, activists, until it has sufficiently infiltrated society.

International and domestic norm entrepreneurship can have synergistic effects. International transactions may push key actors towards accepting cognitive innovation and the reframing of policy areas. This is because "weakly socialized actors … confront the standard of legitimacy as an external institutional resource and constraint," leading them to "strategic use of norm-based arguments in one´s self-interest".[53] As a result, a longer process of normative adaptation may begin, where the "socialization of outsiders into the behavioural rules set by a community of insiders" unfolds. This process is completed by "persuasion through arguing, typically within a supranational negotiating context, and shaming based on non-state actors such as advocacy groups both in international as well as in domestic political situations."[54] The process, however, is not teleological if the international, electoral, prestige etc. costs of sustaining existing institutions do not increase sufficiently to force adaptation, the process may become stalled or reversed.

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[49] Nils Finstad, "The Rhetoric of Organizational Change," *Human Relations* 51, no. 6 (1998): 717-740.

[50] Øivind Bratberg, "Ideas, Tradition and Norm Entrepreneurs: Retracing Guiding Principles of Foreign Policy in Blair and Chirac's Speeches on Iraq," *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 1 (2011): 19.

[51] Dirk A. Moses, *German Intellectuals and the Nazi Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 35.

[52] Finstad, "The Rhetoric of Organizational Change," 718, 735-738.

[53] Frank Schimmelfennig, "The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union," *International Organizations* 55, no. 1 (2001): 63.

[54] Antje Wiener, "Contested Compliance: Interventions on the Normative Structure of World Politics," *European Journal of International Relations* 10, no. 2 (2004): 196. See also Richard Youngs, "Normative Dynamics and Strategic Interests in the EU´s External Identity," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 42, no. 2 (2004): 420, and Trine Flockhart, "Critical Junctures and Social Identity Theory: Explaining the Gap between Danish Mass and Elite Attitudes to Europeanization," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 43, no. 2 (2005): 262.

Theorizing about norm diffusion, entrepreneurship and social change in international relations and political science helps to assign potential roles in the analysis of European mnemonic practices referencing the Roma Holocaust. The international environment is characterized by the emergent European culture of memory, which is briefly introduced in the next section. As the case studies show, neither in Germany, nor in Hungary can this memory be shown to determinatively shape mnemonic practices. At the same time, the international environment can clearly force adaptation and empower local agents of change. The institutionalization of Roma remembering in Germany provides an especially clear-cut example of successful norm entrepreneurship.

3. The Empirical Context

An emergent European memory culture?

European values, according to Jacques Derrida, constitute a set of aporiai. In his reflections on the reunification of Europe after the fall of the Iron Curtain, he warned that "beyond our heading, it is necessary to recall ourselves not only to the other heading, and especially to the heading of the other, but also perhaps to the other of the heading, that is to say, to a relation of identity with the other that no longer obeys the form, the sign, or the logic of the heading, nor even of the antiheading – of beheading, of decapitation." This play on words drives home Derrida's point that European values are in effect opposed to Eurocentrism, that Europe's identity needs to be shaped as a dis-identity, to accommodate difference in the universal, alterity in integration, etc.[55] An ever emergent Europe would grapple with – rather than resolve and freeze – its own legacies of colonialism and exclusion, as well as preserve the dynamic of values that prevents a return to a communitarian essentialization of these – Eurocentrism itself.[56]

European politics of memory are usually approached normatively, and there is widespread acknowledgement that a Europeanized memory involves a double negative: beyond the overcoming of ethnocentrism, it also would avoid Eurocentrism by remaining a field open to contestation and accommodating divergent historical experiences, permitting their juxtaposed representations in memory texts.[5758] A European *acquis historique communautaire*[59]

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[55] Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Todays Europe* (Bloomington, IN: Indianan University Press, 1992), 16-20, 29-31.

[56] Guisan, *A political theory of identity,* 7-9.

[57] Klas-Göran Karlsson, "The Uses of History and the Third Wave of Europeanization," in *A European Memory? Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance*, eds. Małgorzata Pakier and Bo Stråth (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 38-39.

[58] Guisan, *A political theory of identity,* 39.

[59] Fabrice Larat, "Presenting the Past: Political Narratives on European History and the Justification of EU Integration," *German Law Journal* 2, no. 6 (2005): 288.

consists in the acknowledgement of the tension between values of openness and the past, preventing European culture from becoming exclusionary once again. It does not exist as law, but it is enshrined in speech acts: the performativity of documents, addresses and spatial representations that reference them.[60]

The historical representation of the exclusionary aspect of Europe is centred on the Holocaust, which is the anchor of the "memory community" or, "the first circle" of European remembering.[61] Work on this foundational figure of historical identity is ongoing not only because of incomplete restitution, but also because its remaining "hot" memory – memory in a living, dialogical relationship with the present and representations of the self – is seen as an important symbolic exercise.[62] Keeping the memory of the Holocaust "at work" provides "the potential to challenge basic assumptions – about the sovereign law of nation-states … and to create a cosmopolitanized public and political space that reinforces moral interdependencies".[63] Such memory synergizes with the drive to prevent a retreat of "Europe" into its identity, and counteracts (if not always successfully) exclusionary practices rooted in essentialized images of the self.

For Roma memory work, this synergy with the emergent European memory culture is obtained at two levels. First, the Holocaust is foundational for both identity constructions. Second, the dis-identity that cosmopolitan remembering inscribes into the European self, the associated focus on multidirectionality, and "knots of memory" provide a footing from which Roma history can become visible and lose its insularity at the same time. Roma experience is specific, but it is also bound up with majority histories without necessarily privileging a single country or sub-region of the continent. The liberation of memory from being constructed of national, or otherwise homogeneous, building blocks implies the possibility of co-appearing in histories alongside the respective majorities, as well as claiming separate visibility in other instances. A history that may be read as existing within and across state borders is one in which European and Roma memory can be accommodated.

A process of the European "discovery" of the Roma has been ongoing since the large increase in the number of Roma who became member citizens first of the CoE (around

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[60] Bottici, "European identity," 344.

[61] Aleida Assmann, "Europe's Divided Memory Pages," in *Memory and Theory in Eastern Europe*, eds. Uilleam Blacker, Alexander Etkind and Julie Fedor (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 32-35. See also Claus Leggewie and Anne-Katrin Lang, *Der Kampf um die europäische Erinnerung: Ein Schlachtfeld wird besichtigt* (München: Beck, 2011), 23-24.

[62] Ann Rigney, "Ongoing: Changing Memory and the European Project," in *Transnational Memory, Circulation, Articulation, Scales*, eds. Chiara De Cesari and Ann Rigney (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 343. See also Bottici, "European identity," 345., and Hedvig Turai, "Past Unmastered: Hot and Cold Memory in Hungary," *Third Text* 23, no. (2009): 99. See also Stanislaw Tyszka, "Restitution as a means of remembrance. Evocations of the recent past in the Czech Republic and Poland after 1989," in *Performing the Past: Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe*, eds. Karin Tilmans, Frank van Vree and Jay Winter (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 305-334.

[63] Natan Sznaider, "European Memory: Between Jewish and Cosmopolitan," in *Memory and Theory in Eastern Europe*, eds. Uilleam Blacker, Alexander Etkind and Julie Fedor (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 61.

1991-1992), and later of the EU (2004-2007). Before 1989, these organizations had already experienced a period of increased public interest in the lives and rights of Travellers, Tsiganes, Sinti – meaning the West European communities of Romani – around 1969-1980.[64] An awareness of the degree of marginalization and the level of threats (cultural and physical alike) that Roma in post-communist societies were facing soon attained the status of a tacit consensus in supranational organizations. At the NGO-level, the challenges were also globalized to an extent – the best known report of the 1990s, the *Project on Ethnic Relations*, was managed by Princeton University for instance.[65] The CoE issued its first position statement (Recommendation 1203) in 1993, immediately framing the Roma as "not having a country to call their own, … a true European minority … greatly contribut[ing] to the cultural diversity of Europe."[66] The Conference (today: Organization) for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) established a Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues in 1994 at its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, two years after establishing the post of a High Commissioner to oversee minority questions.[67] As a result of Roma intellectuals engaging with these organizations, the partial acknowledgement of the Roma Holocaust achieved by Western European Romani groups in the late 1970s and early 1980s was transformed into a received sub-narrative of the master text of European identity as represented by these fora.[68] As European human and minority rights protection instruments—such as the European Convention of Human Rights, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and more recently the Racial Equality Directive—represented the "cornerstones of hard regulation of Roma affairs", the Europeanization of national polities was considered a major opportunity that the reunification of the continent held out for all ethnic/national minorities, but especially the Roma who could not count on kin-state support.[69]

With the enlargement process of the EU underway, post-communist accession countries had to fulfil a set of political, social and economic conditions, as well as progress with legal harmonization, which were monitored by the European Union. At the same time, to facilitate compliance, the EU also provided pre-accession funding of which especially monies from the PHARE fund were earmarked for Roma programmes. This had a multi-level effect: Roma organizations could operate less dependently on national centres of power, challenge governmental logics, inform

[64] Jean-Pierre Liégeois, *Roma, Gypsies, Travelers* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1994), 278-279.

[65] PER, *The Romanies in Central and Eastern Europe.* and Gheorghe and Mirga, *The Roma in the Twenty-First Century.*

[66] Council of Europe, Gypsies in Europe, *Recommendation 1203*, Parliamentary Assembly (2 February 1993), 20 March 2018, http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-EN.asp?fileid=15237&lang=en. and Liégeois, *Roma, Gypsies, Travelers*, 282.

[67] Laure Neumayer, "Symbolic Policies versus European Reconciliation: The Hungarian 'Status Law," in *History, Memory and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe: Memory Games*, eds. Georges Mink and Laure Neumayer (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 209-225. See also Ionut-Marian Anghel, "Contesting neoliberal governance: The case of Romanian Roma," *Social Change Review* 13, no. 2 (2015): 95.

[68] Armillei, Marczak and Diamadis, "Forgotten and Concealed," 113-114.

[69] Anghel, "Contesting neoliberal governance,"96. See also Aidan McGarry, *Who Speaks for Roma? Political Representation of a Transnational Minority Community* (London: Continuum, 2010), 148-150.

and lean on EU agencies, and emerge as relatively influential players in the accession process.[70] At a second level, this increase in opportunities for participation and resources translated into the strengthening of Roma identity politics, supported in the supranational organizations and implemented by the now somewhat stronger domestic NGO field.[71]

Over a decade after enlargement, however, legitimate doubts arise about the ability of the European agencies, as well as of European memory culture, in regard to their potential to offer meaningful support to Roma organizations and be norm entrepreneurs of domestic mnemonic practices. First, post-accession governance of Roma and minority affairs is no longer subject to conditionality and is only coordinated in the form soft (non-)governance at the European level. Responsibility rests primarily with national governments.[72] This sustains or even incentivizes "shirking" by national governments in carrying out European strategies.[73] A natural drift has been to avoid engaging the complex identity dimension of Roma politics and yield to a pervasive economism in approach, a return to the logics of socialist-era research and projects.[74] Additionally, national governmentalities are relatively free to reconfigure the institutional landscape of minority organizations, seeking to undermine capabilities of both subversion and entrepreneurship.[75] This is reinforced by Western European racism vis-à-vis Roma, who have gone from being seen as an abandoned population to assuming the role of the threatening, nomadic (Eastern) "Other" of the sedentary and "decent" (Western) European. They are European citizens who remain *de facto* unrecognized as such, their treatment frequently being modelled on those of illegal migrants, as evident in the actions of the Sarkozy government in 2010.[76]

Moreover, European memory has itself become a battlefield – as will be discussed in the next section. The challenge to the Holocaust-based historical identity of Europe has come from new member states and former East German *Länder*, where various political and

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[70] Rick Fawn, "Czech attitudes towards the Roma: 'expecting more of Havel's country?," *Europe-Asia Studies* 53, no. 8 (2001): 1193.

[71] Melanie Ram, "Roma advocacy and EU conditionality: Not one without the other?," *Comparative European Politics* 9, no. 2 (2011): 217-242.

[72] PER (Project on Ethnic Relations), *The Roma in Hungary: Government Policies, Minority Expectations and the International Community* (Princeton: Project on Ethnic Relations, 2000), 7-8. See also PER (Project on Ethnic Relations), *Roma and EU Accession: Elected and Appointed Romani Representatives in an Enlarged Europe* (Princeton: Project on Ethnic Relations, 2003), 35-36.

[73] Angéla Kóczé, "Roma emancipációs törekvések: Egy kutatás margójára," in *Egymás szemébe nézve: Az elmúlt fél évszázad roma politikai törekvései*, eds. Angéla Kóczé, Mária Neményi and Júlia Szalai (Budapest: Insitute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2017), 11.

[74] Mihai Surdu and Martin Kovats, "Roma Identity as an Expert-Political Construction," *Social Inclusion* 3, no. 5 (2015): 14.

[75] McGarry, *Who Speaks for Roma?,* 150-151. See also Anghel, "Contesting neoliberal governance:" 86-87, 95; Bernd Rechel, "What Has Limited the EU's Impact on Minority Rights in Accession Countries?," *East European Politics and Societies* 22, no. 1 (2008): 171-191, and Iulius Rostas, "The Romani movement in Romania: institutionalization and (de)mobilization," in *Romani Politics in Contemporary Europe: poverty, neo-liberalism, and ethnic mobilization*, eds. Nidhi Trehan and Nando Sigona (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 51-71.

[76] Guisan, *A political theory of identity,* 143.

intellectual coalitions seek to place communist crimes on an equal footing.[77] This is done in the framework of a discourse of victimhood that may, in specific instances, threaten Roma memory struggle by displacing Roma experience (also organized around the Holocaust) with a story of national suffering where the specificity of Roma history remains unrepresented. Post-communist member states and some former East German regional actors are looking to Europeanize their experience. In theory, this should not threaten Roma memory and self-representation– but nevertheless does so, as these agents present historical emphases that marginalize Roma experience by "filling up" mnemonic practice with majority histories without providing additional opportunities for Roma self-representation.[78]

Finally, European memory itself has a component geared toward selective forgetting instead of "reparative remembering".[79] This is contained in the conceptualization of modern European history as a romance. One of the archetypes of historical narrative, as laid out by Hayden White romance-type emplotment recounts loss and opprobrium but concludes with redemption or comedy.[80] Such a romance is the fundamental plot figure underlying official European history, as expressed in Article 167 of the Lisbon Treaty as well. In former European Council President Hermann Van Rompuy's interpretation, delivered while accepting the Nobel Prize for Peace on behalf of the EU, the process of integration is to be interpreted as a movement "from War to Peace", aided by drawing the necessary lessons of the two world wars.[81] The recently opened House of History, the EU's identity museum of sorts, proceeds from representations of the "eclipse of Europe" to offering a post-war storyline of "the search for a better life through an increasingly united Europe".[82] This carries a twofold challenge to Roma memory. First, from a Roma perspective it could be argued that it is hypocritical to talk about the "eclipse of Europe" and substitute collective European loss in the place of Roma (and Jewish, etc.) suffering. The House of History does include representations of these persecutions, but frames them as part of a European passion play, which is problematic in view of the radical difference of the experiences subsumed thereunder. Second, as a romance, it considers redemption to have taken place – in mythopoetic terms. European history is taken to be in a post-messianistic stage, in the era of truth revealed.[83] For Roma, whose marginalization is very much ongoing, being forced into the happy ending of European history carries the threat of remaining an excess that prevailing European governmentality incorporates, but cannot represent. This is not to argue that the European memory framework *ab ovo*

[77] Troebst, "Halecki Revisited," 64.

[78] Jones, "Memory Competition," 76.

[79] Rigney, "Ongoing: Changing Memory," 343.

[80] Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).

[81] Hermann van Rompuy, From War to Peace: A European Tale, European Council, Speech, 10 December 2012, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-12-930_en.htm.

[82] Rigney, "Ongoing: Changing Memory," 339-340. and Assmann, "Europe's Divided Memory," 25.

[83] Henry Rousso, "Les dilemmes d'une mémoire européenne," in *Historicités*, eds. Francois Dosse, Christian Delacroix and Patrick Garcia (Paris: La Découverte, 2009), 203-221.

excludes conceptualizations of history that do not re-marginalize the Roma[84] – at the same time, it is all too clear that it permits such conceptualizations.

Supranational actors are important allies for Roma, as are transnational European histories and the emergent European memory rooted in them. At the same time, since the Eastern enlargements, European identity politics has moved towards a rushed discourse of triumph (also to mask challenges and recent failures), while supranational minority politics has moved towards devolution. As a result, Roma mnemonic practices and identity politics in general have become once more increasingly dependent on their own resources and the agendas of national actors, or, at best, international donor NGOs. Supranational synergies have not disappeared from Roma memory work, but they have been weakened, especially in the case of Hungary.

The Post-communist Memory Complex

Conventional explanations, of Eastern and East Central European resistance to adopting canonical patterns of remembering World War II and the Holocaust, reference the specific historical trajectory of the region(s). These references point out that communist memory is still "hot", and it structures identities in important ways. At least parts of these societies fear that their regional experience of Stalinism and communist oppression will be marginalized by a European/global memory culture structured around the memory of the Holocaust. There is tension between this hot memory and the Western European norm of not letting the memory of the Holocaust become "cold" – i.e. requiring sustained memory work despite any results already obtained.[85] Also, World War II perpetrator legacies were suppressed before 1989, with the conscious assistance of communist parties seeking to strike bargains with the societies they were ruling over. Rediscovered guilt, once displaced to "Germans", "Nazis", "fascists" etc., threatens national identities based on an understanding of the collective self-rooted in victimhood.[86] As Zoltán Dujisin argued, East Central European entrepreneurs of majority memory are in this manner proposing a counter-regime to the emergent European memory canon,[87] which often instrumentalizes the concept of totalitarianism. In so

[84] Veronika Settele, "Including Exclusion in European Memory? Politics of Remembrance at the House of European History," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 10, no. 3 (2015): 413.

[85] Turai, "Past Unmastered," 199. Regina Fritz and Imke Hansen, "Zwischen nationalem Opfermythos und europäischen Standards: Der Holocaust im ungarischen Erinnerungsdiskurs," in *Universalisierung des Holocaust? Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik in internationaler Perspektive*, eds. Jan Eckel and Claudia Moisel (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2008), 59-85.

[86] Barbara Zehnpfennig, "Das Ende des ideologischen Zeitalters? Ideologisches Denken vor und nach dem Historikerstreit," in *Die Gegenwart der Vergangenheit: Der Historikerstreit und die deutsche Geschichtspolitik*, eds. Steffen Kailitz (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2008), 105-119. See also John-Paul Himka, "Obstacles to the Integration of the Holocaust into Post-Communist East European Historical Narratives," *Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne des Slavistes* 50, no. 3-4 (2008): 360-370.

[87] Zoltán Dujisin,"Post-Communist Europe: On the Path to a Regional Regime of Remembrance?," in *Thinking Through Transition: Liberal Democracy, Authoritarian Pasts, and Intellectual History in East*

doing, their discourse references both the memory of the Holocaust and the Soviet period, while implicitly also attributing responsibility for crimes to the eternal "Other" of the Eastern European self: the imperialist/colonizing great powers that border the region both from the East and the West. Totalitarianism, as the strategic metaphor of remembrance in the region therefore successfully integrates genocidal and oppressive 20th century regimes into national narratives of heroism and victimhood.[88] Linking national histories of suffering at the hands of various imperialisms and 20th century experiences of mass violence enable post-communist memory entrepreneurs to avoid and delegitimize critical engagement with chauvinistic and racist aspects of national history and the underlying ethnic ideologies.[89] It is this integrative linkage between a victim role spanning many centuries and the suppressed perpetrator legacy in the Holocaust that lies at the core of the "post-communist memory complex."

Just as the post-communist memory complex becomes a source of resistance to a shared European memory organized around the cosmopolitan and universalizing conception of the Holocaust, it can obstruct the visibility of Roma histories. This is especially true of the "de-centred" character of the genocide against Roma, which involved considerable participation and initiative on the part of the local majority society and national authorities (as opposed to foreign perpetratorship). The post-1989 "defrosting" of European memories, as observed by Tony Judt, triggered a desire to forget much of the past that was coming into sight once more – "things done by us to others". Repressing the problematic aspects of the past has been aided by remembering "things done to us by others", incorporating victimhood mythologies in the heroic narratives of the nation.[90]

A further source of incompatibility between "Western" and "Eastern" memory has to do with how the latter upsets the logic behind the former. In the Western/EU memory canon, nationalism caused Europe's "eclipse", and discarding nationalist ideology in the political practice of integration ensured its revival. That nationalism would be followed by international communism, bringing yet more suffering, was not a turn of events for which the Western memory canon could offer a coherent narrative.[91] As the result of these two factors,

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Central Europe After 1989, eds. Michal Kopeček and Piotr Wciślik (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2015), 558-559. See also Joerg Hackmann, "From National Victims to Transnational Bystanders? The Changing Commemoration of World War II in Central and Eastern Europe," *Constellations* 16, no. 1 (2009): 167-181, and Ferenc Laczó, "Caught Between Historical Responsibility and the New Politics of History: On Patterns of Hungarian Holocaust Remembrance," in *Life Writing and Politics of Memory in Eastern Europe*, ed. S. Mitroiu (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 191.

[88] Dujisin,"Post-Communist Europe," 568-571.

[89] Michael Shafir, "Ideology, Memory and Religion in Post-Communist East Central Europe," *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 15, no. 44 (2016): 54-60.

[90] Tony Judt, "The Past is Another Country: Myth and Memory in Postwar Europe," *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory*, no. 8 (1996): 42-45. See also Heidemarie Uhl, "Konkurrierende Erinnerungskulturen in Europa: Neue Grenzen zwischen 'Ost' und 'West'?," in *Kulturen der Differenz: Transformationsprozesse in Zentraleuropa nach 1989*, eds. Heinz Fassmann, Wolfgang Müller-Funk and Heidemarie Uhl (Göttingen: Vienna University Press, 2009), 165-177.

[91] Leggewie and Lang, *Der Kampf, 134.*

East Central European national narratives were, by and large, reconstructed in recent years without obvious synergies and linkages to the Western canon of remembrance.[92]

After 2000, an awareness of mutual incomprehension and of "unreconciled" memory, the notion of Western ignorance about Eastern suffering developed in tandem with the increased political instrumentalization of post-communist memory by segments of the political class in new member states.[93] This frequently occurred with the aim of either claiming victimhood status in a European context or delegitimizing a post-communist left-wing political opponent.[94] Efforts to mend the "memory gap" included a CoE resolution (No. 1481) in 2006, recognizing the "need for international condemnation of crimes of totalitarian communist regimes". The resolution "strongly condemns the massive human rights violations committed by the totalitarian communist regimes and expresses sympathy, understanding and recognition to the victims of these crimes."[95] In European memory politics, the German formula, developed to reconcile post-unification West and East German remembering, gained currency and was *de facto* adopted as an axiom. Its basis is the idea that Nazism and Soviet communism share similarities, but the uniqueness of the Holocaust is considered outside of otherwise legitimate comparisons between the two totalitarianisms.[96] Despite the European Parliament's resolution on "European Conscience and Totalitarianism", a follow-up to the CoE's acknowledgement, various East Central European elites, from the Baltics to Romania, have continued to push for repeated acknowledgments of "Eastern" suffering.[97]

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[92] Assmann and Conrad, 2. See also Péter Balogh, "Returning to Eurasia from the heart of Europe? Geographical metanarratives in Hungary and beyond," in *Beyond Transition: Memory and Identity Narratives in Eastern and Central Europe*, eds. Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, Niklas Bernsand and Eleonora Narvselius (Lund: Lund University, 2015), 191-192.

[93] Troebst "Jalta versus Stalingrad:" 381-400.

[94] Mink and Neumayer, *History, Memory and Politics*, 4. See also Rousso, "Les dilemmes," 203-221, and Péter Apor, "Eurocommunism: Commemorating Communism in Contemporary Eastern Europe," in *A European Memory? Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance*, eds. Małgorzata Pakier and Bo Stråth (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 242-244. See also Muriel Blaive, Christian Gerbel and Thomas Lindenberger, *Clashes in European Memory: Communist Repression and the Holocaust* (Wien, Bozen, 2011), and Milan Hrubes and Jiri Navrátil, "Constructing a Political Enemy: Anti-Communist Framing in the Czech Republic Between 1990 and 2010," *Intersections: East European Journal of Society and Politics* 3, no. 3 (2017): 41-62.

[95] Council of Europe, *Council of Europe Resolution 1481*, on the "Need for international condemnation of crimes of totalitarian communist regimes, 25 January, 2006, http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=17403&lang=en.

[96] The formula, proposed for a commission of the German Federal Assembly by historian Bernd Faulenbach in 1993, is reproduced and analyzed by Assmann. See Aleida Assmann, *Das neue Unbehagen an der Erinnerunskultur: Eine Intervention* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2013), 114.The thesis and the reasoning were originally published in an important volume edited by Weidenfeld. See Werner Weidenfeld, *Deutschland: Eine Nation–doppelte Geschichte. Materialien zum deutschen Selbstverständnis* (Cologne: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1993). The theses state that "1. The memory of Stalinism must not relativize the memory of the Holocaust. 2. The memory of the Holocaust must not trivialize the memory of Stalinism" (Emphasis in original.)

[97] European Parliament, "European Conscience and Totalitarianism," 2 April 2009, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+TA+P6-TA-2009-0213+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN.

This has reproduced fissures within the EU, as both in 2008 during the Czech, and in 2010, during the Hungarian Council presidency, new initiatives were launched and supported by declarations of a largely Eastern club of member states to further enshrine in the European Union the memory of Soviet communist oppression.[98]

The explanation for repeated attempts at ever newer codifications of the formula likely rests in the respective attitudes of the elite groups. Post-communist elites may, in theory, recognize the Holocaust as the "first circle" of European memory, but from a political, utility-maximizing perspective they are usually drawn to focusing on the memorialization of communist oppression, to which large parts of these societies can relate easily, both on the basis of personal experience and because their victim roles remain unchallenged in the context of the Sovietization of East Central Europe. Anti-communism remains a periodically deployed frame for the present, which calls for remembering the crimes of the Soviet era.[99] Western elites may also, in theory, recognize the importance of remembering Soviet-type dictatorships and the occupation of the region, but they naturally do not preoccupy themselves with memory that does not touch upon the mnemonic practices of their political community. Neither the former "East" has succeeded in upholding its end of the "memory bargain", nor the "West" shown itself empathic to "Eastern" suffering – with the notable exception of former border states such as Sweden and Austria. Even in Germany, some elite groups in the new *Länder* continue to voice their dissatisfaction with public representations of crimes and suffering in the former Democratic Republic, positioning themselves towards Holocaust remembrance in an explicitly competitive manner.[100]

A logic, at work, or at least instrumentalized in these contestations of mnemonic practices, has been reminiscent of postcolonial resentment on the one hand, and colonialism on the other.[101] With new member states facing the expectations of the "old" member states during the accession process and after, "the Western processes of self-critical confrontation with the dark past, underway since the late 1960s, [have been] seen as establishing direction for post-communist Eastern Europe, a model which then simplistically views that region as governed by reviving nationalist sentiments or uncritical patriotic narratives."[102] As the analysis of the situation in Hungary will show, more complex processes than stubborn

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[98] Jones, "Memory Competition," 65-67. See also Christina Kraenzle and Maria Mayr, *The Changing Place of Europe in Global Memory Cultures: Usable Pasts and Futures* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 3.

[99] Apor, "Eurocommunism," 233-246; Hrubes and Navrátil, "Constructing a Political Enemy: 41-62.

[100] Jan-Werner Müller, "Just Another Vergangenheitsbewältigung? The Process of Coming to Terms with the East German Past Revisited," *Oxford German Studies* 38, no. 3 (2009): 334-344; Jones, "Memory Competition," 76.

[101] Ewa Thompson, *Imperial Knowledge: Russian Literature and Colonialism* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000).

[102] Joanna Wawrzyniak and Małgorzata Pakier, "Memory Studies in Eastern Europe: Key Issues and Future Perspectives," *Polish Sociological Review*, no. 183 (2013): 266; Ulleam Blacker, "Living among the Ghosts of Others: Urban Postmemory in Eastern Europe," in *Memory and Theory in Eastern Europe*, eds. Uilleam Blacker, Alexander Etkind and Julie Fedor (Houndsmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 176. See also Troebst, "Jalta versus Stalingrad:" 381-400.

nationalist reflexes are at work in producing resistance to the European memory canon. In accordance with the logic of the concept of "memory games", East Central European governmentalities accommodate and reproduce a broader set of ideas about the past than merely the old ethno-nationalist narrative. At the same time, the emphasis on preserving a national framework and the specificity of the national experience is evident throughout. It remains possible to formally comply with emergent norms of remembering the past in Europe and continue blotting out subaltern experience as well as perpetrator legacies that live on in society.

Domestic political realignments characteristically impact weaker East Central European institutions far more radically than is the case in old member states, where institutional autonomies are more established. A change in government can render an institution, as in the case of Poland's National Memory Institute, into a vehicle for the dissemination of the "martyrological idiom" hailing from the vocabulary of national communism, effacing the previous norm entrepreneurial work aimed, *inter alia*, at facing Polish perpetratorship.[103] Regression to an ethnicist story of suffering is made easier by the legacy of Soviet communism. With regard to Auschwitz, a quintessential cosmopolitan signifier in the "West", Polish generations were taught to believe that it was the graveyard of "4 million Eastern European victims", with Poles being the single largest group. (At the same time, pre-1989 Western memory was organized around the notion of one million Jewish victims.)[104] Similarly, in Hungary, Jewish and Roma victims could be commemorated during the later decades of communism, but not represented as such, generating a zone of indistinction of the dead, who populated memory stripped of attributes such as Jewishness. Once again, as the Hungarian example will demonstrate, this makes "suddenly" thinking in terms of Jewish and Roma victims an exercise that involves questioning tales of national innocence and victimhood. Whilst islands of alternative remembering can in fact flourish in post-communist societies, retuning public thinking and dominant discourses requires far greater investment. Impacting these supposes disseminating messages in education and the media, which are available to domestic governments, but much less to supranational organizations or Roma NGOs.[105]

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[103] Jonathan Huener, *Auschwitz, Poland, and the Politics of Commemoration: 1945–1979* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2003); Filipa Raimundo, "Dealing with the Past in Central and Southern European Democracies: Comparing Spain and Poland," in *History, Memory and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe: Memory Games*, eds. Georges Mink and Laure Neumayer (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 141. See also Georges Mink, "Institutions of National Memory in Post-Communist Europe: From Transitional Justice to Political Uses of Biographies (1989–2010)," in *History, Memoery and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe: Memory Games*, eds. Georges Mink and Laure Neumayer (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 156.

[104] Marek Kucia, "The meanings of Auschwitz in Central Europe before and after 1989," in *Memory and Identity Narratives in Eastern and Central Europe*, eds. Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, Niklas Bernsand and Eleonora Narvselius (Lund: Lund University, 2015), 67. See aslso Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, "Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory," European Journal of Social Theory 5, no. 1 (2002): 87-106, and Huener, *Auschwitz, Poland*.

[105] Alaina Lemon, *Between two fires: Gypsy performance and Romani memory from Pushkin to postsocialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 167; Mink, "Institutions of National Memory," 167-169.

In East Central Europe, the supranational level frequently has the least (direct) influence on memory games – local challenges by NGOs and coalitions of intellectuals, possibly supported by international backers, tend to have greater impact. Empirics suggest that national governments remain strongest in arenas of identity politics, NGOs follow, and despite its emergent memory culture, the EU has the least tangible domestic effect. Longer term trickledown consequences of resolution-making and other rhetorical commitments at the community level, however, may yet reveal the supranational influence stronger than it can be ascertained at present, when European frameworks for mnemonic practice are still in a very early stage.[106]

An important caveat with regard to the preceding assessment concerns the semantics of resentment and resistance. The monolithic concept of the post-communist memory complex can easily create a bias about how governmentality operates in arenas of memory politics in post-communist societies. The Foucauldian terms adopted in this paper (power-knowledge/governmentality) signal that power in these cases often works in a nimble, decentred and highly flexible fashion. Governmentality can engage for instance in symbolic norm entrepreneurship in the broader process of reproducing power relations, presenting itself as following European norms while subverting their substance. As an eminent example, commemoration of the Roma Holocaust does not entail accepting and putting into practice ideational corollaries concerning equal opportunity and critical reflection on national histories, as well as current instances of exclusion. These are desired by Roma activists and taken for granted by European actors – but governmentalities manipulating memory games can attempt to work around problematic areas and engage in mimetic reproduction of rituals void of moral imperatives. Commemoration also does not equal participation. They represent a symbolic terrain of subaltern identity that can be (re-)colonized by governmentalities, reducing the commemorated subject to a prop. Governmentalities, however, can themselves be subverted. Mimetic norm-following can be exploited by the exploited, *inter alia* by way of challenging the occupation of the minority's voice opportunities in public (using the visibility of the event, etc.), shaping discussions, occupying symbolic places of memory to resist its cognitive colonization or uploading dissenting messages into official mnemonic practices.

The fact that commemorations of the Roma Holocaust have multiplied in East Central Europe, including many state-sponsored events, should neither be read as proof of social change nor, cynically, as proof of the immutable character of Eastern Central European nationalizing elites. They represent empirical data, and a close empirical investigation is required – as will be attempted in this paper in the case of Hungary – to evaluate these trends. In terms of a landscape, what may be stated is that the past decade has seen a marked increase in public representations of the memory of the Roma Holocaust.[107] A memorial day is observed in Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. NGO-sponsored events have multiplied as well, and some have garnered international

[106] Blacker, "Living among the Ghosts of Others," 185-186.

[107] OSCE, Holocaust Memorial Days: An overview of remembrance and education in the OSCE region, *OSCE Report*, 27 January 2015, http://www.osce.org/hmd2015.

visibility, including large shows at international cultural fairs in 2007, a breakthrough year of sorts. A boom of media representations is also tangible, even if these documentaries rarely reach large audiences – they do impact intellectual discourse, especially in their native countries.[108]

Other experiences highlight its uneven nature and direction of change. The most famous example of post-communist memory's insensitivity to Roma suffering in the Holocaust has perhaps been the fate of the Lety site where, during World War II, Roma were interned and many deported to extermination and labour camps. Bohemia was a *de facto* occupied province, but Czechs were involved in operating the camp as regular personnel, and the decision to establish it was taken two weeks prior to the German occupation. The European Parliament called on the Czech government in 2005 to address the situation on the ground: during the forgetting that characterized the Soviet communist period, a pig farm was established at the site of the former camp. Lety became a symbol of how an acknowledged historical atrocity can be kept invisible by governmental foot-dragging.[109] Despite the unusually forceful normative signal, little progress was detectable for a decade characterized by persevering NGO activism and governmental passivity. Finally, in 2017, the Czech government announced its decision to purchase the farm and establish a proper memorial ground.

The specificity of the Lety memorial rests, however, not only in that it took a quarter of a century of democratic politics to effect change. There were important steps taken much sooner towards facing the Czech past, drawing lessons and ensuring that commemoration could take place under proper circumstances. The first President of the Czech Republic and one of the most influential global personalities of the transition, Václav Havel issued two statements (in May and July 1990) on crimes committed against the Roma. He was also a sponsor of granting Roma the status of a national minority, while his fellow former resistors in Charta 77 forcefully condemned anti-Roma violence then on the rise.[110] While not lodging it in the forefront of his presidential agenda, Havel remained committed to his norm entrepreneurial stance in minority issues. Infrequently referenced in the now considerable literature about the camp's history and post-history, in 1995 a memorial on an adjacent plot was unveiled in his presence. President Havel delivered the inaugural address on the site. By that time, a Roma intellectual discourse had emerged on Holocaust memory, geared towards generating a historical platform of shared Roma experience, and signifying the imperative to break with majority practices of exclusion and discrimination *in the present*. Havel's speech reflected many of the agenda points of 1990s Romani activists, acknowledging the Roma Holocaust as a signifier carrying relevant meanings in the present and positioning Lety as a living, rather than dead memorial. Havel stated that:

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[108] Armillei, Marczak and Diamadis, "Forgotten and Concealed," 114-120; Daniel Baker, "Breaking beyond the Local: The Function of an Exhibition," Third Text 22, no. 3 (2008): 417; Adina Bradeanu, "Life as a Hill," Third Text 22, no. 3 (2008): 421-425, and Lemon, *Between two fires,* 147.

[109] Huub van Baar, "The Way Out of Amnesia?," *Third Text* 22, no. 3 (2008): 375-382.

[110] David M. Crowe, *A history of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia* (London: I. B. Tauris & Co., 1995), 64-65.

> [H]ere we evidently are at the root of the problem. The Roma were not considered an integral part of Czech society, they were perceived as a different, foreign society of their own. This difference led to contempt, distrust, and rejection … What happened later, during communism? Manipulation, organized resettlements, disruption of ancestral ties, and the Roma were, under the pretext of state care, stripped of responsibility for their own fate. … Let's learn to listen to Romani people, to understand them, let's abandon the conviction that we, as the majority in this society, set the standard for all values and that our way of life and the values that we profess are the norm for everyone. The coexistence of all the nationalities in one state naturally is conditioned by their mutual adaptation to the generally applicable civic norms. However, that in no way prevents the further development of the cultural and linguistic heritage of a minority that enriches all of society. The quality of our relationship toward ethnic minorities, i.e., toward those whom we feel are different, is the measure of the quality of our civic awareness.[111]

Havel was opening the discourse of Czech anti-communist, liberal humanism to incorporate, without prescribing identity, Roma nationality. The presidential drive for emancipatory inclusion, however, was, reversed under his successor, Václav Klaus, who embodied majority distrust towards both foreign influence and minorities at home. During his long tenure, Klaus largely rehabilitated the narratives of Czech victimhood. Suspended between two logics prescribing opposing approaches to sites of perpetrator legacy, of majority violence against marginalized identities, Lety remained in its post-1989 state. Because of its visibility, it was frequently referenced. Populists could make use of it to covertly communicate their anti-Roma stance by simply opposing the closing of the pig farm on any ground they saw fit. Such politicians include current president Miloš Zeman[112] and the leader of the largest party in the wake of the 2017 election, Andrzej Babiš – alongside right radical leaders. So what did bring about change over two decades after Havel's speech? The memory game framework finds support in how the Lety controversy has evolved of late: when in 2017 the governing coalition broke up in Czech parliament, Andrzej Babiš' popularity was rising rapidly. Babiš, the minority partner in the defunct coalition, had been overheard in fall 2016 saying that he did not consider Lety to have been a concentration camp, for which he was accused of denying the Holocaust.[113] The outgoing government, potentially eyeing the elections, took up the case of Lety in the wake of a visit there by the minister responsible for human rights

[111] Václav Havel, Václav Havel's 1995 speech at the unveiling of the Lety memorial, 13 May, 1995, http://www.romea.cz/en/news/czech/vaclav-havel-s-1995-speech-at-the-unveiling-of-the-lety-memorial.

[112] France Soir, "Porcherie sur un ex-camp Nazi pour Roms: Des propos de Zeman suscitent l'indignation," 30 June, 2017, http://www.francesoir.fr/actualites-monde/porcherie-sur-un-ex-camp-nazi-pour-roms-des-propos-de-zeman-suscitent-lindignation.

[113] CTK, "Czech Vice PM pays his respects at the Lety memorial to Romani Holocaust victims – but no Roma are invited," 6 September, 2016, http://www.romea.cz/en/news/czech/czech-vice-pm-pays-his-respects-at-the-lety-memorial-to-romani-holocaust-victims-but-no-roma-are-invited.

in March 2017, and released several communications in the summer regarding its intention to settle the situation by purchasing the plot.[114]

Political expediency, and mobilizing Roma and progressive voters were the likely impetus behind the move – otherwise it is hard to see why no specific commitments were issued in previous years by the same government. The fate of the other Roma concentration camp on Czech territory certainly reinforces this inference. A second project aiming at the construction of another memorial, at the former Hodonín camp (on grounds already purchased by the government) was slated to open in 2017. In the wake of the elections, the opening has been postponed without a new date given. (Prague Monitor 2017a) As this shows, the transformation processes of mnemonic practices and norms in general remain precarious. The post-history of Lety reads more like a study on the reasons why Roma intellectuals and organizations became disillusioned with post-communist identity politics. This disillusionment is likely part of the explanation of the ideational pull transnational reconceptualizations of Roma identity and memory embedded in European memory exert on elites,[115] as discussed in the next section.

Invoking the post-communist memory complex opens a vista – to be explored in detail in the section about Hungary – towards interpreting governmentalities seeking to limit and control mnemonic representations and performances of Roma identity. The emphasis on suffering under communism is fed, as has been argued, by the linkage between remembering communism and sustaining national victimhood roles. The latter are threatened more by the memory of violence against Roma than by any other marginalized memory culture. Re-centring histories of Roma suffering would reinstate the primacy of the memory of Holocaust and reveal the history of genocide to include local and national perpetrator legacies at the same time. This dual challenge, directed at the knot of victim identity and the memory of communist oppression, renders representations of the genocide the single most subversive narrative on the broader horizon of Holocaust remembrance. As the case of Lety demonstrates, governmentalities relying on and reinforcing the post-communist memory complex possess the resources and the resilience to stall even sustained efforts at disseminating Roma histories by inscribing them into public spaces.

Roma remembrance and activism: historical experience and political agency

Babi Yar, near Kyiv, is the site of the single largest massacre and the site where most victims were executed in Soviet territory during World War II. It is estimated that between 100,000 and 150,000 people were murdered there in over two years, between two thirds and three quarters of them Jewish. During Soviet times, the victims of the genocidal actions were

[114] CTK, "Czech company accepts state offer to buy pig farm on Roma genocide site," 7 August, 2017, http://www.romea.cz/en/news/czech/czech-company-accepts-state-offer-to-buy-pig-farm-on-roma-genocide-site.

[115] Maria Malksoo, "The Memory Politics of Becoming European: The East European Subalterns and the Collective Memory of Europe," *European Journal of International Relations* 15, no. 4 (2009): 653-680.

commemorated with a de-ethnicizing memorial of Soviet victims. Shortly before the fall of the communists, the international Jewish community was given the right to construct a specifically Jewish memorial in the shape of a menorah. After independence, various Ukrainian organizations placed there a multitude of crosses, commemorating victim groups defined along diverse criteria. As a recent study observes, two elements of Babi Yar's history have remained unrepresented: "militia involvement in killings and Gypsy victims".[116]

Unrepresented – at Babi Yar and elsewhere –, Roma victims of the Holocaust have been the source of an experience of loss that otherwise diverse communities shared across the larger part of Europe. Due to familial relationships, there were communities in countries that did not experience German occupation or a puppet regime, yet still carried the memory of murdered relatives. Emerging Roma leaders in the late 1980s and early 1990s already had some evidence to draw on: at least some were familiar with various early anthropological work that recorded Roma memories of the Holocaust. Others will have been aware of the songs and stories of mourning and loss which anthropologists in various countries started collecting in the previous two decades. These were not histories in the sense of the Western narrative tradition so much as creations of folk literature and music: ballads, songs, as well as the contributions of some post-war Roma artists to popular tradition, such as the song *Gelem, gelem* by Žarko Jovanović, chosen as the Romani anthem during the first world congress in 1971.[117] The non-linear temporal structure and the vehicles of Roma remembering reflect both endogenous difference *vis-à-vis* European regimes of historicity (cultural specificities) and exogenous constraints (the lack of formal institutions of tending memory in a subaltern condition sustained by exploitative majorities).[118]

Roma identity politics has evolved in close symbiosis with Holocaust memory. The latter term here carries three naturally mingled layers, all of which lend themselves to productive analysis. It denotes the historical experience and the community of memory that shared experience generates – this makes up its intra-community dimension. It also refers to the Roma struggle to be included and represented in the culture of remembrance, alongside other victims and especially Jewish victims. This constitutes the universal dimension of the Roma Holocaust. Finally, the Roma Holocaust as a trope of public remembering has also been deployed to challenge practices of marginalization and repression in the past and in the present. This may be termed as the emancipatory dimension, through which the Holocaust

[116] Sarah Fainberg, "Memory at the Margins: The Shoah in Ukraine (1991-2011) in: *History, Memoery and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe: Memory Games*, eds. Georges Mink and Laure Neumayer (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 86-87.

[117] Ilona Klimova-Alexander, *The Romani Voice in World Politics: The United Nations and Non-State Actors* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 27-30, 40-42.

[118] Ian Hancock, "Responses to the Porrajmos: the Romani Holocaust," in *Is the Holocaust unique? Perspectives on comparative genocide*, eds. Alan S. Rosenbaum (Oxford: Westview Press, 2009), 75-76. See also Zoltan Barany, *The East European Gypsies: Regime Change, Marginality, and Ethnopolitics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 103, and Michael Stewart, "Remembering without commemoration: The mnemonics and politics of Holocaust memories among European Roma," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 10, no. 3 (2004): 561-582.

operates as the metaphorical condensation or synecdoche of a common aspect of centuries of otherwise divergent regional Roma histories.[119] These three aspects – the intra-community, the universal and the emancipatory – represent three possible vistas of interpreting the intersections of Romani activism and memory in post-war, and especially post-1989 Europe.

Community of experience is crucial in conceptualizing nationhood, no matter how atypical, in the absence of a shared territory, language, religion and a century-spanning shared historical situation.[120] As Gheorghe and Mirga argued, for the first time in history, a continent-spanning Roma elite existed in the 1990s, but it originated from and sought legitimacy to represent divergent and geographically disparate groups.[121] Segments of this elite, however, were very much global. Fosztó applies to this stratum the notion of "elite diaspora", highlighting how "the cosmopolitan elite … communicates easier among his/her fellows, and identifies more with elite members of similar position." and also "tends to use the discourse of cultural hybridity".[122] In the case of the Roma elites, even multiple hybridities were brought into play. Translating across region-specific traditions of the Romani past and identity, as well as navigating the intersections of Roma and cosmopolitan European traditions have both had to be undertaken to sustain a project of identity construction. The centrality of the Roma Holocaust in the project of non-territorial nation-building was reinforced from both directions: the need to construct common platforms for a fragmented identity conglomerate ("the Roma") and the opportunity of finding an interface for the emergent identity politics with mainstream European structures of memory and collective identity.[123]

The second universal, and symbolic, aspect of the memory of the Holocaust is rooted in the understanding of persecution by the Nazis as racially motivated and genocidal in character. This layer repositions the pariahs of traditional societies as universal signifiers of human suffering. As a result, it contributes to subverting racist discourses that nevertheless refuse to acknowledge kinship with Nazi racial ideas – a characteristic of operators of contemporary covert structural racism and of governmentalities that consign Roma to marginal niches in society.

The universal character of Roma suffering in the Holocaust ties in with the final, emancipatory dimension of Holocaust remembrance. The latter raises, even more directly, the question to what extent majority and governmental practices today are still sustaining logics of exclusion, once driven to their extreme in the genocidal actions of the Holocaust.

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[119] Slawomir Kapralski, "Identity building and the Holocaust: Roma political nationalism," *Nationalities Papers* 25, no. 2 (1997): 277 and Reading, "The European Roma," 121-140.

[120] Kapralski, "Identity building and the Holocaust: 277.

[121] Gheorghe and Mirga, *The Roma in the Twenty-First Century.*

[122] László Fosztó, "Diaspora and Nationalism: An Anthropological Approach to the International Romani Movement," *Regio* 4, no. 1 (2003): 119.

[123] Ian Hancock, "The East European Roots of Romani Nationalism," in *The Gypsies of Eastern Europe*, eds. Dan Crowe and John Kolsti (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1991), 144-146, and Andzej Mirga and Nicolae Gheorghe, *The Romanies in Central and Eastern Europe: Illusions and Reality* (Princeton: Project on Ethnic Relations, 1992).

In practice, what is at stake is often whether the traditional discourse about the "rootless" Gypsy is accorded legitimacy within majority society. It is this figure of the vagrant that represents "a 'social problem' requiring 'rehabilitation' and 'reintegration', who can – and must – be brought back into the fold of 'society'".[124] It was the acceptance, and subsequent refusal, of this emancipatory layer of Holocaust remembrance that was invoked in the previous section to partially explain the fluctuations in the abortive pantheonization of Lety in the Czech Republic: whilst Havel and the early human rights elite the first elections swept to power tended to accept this logic, his successors were less inclined to do so. The image of the asocial Gypsy has persisted and become even more reinforced across societies and centuries, returning to the mainstream especially in post-1989 East Central Europe.[125] Unless one accepts that such insistence on the social characteristics of a large and diverse population is racism itself, the outcome is the covering up of racism:

> These flawed analyses encourage a focus on the consequences of a given situation (such as health problems, poverty, illiteracy, etc., rather than on their root causes (rejection, inappropriate provision, etc.). Another perverse effect of the development and use of this kind of imagery: since it categorizes Roma/Gypsies in social rather than ethnic or cultural terms, it means that neither their authors, nor the law, consider the resulting measures are discriminatory.[126]

By virtue of its emancipatory dimension, Holocaust memory may be deployed to delegitimize the policing discourse directed against Roma, revealing its racist underpinnings and Nazi genealogy. In reverse, as especially the section on Hungary demonstrates, governmentalities that sustain exclusion or, at the very least, avoid engaging with it, seek to divest Holocaust memory from its emancipatory aspect, refusing to acknowledge continuities in marginalizing and repressive practices. For this reason, this dimension emerges as the most contested and most productive one, at least at the intersections of majority and minority politics.

As a result of this productivity, Holocaust memory was not only key in the "transition toward becoming an ethnically mobilized group, having a common stance and interests," but also functioned as a rhetorical resource in the civil rights struggle. Tying in with the position prevailing in recent scholarship, the early 1990s oftentimes permitted more movement and restructuring in this hybrid zone of identity politics and basic rights than under later, consolidated post-communist governmentalities which capitalized on the post-communist memory complex in their respective nation-building practices.[127]

Despite the paramount existence of Holocaust memory for Roma identity politics, the difference between the ways in which both Jewish and Roma suffering possesses universal significance is not denied by most Roma activists and experts. Heated exchanges have

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[124] Jean-Pierre Liégeois and Nicolae Gheorghe, *Roma/Gypsies: A European Minority* (London: Minority Rights Group, 1995), 12-13.

[125] Crowe, *A history of the Gypsies*, 236-238.

[126] Liégeois and Gheorghe, *Roma/Gypsies*, 12-13.

[127] Mirga and Gheorghe, *The Romanies in Central and Eastern Europe.*

produced statements that suggest otherwise, but, especially in Europe, the different characteristics have been acknowledged from the very beginnings of discussions on the Roma Holocaust[128] In fact, the early contribution of Kenrick and Puxon, a discursive origo for interpreting the Roma Holocaust, accomplished the interpretive move of canonizing the difference and interpreting the specificity of persecution. In the case of the Roma, decentred violence emerged out of the confluence of Nazi political will and ideology, often divergent decisions of Reich-level and regional functionaries, governmental decisions taken in allied or occupied countries and the local, often "grassroots level" willingness (both of occupiers and of collaborators) to perpetrate the crimes.[129]

The latter aspect has contributed to difficulties in engaging majority societies whose participation tended to be even broader in the murder of Roma than in the killings of their Jewish fellow citizens, whilst documentation of that participation remained far scarcer. In this respect, the ethno-nationalist discourse that re-emerged in East Central Europe after 1989 only further increased difficulties of reconciliation and has contributed to the ongoing marginalization of Roma memory in majority mnemonic practices.[130] Importantly, there has been a trend of forgetting the extent to which racial thinking permeated not just Nazi Germany, but much of Europe before World War II. Oral histories collected by ethnographers/anthropologists and Roma intellectuals that offer support to this inconvenient truth and establish local perpetratorship are often challenged with reference to their "unprofessional character". Roma memory work may draw more on experience and tradition than the systematic (archival) study of racialized governmental logics and their operation, but this only serves to underline the claim why the insistence of academics and activists, regarding the veiled, but easily detectable racist logic underlying persecution of the Roma, is significant for the whole of Europe and the present. Were one to deny the validity of communal experience, it would amount to the silencing and re-colonizing of (formerly?) subaltern identities.[131]

For Roma thought on the universal and symbolic dimension of genocide, Auschwitz has naturally acquired special significance. The structuring of spaces of remembrance in the camp reflected a compromise of historical traditions: most commemorative exhibitions (13 altogether) were funded by states, and a single victim group, the Jews, were represented

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[128] Donald Kenrick and Grattan Puxon, *The Destiny of Europe's Gypsies* (London: Chatto – Heinemann Educational for Sussex University Press, 1972), 183-184.

[129] Gilad Margalit, *Germany and its Gypsies: A post-Auschwitz ordeal* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), 47-48. Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, 103. Szász, *Memory Emancipated, and* Armillei, Marczak and Diamadis, "Forgotten and Concealed," 111.

[130] Donald Kenrick, *The A to Z of the Gypsies* (Romanies) (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010). Hancock, "The East European Roots," 138, and Hancock, "Responses to the Porrajmos," 95-96.

[131] Ian Hancock, "On the Interpretation of a Word: Porrajmos as Holocaust," in *Travellers, Gypsies, Roma: The Demonisation of Difference*, eds. Thomas Acton and Michael Hayes (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2006), 53. See also David E. Stannard, "Uniqueness as Denial: The Politics of Genocide Scholarship," in *Is the Holocaust unique? Perspectives on comparative genocide*, ed. Alan S. Rosenbaum (Oxford: Westview Press, 2009), 302; Michael Stewart, "The Gypsy Problem: An Invisible Genocide," in *Forgotten Genocides: Oblivion, Denial, and Memory*, ed. René Lemarchand (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 140-147.

separately. The marginal acknowledgement of Roma suffering was first inscribed into the space of the lager in 1994, when Romani was included among the twenty languages used on commemorative plaques. Roma victims were also represented in some of the national exhibitions (many of them redesigned after 1989-90).[132] This mode of inclusion, however, reinforced the status of Roma as dependents of European states, even in the mode of representing their victims. This explains the significance of a separate Roma exhibition in Auschwitz. The installation, together with the Berlin memorial discussed below, signals the opening of European mnemonic practices toward including and co-representing Roma experience, reflected today in the two most symbolic transnational/universal locations.[133]

It is, however, important to distinguish between formal inclusion in a canon of memory and representation in the multiple manifestations of that canon: it will take more work – often at the national, rather than the transnational level – to move forward in the horizontal dissemination of this symbolically acknowledged genocide. Governmentalities can resist change at multiple levels, and the path from Auschwitz to the pages of schoolbooks has not been straightforward – an example will be discussed in the chapter on Hungary. The inconclusive post-history at Lety, already presented, also highlights how the logic that prevailed in Auschwitz can be blocked from reconfiguring space and remembering elsewhere, despite Czech and other European majority elites nominally subscribing to the universal and paradigmatic significance of Auschwitz.

The difficulties of transposing logics prevailing in the universal dimension of Holocaust memory into national contexts, suggested above, are reflected in a multitude of cases. Often, these are influenced by the obvious and large-scale participation of non-German, local, national, etc. authorities in the realization of genocide. Lety is a case in point, but so are French internment camps, some of which were not shut down immediately upon liberation.[134] Romanian perpetratorship in the deportation of Roma to Transnistria also conflicts with traditional accounts of the Antonescu regime as having prevented the Holocaust from taking place on Romanian soil.[135] It is a natural outcome that, where majority complicity did not complicate victim and perpetrator roles, institutionalization of memory at the national and community level could start much sooner. This was the case, for instance, in Szczurowa, where 93 Polish Roma were murdered in 1943.[136] Where the local majority played the role of co-perpetrators, remembering was frequently stalled for decades – as in the case of the Czech and Austrian camps.[137] Similarly, when Roma memory faces an already overdetermined

[132] Kucia, "The meanings of Auschwitz," 71-82.

[133] Baar, "Romani identity formation." and van Baar, "From 'Time-Banditry.'"

[134] Marie Christiane Hubert, "The internment of Gypsies in France," in *In the Shadow of the Swastika*, 64-69.

[135] Kelso, "Gypsy deportations from Romania," 95-130. and Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine, "Fascism and Communism in Romania the Comparative Stakes and Uses," in *Stalinism and Nazism: History and Memory Compared*, ed. Henry Rousso (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 167-170.

[136] Annamaria Orla-Bukowska, "New Threads on an Old Loom: National Memory and Social Identity in Postwar and Post-Communist Poland," in *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*, eds. Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner and Claudio Fogu (Durham, Duke University Press, 2006), 189.

[137] Thurner, "Gypsies in the Austrian Burgenland."

representation of the past, as at Babi Yar or at the Ustasha-ran Jasenovac camp in Croatia, gaining a platform for representing the Roma dimension of public remembering is often extremely slow and/or is resisted by the majority controlling the necessary resources, such as access to the site.

The example of Jasenovac offers insight into the processes of claiming inclusion and working towards emancipation, as well as to why local Roma mobilization and elite activism can prove crucial. The status of Jasenovac as a site of memory and contrition is precarious. The Croatian left tends towards formulating a broader anti-fascist narrative in which Jasenovac appears as the concentration camp where Ustashe – the Croatian fascists – murdered minorities and also Croats who resisted. On the Croatian right, Jasenovac is reinterpreted cyclically as a labour camp, starting with historian, later President of the Republic Franjo Tudjman's writings and stretching to the 2016 film by Jakov Sedlar (*Jasenovac – The Truth*).[138] The Croatian controversy itself, however, emerged as a response to the Serbian-driven Yugoslav discourse of the 1980s, which claimed that Jasenovac represented "Yugoslav Auschwitz" in a textbook example of competitive victimhood. This was subsequently read – by both Croats and Serbs – as meaning "Serbian Auschwitz".[139] Croatian Jews and other Jewish organizations understandably resist both the colonization and the trivialization of the memory of the camp by Balkans nationalisms.[140] In this context, former Yugoslav Roma organizations and their allies have represented the crucial linkage in working towards acknowledgement not in competition with, but juxtaposed with other victim groups. Croatian Roma have achieved the right of being represented at the official commemorations as a formally acknowledged victim group, together with Croatian Jewish and Serb leaders. Regional activists and organizations are better equipped to do research on the subject, whilst the transnational elite has incorporated the trope of Jasenovac into accounts of the genocide of the Roma, ensuring international monitoring of mnemonic practices at the site. The normative conclusion by a Serbian Roma activist and researcher, Dragoljub Acković, on Jasenovac, according to which "the past is our present and we must make certain that it does not become our future" is a paradigmatic encapsulation of the stakes of remembering, and demonstrates the valence of Holocaust memory for the project of Roma emancipation at all levels – from the regional to the transnational.

The shared goals of Roma (and sympathetic non-Roma) entrepreneurs of memory, as the above suggest, combine defending the partial inclusion of Roma suffering in the memorialization of the Holocaust with efforts to make this memory "valid" for the present. The

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[138] Paul Hockenos, *Free to Hate: The Rise of the Right in Post-communist Eastern Europe* (Abingdon-New York: Routledge, 1993), 283-285. Michael Shafir, "Denying the Shoah in Post-Communist Eastern Europe," in *Holocaust Denial: The Politics of Perfidy*, ed. Robert S. Wistrich (Berlin, De Gruyter, 2012), 54. and Sven Milekic, "Croatian Jews Outraged by Concentration Camp Film, " *Balkan Transitional Justice – Balkan Insight*, 5 April, 2016 http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/croatian-jews-outraged-by-holocaust-denial-film-04-05-2016.

[139] Robert M. Hayden, "Mass Killings and Images of Genocide in Bosnia, 1941–5 and 1992–5," in *The Historiography of Genocide*, ed. Dan Stone (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 495.

[140] Milekic, "Croatian Jews Outraged."

cause for the additional efforts is the often formal, ritualistic character of inclusion, without direct normative relevance for the present. Due to the frequently marginal position of Roma voices in national and transnational exchanges, positions and even research findings about the Roma are far easier to overlook than in the case of other victim groups. This section referenced half a dozen pieces from three decades that discuss Roma mnemonic practices referencing the Holocaust, the section on Hungary adds a closer demonstration of how this memory was re-discovered there in the 1970s. At the same time, the claim that Roma "have chosen not to bother with history at all", having "made an art of forgetting", has recurred in literature persistently[141] Such claims, rooted in a bias that leads to disregarding what is not formulated according to one's disciplinary conventions, would be unthinkable in a different academic community, where the study of alterities forms a core part of the methodology – as in anthropology. But historians, socialized in a discipline, which has its roots in interpreting diachronic iterations of oneself through the prism of the nation, tend to demonstrate less sensitivity to idiosyncratic traces of the past that a victim community still has.

Furthermore, these same groups of intellectuals are forced to take on persistent scholarly claims that deny the genocidal character of the violence against Roma. These are usually rooted in an intentionalist definition of genocide carried to the extreme: in the absence of a clear written source that attests to a central and general order calling explicitly for extermination of all Roma, they do not admit the applicability of the term to a given situation.[142] Relying on a strict

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[141] Inga Clendinnen, *Reading the Holocaust* (Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 8.

[142] Two debates are not treated in depth in this paper that both involved sustained discussion of Roma suffering: the debate about what constitutes genocide and the controversy around the number of Roma victims. These are often heated debates that, however, do not influence memory politics – regardless of number, the status of anti-Roma violence in World War II is accepted to constitute genocide and referred to as an aspect of the Holocaust by practically all public figures, save representatives of the far right. The lesson of public debates is far more that acknowledging genocide does not translate into accepting the memory of genocide as a moral imperative for efforts to intervene in the present. For the background on the differences between positions regarding genocide, cf. Alfred Cave, "Genocide in the Americas," in The *Historiography of Genocide*, ed. Dan Stone (Basingtoke-New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 275. Curthoys-Docker, *Defining Genocide*, 11-14, 23. See Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, "The Politics of Uniqueness: Reflections on the Recent Polemical Turn in Holocaust and Genocide Scholarship," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 13, no. 1 (1999): 28–61; Dan Stone, *The Holocaust, Fascism and Memory: Essays in the History of Ideas* (Basingstoke-New Yort: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 25-31; Rosenbaum, *Is the Holocaust unique?*, 2. For characteristic positions of inclusion and exclusion cf. Steven T. Katz, "The Uniqueness of the Holocaust: The Historical Dimension," in *Is the Holocaust unique? Perspectives on comparative genocide*, ed. Alan S Rosenbaum (Oxford: Westview Press, 2009), 55-74; Yehuda Bauer, "Romanies," in *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, eds. Israel Gutman, and Michael Berenbaum (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 1994), 441-455; Steven T. Katz, "Quantity and Interpretation: Issues in the Comparative Analysis of the Holocaust," in *Remembering for the Future: Jews and Christians During and After the Holocaust* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1988), 200–216; Hancock, "Responces to Porrajmos:" 75-76. Guenter Lewy, *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 199-210; Michael Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie und Genozid: Die nationalsozialistische 'Lösung der Zigeunerfrage'* (Hamburg: Christians, 1996). In the debates, Stephen Katz and Ian Hancock have represented the most uncompromising, opposed positions. Yehuda Bauer articulates a more conditional refusal to include Roma among Holocaust victims, whilst acknowledging the overarching character of the violence perpetrated. The majority of historians, including most famously Michael

intentionalist definition overlooks the fact that violence against the Roma has historically been deployed in a decentred manner, carried out by diverse agents, through coordination rather than strictly hierarchically. In an interpretation that is willing to accord Roma experience a voice, the latter is a key insight on which memory construct hinges. It is through recognizing the historical and structural nature of violence against Roma that it becomes possible to turn the memory of the Holocaust into hot memory, as the logics of decentred, "pro-active" local violence represent the thread that runs through histories of living juxtaposed to various (national) communities in Europe. In this light, as Mayall notes, "[t]he Holocaust is also placed in the much wider context of hostile treatment by a wide range of 'host' societies which both preceded and have followed the genocide attempted by the Nazis."[143] By not according the Roma experience a voice in constructing the narrative, as academic histories sometimes do, the writing becomes an exercise in the logic of colonialism, where the subaltern is not allowed speak for her/himself, and denies the emancipatory potential inherent in remembering the longer history of dispersed violence through its apex during the Holocaust.

Visibility and acknowledgement ultimately matter in a political sense because they shape frames through which processes of the present are evaluated and responses to them are conceptualized. Most recently, it was the Kosovo conflict and its aftermath that for Roma communities and allies across Europe reinforced the sense of remaining unspoken for and unrepresented in accounts of violence in the present, mirroring accounts of past violence. Roma were targeted by – chiefly Albanian – fighters during the conflict and in its immediate aftermath, as part of a drive to alter the ethnic landscape in key settlements in Kosovo, yet their plight remained largely unreported.[144]

The past decades of activism are adding to representations of Roma history, even if there is a definite tendency towards forms of representation, which require moderate resources – notably written output and documentaries. The situation therefore has changed somewhat, compared even to the year 2000, when Lemon observed that "public Romani monuments are lacking not out of some cultural aversion to recollection or out of deficient religious motivation but because Roma have only rare access to the media technologies that broadcast memory and mourning and do not control the architectural boards and educational systems that display and reproduce them."[145] This statement could today be amended by the observation that on the one hand, production of memory has intensified, while the resource-intensive areas of dissemination and spatial representation remain those aspects, where strong institutional actors need to be co-opted by Roma elites for a memory project to take off. In this respect, infiltrating internationally leading loci of high cultural representation has emerged

Berenbaum, as a Holocaust historian, and Michael Zimmermann, as the first globally acknowledged academic specialist of Nazi violence against Roma, promote including the Roma amongst victims of the Holocaust, while insisting on differentiating between the character of the genocide against Jews and the genocide against Roma.

[143] David Mayall, *Gypsy Identities 1500–2000: From Egipcyans and Moon-men to the Ethnic Romany* (London – New York: Routledge, 2004), 265.

[144] Rainer Schulze, "Silenced Voices: Roma, Kosovo, Memories of 'Home' and the Need for a New Discourse," in *Antitziganism: What's in a Word?*, ed. Jan Sellig (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2015), 64-66.

[145] Lemon, *Between two fires,* 149, 167.

as one strategy, discussed in more detail in the section on Hungary.[146] Successful domestic lobbying, notably in the German case, also provides examples of how governments can be co-opted into generating visibility for remembering the Roma Holocaust, as in the case of the Berlin memorial. The (in many ways optimal) practice of providing endowment-type funding that ensures the subsequent autonomy of the recipient, however, has not migrated successfully beyond Germany – despite the Cultural Centre run by the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma being recognized as a model by other groups across Europe.[147] The previous two examples nevertheless mark out what seem to be possible strategies for moving forward with not only the construction, but, crucially, the dissemination of Roma memory to empower the minority communities.

Recent Roma theorizing has not only embraced a variety of practical strategies, but also warned repeatedly against constructing a transnational narrative exclusively based on passive suffering.[148] The position underpins the emphasis on diverse commitments such as increased media output, but also the infiltration of previously closed off terrains of representation as outlined by Junghaus.[149] This demonstrates the evolution away from the initial focus of most Roma initiatives and their ambition to secure recognition as a victim group. As early as 1992, a specialist of African American studies, Jennifer Hohschild, warned Roma leaders about experiences of other minorities with regard to the difficulties of acquiring a sense of agency and empowerment.[150] This has permeated the discourse, favouring forward-looking historical narratives. Nicolae Gheorghe programmatically stated in 1997, that

> Much of this discourse about the discrimination against and the victimisation of Romani is highly ideological. They are realities but there is also a political exploitation of those realities in creating a language to promote it. I have found this language less and less satisfactory. It has become a ritualistic presentation and interpretation of history only from the point of view of discrimination and victimisation of the group.[151]

In this view, the historical agency of Roma individuals and communities must not be permitted to be lost in constructing narratives. Gheorghe, Mirga and other leading norm entrepreneurs of the Roma movements have been very outspoken in acknowledging that nation-building involves constructing a historical narrative, and acquiring a "usable past". The earlier transnational Roma discourse organized around suffering and restitution, as

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[146] Tímea Junghaus, "Paradise Lost – The First Roma Pavilion" in *Paradise Lost*, ed. Katalin Székely: (Venice: La Biennale di Venezia, 2007), 20.

[147] For a detailed discussion cf. the section on Germany.

[148] Nicolae Gheorghe and Iulius Rostas, "Roma or Ţigan: The Romani Identity – Between Victimisation and Emancipation," *Roma Rights* 20, no. 1 (2015): 43-66.

[149] Junghaus, "Paradise Lost," 16-23.

[150] PER, *The Romanies in Central and Eastern Europe.*

[151] Nicolae Gheorghe, 'The social construction of Romani identity', in *Gypsy Politics and Traveller Identity*, ed. Thomas Acton (Hatfield, 1997), 161.

found especially in the communications of the now largely defunct International Romani Union, and the agency-centric narratives promoted by both the transnational diaspora elite and the parts of the embedded domestic elite thus differ significantly. This shift of accents is connected, in part, to the relative ascendance of the Roma National Congress and the European Roma and Traveller Forum, in tandem with the evolving partnership of the Council of Europe, which displaced in several respects the International Romani Union (IRU) in the new millennium. These organizations have represented a commitment to not only transnational norm entrepreneurship, but also actions directed at propping up Roma agency in all settings, including regional and local.[152]

The emphasis on agency over passive suffering has also produced a pivot towards the research and representation of Roma resistance. The notion lies at the intersection of the focus on agency in identity politics and a Holocaust-centered culture of remembrance in memory politics. Its emergence reflects the polycentric structure of Romani intellectual movements, coming into being without a clear origo. Perhaps closest to an "origin" of the current focus on resistance is the 2010 initiative of the French grass-roots organization *La Voix des Rroms*)[153], yet the activist initiative was fed by earlier intellectual input over at least two generations of thinking about agency and status *vis-à-vis* majorities. This spans interventions by the post-1989 generation with national and transnational leaders such as Rudko Kawczynski and Ágnes Daróczi—both of the European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF)—as well as new contributions by Tímea Junghaus or Angéla Kóczé. Especially in contributions by Kóczé to ongoing discussions, emphasis on emancipatory empowerment in a postcolonial theory-inflected language game has been applied with consistency to all potential passivizing influences, including the liberal NGO establishment and non-Roma academia.[154] Significantly, and attesting to the ideational pull of this focus, "conservative" organizations such as the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma also adopted the discourse and concomitant emphasis on agency, as the broader process of the social dissemination of the above ideas unfolded. This has led to projects at various levels, but all with a transnational inspiration and significance. The 2006 Neuengamme conference, organized by the ERTF, may be considered the direct intellectual origo from which the cultic construction of the 16 May anniversaries originated as an idea. The effort currently spans over a decade and is ongoing, as the ERTF's own Forgotten Voices project demonstrates.[155] In terms of the galvanizing effect, especially the activism of Roma youth organizations, demonstrate the appeal of the reframing of Holocaust memory. From transnational umbrella organizations

[152] PER (Project on Ethnic Relations), *Leadership, Representation and the Status of the Roma* (Princeton, NJ: Project on Ethnic Relations, 2001), 41.

[153] Jonathan Mack, "Widerstand als Leitmotiv des politischen Aktivismus," *Romano Centro* no. 85 (2016).

[154] Nidhi Trehan and Angéla Kóczé, "Racism, (neo-)colonialism, and social justice: The struggle for the soul of the Romani movement in post-socialist Europe," in *Racism, Postcolonialism, Europe*, eds. Graham Huggan and Ian Law (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009); Angéla Kóczé, "*Speaking from the Margins,*" *in Roma Rights 2015/2* (Nothing About Us Without Us? Roma Participation in Policy Making and Knowledge Production, 2015), 83-87.

[155] Forgotten Voices of the Holocaust of the Roma during the Second World War. European Roma and Travellers Forum (2016) http://www.2august.ertf.org/Projects/.

such as *Ternype* (www.ternype.eu) to national initiatives (for instance *Phiren Amenca* in Hungary or *Romano Centro* in Austria), it has set off – especially from 2014 onwards – a wave of "historical activism".

Driven by the logic of postcolonial studies, the presentation of resistance has unearthed a broad range of strategies, usually context-specific, that Roma employed in the face of persecution. In Romania, where about 25000 Roma were resettled into camp-like conditions in Transnistria, these ranged from recourse to the legal system to mass flight.[156] There are records of Roma fighting with resistance groups from Italy through France to Yugoslavia and elsewhere.[157] Decades prior to any programmatic research on Roma resistance, Jan Yoors already observed that as "the Roma had lived all their lives in a 'twilight zone', forever aware of tactics of survival, they were prepared and became willing instructors in the secret war."[158] It is likely that at least a portion of the Roma murdered by Nazis in occupied Soviet territory were executed for aiding partisans – while another segment of those murdered were likely bracketed as partisans out of bureaucratic necessity to somehow label victims.[159]

In addition to participating in resistance movements, Roma resistance in Auschwitz was also documented early on. In one of the key collections of critically interpreted testimonies, Hermann Langbein, a survivor-researcher, who stated very early on that "[t]he Gypsies were the only other group that suffered the same 'total' fate under the Nazis", also devoted his attention to the fate of Roma in Auschwitz.[160] He worked with several reports and testimonies from Auschwitz (the block elder, an imprisoned Dutch colonel, as well as others such as Elisabeth Guttenberg and Hermine Horváth, and the non-commissioned SS officer who acted as reporting officer for the Roma block). Langbein is unambiguous about the determination of the Roma who refused to march to their deaths, stating that "[t]he ss [sic] had to exert its full brutality in the liquidation of the Gypsy camp as well, because all tricks intended to persuade the Gypsies to board the trucks willingly, failed." Van Velsen, the Dutch block elder reported on the strategy employed to subvert guards via systematic gifts, and "Gypsy" escapes, which were frequent.[161] Other camps in Germany, and especially the Ustasha camp in Jasenovac, were scenes of other, documented acts of resistance. In this respect, the historical record is unambiguous.[162]

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[156] Shannon Woodcock, "Romanian Romani Resistance to Genocide in the Matrix of the Tsigan Other," *Anthropology of Eastern Europe Review* 25, no. 2 (2007): 28-44.

[157] Crowe, *A history of the Gypsies*, 221; Ethel Brooks, "Remembering the Dead, Documenting Resistance, Honouring the Heroes: The Sinti and Roma," in *The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme: Discussion Papers Journal* Vol III. (New York: United Nations, 2015), 53.

[158] Ian Yoors, *The Gypsies* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1987), 255.

[159] Michael Zimmermann, "the Soviet Union and the Baltic Lands 1941-1944," in *In the Shadow of the Swastika. The Gypsies during the Second World War*, Vol. 2, ed. Donald Kenrick (Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 1999), 131-148.

[160] Hermann Langbein, *People in Auschwitz* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 14.

[161] Ibid.,111, 298.

[162] Ulrich König, *Sinti und Roma unter dem Nationalsozialismus* (Bochum: Brockmeyer, 1989), 129-133. and Hayden, "Mass Killings and Images," 495-498.

Langbein, however, also warns of examples where the historian studying sources can be led astray: he notes how on one occasion, after two Roma escaped from a tree cutting detail, the guards reported a rebellion to escape punishment. The report was accepted, likely filed, and the guards received praise instead of censure.[163] Uncertainties concerning what happened in Auschwitz matter, since history perceived as a "usable past" will be subjected to scrutiny. The 16 May, 1944 events constitute such an undecidable juncture of Roma memory. Not preserved by Roma eyewitnesses, but registered only by a Polish clerk in his deposition, it was adopted by Roma activists as a key moment of Roma resistance in Auschwitz. Based on historical information, the fundamental notion that Roma resisted and violence was needed to subdue the *Zigeunerlager*"prior to murdering its captives (on 2-3 August, 1944) is beyond doubt. What, if anything, transpired on 16 May, however, is uncertain.

The episode serves as a reminder of the dangers of memory politics – looking for usable pasts may lead memory workers into a position where their activism can be challenged on the basis of verifiability. This potentially delegitimizes their work in the eyes of the academic community, reinforcing the frequent bias of the latter, as well as confusing non-academic allies of Roma identity building. At the same time, non-Roma national historiographies at various times have produced, and often still produce, fictions that acquit and obfuscate, engaging in conscious falsification of history. Compared to the track record of European majority historiographies, a specialist on the Roma Holocaust reminds us that one has to "[c]onsider that the first comprehensive studies of the Nazi persecution of Sinti and Roma (Gypsies) came out only in the mid and late 1990s", while early forays, such as the 1972 book by Kenrick and Puxon were not taken up by most historians.[164] It is also a tell-tale sign of the difficulties facing Roma memory work that when uncertainties concerning the presentation of facts in works by engaged scholars are criticized, the critics rarely pause to consider how the text by, say, a Roma scholar they are challenging compares to texts of "histoire engagée" produced by some Eastern European or Asian contemporaries.

Roma activist and scholarly discourses have been extremely successful in adopting specialized language games of various disciplines, including history and anthropology, through which they formulate positions regarding the past and specifically the Roma Holocaust. As a result, today Roma elites communicate with European elites through linguistic channels which may be uncomfortable to the latter, but are totally understandable – an instance of the hybridization referenced by Fosztó.[165] A Polish, Romanian or Hungarian non-Roma intellectual may be shocked when faced with postcolonial criticism, but their understanding of it will be a question of will, not ability. This is because these same languages have been deployed by these national communities in their respective quests to hammer out national stories that unite themes of suffering and agency, persecution and triumph.

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[163] Langbein, *People in Auschwitz,* 259.

[164] Anton Weiss-Wendt, "Problems in Comparative Genocice Scholarship," in *The Historiography of Genocide*, ed. Dan Stone (Basingtoke-New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 43.

[165] Fosztó, "Diaspora and Nationalism:" 115.

4. Germany: Representation through Nationalization

The section presents aspects of Sinti and Roma memory work in Germany, spanning the past half-century. The German case is usually considered paradigmatic with regard to Roma rights movements in general.[166] To this claim, this section adds the derivative observation that a similar relationship exists with regard to Holocaust memory. The term paradigmatic signifies here more than the dissemination of practices across Europe that had originated in Germany. It also extends to the productivity of comparative analyses of the fault lines dividing the Sinti (minority) and Roma (transnational) politics of memory. This division within the broader minority has had an important bearing on how policies and mnemonic practices have been shaped in the country and in the communities themselves.

German national politics of identity and memory demand vast resources and explore with greater commitment practices of facing the past than is the case in other societies with perpetrator legacies. After a long history of administrative discrimination spanning the better part of the first century of modern Germany, it also became the home to the first well-organized Roma civil rights movement.[167] All of the above do not make Germany a country where the situation of Roma should be regarded as unproblematic – at least in part because of the aforementioned divisions of Roma identity politics and the nature of the governmental-civilian dialogue, progress has often been slow and achievements did not benefit all Roma in equal measure. "Paradigmatic" does not signify "ideal situation". At the same time, Roma efforts in Germany should be investigated as a case where the environment was relatively advantageous for constructing an intercommunity narrative about the past and a specifically Roma memory in tandem. If juxtaposed with attempts at securing representation for Roma historical experience in Hungary, in a comparable undertaking of dual identity politics (as a minority *and* as a non-territorial nation), the German case helps to identify key weaknesses of the post-socialist constellation for Roma politics of memory. On the other hand, it also demonstrates, as will be shown towards the end of this section, that governmentality operates not against all forms of civil society and norm entrepreneurship, but in a far more nimble and adaptable manner, seeking to co-opt some agents of change and fence off others. At this general level, the German case proves structurally similar to the Hungarian one, an insight that will be revisited in the conclusion.

The history of anti-Roma discrimination in Germany represents an instance of bourgeois biopolitics, where the adjective bourgeois signifies that the disciplinary aspect of this biopolitics was directed at those who were construed as threatening the decent morals and lifestyles of the "average German". In practice, this meant *die Fahrende* or travellers. Their discrimination was formalized around the beginning of the 20th century, the most famous example being the *Zigeunerbuch*, a registry of the state of Bavaria (1905), which by 1925 had grown to 14,000

[166] Ibid., 115.

[167] Yaron Matras, "The Development of the Romani Civil Right Movement in Germany 1945–1996," in *Sinti and Roma. Gypsies in German-Speaking Society and Literature*, ed. Susan Tebutt (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1998), 49-63; Daniel Gress, "The Beginnings of the Sinti and Roma Civil Rights Movement in the Federal Republic of Germany," in *Antitziganism: What's in a Word?,* ed. Jan Sellig (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2015).

descriptions of individuals deemed asocial.[168] Much as in France, another example of a well-organized state whose emergent biopolitics aimed at the policing of the nomadic *différend*[169], early 20th century practices revealed themselves resilient in the face of normative challenges and survived into post-1945 democracies. These also prepared the ground for radical persecution by creating vulnerable bodies assumed to be always already outside the law.[170]

Nazi policies underwent a gradated movement from exclusion to genocide during the late 1930s and World War II.[171] Most people falling under the anti-Roma legislation did not survive the war. After 1945, in the Western, democratic half that became the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, Roma remained unrecognized as a victim group. Anti-Roma practices persisted especially in police work. Numerous former perpetrators (usually from the Security Service [SD] or the criminal police [*KriPo*] which had handled Roma affairs) went on to serve, in several cases responsible for Roma desks.[172] The period was one of political invisibility for Roma, whose communities remained largely abandoned to the operations of administrative organs. The latter continued to deploy racial logics in their management, while accepting responsibility for the Holocaust with regard to non-Roma victims, first and foremost political prisoners and Jewish survivors.[173] Formal discourse showed continuities as well: substituting vagrants for *Zigeuner*, the argument of "asocial" behaviour both predated Nazism and escaped being linked to Nazi ideology, remaining in received usage up until the 1960s.[174]

An opening to bringing Roma rights in front of a national audience was created after the student movements of the late 1960s created the discourse of not closing the book on, but instead radically questioning the past, creating an imperative of engaging, instead of moving on, with historical crimes. When in 1973 Anton Lehmann was shot by the police in Heidelberg,[175] the newly (re)formed Association of German Sinti (Association) organized its

[168] Kenrick, *The A to Z of the Gypsies,* 97.

[169] Hubert, "The internment of Gypsies," 60-62.

[170] Hancock, "Responses to the Porrajmos," 87-88.

[171] Sybil Milton, "Der Weg zur 'Endlösung der Zigeunerfrage': Von der Ausgrenzung zur Ermordung der Sinti und Roma," in *Kinder und Jugendlicher als Opfer des Holocaust,* ed. Edgar Bamberger and Annegret Ehmann (Heidelberg: Dokumentations- und Kulturzentrum Deutscher Sinti und Roma, 1995), 29-52; Erika Thurner, *National Socialism and Gypsies in Austria* (Chicago: The University Press, 1998).

[172] Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Gerhard Paul, Karrieren der Gewalt: *Nationalsozialistische Täterbiographien* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2004); Julia von dem Knesebeck, *The Roma Struggle for Compensation in post-war Germany* (Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2011), 33-34, and Margalit, *Germany and its Gypsies*, 56, 91.

[173] Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie und Genozid,* 381; Margalit, *Germany and its Gypsies*, 56, 9. See also Knesebeck, *The Roma Struggle*, 96-97, 233-234.

[174] Gress, "The Beginnings of," 49. Volker Hedemann, *'Zigeuner'! – Zur Kontinuität der rassistischen Diskrimierung in der alten Bundesrepublik* (Hamburg: LIT, 2007), 12-13; Margalit, *Germany and its Gypsies*, 59-70.

[175] There exists a recurring claim in relevant literature according to which the interest representation was formed as a reaction to the murder, which is antedated to 1972. As far as can be ascertained, the Association of German Sinti was formed before the shooting, which actually happened in May 1973, and it was not the impulse that established it but, in fact, the first major issue for the reformed organization.

first demonstration, starting, at first a modest and local, becoming a broader and eventually national dialogue with other NGOs, and then political parties. The precursor association was founded by brothers, Oskar and Vinzenz Rose, as well as the Association of Persecuted People of non-Jewish Confession (*Verband der Verfolgten nichtjüdischen Glaubens*) in 1956.[176] Their association was originally aimed at securing restitution, mainly for Sinti who were not only not recognized at the time as a victim group, but the West German state had turned down numerous reparation claims on the grounds that internment, sterilization and other violent interventions by the Third Reich state machinery were based on "legitimate" police or health considerations.[177]

The Lehmann murder initiated a turnaround: The core message of the younger generation, the first who became "activists" during the 1970s, became the precariousness of Roma (Sinti) lives in democratic Germany. As Romani Rose became more and more involved in the work of the association, it underwent a process of professionalization and emerged as a full-fledged NGO with special expertise and familiarity regarding the administrative and legal environment relevant to its work.[178] What did not change was the embeddedness of the activist discourse in the concept of German citizenship. Sinti active in the Association defined themselves as German, but different from ethnic Germans – a minority. While in the 1970s, the first international movement behind the international congresses of Roma in 1971 and 1978 (later named the International Romani Union) promoted the concept of a separate, deterritorialized nationhood. Sinti in Germany resented the idea of excluding themselves from a successful society.[179] The resulting German (Sinti) model of dual self-identification became the most widespread template for early activists before and after the fall of the Iron Curtain in the East, emphasizing roots and belonging to the state formed by the non-Roma majority (with a more accented integration of the notion of cross-border Roma solidarity and/or nationhood than in the case of leading German Sinti activists).

The first nationally visible results of NGO work came between 1979 and 1982. In the years immediately preceding this, the Association built close contacts with a new left and strongly anti-fascist organization, the Society for Threatened Peoples. It leader, Tilman Zülch became an important ally, who accepted the Roma claim of being forgotten victims of the Holocaust at a time when the realization that Jehovah's witnesses, gays and other communities were also targeted by Nazi persecution was gaining currency in society. Through its political connections, Zülch was able to present Rose to Social Democratic and Green politicians, who subscribed to the need of revising German thinking about how victims of the Holocaust were conceptualized.[180]

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[176] Liégeois, *Roma, Gypsies, Travelers*, 252.

[177] Karola Fings, *Sinti und Roma: Geschichte einer Minderheit* (München: Beck, 2016), 92-97.

[178] Ibid. 102-103. See also Leggewie and Lang, *Der Kampf, 197.*

[179] Margalit, *Germany and its Gypsies*, 199-200. See also Gress, "The Beginnings of," 51, and Fosztó, "Diaspora and Nationalism," 110-117.

[180] Gress, "The Beginnings of," 49. See also Matras, "The Development of," 54, and Knesebeck, *The Roma Struggle*, 231-232.

Simultaneously to the opening up of channels of communication towards political actors with clout, the movement launched a large-scale campaign on a wave of renewed German interest in coming to terms with the legacy of the Holocaust – a phenomenon that is frequently attributed to the screening of the Holocaust mini-series on German television, seen by 20 million people, or a third of the country's population. The Association's chosen strategy was to aggressively link human rights violations today with the genocide committed by the Nazis. In the more sensitized German media environment, the very respectable liberal weekly *Die Zeit* afforded coverage to the movement and presented its slogan "gassed in Auschwitz, still persecuted today". The Association's memorial demonstration at the Bergen Belsen concentration camp in 1979, as well as the hunger strike of 12 Sinti in Dachau in 1980 broke the media barrier for good. These efforts mediatized the struggle for recognition the Sinti and Roma communities of Germany engaged in.[181]

In 1982, the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma was formed, an instance of institutional resource pooling that was essentially dominated by the leadership of the Association with input from the Society for Threatened Peoples, which also had a key Sinto activist/official (Fritz Greussing). Romani Rose became the president of the Central Council. When the Council was granted a visit to Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, he publicly and formally recognized the crimes committed against Sinti and Roma as genocide, an acknowledgement later repeated by his successor, Helmut Kohl. Romani Rose also met President of the Federal Republic Karl Carstens, elevating the standing of the Central Council to that of an NGO with a recognized voice in national politics. The years 1979-1982 brought the nationalization and politicization of the movement, and see the application of a combined memory policy and collective rights campaign model, which was visible to numerous Roma activists ten years later – as the case of Hungary will demonstrate.[182]

The political and media breakthrough that the Central Council, and within it the Association, achieved did not immediately translate into a legislative-administrative breakthrough. Recognition and a sense of agency were the two most important dividends of the campaign. Recent research by Sebastian Lotto-Kusche has reconstructed the discursive aspect of the "storming" of the *Kanzleramt* by activists: archival evidence shows that the terminology "Sinti and Roma" was unknown to federal civil servants, to the point of requiring the superscript *Zigeuner* on some documents as late as 1980. The movement accomplished an instance of successful norm entrepreneurship. It introduced a marginalized problem, legitimized its presentation as an issue requiring political intervention and proposed a discourse for framing it, which was largely accepted.[183] Another measurement available to us is the partially quantitative

[181] Gress, "The Beginnings of," 48-54. See also Katja Seybold and Martina Staats, "'In Auschwitz vergast, bis heute verfolgt'" Gedenkfeier und Kundgebung in der Gedenkstätte Bergen-Belsen am 27. Oktober 1979 zur Erinnerung an den Völkermord an den Sinti und Roma," in *Die Verfolgung der Sinti und Roma im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Herbert Diercks (Hamburg: Temmen, 2012), 158-163. See also Lewy, *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies*, 227; Knesebeck, *The Roma Struggle*, 217-220, and Hedemann, *'Zigeuner'!*, 70-74.

[182] Knesebeck, *The Roma Struggle*, 232.

[183] Sebastian Lotto-Kusche, "Politische Anerkennung der Sinti und Roma in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Eine Untersuchung anhand des Wandels in der Sprachpraxis staatlicher Stellen," in *Textuelle Historizität:*

evaluation of Roma issues appearing in the *Bundestag* from the beginnings of the republic, analyzed by Katherine Meyer. Her data bear out both the success of the mobilization and the amount of work that needed to be done after the breakthrough in visibility and participation: from 1949 to 1970, there is minimal attention to any Roma issue, while from 1970 to 1985 there is a slow trend, especially towards the second half of the period, of Roma breaking the barrier of political discussion, at least in terms of figuring on the agenda.[184]

The legislative dimension evolved with considerable delay and only after German Sinti and Roma calls for reparations had been endorsed by the Greens and some Social Democrats. While in opposition, in 1985 the Greens presented a comprehensive handling of the "forgotten victims", a draft bill on "the regulation of the appropriate care for all victims of national socialist persecution in the timeframe 1933-1945". The Social Democrats, less ambitiously, called for an amendment to existing regulation. The parties managed to prod the conservative government into a review of compensation policies, and a broader debate, in which the Sinti and the Roma were both on the agenda and given opportunity for participation, could commence. The first tangible outcome of presence on the national political agenda was funding received for a cultural and historical centre, which has since become a model institution for post-communist Roma organizations. It has operated under the Central Council's supervision since 1987. Whilst it was still widely believed that their treatment was not equal to that of Jewish victims, the Sinti and Roma were included in the political and cultural agenda of Holocaust-related memory work in Germany.[185] The legislative-cultural turning point arrived in 1995-1997. Recognition as a national minority, President Roman Herzog's landmark anniversary address on the day of the liberation of Auschwitz in 1997 (juxtaposing Jewish and Roma victims), and the beginning of the state-sponsored memorialization of Roma victims in public spaces all took place in this period (the first was the Buchenwald memorial, inaugurated in 1995).[186]

The two decades since the canonization of a "Roma aspect" in official German remembering have witnessed the dissemination of knowledge transferred by Roma and allies to local and federal governmental agencies as well as majority NGOs through community initiatives, cultural production and education. The cultural centre of the Central Council has been an innovator, as well as a promoter and supporter of this process. At the same time, the aggregate power-knowledge of the German education system and the associated funding network commanded much vaster resources which, step by step, could be partially harnessed by an elite coalition to fostering memory work about Roma victims. The collective choices of the operators of these large networks of government have proven decisive.

Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf das historische Apriori, eds. Heidrun Kämper, Daniel Schmidt-Brücken and Ingo Warnke (Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter, 2016).

[184] Gabi Meyer, *Offizielles Erinnern und die Situation der Sinti und Roma in Deutschland: Der nationalsozialistische Völkermord in den parlamentarischen Debatten des Deutschen Bundestages* (Wiesbaden: Springer VS., 2013), 110-276.

[185] Knesebeck, *The Roma Struggle*, 222-223.

[186] Ibid. 234-235. and Meyer, *Offizielles Erinnern*, 276-291.

Roma memory about the Holocaust could also profit from already running models of engaging with perpetrator legacies. These include a culture of local history research and a self-reflexive mode of cultural production, where the process of working through perpetrator legacies is well underway. Imprints of this engagement are easy to locate, ranging from study projects (a regional survey is offered f.i. in the individual pieces found in Dierecks 2012) to theatrical productions (among them *Das Verschlingen*, the German equivalent of Porrajmos, at *Galerie Kai Dikhas* in Berlin)[187] and exhibitions in symbolic locations, including the German Police Academy (*Deutsche Hochschule der Polizei*), the school of the organization once responsible for many of the decentred killings and the post-war refuge of several war criminals who had ordered the mass executions.[188]

Despite its seeming linearity, it is important to "unpack" the policy processes of these years. A simple narrative suggests a dynamic of Roma activism and a receptive political class making progress through a series of debates and compromises. None of these terms, however, is unambiguous. The recognition as a national minority was granted to "German Sinti and Roma". Belonging to the group was defined in an extremely narrow manner, excluding Roma guest workers residing in Germany for decades. This is the narrowest possible framing of Sinti and Roma identity (Sinti being identified as having lived in Germany since the late middle ages – meaning that for most self-identifying families, being Sinti can only by a hypothesis). Restitution and formal inclusion in German memory politics has been extended to this group. In keeping with the acknowledgement, the government has sought to focus on a preferred partner, the Central Council. Alternative Roma identities have emerged and organized themselves in Germany, such as the Rom and Cinti Union (RCU), a Hamburg-based organization, which is not a member of the Central Council, as well as the more recent Sinti Alliance. These represent a broader identity platform rooted in transnational solidarity and form a minority in the self-limiting Sinti and Roma communities of citizens. In public action, they are found allied to, or speaking also for, Roma residing in the country without citizenship or residence permits. These organizations consider the existing German regulative framework as not merely insufficient, but fundamentally flawed. Their positions are close to the concept of a deterritorialized nation existing in stateless solidarity with members, and as minorities in the individual home countries with which the German state needs to build a special ethical relationship as a result of historical crimes.[189]

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[187] The first gallery to focus on contemporary Sinti and Roma perspectives, Kai Dikhas (http://www.kaidikhas.com) has emerged as a both an innovative and dissenting voice. See Árpád Bak, "Interview with Moritz Pankok (Berlin) about Ceija Stojka and Re-evaluation of Roma Art," *Artmargins Online*, 2 December, 2014. http://www.artmargins.com/index.php/5-interviews/755-interview-with-moritz-pankok-about-ceija-stojka-and-the-re-evaluation-of-roma-art. For an analysis, see the conclusion to this section.

[188] The edited volumes by Diercks as well as Krahl and Meichsner offer the perhaps richest sub-national perspectives on ongoing, often grassroots, efforts in different regions of Germany (the northwest and the new *Land* Saxony). See Diercks, *Die Verfolgung der Sinti und Roma.* See also Kathrin Krahl and Antje Meichsner, *Viele Kämpfe und vielleicht einige Siege: Texte über Antiromaismus und historische Lokalrecherchen zu und von Roma, Romnja, Sinti und Sintezze in Sachsen, Sachsen-Anhalt und Tschechien* (Dresden: Heinrich Böll Stiftung, 2016)

[189] Rudko Kawczynski, "The Politics of Romani Politics," *Transitions* 4, no. 4 (1997): 25-26.

These organizations offer a different interpretation of the Holocaust in which they see the universal suffering of all Roma as inseparable, opposed to the focus on German citizens espoused by the Central Council.[190] From this, it follows that the German state – having assumed responsibility for the perpetratorship – carries a certain moral burden towards all Roma (as it does towards Jews). While the Zentralrat's political agenda focuses on Sinti and Roma citizens and their integration, as well as upwardly social mobility, in the latter case the plight of Roma in Europe at large serves as the framework for the political agenda. The Union's long-standing president, Rudko Kawczynski has argued for the past two decades that Germany "had a 'historical responsibility" to welcome the Roma".[191] Both platforms rely on the memory of the Holocaust to develop of discourse of moral imperatives flowing from it, and both consider that the government is the representative organ of society that is expected to acknowledge this imperative. The structural similarity is complemented by a substantive difference in terms of the referent objects, where the two positions sharply diverge.

Accordingly, the Romani Council Union (RCU) has advocated strongly for migrant Roma from the East and has criticized the Central Council on numerous occasions. Kawczynski articulated this position as early as the fall of Soviet-style dictatorships around 1989, when westward Roma migration, as a potential threat, first appeared in German mainstream media.[192] For the Rom and Cinti Union, the historical responsibility of the German state extended to all Roma, a practical consequence of which should have been an ethics-driven *de facto* prohibition against the expulsion of asylum-seeking Roma from the East. Divergent interpretations of German responsibility underpinned the debate over expulsion between the Central Council and Kawczynski's organization in the early 1990s. The RCU effectively accused the Central Council of enabling racist and anti-Roma policies, contributing to the re-emergence of practices and mind-sets from the era of the Holocaust.[193]

The difference between the two campaign slogans precisely capture this cleavage. During its first major human rights campaign at the end of the 1970s – as a norm-entrepreneurial, anti-status quo movement – the Association of German Sinti and Roma provocatively chose the slogan "gassed in Auschwitz, persecuted today". In 1992, the RCU sponsored the exhibition "1939-1989: gassed – persecuted – expelled", extending the normative framework to asylum seekers. At the same time, Central Council spokespersons publicly announced their acceptance of various repatriation measures, most importantly the German-Romanian agreement on the repatriation of up to 50,000 Roma holding Romanian citizenship.[194] At the same time, Kawczynski was also challenging the International Romani Union's victimhood

[190] Knesebeck, *The Roma Struggle*, 223.

[191] Barany, *The East European Gypsies*, 251.

[192] Spiegel, "Sie haben mich reingelegt: Hamburgs Innensenator Werner Hackmann (SPD) und Roma Rudko Kawczynski über Asyl für Zigeuner," *Der Spiegel*, no. 46 (1989): 82-96. http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-13497190.html. and Spiegel, "Alle hassen die Zigeuner," *Der Spiegel*, no. 36 (1990): 34-57. (Nummer "Asyl in Deutschland? Die Zigeuner)

[193] Spiegel, "Benzin ins Feuer: Der Streit der deutschen Zigeunerverbände über Bonns Abschiebepolitik," *Der Spirgel*, no. 46 (1992): 65-66. http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-13680779.html.

[194] Ibid.

narratives and perceived arbitrary operation. In terms of the emphasis on action by Roma for Roma and the positioning of Holocaust memory as a source of a shared transnational identity, as well as a similarly transnational moral imperative for majority society *vis-à-vis* all Roma, his platform appears as a precursor to post-2000 transnational Roma nation-building and self-empowerment.[195]

It is similarly important to unpack the other side of the equation – national politics. German memory culture, with some fits and starts, has moved towards increasing recognition of victims and acceptance of responsibility, both material and moral, over the course of the past half-century.[196] At the same time, national political leaders have control over the legal and administrative aspects of memory politics in the country, which, in a way, is reflected in the empowerment of the Central Council. By preferentializing and accepting as the only partner a distinctly national organization, they provided resources and legitimacy to the actor within the broader Roma NGO universe that refused to position anywhere near the top of its agenda the twin questions of German responsibility for non-citizen Roma victims and the rights of migrant Roma in Germany (and elsewhere) today. German mainstream political culture and the Central Council could cooperate on the basis of conferring mutual legitimacy on each other, often blotting out other voices in official exchanges.

Finally, it bears emphasis that German processes did not occur in isolation. Even prior to the active participation of supranational organizations in Roma politics, international linkages influenced memory work in Germany. Despite its emphasis on the interests of German Sinti and Roma and divergent identity politics, the Association in the late 1970s had a working relationship with the International Romani Union. Their agendas overlapped in important aspects: securing political agency for Roma and acknowledgement of the responsibility born by the German state for the Holocaust against Roma represented the core items of the common platform.[197] Under the leadership of Jan Cibula the IRU was relatively active in the period and held out the promise of growing into a broad, continental umbrella organization. The third international congress (the second under the aegis of the IRU) was held in Göttingen in 1981 and focused on the memory of the Holocaust and restitution. This likely influenced the German government to build closer ties with the freshly formed Central Council a year later, to find a reliable partner and limit potential claims by focusing on German citizens.

The Central Council has also seen itself as a disseminator of best practices. It has developed a culture of transnational commemoration and national activism, which harmonizes with the German governmentality structuring identity politics in the country. The message of empowering Roma in their native countries synergizes with discourses of population

[195] An outline of this is offered through examples in the section on Hungary. Kawczynski, "The Politics of Romani Politics."

[196] Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge, MA – London: Harvard University Press, 1997). Moses, *German Intellectuals*. See also Jeffrey K. Olick, *The Sins of the Fathers: Germany, Memory, Method* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016).

[197] This is clearly reflected in Pogrom, a publication of the Society for Threatened Peoples, a manifesto by Jan Cibula, then President of IRU.

management that frame repatriation as a desirable instrument and outcome for the German state. In keeping with these tenets, the Council has consistently invested resources in the transnational dissemination of best practices, especially through the person of Romani Rose, who still travels and lectures frequently.

In sum, German politics was both influenced by the international setting and exerted a transnational influence through ideational transfers – first and foremost towards the East. In this respect, too, Holocaust memory revealed itself as a common platform where Roma organizations with divergent identity politics could meet, but also come into conflict. The domestic/minority politics focus of the Central Council was seen in the immediate aftermath of Soviet-style communism as a model, especially in the post-socialist countries, and so had an indirect effect, as well. The dynamics of the German case, however, were determined first and foremost by the political choices of the national political elite. Sinti and Roma successes came when normative pressures could be brought to bear on the political class and a winning coalition of Roma and non-Roma could be assembled. Domestic norm shifts (the discovery of the "forgotten victims" in the 1970s) had a greater facilitating impact than international norm diffusion.[198] Also, a governmental logic seeking to limit the scope of policy imperatives resulting from perpetrator legacies remained operational even in the memory politics of the Federal Republic of Germany, despite a normative framework of admitting responsibility, contrition and reparative remembering, which prevailed in the country.

The dynamics of Roma memory politics is condensed into the difficult process of creating a memorial to Roma victims of the Holocaust in Berlin. In 1992, the federal government committed to constructing a memorial, originally to be erected in Marzahn, a Berlin suburb where an internment camp housing mainly Roma victims had operated during the Third Reich. Activists mobilized public opinion successfully against this plan, until the government acquiesced to having the memorial in symbolic proximity to that of Jewish victims. The inauguration of the work was stalled for years, however, to the point that Israeli architect Dani Karavan, who was chosen to create the memorial, doubted if he would see his design realized in his lifetime. Karavan was 62 years old when he received the commission, and 82 by the time the inauguration happened. When both venue and funding were secured by the government, identity politics came to bear on the memorial. Seeking to avoid controversy, majority politicians wanted to see an a priori consensus regarding the memorial, the planned inscription of which (*Zigeuner*) was found to be reflective of past racist practices especially by the Central Council and Romani Rose. The proposed term "Sinti and Roma" proved unacceptable from the transnational perspective espoused by the Rom and Cinti Union and the Sinti Alliance.[199] The debate lasted throughout the second half of the aughts.

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[198] Margalit, *Germany and its Gypsies*, 160-179.

[199] Stefan Berg, "The Unending Battle over Berlin's Sinti and Roma Memorial," *Spiegel Online*, 28 December, 2010 http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/a-project-in-jeopardy-the-unending-battle-over-berlin-s-sinti-and-roma-memorial-a-736716.html. Siobhan Dowling, "Roma Suffering 'Has Not Ended," *Spiegel Online*, 28 January, 2011 http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/the-world-from-berlin-roma-suffering-has-not-ended-a-742181.html. Miriam Bunjes, "Mehr al sein Streit um Worte," *Der Freitag*, 2 June, 2011 https://www.freitag.de/autoren/der-freitag/mehr-als-ein-streit-um-worte. Karoline Kuhla, "Denkmal für

Finall the main inscription was a universally acceptable poem by Santino Spinella, entitled *Auschwitz. Zigeuner* is referenced only as the term used by the Nazis, in a strictly historical statement installed by the memorial, to which examples of Romani groups from all over Europe are added in the commentary. The text later lists Sinti and Roma specifically, which is standard reference to the minority holding German citizenship only. It thereby creates ambiguity, reflecting also the unresolved identity politics with which Roma remembering remains imbued in Germany.[200] As in previous decades, the country-specific identity of the main activist organization, the *Zentralrat* did not imply lack of transnational solidarity: in statements given at the inauguration, Rose defined the memorial as representing the success of the struggle in Germany, specifying its meaning in the present as a warning that abroad – Hungary, the Czech Republic, France, Montenegro, etc. violence and exclusion against Roma is still widespread. At the same time, the Rom and Cinti Union's long-time president, Rudko Kawczynski has continued to focus on German politics, referencing a transnational ethics and Roma solidarity, in directing attention to the exploitation of migrant Roma workers by a governmentality that retains, but does not legalize, them.

The divergent readings of the functions of a Roma Holocaust memorial symbolically placed across the memorial for Jewish victims in Berlin continue to animate mnemonic practices. When in May 2016 Roma and non-Roma allies "occupied" the memorial grounds, they demonstrated the symbolic potential of such a location for present-oriented, transnational political action.[201] In moving to the memorial, the majority's responsibility was evoked, by the protesters, for a past crime, but at the same time they also conjured up the memory of Roma agency and the ability to resist – increasingly commemorated on 16 May across Europe, a few days prior to the "occupation". The demonstration of ability to resist was both retroactive (seeing ourselves as more than victims) and oriented towards the present, specifically the aim to prevent the expulsion of asylum-seekers from the Western Balkans.

At the same time, the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma opposed the action, and condemned the instrumentalization of the memorial site, which the organization's press release interpreted as commemorative in character.[202] The Zentralrat did express opposition to the increasing stringency of both asylum regulations and the way they are observed in practice, but essentially held on to the identity politics compromise that had emerged by the late 1990s. It emphasized the tribulations of Roma in especially the Western Balkans, but in terms of political actions it suggested targeting their living conditions in their native

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Sinti und Roma: Keine Opfer zweiter Klasse," *Spiegel Online*, 23 October, 2017 http://www.spiegel.de/kultur/gesellschaft/denkmal-fuer-ermordete-sinti-und-roma-wird-eingeweiht-a-862953.html.

[200] Miriam Bunjes, "Mehr al sein Streit um Worte." See also Kuhla, "Denkmal für Sinti und Roma."

[201] Tagesspiegel, "Polizei räumt besetztes Denkmal für ermordete Sinti und Roma," *Der Tagesspiegel*, 23 May, 2016 http://www.tagesspiegel.de/berlin/berlin-mitte-polizei-raeumt-besetztes-denkmal-fuer-ermordete-sinti-und-roma/13627096.html.

[202] Zentralrat, "Zentralrat lehnt politische Protestaktionen am Denkmal für die ermordeten Sinti und Roma Europas in Berlin ab," *Zentralrat Deutscher Sinti und Roma*, 23 May, 2016 http://zentralrat.sintiundroma.de/zentralrat-lehnt-politische-protestaktionen-am-denkmal-fuer-die-ermordeten-sinti-und-roma-europas-in-berlin-ab/.

countries. This discourse reinforces the platform of transnational solidarity "in Westphalia", i.e. where states (governmentalities) still control and administer populations. Such governmentalities can (and should) accept a moral commitment to observe universal human rights and work towards these, but cannot be made responsible for the fates of individuals (as would be the case in a cosmopolitan ethics).

The German case is usually considered "paradigmatic" in histories of Roma civil rights movements because of the perceived linear progress achieved through successive campaigns and through persuasion and co-optation directed at the political classes of the country. I have sought to demonstrate above that co-optation also operates through the governmentality that seeks to accommodate but also discipline and control populations – in this case, German Roma. In practice and in the specific German situation, this has included the drawing and sustaining of a delineation between groups seen as a German minority and that of "alien" Roma. Interpreting what the memory of the Roma Holocaust means in German society today has a direct bearing on configurations of citizenship, residence and solidarity.

In this respect as well, the Roma Holocaust represents entangled memory where a transnational horizon of historical and (disappearing) generational experience and its corollary, universalist ethics, meet national horizons configured around emancipation in the pre-existing political community, moving from exclusion and invisibility towards inclusion and representation. The two both reinforce each other – with regard to pressure for governmental engagement in the Western Balkans and struggle with incommensurable positions (such as the primacy of solidarity under an emergent Roma identity or of national minority agendas). In articulations of these positions, victimhood and agency also vie for relative prominence. Governmentality navigates this entangled memory, seeking to control it through concessions and delineations. In this enterprise, it can be challenged both from within – partner organizations exerting pressure, and from the outside, by subversion aimed at the stabilizing narratives (in this case of a Holocaust memory that can be fitted into an intra-German horizon). Multidirectionality appears here as the uncontrollable "excess" of memory that resists normalization and exile from the *lieu de mémoire* through which governmentality would pacify Roma agency. It is linked with criticism from the outside, with resistance to the reduction of mnemonic practices to frameworks of geographically bounded histories. It transforms Holocaust remembrance, and the Memorial in particular, into a "knot" where opportunities for action for the Roma reside tangled up with uncomfortable legacies for the majorities. Occupation of the grounds is, inter alia, also a struggle for preserving the normative productivity of this excess. In Germany, where the intra-state option of "conventional" emancipation as minority has been exceptionally successful, this has remained a minority position, if undoubtedly one which has both staying power and has influenced transnational norm entrepreneurship.[203] In other national arenas, however, especially where a roadmap towards emancipation as citizens of the native state was either never proposed or abandoned by prevailing governmentalities, a "flight" to the transnational may emerge as the only viable instrument of both self-empowerment and self-defence.

[203] This can be traced through individual careers, as well: Rudko Kawczynski went on to become President of the Council of Europe partner organization the European Roma and Traveller Forum, which he transformed into an agent of change and transnational identity politics in the first decade of the new millennium.

Some patterns of Roma identity and memory politics first emerging in Germany have recurred, with various amounts of delay and with variable geometries, in other countries. Similarly, the movement of majority politics (or of segments within the political establishment) towards a deeper engagement with perpetrator legacies of the state and of society has progressed across the continent – although in a far less linear fashion. There exists also in every country a governmentality that seeks to efficiently manage "Roma" or a related construct (such as Sinti and Roma in the case reviewed here). In Germany, logics of governmentality have empowered some actors that introduce divisions into the continuities of Roma identity, understood as a transnational super-community and seek arrangements with these, while those on the other side of the divide are represented by organizations that have fewer opportunities for participation. Accordingly, the set of moral imperatives that emerges from responsibility for the Holocaust has been interpreted in the form of a duality, around which establishment Roma and majority discourse has converged: complete integration without forced assimilation of "native" Sinti and Roma with equal rights and opportunities into German society, and limited solidarity with those on the "outside". Their plight is acknowledged, yet responsibility for reforming exclusionary and discriminatory practices falls not on German society, but on supranational and transnational norm entrepreneurs, as well as domestic actors in those societies. In contrast to this, in countries where governmentalities are less welcoming to NGOs and to co-opting initiatives from marginalized groups, where a culture of contrition over historical responsibility for genocide is less established or non-existent, several aspects of the "German paradigm" appear hard to imitate. Can – and should – Roma elites build a minority participating in symbolic exchanges with the majority in such situations? Can – and should – Holocaust memory be seen as a resource through which to establish a transnational community, rather than a path to gain acceptance by the majority? Can – and should – Roma activists and NGOs engage with the state and the national level or engage in cooperating with an emergent transnational governmentality that might constrain national politicians more efficiently than any domestic movement? The section on Hungary represents the closer investigation of these choices and dilemmas in the context of post-communist memory and a far more adversarial governmentality, offering a divergent analysis that captures situations, which the vast majority of European Roma, living in the ECE member states, are likely to encounter.

5. Case Study II: Activism, norm-entrepreneurship and a recolonizing governmentality in Hungary

Post-1989 mnemonic practices in Hungary have been marked by cleavages separating two ideological communities. The mnemonic community, that accepts interpreting national history from the vantage point of Western, liberal values, has integrated the memory canon formed around the primacy of the Holocaust. This pattern of remembering has broadened in the past quarter century to include not only liberals but former and present-day socialists.

An opposing culture of remembrance emphasizes the need to recover (the continuity of) the nation across centuries, liberating it from "foreign" truth regimes. For this latter group, the Holocaust holds a central position in the memory canon only by virtue of being subsumed under the label of totalitarian oppression, which in turn symbolizes and condenses centuries of foreign domination and national victim role.[204] Both of these mainstream approaches have made political offers amounting to an "identity pact" to the Roma in the past two decades roughly. In the context of these offers, the memory of the Roma Holocaust was also assigned a place in national commemorative practices. Therefore, the following, first presents a concise account of how a post-1989 progressive Roma politics of memory emerged and also launched several interventions with regard to the memorialization of the Holocaust. Subsequently I show to what extent the institutionalization of Roma memory politics has been influenced by governmental interventions, and give an account of the memory dimensions of the two different identity politics offers by prime ministers, Ferenc Gyurcsány and Viktor Orbán.

The three distinct phases of constructing mnemonic practices around the Roma Holocaust and the consequences of such practices relative to the prevailing biopolitical regimes constitute the basic structure of this section. Roma history and struggle are interpreted by considering aspects of the treatment of Roma by Hungarian governmentalities as well as the struggle of Roma and their allies against some of these practices. Governmentalities may be challenged through a spectrum of means, from crime to intellectual and political struggle – what follows focuses strictly on the latter. It deals with elites that produce languages and counter-languages of disciplining and rebellion, of stability and subversion. The concept of memory games is invoked to interpret governmental manoeuvring in the policy arena, highlighting how the national government attempts to structure memory in a manner that pre-empts excessive costs (such as a head-on collision with supranational organization), while seeking to both retain control over memory and embed its messages to the present into mnemonic practices. This investigation also reveals the domination of the national level (the prevailing governmentality) in the policy arenas of memory and identity. The analysis, however, also shows that this dominance is sustained in a far more complex and somewhat constraining international constellation than usually assumed. Roma-related manifestations of the post-communist memory complex should not be misread as *just* a state-driven competition for victim status in which Roma are rendered invisible. Rather, the quasi-colonial governmentality works through the radical recontextualization of Roma victimhood and resistance, aimed at stripping them of their emancipatory potential identified by transnational Roma actors in the 1970s and after. Neither victim status nor the capacity to resist is denied, yet both victimhood and resistance are confined in an interpretive space

[204] Attila Ágh, "Cultural War and Reinventing the Past in Poland and Hungary: The Politics of Historical Memory in East–Central Europe Source," *Polish Political Science Yearbook* 45 (2016): 32–44; Gábor Egry, "A Fate for a Nation: Concepts of History and the Nation in Hungarian Politics, 1989–2010," in *Thinking Through Transition: Liberal Democracy, Authoritarian Pasts, and Intellectual History in East Central Europe after 1989,* eds. Martin Kopecek and Piotr Wcislik (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2015). See also Gábor Gyáni, "Trianon versus holokauszt," *Élet és Irodalom* (10 August, 2012) and Apor, "Eurocommunism," 233-246.

defined by an assumption of irrelevance for the present, and exist as vacuous representations of an insular past.

Roma in Hungary share their "structural history" with other Roma communities of the continent.[205] After multiple waves of immigration, yielding a culturally and linguistically heterogeneous minority, Roma were among the first to face the full weight and arsenal of emergent biopolitics in the modernizing Hungarian state. Defining nomadism as a threat early on and subsequently "detecting" it even among sedentary groups,[206] emergent Hungarian governmentality found resources, from gendarmes to enforced medical exams, to control the Roma in society. Roma have been the most consistently moulded subject of disciplinary power through policing and discriminatory regulations regarding movement, identity and the biological body – not unlike in the cases of Germany and France.

During the late modern period, Roma lives have been marked out for discrimination, in as much as they carried a *différend*, an irreducible alterity. Biopolitics foresaw the elimination of these alterities, defined along colonial logics of civilization, referencing backwardness, lawlessness and the necessity of support for backward groups to help them achieve "cultural adulthood". Both before and after World War II, the "civilizing" discipline imposed on Roma could translate and manifest itself in random violence, physical or cultural, by power operators.

The Roma Holocaust unfolded in Hungary through gradations that culminated in the Arrow-cross (Hungarian Nazi) terror in the late fall of 1944 and the first months of 1945. Policing was transformed, from 1939 on, into occasional, and later more frequent, forced labour, as well as disciplinary (but not immediately genocidal) terror. At the same time, nominal membership in the nation was not denied, reflected in the practice of drafting Roma into armed military service until 1944.[207] Then, first the new, more pro-German government after the occupation of the country by German troops in March 1944, and, in October of the same year, the Arrow-cross regime, imposed stringent and increasingly violent regulations that constituted the prelude to the Holocaust. In the fall of 1944, mass executions and forced internment alike became widespread across all territories controlled by

[205] Often, surveys in English language literature reference the same short accounts of Roma history in Hungary. It is a major problem that fundamental research carried out by Hungarian scholars is often not available in English or other foreign languages. Important works on which the preceding historical sketch is based include László Pomogyi, *Cigánykérdés és cigányügyi igazgatás a polgári Magyarországon* (Budapest: Osiris – Századvég, 1995); Gyula Purcsi Barna, *A cigánykérdés 'gyökeres és végleges megoldása': Tanulmányok a XX. századi 'cigánykérdés' történetéből* (Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó, 2004); Csaba Dupcsik, *A magyarországi cigányok története: Történelem a cigánykutatások tükrében, 1890-2008* (Budapest: Osiris Kiad, 2009), and, as an exception, being available in English, Balázs Majtényi and György Majtényi, *A Contemporary History of Exclusion. The Roma Issue in Hungary from 1945 to 2015* (Budapest – New York: Central European University Press, 2016), 98-103, (dealing with the post-1945 period).

[206] Colin Clark, "'Severity has often enraged but never subdued a gypsy': The History and Making of European Romani Stereotypes," in *The Role of the Romanies Images and Counter-Images of Gypsies'/Romanies in European Cultures*, eds. Nicholas Saul and Susan Tebbutt (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 116-145. See also Robbie McVeigh, "Ethnicity Denial and Racism: The Case of the Government of Ireland Against Irish Travelers," *Translocations* 2, no. 19 (2007): 92-96.

[207] Bársony and Daróczi, *Pharrajimos*, 34-36.

the then-Hungarian state.[208]) Over 30 camps were likely in operation, and tens of thousands suffered local violence, internment, forced labour and/or deportation. The number of Roma victims murdered by Hungarian authorities and paramilitary, as well as the German Nazi machinery, is usually estimated to be between a few thousands and 50, 000. The lower figure represents an approach that focuses on documentary evidence,[209] the upper – an estimate by poet Károly Bari – makes the assumption that recorded mass executions are essentially the tip of the iceberg, with many more undocumented cases especially in late 1944.[210] Most other commentators converge around 3,000-10,000 deaths, with the number of victims of direct persecution and violence who survived, usually taken to be five to ten times that number.[211]

While figures regarding victims are likely to remain contested, for interpreting the relationship between knowledge production about the past and mnemonic practices, the most relevant aspect is that the genocidal character of the violence has not been disputed by academics in Hungary. This has likely contributed to the relative preponderance of political figures who similarly have accepted the notion of a Roma Holocaust. The central question therefore becomes how the Roma Holocaust is embedded into Hungarian history, linked to or decoupled from long-established patterns of exclusion and marginalization and how it is positioned with regard to the present.

In the interwar period, policing had remained the most important tool in the instrumentarium of emergent biopolitics conceived in terms of conservative-authoritarian nationalism. In several waves, but especially after 1945, this was replaced by the large-scale reconfiguring of life rendered bare through forced resettlement, mandatory employment and various health and education directives in the socialist era. At the same time, the latter regime did open capillaries of mobility and made possible the emergence of a Roma intellectual stratum, which, while thin, was increasingly permitted to act as a voice within the confines of the system.[212] It was these intellectuals who first sought to give voice to Roma from within the communities. Of this group, the older generation tended to be more cooperative and accepting toward the waning state socialist regime, whilst the younger one experimented with more direct challenges to power already by the 1980s. Both generations, however, conceptualized Roma identity as culturally and ethnically distinct, while considering Roma to be also part of the Hungarian political nation, regardless of the vernacular of a given individual. They also shared awareness of, and early commitment to, memorializing the Roma Holocaust. Through Lutheran church connections and some early contacts between the West German left and Hungarian progressive opposition

[208] Ibid., 38-41.

[209] László Karsai, *A cigánykérdés Magyarországon 1919-1945: Út a cigány Holocausthoz* (Budapest: Cserépfalvi, 1992).

[210] Károly Bari, "The Holocaust in Gypsy Folk Poetry," *Hungarian Quarterly* 42, no. 162 (2001): 65.

[211] Bársony and Daróczi, *Pharrajimos*, 41. See Szabolcs Szita, *Tények, adatok a cigányok háborús üldöztetésének (1939–1945) tanintézeti feldolgozásáho* (Budapest: Magyar Auschwitz Alapítvány – Holocaust Dokumentációs Központ – Nyugat-magyarországi Egyetem Soproni Tanárképző Intézete, 2000).

[212] Majtényi and Majtényi, *A Contemporary History of Exclusion*, 98-103.

figures, news of the activism of German Sinti and Roma organizations made it across the Iron Curtain, to Hungary around 1980.[213]

The first major act of memory entrepreneurship for the first generations of Roma intellectuals aimed at establishing a memorial in Székesfehérvár, close to the scene of the single largest massacre of Roma in Hungary during World War II.[214] Communist memory politics, as discussed previously, effectively prohibited such "singling out" of a victim group. Notably, the 1985 memorial by the Danube in Budapest, the most imposing element in the World War II remembrance practices of the waning Kádár regime, not only omitted to mention Roma, but did not specify Jews as victims either, its inscription limited to commemorating "victims of fascism". As a result of the strict supervising of mnemonic practices, the initiative, which had been in development since 1974, foundered, having been rejected by the regime for years.

Roma in the Holocaust, nevertheless, became representable in certain limited aspects in the later years of the Kádár regime. Importantly, cultural authorities permitted the broad distribution and multiple printings of *The Colour of Smoke* [1975] by Menyhért Lakatos, a novel telling the antecedents of the Roma Holocaust through the eyes of an adolescent country boy.[215] It contained straightforward accounts of discrimination and violence by the interwar authoritarian regime, as well as a dreamlike conclusion of Roma being hauled on a train, imagining that they are taken to work. Ágnes Daróczi was featured on national television in 1972 in a talent competition, reciting a poem referencing Roma suffering by young poet Károly Bari, and Zsolt Csalog's collection of stories organized around Roma memory, published in 1976, also contained a first-person victim account.[216] Folklore collections compiled by Kamill Erdős since the 1950s had included select pieces of ballads referencing the Holocaust, as did the 1977 volume by László Szegő – these, however, had to be reintroduced into public discussions in the 1990s by Roma intellectuals.[217]

The genesis of progressive Roma politics of memory

As the identity politics of the late Kádár regime became more permissive toward representations of cultural difference and collective memory, documentary films could address previously invisible legacies of World War II. These included the catastrophe of the Hungarian 2nd Army at the Don river, the genocide against Jews and, importantly, a short piece by József Lojkó Lakatos in 1981, entitled *The Forgotten Dead,* focusing on the Nazi genocide of

[213] Evangélikus Élet, "Politikusok és cigányok Bergen-Belsenben," *Evangélikus Élet* (26 October, 1980).

[214] János Bársony and Daróczi, *Pharrajimos,* 45. See also József Harmat, *Roma holokauszt a Grábler-tónál: A székesfehérvári és várpalotai cigányok tömeges kivégzése Várpalotán 1945-ben* (Várpalota – Veszprém: Várpalota Önkormányzata és a Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Veszprém Megyei Levéltára, 2015).

[215] Menyhért Lakatos, *The Color of Smoke: An Epic Novel of the Roma* (Williamstown: New Europe Books, 2015).

[216] Ágnes Daróczi, Romanistan Hungarian TV Broadcast, *Ki Mit Tud* (1972). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9OUTPwiW0JE. See also Zsolt Csalog, *Kilenc cigány* (Budapest: Kozmosz Könyvek, 1976).

[217] László Szegő, *Csikóink kényesek: Magyarországi cigány népköltészet* (Budapest: Európa, 1977), 93; Kamill Erdős, *A Békés megyei cigányok és cigány dialektusok Magyarországon* (Gyula: Erkel Ferenc Múzeum, 1979), 33.

Roma.[218] László Szegő was able to publish an interview in the periodical *Mozgó Világ* [World in Motion] in 1983 with a Roma survivor, which represented an important inroad into the cultural-political mainstream. The periodical was at the time the most influential among segments of the intelligentsia growing disillusioned with Soviet-type communism and the significance of achieving representation – in the voice of a Roma – of Roma suffering, forecasting the post-1989 alliance between Roma and majority progressives.[219] Finally, Menyhért Lakatos was permitted, in 1984, to contribute a short chapter about the Roma Holocaust to the volume commemorating the German occupation and the terror by the collaborationist regimes of 1944, as the first representation of Roma suffering in the official politics of remembrance sponsored by the communist party state.[220] The exploration of the memory knot connecting Jewish and Roma memory, launched a few years later at the behest of János Kőbányai, the editor Past and Present [Múlt és Jövő], a Jewish periodical would prove more impactful in the long term. In a special volume of the periodical, an experienced sociologist and social worker, Ágnes Diósi contributed a piece on Roma memory of the Holocaust. In this manner, Roma suffering gained representation in one of the earliest Jewish anthologies published in the increasingly liberal climate of the disintegrating communist regime.[221]

This coincided with the unveiling of the first memorial plaque commemorating Roma victims, a rare triumph for the Roma coalition, also led by Lakatos, operating within the Patriotic Popular Front. The latter was a corollary organization to the ruling party, created largely to offer a monitored and controlled forum for alternative, yet "allied" political platforms during the softer phase of state dictatorship. It was unveiled in a village (Tornyos) which had functioned as a detention and deportation centre, and permission for it was likely obtained, in part, because it was far from the more strictly controlled public spaces of the capital.[222]

The pre-1989 efforts, however meagre results they yielded due to their conflict with the official mnemonic practices of the Kádár regime, likely played a role in the emergence of a marginal awareness among intellectuals in the period of democratization. Subsequently, Roma were not entirely left out the "reconciliation cycle" that unfolded after 1989.[223] The first democratically elected Hungarian government, was headed by József Antall. Antall pursued an integrative identity politics, which aimed at accommodating both Jewish and Roma (cultural or ethnic) identities within the framework of the nation. Sponsoring a series of (usually modest) memorials commemorating Jewish victims, the government at least did not attempt to hinder regional initiatives at memorializing Roma suffering. Three provincial

[218] József Lojkó Lakatos, "Elfeledett holtak," *Documentary short* (1981).

[219] László Szegő, "Győrben egyiket se lőtték agyon…," *Mozgó Világ* 9, no. 12 (1983).

[220] Menyhért Lakatos, "A cigányok sorsa 1944-ben," in *Magyarország 1944-ben,* ed. Sándor Orbán (Budapest: Kossuth, 1984).

[221] Ágnes Diósi, "'Verd meg, isten, a németet, mert megölte a népeket!' A cigány holocaust a cigányság emlékezetében," in *Múlt és jövő: Zsidó kulturális antológia*, ed. János Kőbányi (Budapest: Agroinform – Antikva, 1988), 98-102.

[222] Bársony and Daróczi, *Pharrajimos*, 46. See also Szász, "Memory Emancipated," 172, 176-177.

[223] Péter Szuhay, "A magyarországi cigány etnikai csoportok kulturális integrációjáról és a nemzeti kultúra megalkotásáról," *BUKSZ* 7, no. 3 (1995). See also Mink and Neumayer, *History, Memory and Politics*, 10.

cities became the home of various public monuments dedicated specifically to Roma victims in 1991-1994 (Nagykanizsa, Nyíregyháza, and Szombathely).[224] At the same time, the government did not adopt the commemorative practices that had emerged in Germany a decade prior, and, if anything, was seeking to juxtapose these victim groups and segments of the majority society (such as the soldiers sacrificed in vain to stop the Stalingrad offensive of the Red Army in early 1943, etc.). Early official speeches regarding Roma in the Holocaust[225] could invoke the same disciplinary logic against the Roma *différend* that had also historically motivated violence against them. As Zsuzsanna Vidra has reconstructed, the Speaker of the first democratically Parliament did address Roma in the Holocaust on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the deportations to Auschwitz from Hungary. György Szabad, however, called on the Roma to do everything to turn around their lives so as to be able to take their place in society. In doing so, he expressly severed all linkages of a moral imperative arising out of Hungarian perpetratorship in the Holocaust toward the situation of Roma in the present.[226] This formula was to recur, especially, but not exclusively, amongst conservatives in the two decades that followed.

The "umbrella of national memory" that the Antall-government opened diverged from the preferences of many Roma intellectuals. *Phralipe* had already emerged as the most vocal Roma organization, unique because of its bottom-up, grassroots character, with an emphasis on activism and actions. This reflected its roots in an early civic resistance movement against the ghettoization of Roma in the industrial city of Miskolc (where large numbers of Roma had been forcibly resettled to provide labour for socialist industrialization). Phralipe's ranks were bolstered by many pre-1989 intellectuals of the second generation, i.e. those who had called for more decisive action against the identity politics of the Kádár regime – activists such as Ágnes Daróczi, Béla Osztojkán and Jenő Zsigó. Their stance stood in stark contrast with most other Hungarian and East Central European fora of interest representation. Both in *Phralipe* and in the Hungarian Roma Parliament (HRP), conceived originally as a supra-organizational platform by *Phralipe* and other activists, a current informed by West-European, notably German discourses was influential. In the two most significant Roma periodicals of the early 1990s, the eponymous *Phralipe* and HRP's *Amaro Drom,* references to the significance of the Holocaust with regard to defining Roma identity and accounts of the emancipatory memory work done by German Sinti and Roma abound. *Amaro Drom p*ublished in 1991 a full review of the exhibition *Nur wenige kamen zurück [Only a few ever returned]*, complementing accounts of German and Austrian suffering published in the same year in *Phralipe*.[227]

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[224] Peter Szuhay, "A holocausttól a pharrajimosig: Egy szemünk elõtt kialakulóm rítus, mint a romák történelmének metaforája," *Élet és Irodalom*, 50, no. 46. (2005). See also Szász, "Memory Emancipated," 129, 172.

[225] The term is used to reflect the non-recognition of a Roma Holocaust at the time.

[226] Zsuzsannna Vidra, "A roma holokauszt narratívái. Történetírás, megemlékezés, politikai diskurzusok," *Regio*, 16, no. 2. (2006): 127.

[227] Amaro Drom, "Csak kevesen tértek vissza – Szintik és romák a nemzeti szocializmus alatt," *Amaro Drom* 1, no. 7 (1991). László Seres, "A cigányság sorsa a fasiszta Ausztriában," *Phralipe* 2, no. 2 (1991). See also Regine Stenner, "A németországi cigányüldözés története," *Phralipe* 2, no. 6 (1991).

This public history focus did not fade in the 1990s: the single most covered international event was the opening of the Heidelberg cultural and documentation centre.[228] These reports about developments in Germany were embedded into a series of relevant discussions about the Roma Holocaust in Hungary that touched on oral history and folklore as preservers of memory, forced labour service, the internment camps and, most importantly, the relevance of the memory of the Holocaust.[229] A characteristic voice of the period, Béla Osztojkán argued forcefully for reclaiming Roma memory in the interest of shaping a self-conscious Roma community. He considered both post-communist majority society and Roma communities "bankrupt" and distinct, but nevertheless each other's relatives.[230]

The relationship between Holocaust memory and the progressive Roma identity project in Hungary of the 1990s was laid out, after several iterations, with perhaps the greatest force and clarity by a one-time Miskolc leader of *Phralipe*, later president of the HRP and other organizations, Aladár Horváth, in several longer opinion pieces published in leading dailies. During the second half of the 1990s, Horváth was at the helm of a movement to institutionalize formal national commemorations of Roma victims of the Holocaust, which had held the first of the annual vigils in front of the Hungarian Parliament on 2 August, 1995.[231] In a programmatic article from 1997, Horváth laid out four theses about Roma victimhood in history and political agency in the present. Roma are victims of genocide – this, Horváth argued, is not so much denied, as underrepresented. Also, the road leading to the genocide against Roma was paved by a long history of persecution. Importantly, this distributes responsibility for the Roma Holocaust amongst European national majorities, including Hungarians. Third, the discrimination of Roma did not end after the Holocaust, Roma have not become *de facto* emancipated. Fourth, at the level of meta-history, Horváth also laid stress on Roma abilities and the stake in shaping the Roma self as living with, but distinct from, the non-Roma Hungarian majority.[232] In so doing, he reiterated previous positions, most frequently presented on the pages of *Phralipe* and *Amaro Drom* of the intellectuals/community organizers who made up the "progressives" in this period.

The unobserved relevance of the Holocaust for majority society remained Horváth's central theme during the commemorative vigils, which attracted increasing attention each year. In his speech delivered during the 2 August vigil, in 1998, and published in the largest daily at the time [Népszabadság], he observed the resistance to connect the past with the

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[228] Phralipe, "Roma kulturális és dokumentációs központot adtak át a németországi Heidelbergben," *Phralipe* 8, no. 4 (1997). See also Amaro Drom, "Roma központ Németországban," *Amaro Drom* 7, no. 4. (1997).

[229] Bari, "The Holocaust in Gypsy Folk Poetry:" 64-70. See also Zsuzsanna Bódi, "A munkaszolgálatos," *Amaro Drom*, 1, no. 7. (1991); Waldemar Chrostowski, "A cigányok holocaustja," *Phralipe* 3, no. 5 (1992); Henry R. Huttenbach, "A 'Romani Porazhmos': Az európai cigányság kiirtása 1933–1945 között," *Phralipe*, 5, no. 7 (1994); János Bársony, "A magyarországi cigány holocaust és előzményei," *Amaro Drom* 4, no. 7 (1994); János Bársony, "Magyarországi cigány Holocaust," *Phralipe* 7, no. 10 (1996), and N.N., "Hogy emlékezetedből ki ne hulljon: A cigány holokauszt utóélete töredékekben," *Phralipe* 7, no. 11 (1996).

[230] Béla Osztojkán, Bevezető, *Phralipe*, no. 1 (1990).

[231] Bársony and Daróczi, *Pharrajimos,* 47. and Szuhay, "A holocausttól a pharrajimosig."

[232] Aladár Horváth, "Holocaust beszéd," *Magyar Hírlap* (6 August, 1997).

present. Horváth's assessment is an unintentional invocation of Agambenian concepts of abandonment:

> We live in zones of indifference, as we did when we were being herded into cattle wagons or walked to the village's edge to shoot us into the ditches they had made us dig up. Society did not care then and does not care today about what will become of us, about where our road might lead. As long as we continue living in ghettoes, in segregated shanty towns, away from the gaze of society, few will take interest in the death pangs of our beaten-up and crippled people, audible from many places.[233]

Horváth revisited, in important opinion pieces, the consequences of keeping the memory of the Holocaust alive. In 2003, he laid out the identity programme that had inspired the efforts of Roma progressives to institutionalize remembrance during the preceding decade and a half: Arriving at a shared civic identity, available as a resource to both Roma and the non-Roma majority, recognizing the distinct character of the former.[234] His position partially reflected tenets promoting deterritorialized nationhood, rooted in a common, transnational memory, which his group of progressives had made available in Hungarian and brought into circulation in the previous decade.[235] Yet, as in the case of his mentors, the early "radicals" of *Phralipe*, the acknowledgement of a Roma nationality did not replace the programme of existing within the civic community of Hungary, avoiding self-exclusion as well as acknowledging the self-identification of many Roma with the country where they live. A Roma national task, in this reading, is to form a co-existing partial nation ("Roma Hungarians, Hungarian Roma") and change prevailing mentalities. Historical memory had a crucial part in this as the starting point for rethinking intercommunity relations. As Horváth ironically pointed out:

> Right Honourable History! We have been here all the time. When we made sacrifices in the struggles of the majority nation we were not considered Roma. When it was the majority's turn to help us, we became strangers in the eyes of our own mother nation.[236]

Beyond promoting the acknowledgment of historical responsibility in majority society, reaching out to and uniting linguistically and culturally diverse Hungarian Roma remained an immediate challenge throughout the post-1989 period. Holocaust memory, as evident in some remarks in the pieces referenced above, was seen as having the additional function of constructing unity through memory. In deploying these mnemonic practices, the progressives sought to bridge three distinct and also internally heterogeneous ethno-cultural

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[233] Aladár Horváth, "Sorsunkat közrefogja a közöny," *Népszabadság* (17 August, 1998).

[234] Aladár Horváth, "Gádzsó és roma köztársaság?," *Népszabadság* (24 May, 2003).

[235] Jean-Pierre Liégeois and Nicolae Gheorghe "Európa romái," *Phralipe* 8, no. 4 (1997): 5–34. See also Liégeois and Gheorghe, *Roma/Gypsies*, 12-13.

[236] A translation of the original article is available in English.

backgrounds amongst Roma in Hungary, translating the potential to form new collectivities by recourse to shared historical experience.[237]

Throughout the 1990s, memory work was spearheaded by "progressive" NGOs, with a mix of state support and international donors. An analytic summary of identity positions amongst the progressives noted the oscillation between aspiring to a separate national existence and emphasizing coexistence with the majority in Hungary. Roma ethnicity could, in theory, be embedded into a civic (post-ethnic) Hungarian nation, but it could also serve as the basis for a cultural nationalism. Whilst the former emerged as dominant, the figure of Roma nationhood was frequently deployed in progressive discourse (if with qualifiers and lacking the transnational, deterritorialized bent of the international Roma movement).[238] Nation-building within a nation is possibly the best, if oxymoronic, summary of this position. Internationally, this reflected German influence, specifically of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, but also integrated the transnational dimension theorized prominently by East Central European Roma intellectuals such as Gheorghe and Mirga.

As the above suggest, Roma progressives capitalized on all three aspects of Holocaust memory as introduced in the section on Roma activism. The intracommunity dimensions were utilized in the interest of fashioning a Hungarian Roma collectivity (superseding the three larger traditional group identities present in the country).[239] This was to be conducted along the same reflexive constructivist agenda as parallel initiatives at transnational nation-building. The universal-cosmopolitan aspect found frequent expression in Roma periodicals, usually geared towards demonstrating to Roma readers the symbolic legacy their community was carrying. This represented a manner of self-empowerment through history. Finally, the most important dimension remained the emancipatory aspect of remembrance: Holocaust memory was always contextualized as bearing symbolic relevance for the present, still marked by discrimination. Mnemonic practices were configured to instruct majority society and its institutions about the victimhood of a group while transforming this reminder into an agency-generating thought. Roma progressives recognized the significance of the memory of the Holocaust and, as the surveyed speech acts attest, operationalized it largely along transnational and German Sinti/Roma knowledges and practices.

These efforts were not so much directly resisted, as passed over by the new political class in Hungary. On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, Gyula Horn, the Socialist Prime Minister, sent an official greeting to Roma leaders that largely failed to be registered. The norm entrepreneurial initiatives of the President of the Hungary, Árpád Göncz, who promoted the acceptance of perpetrator legacies[240] never acquired critical mass – both a strong civic intellectual discourse and a committed political power centre were

[237] Péter Szuhay, "Akiket cigányoknak neveznek: akik magukat románok, muzsikusnak vagy beásnak mondják," in *A cigányság társadalomismerete*, eds. Terézia Reisz and Mihály Andor (Pécs: Iskolakultúra könyvek, 2002), 29-31. See also László Fosztó, "Van-e cigány nemzettudat?," in *Társadalmi önismeret és nemzeti önazonosság Közép-Európában,* ed. Csilla Fedinec (Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 2002).

[238] Szuhay, "A magyarországi cigány etnikai csoportok."

[239] Szuhay, "Akiket cigányoknak neveznek."

[240] Vidra, "A roma holokauszt narratívái:" 126.

missing. Instead, it was mainly intellectuals – both Roma and non-Roma allies – who added to the official discourse of Holocaust remembrance a Roma component through pieces published in dailies and magazines.[241] As activist and researcher Ágnes Daróczi became editor of the public broadcaster's Roma news and cultural magazine (entitled *Patrin*), the penetration of mainstream forums continued beyond the first Roma day she organized, as an anchor for the national broadcaster, on 2 August, 1994. All of this, however, failed to produce a spill-over that would have fundamentally reconfigured public consciousness. National politicians were increasingly turning to picking and choosing cadre from among Roma leaders, conferring legitimacy on those who were seen as less "problematic" by providing funding and exposure. Finally, from 1995 onwards, a new minority interest representation structure based on self-governments was introduced, which could be manipulated by the government and political parties at several levels, from elections through organizational funding to pork-barrelling local politics. Culture, including memory work, preserved its importance for the progressive Roma elite, precisely as other vistas of minority politics were increasingly dominated by political dependents of major (non-Roma) parties. There, their efforts were not so much contested, as contained. Their ambitions as norm entrepreneurs failed on two levels. First, they could not sway majority society towards acceptance of the Roma Holocaust as a universal signifier reminding the majority of past wrongs and current discrimination. Second, more and more Roma opted to participate in politics, not through activist work in NGOs, but rather through the system of self-governments with its payout system and built-in propensity to focus on "fixable" local issues. The model of a self-organizing community was also fading.[242]

Compared with the German case, both similarities and differences are visible. In Germany, the prevailing governmentality emerged out of the preferential partnership between a self-limiting NGO platform nevertheless committed to pursuing a clear emancipatory agenda and a government acknowledging responsibility. In Hungary, the political class established a dependency, proven by how subsequent governments opted to work with the same organization (Lungo Drom) throughout much of the past two decades, buttressing Lungo Drom's control over the interest representation mechanism. While the *Zentralrat* in Germany retained its autonomy and lobbied the government, in Hungary, increasingly, the Lungo Drom-dominated system of self-government has lost its power of initiative. Both governmentalities can be seen to seek a "mainstream" partner with which cooperation is possible, but the relative difference in the distribution of resources has meant that in Hungary, with weak civilian culture, interest representation has been recast as dependency in the emerging new "self-government" aspect of the prevailing governmentality. The first balanced model of Roma-majority relations into which Holocaust memory was embedded, included the government and its preferred partner, the self-government, whilst progressive norm entrepreneurs were kept at arm's length. It is the result of this that, while it is possible to reconstruct a fully-fledged memory of the Roma

[241] Binder Mátyás, "Felébredt ez a nép ," A magyarországi romák/cigányok etnikai-nemzeti önszerveződési folyamatairól," In *A múlt feltárása – előítéletek nélkül,* ed. Jenő Gergely (Budapest: ELTE BTK, 2006), 74-76.

[242] Martin Kovats, "The political significance of the first National Gypsy Self-government in Hungary," *Contemporary Politics* 6, no. 3 (2000); Ernő Kállai, "Helyi cigány kisebbségi önkormányzatok Magyarországon," *Pro Minoritate* 15, no. 2 (2005): 137 -140.

Holocaust in 1990s, its effect on society has remained limited. Roma norm entrepreneurs did not possess the resources to challenge mainstream silences about them. The communally developed representations of the past did not enter into broader circulation until – as was the case in Germany – political synergies propelled parts of the post-1989 progressive Roma elite into positions of relative influence after 2002.

Norm-entrepreneurial initiatives after 2002

The years 2002-2006 constitute a period of norm entrepreneurship regarding Roma memory and the acknowledgement of perpetrator legacies burdening majority society. The period followed the accession years, which included scrutiny and benchmarking by the European Commission regarding, *inter alia*, Roma inclusion. East Central European governments, Hungary included, were compelled to launch inclusion projects, which in turn were supported by pre-accession funds (covering up to 50% of the costs). Given the structure of the accession process, 1998-2002 were also, the only years when progress had to be measurable and demonstrated.[243] This provided some Roma networks with funding, but cooperation with the conservative government then in power remained problematic for Roma progressives. Furthermore, partnering with (grass-roots) Roma organizations was not one of the criteria for community funding use, which limited the ability of long-established NGOs to act as co-shapers of larger projects and made their participation, in any case, dependent on governmental preferences.[244]

Despite funding being available and the supranationally mandated pre-occupation with the situation of the Roma, the period did not reconfigure the relationship between (marginal) Roma memory and the mainstream near-invisibility of the Roma Holocaust. Mnemonic practices shifted only slowly after the 2002 elections, which brought a Socialist government (supported by its junior coalition partners, the liberal Free Democrats) into power. A long-term ally of Roma movements, the scholar Martin Kovats gave voice to the relative optimism of the time:

"At the start of 2003, it seems we may be on the threshold of significant changes with respect to Roma policy and politics in Hungary. Government policy is exhibiting a greater concern for social cohesion and equal opportunities, i.e. treating Roma people as citizens in contrast to the complacent promotion of some essential Roma 'difference'."[245] It should be noted that even this partial mainstreaming of Roma memory occurred *after* the period of intense supranational scrutiny and incentivization, signalling the relative weakness of the international context as a driver of social change in the field of mnemonic practices.

[243] As it was the Copenhagen Council meeting in December 2002 that decided on the accession, despite the enlargement formally taking place on May 1, 2004, it is more exact to consider 1998-2002 as the period of the strongest normative pressure by the European Union.

[244] Jennifer Tanaka, *Roundtable on Roma and Sinti National Policies: Organised by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Council of Europe, and the Project on Ethnic Relations, 1-2 November 1998 PER Report* (Princeton, NJ: Project on Ethnic Relations, 1998) http://www.per-usa.org/1997-2007/osce_rnd.htm.

[245] Martin Kovats, "Roma Politics and Policy in Hungary 1999-2003," *European Yearbook of Minority Issues Online* 2, no. 1 (2002): 86.

The post-2002 processes unfolded primarily in the context of an ambition to shape a new, inclusive left, aligned to Western European norms of identity and memory politics. Much as in late 1970s Germany, and the discovery of the "other victims" of the Holocaust, it was a domestic shift of political and ideological preferences that helped move Roma policy and politics higher up the government agenda.

In 2002, the Roma Coordination Council, successor to the inconsequential inter-ministerial Gypsy Affairs Committee, an advisiory body to the prime minister, invited some representatives of progressives to join bureaucrats and Roma self-government members in discussions on the coordination of Roma policy. These included long-time civil rights and social justice activists such as Jenő Zsigó and Aladár Horváth. The Roma NGO sphere gained an opportunity for participation in inter-ministerial decision-making for the first time. Horváth also became a special advisor to the Prime Minister (PM), Péter Medgyessy, at the time, and many of the leaders of the post-1989 activist movement, the original formulators of Roma Holocaust discourse in Hungary, joined him in accepting advisorial positions in one branch of the public administration or another.

In 2004 Ferenc Gyurcsány, a young ideologue, took over the government following the resignation of PM Péter Medgyessy. Gyurcsány was a driver of inclusionary and emancipatory initiatives as an advisor to the PM and as a rising party ideologue since 2002. After forming his cabinet, he engaged in a large-scale norm-entrepreneurial undertaking of considerable ambition. The socialist-liberal coalition government sponsored a second round of Holocaust memorial constructions, which included Zalaegerszeg, Pécs and Szigetvár. The most important was support accorded the Roma Holocaust Memorial Committee by the Budapest city council, which incorporated intellectuals like Ágnes Daróczi and which led to the construction of the Budapest memorial by 2006. The latter represented a qualitative departure from the memorials of the 1990s and the early aughts[246] in conceptualization and location alike.[247] It was, however more important that Gyurcsány consciously broke with the taboo of the "post-socialist memory complex" in 2006-2007. After delivering a short greeting in Lovari in Parliament upon becoming Prime Minister in 2004 – an absolute first – three years later he accepted that responsibility of perpetratorship fell on majority society. The greeting stated, that "there is but one Hungary, which is the common country for Roma and *gadje*." Its novelty consisted in stating that it is possible to speak about two communities in Hungary, i.e. that Roma inclusion does not have to occur under the aegis of a de-ethnicizing and nationalizing effort and through inclusion in the narrative of collective Hungarian victimhood. In 2006, it was Gyurcsány's cabinet minister, Péter Kiss who delivered a speech at the unveiling of the monument. In his speech, Kiss stated that "we hold a shared national responsibility for the events that occurred 60 years ago. We have a reason to be ashamed,

[246] Szász, "Memory Emancipated," 177.

[247] It is a granite object with a suffering figure visible through cracks, bringing together a brutalist initial appearance with intricate conceptualizations inspired by postmodern logics. For an in detail analysis, consult Szász, "Memory Emancipated," 168-195. Invaluable within the analysis is the historical reconstruction of the process, not recorded in other scholarly contributions, through interviews, notably with Roma activist, journalist and scholar Ágnes Daróczi, the leader of the social movement for establishing the memorial).

as prejudices still live on, in the form of gross generalizations and racism." The ranking Socialist of the Budapest party organization, János Schiff (deputy to liberal mayor Gábor Demszky), went on in his speech to position Roma as a universal symbol of "liberty" by virtue of their way of life, and thus the antithesis of Nazism.[248]

A year later, Gyurcsány's office issued a formal communiqué on the memorial day of the Roma Holocaust. It contained three key acknowledgements, which expanded on Kiss' speech the year before. It stated that the Holocaust was a "twofold national tragedy", as "the perpetrators included Hungarians. It was fratricide, one of the greatest sins known to humankind." Second, the physical violence of the Holocaust was tied to the structural exclusion that preceded it, acknowledging, that "the Holocaust began … with verbal and intellectual violence". Finally, it accepted the forward-looking extension of the validity of the Holocaust-frame in reminding that some in the country "are preparing to step into the river which this nation has already waded into a generation ago, and which has given this community nothing but grief and shame."[249]

A decade after Horváth's formulation of a Roma programme of remembrance, the key elements of Roma progressives' memory politics had been transferred into government discourse. The status of Roma as sufferers of persecution and the acceptance of the apex of that persecution, the Holocaust as a signifier, referencing structural violence before and after the historical event itself, had been confirmed in these speech acts. Historian-lawyer János Bársony and Ágnes Daróczi were given the opportunity to complete *Historia Romani*, with director Péter Gábor. The six-part series, the most ambitious Hungarian historical documentary about the Roma by far, discussed the Roma Holocaust in a separate episode that screened on Hungarian television a decade after work on the series had started in 1997. Its completion in 2005, and broadcast in 2007, was made possible by the simultaneous availability of EU funding (the final round of pre-accession assistance), international NGO sponsorship from the Soros Foundation, and support from several governmental organizations, including two ministries. It translated to the television screen the logic of the post-1989 progressives that also found reflection in key speech acts by leading politicians around the same time. The emancipatory dimension of the Roma Holocaust was entering the majority national canon.

Several Roma intellectuals, like Jenő Zsigó, former head of the Roma Affairs Council, had by that time grown disillusioned by the lack of effective policies promoting emancipation, mobility, etc. and withdrew from the various consultative bodies.[250] Nevertheless, within the field of narrowly understood identity politics, a national politician had co-opted progressive Roma discourse and was turning it into an official instrument for facing history. The discursive shift was mirrored by a transfer of the Roma consultative body advising the

[248] Hírközpont, "Felavatták a roma holokauszt áldozatainak emlékművét." *Hírközpont,* 16 September, 2006 https://hirkozpont.magyarorszag.hu/hirek/emlekmu20060916.html.

[249] Prime Minister's Office, "A miniszterelnök üzenete a Roma Holokauszt emléknapján," (2 August, 2007) https://hirkozpont.magyarorszag.hu/sajtokozlemenyek/gyurcsany20070802.html?highlight=holokauszt

[250] Szilvia Varró, "Rabszolgák és rabszolgatartók," *Magyar Narancs*, 22 June, 2005, http://magyarnarancs.hu/belpol/rabszolgak_es_rabszolgatartok_zsigo_jeno_a_magyarorszagi_roma_parlament_es_a_fovarosi_cigany_onkormanyzat_vezetoje-64108.

government (Government of Hungary 2006), and Hungary scored relatively high (albeit still very low) in initial independent assessments of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, an East Central European transnational project launched during the final stages of the accession process with help from the Open Society Foundation.[251] It is not within the scope of this paper to construct a counterfactual on whether the norm entrepreneurship of 1990s progressives, in tandem with the initiative of Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány, could have translated into a strong institutionalization of existing or novel policies created with and for Roma in Hungary. Frustration over lack of commitment to social programmes characterized the same Roma intellectuals whose ideational innovations in framing Roma memory were being adopted. Due to a fall, first in popularity, and then from office, of the prime minister, the first government-sponsored memory project disseminating a Roma-sourced vision of history was aborted. Instead of becoming a lesson in norm-entrepreneurship, Gyurcsány's initiative and its subsequent rollback became a lesson about the extent to which national politics dominates representations of minority memory.

As the above suggest, the institutionalization of Roma remembering commenced in Hungary as part of an internationally informed, but essentially domestic elite project, whose main movers gained their formative experiences in the 1980s or before, under the Kádár regime. In the emerging Roma identity politics, the remembrance of the Holocaust affirmed the specificity of Roma experience and suffering. More importantly, it operated as a signifier that carried references to pre-and post-World War II discrimination and persecution. Arguably, this diachronic value of Holocaust memory was emphasized more, and indeed mattered more, in this project, than did its transnational potential. Reflected in the mere partial adoption of *Gelem, gelem* and the propagation of *Zöld az erdő* as a specifically Hungarian Roma anthem by these organizations[252], Hungarian Roma activism was supported by multiple international grants but existed and operated in an arena shaped primarily by government policies. The landscape did shift: when the Kurt Lewin Foundation launched romapage.hu, available information changed drastically, for instance, but the organizational structures remained predominantly domestic. Even an institution of paramount importance regionally, the European Roma Rights Center, had a predominantly indirect effect – as in other countries – through grants and projects. As a result, memorialization became dialogical only when the government was willing to act in partnership, respecting the autonomy of Roma organizations, but also supporting them and adopting parts of their programme. The first instance of such synergy came with Ferenc Gyurcsány's premiership, rooted in his conviction about the need to construct a post-ethnic, inclusive Hungarian identity. Overall, the supranational level showed itself able to influence domestic processes as well as support initiatives by and for Roma, but it is important to note that this was due to the accession effect which combined conditionality, monitoring and funding. The supranational factor certainly did not substantively constrain

[251] Decadewatch, *Roma Activists Assess the Progress of the Decade of Roma Inclusion* (Budapest: Decadewatch – World Bank, 2007).

[252] Lídia Balogh, "Esztétikum közcélra. A szimbólumok, mítoszok, illetve allegóriák közösségi szerepéről, a roma nemzetépítési törekvések példáján keresztül," *Pro Minoritate* 21, no. 3 (2011).

government memory politics. Despite the influence, it was not until the national government adopted the local Roma progressives' interpretation of history, that Roma memory could be institutionalized beyond the narrow boundaries of the 1990s.

In the abortive mainstream canonization of the post-1989 discourse, agency figured indirectly, and the notion of resistance was all but missing from it. Establishing agency and a memory politics platform for theorizing was, however, the root cause of the norm promotion carried out by Roma intellectuals, hence its importance was never in doubt. The concept of resistance as an inspirational limit figure of agency did not configure memory, attempts to locate episodes into which agency was inscribed through acts of resistance were few and far between. This is somewhat surprising in light of the international connectedness of Roma progressives in Hungary. Ágnes Daróczi and János Bársony, for instance, not only had an important role in the formation of the European Roma and Traveller Forum around 2004, but also participated in key conferences, especially at the ERTF-sponsored Neuengamme in 2006, where resistance was formulated as a focus for Roma memory work. Yet only in the larger works, such as János Bársony's and Ágnes Daróczi's 2004 volume, published in English in 2008, did resistance emerge as an important feature of Roma during the Holocaust, deployed as a marker of agency.[253] As in the German case, ending the invisibility of victims dominated in activists' speech acts.[254] In emphasizing visibility and agency in the present, through establishing the validity of the Holocaust framework for interpreting and resisting continued discrimination, the Sinti and Roma experience of the 1980s in Germany and the transnational Roma theorizing of the 1990s continued to provide rhetorical resources adapted to the situation in Hungary.

Recolonizing Roma remembrance

The status of Roma memory has changed significantly during the present decade. In mapping the multi-dimensional, and partially still ongoing, reconfiguration, several trends need to be noted. Roma memory could be articulated – fragmentarily – in the cracks of the de-ethnicizing and assimilationist Soviet-type governmentality before 1989, and in a tense exchange with various majority identity projects after 1989. The NGO-shaped discourse of emancipatory Holocaust memorialization was all but abandoned by governmental actors during the long, post-2006 crisis of Hungarian politics, and the norm entrepreneurial spirit of the early Gyurcsány cabinets faded quickly, even during the last year of his premiership. The partial consolidation of a new governmental framework occurred after 2010 in the form of a discursive re-colonizing of Roma memory by the conservative nationalist government coming into power. This consistent effort, analyzed in this section, has been contested by a new generation of Roma and non-Roma intellectuals. The latter have adopted the discourse of deterritorialized nation-building, of the Roma-as-excess with regard to nation states, to challenge and de-stabilize colonial governmentality. This new generation represents the only

[253] Bársony and Daróczi, *Pharrajimos*.

[254] Vidra, "A roma holokauszt narratívái," 126.

sustained challenge to the monolithic government discourse in the wake of the erosion of the post-1989 institutional structures built by domestic Roma organizations. Publications and institutions have disappeared or retain much lower visibility, and various advisorial positions have been re-staffed or eliminated.[255] The current Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán has been called a "mnemonic warrior"[256] and the determined efforts at re-framing Holocaust remembrance, including the place of the Roma in it, has included both silencing and colonizing institutions. This mnemonic shift has also succeeded in saturating representational spaces with a highly regulated discourse.

With the relative loss of influence and capacity to impact public discourse and organize communities on the part of the 1990s progressives, the emergent generation of Roma intellectuals, with some allies, have engaged in a radical repositioning of Roma memory, agency and identity in public discourse. This shift, which is both generational and meta-theoretical, occurred not from one moment to the next: it can be traced at least to the 2004 exhibition at Budapest's *Kunsthalle* (*Műcsarnok*). *Hidden Holocaust* endeavoured to force a re-thinking of the Holocaust by "invading," with the evocation of the unremembered, one of the central cultural spaces of majority culture – which had proven impervious to Roma (self-) representation before. Without expressly presenting a transnational agenda, it nevertheless linked Roma emancipation to a universal-cosmopolitan signifier. The emphasis shifted from the memory of the Holocaust within a specific society and from the historicizing of persecution to de-localized, implicitly transnational contextualization and the forceful mapping of memory onto present-day majority/minority borders and transactions.[257] It also replaced the search for closure – inclusion, compensation, fixed meanings – implicit in much of what the older generation called for with the attempt at composing a radically open text where (self-)liberation through engagement replaced the older trope of emancipation/inclusion.[258]

The paradigmatic textual representation of the idea underpinning the exhibition was published three years later, by Tímea Junghaus in introducing the pavilion *Paradise Lost* at the Venice Biennale in 2007. The first Roma pavilion and the first show to feature Roma artists at the Biennale was firmly rooted in the tenet that "[t]he Roma community is a transnational minority; their rights and identity are contingent upon not only the discretion of individual states, and thus the legitimacy of Roma identity is the competence not only of the particular nations. The Roma community knows no territorial boundaries, uniting people of different

[255] Mária Neményi and Júlia Szalai, "Elbeszélt évtizedek: A roma politika közelmúltbeli története a roma politikusok szemével," in *Egymás szemébe nézve: Az elmúlt fél évszázad roma politikai törekvései*, eds. Angéla Kóczé, Mária Neményi and Júlia Szalai (Budapest: Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2017), 37.

[256] Jan Kubik and Michael Bernhard, "A Theory of the Politics of Memory," in *Twenty Years after Communism: The Politics of Memory and Commemoration,* eds. Michael Bernhard and Jan Kubik (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 13.

[257] The exhibition offered a minority and a majority route, inter alia, connected by passages.

[258] Allan Siegel, "Hidden Holocaust," *ARTMargins*, 27 October, 2004 http://www.artmargins.com/index.php/8-archive/218-hidden-holocaust.

tongues and religions …"[259] It represented a trailblazing translation of 1990s transnational identity politics into contemporary art. It has also become a frequently referenced manifesto of a new Roma identity politics in the Hungarian context, one that was shaped by intellectuals less as leaders of domestic organizations and institutions, but more as representatives of a new generation of Roma elites, with strong postcolonial-poststructuralist commitments, frequently embedded into transnational networks themselves. Junghaus also provided, in the same text, the rationale for the new identity politics of culture. Through the "creation of mega-projects which find their way into the institutions of official culture", Roma artists and Roma society, culture and the self-representations they craft can more efficiently enter into dialogue with the majority and stake out an autonomous existence within the fabric of post-nationality.[260]

The most productive venue of Roma memory work about the Holocaust has accordingly become a gallery, *Gallery8*, run by the European Roma Cultural Foundation. Launched by Junghaus and other Roma and non-Roma intellectuals/activists including postcolonial feminist theorist Angéla Kóczé, sociologist Anna Lujza Szász, and also having a senior researcher of ethnicities and identities on its board in the person of Éva Kovács, the gallery has produced a remarkable number of projects that provide voice to diverse Roma perspectives on memory. Beyond hosting shows such as Ceija Stojka's exhibition, it has embarked on undertakings such as *Multiple Exposures* (curated by Szász), a by-invitation group show around a portrait photo and the Holocaust history behind it; *The Memory of the Roma Holocaust* (Kóczé), an intermedia commemoration of the 2 August anniversary; as well as *Learning the History of Roma Survival and Resistance* (Junghaus, Diana Bencze, Nanna Dahle), placing Roma during the Holocaust into positions of agency. The latest exhibition reflecting on the Holocaust has been *Sites of Repressed Remembrance* (Bencze, Junghaus, Luca Pintér), mapping and challenging dynamics of forgetting.[261]

These projects have all found their way into mainstream media, although coverage is usually limited to left-leaning outlets. Intellectually, they represent, in all likelihood, the most significant innovation in the construction of Roma and "Roma+" memory since a generation earlier the late Kádár-era progressives made their voices heard. At the same time, this work does not translate into social organization on the scale of the Roma NGOs that sprung up after 1989. This is in part an outcome of the adaptation of deterritorialized nation-building as laid out by Junghaus and other theorists. The lack of a corollary NGO-world, however, is also the outcome of the erosion of old organizations and efficient governmental management aimed at preventing the success of grass-roots community building work.

The Roma identity politics created by the conservative government efficiently reconfigure and ultimately recolonize the terrain "lost" to NGOs in the 1990s. Within this identity politics there exists a parallel discourse about Holocaust memory that aims to re-open the umbrella of (Hungarian) nationality to include Roma in a disciplinary framework of belonging to the

[259] Junghaus, "Paradise Lost," 16.

[260] Ibid., 20.

[261] The projects are summarized in the archival section of the gallery8.org website, located on the page http://gallery8.org/exhibitions.

majority, while denying agency to remember and configure memory from any other entity than the government-as-nation.

The articulation of disciplinary Hungarian identity in commemorative discourse was preceded by a return of the technocratic approach of the pre-2002 period.[262] The shift undermined institutions through which Roma could exercise agency, affecting policy areas ranging from the distribution of scholarships to media outlets. In 2011 the Ministry for Public Administration and Justice prepared a *National Strategy for Social Inclusion* [Nemzeti Társadalmi Felzárkózási Stratégia] that was intended to yield a more efficient, targeted approach in using funds in social policy. (National Strategy 2011) It was to be carried out exclusively by the government and through the national self-government of Roma, dominated by government allies. Public institutions such as Hungarian Roma Public Trust (a so-called public benefit NGO), which had handled scholarships for Roma youth and cultural funding with a fair amount of autonomy, were closed, and a virtual monopoly established over resources and policy execution, based on the *Strategy*'s extreme technocratic statism. It contained zero references to Roma as a self-identifying group or set of groups. It accomplished on paper what it was aiming to create: integrated Hungarian citizens with token institutions preserved (such as the Gandhi High School in Pécs) at the cost of rendering Roma as Roma largely invisible in government policy. Understandably, Roma memory, etc. did not figure in the Strategy.

The *Strategy* was the Hungarian "deliverable" foreseen in the European Roma Strategy (*An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020*) a document advocated for by the Hungarian government during its rotating Council presidency.[263] The format, however, embodied the type of soft governance that in fact "unburdened" national governments. It symbolically shifted social problems associated with the Roma minority to a European level. Furthermore, it also permitted the government to present itself as a norm entrepreneur in promoting the Europeanization of Roma policy, while the participating states could count on each other to keep the Strategy – without mandatory dedicated EU or national funding – locked in at the lowest common denominator.[264] A textbook case of the *Politikverflechtungsfalle* or "joint decision trap", it brought on board supra- and subnational actors, distributing responsibility to the point where accountability was seriously compromised.[265] The Hungarian case confirms the predictions made by Huub van Baar in subsequent pieces: By establishing a single subnational partner (the Roma national self-government), the government delegated all dedicated Roma programmes to a non-transparent proxy organization, carried out its social policy and distanced itself from all responsibility

[262] Kovats, „Roma Politics and Policy," 78-80.

[263] European Commission, *An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020*, COM (2011), 173.

[264] Gergely Romsics, *An Interim Review of the 2011 Hungarian Presidency: Finding a New Niche for the Rotating Presidency in Times of Storm and Stress, SIEPS Working Paper* (Stockholm: Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies, 2011), 93-96.

[265] Fritz W. Scharpf, "The Joint-Decision Trap. Lessons From German Federalism and European Integration," *Public Administration* 88, no. 2 (1988), 239-278.

for the decay in Roma NGO networks.[266] The Commission's monitoring mechanism, provided for in the Strategy, noted the non-realization of goals with considerable criticism in its annual analyses, but the actual country conclusions – the executive summary for Hungary in a way – reveal a considerable toning down of the criticisms found in the body of the text. Clearly, the Commission has opted not to tackle the mimetic norm-following of participating member states, and the autonomy of the government has not become more limited as a result of the European Roma Strategy's soft coordinating and monitoring mechanisms.[267]

The non-Roma character of Hungary's *de facto* Roma inclusion strategy signalled a lacuna: the norm entrepreneurial approach with regard to memory and identity was abandoned with the fall of Prime Minister Gyurcsány, and 2010-2013 was characterized by disappearing voices. As one NGO after the other reduced or ceased its operations, the government did not immediately fill this "identity politics void", focusing exclusively on social policy. From 2014, the Holocaust Memorial Year, however, an identity project has taken shape, marking out the place of the Roma within the Hungarian nation. In memory policy, this has meant a return to the displacement of responsibility to the Nazis and, at times, the Hungarian Arrow Cross movement. 2 August has remained the single most important day of commemoration. At the same time, the historical referent object, the murder of Roma in Auschwitz, is often paired with a disciplinary discourse that calls on present-day Roma to take control of their lives and become productive – and docile – members of society. The commemoration of Roma genocide is thus transformed into a vehicle for shaping the new Roma, without reflection on how this movement symbolically recreates the violence it claims to be de-legitimizing.

The framework for the filling of the post-2010 "identity politics void" was created by the new constitution in 2012. As pointed out by Balázs and György Majtényi, this was accomplished by two, connected claims included in the Preamble of the *Basic Law*. The historical survey contained in it defined Hungarians as a victim group and rendered all other identities invisible. As per the Preamble, victims were Hungarians and Hungarians were victims, underpinned by the emphasis on the loss of sovereignty in 1944, which had the function of preserving/restoring a national myth of innocence. This quintessential reiteration of the post-communist memory complex has prepared the ground for the Roma memory policy that unfolded in subsequent years.[268]

Among individual speech acts, the symbolically most significant item remains the 2014 address by President János Áder. The year had been designated as the Holocaust Memorial Year by the government, as the 70th anniversary of the genocide committed in Hungary by German Nazis and their Hungarian allies, the only anniversary on which the President chose to deliver a full address up to the present (2017). Áder broke, in his speech, with the official government position that had caused controversy and acknowledged Hungarian participation

[266] Huub van Baar, "Cultural policy and the governmentalization of Holocaust remembrance in Europe: Romani memory between denial and recognition," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 17, no. 1 (2011): 8-11.

[267] European Commission, *Effective Roma integration measures in the Member States. DG Justice and Home Affairs*, COM (2016) 424, 27 June, 2016, 60-62.

[268] Majtényi and Majtényi, *A Contemporary History of Exclusion*, 189-190.

in the execution of the Holocaust. At the same time, the key rhetorical question was phrased as "How could we Hungarians inflict such a deep wound on our own nation?", preserving the victimhood role for the "nation" as a whole, incorporating the Roma (and Jews), and reserving perpetratorship for a limited group of "cynical propagandists, thousands of Nazi-minded officials, the gendarmes and Arrow Cross soldiers of the Hungarian administration". It also repeated the, historically at least, half incorrect statement according to which "segregating and deporting them was fundamentally a demand of Hitler's Third Reich", whereas segregation was widely practiced before (and after) the Holocaust. But perhaps most important was what was not said. Comparing Horváth's paradigmatic definition of the societal functions of remembering the Roma Holocaust and the presidential address, the two aspects that disappeared were the linkages between the Holocaust and the preceding, as well as of subsequent, discrimination. The Holocaust was (re)framed as an idiosyncrasy of Hungarian history rather than a reminder about the moral imperative of emancipation (for the majority) and a symbol of an emergent political agency rooted in shared historical trauma (for Roma).[269]

The speech was a reinforcement of the similar, if less solemn addresses delivered by lower ranking public figures in the previous years, during which the disciplinary language of Roma responsibility re-emerged after being banished from government discourse under the previous, Socialist government. The return of this language was enabled by the severing of Holocaust memory from discrimination and persecution before and after WWII. In such instances, the Holocaust was transformed into a platform of further disciplining. The emphasis on "never again", originating from the beginnings of German efforts at facing history, was adopted *and* undermined, simultaneously, in these contexts. The tension between re-establishing the state's authority to control and manage the population and the genocidal instance of control and management which the Holocaust represents went unnoticed in these speech acts.

From 2014 onwards, annual commemorations of both Roma victims and Roma resistance became the norm. Following Áder's 2014 speech on Hungarian responsibility/innocence and the appropriation of the (tragic) past as the counter-concept of the (redeemed) present, a standard commemorative model seems to have emerged. Starting with 2014's opening of the Center for Gypsy History, Culture, Education and Study of the Holocaust, it continued with the 2015 commemoration on 16 May of Roma resistance.[270] The primary commemorations were subsequently moved back to 2 August in 2016 and 2017, but the 16 May programming has continued in recent years, always held at the National Theatre.[271] The closing ceremony

[269] János Áder, Speech of …. at the Roma Holocaust Remembrance Day, *President's Office*, 2 August, 2014 http://www.keh.hu/speeches/1897-Speech_of_President_Janos_Ader_at_the_Roma_Holocaust_Remembrance_Day&pnr=1.

[270] Nemzeti Színház, "371 csillag – Emlékezés a Roma Holocaust 70. évfordulójára," *National Theater Press Release,* 15 May, 2015 https://nemzetiszinhaz.hu/hirek/2015/05/371-csillag-emlekezes-a-roma-holocaust-70-evfordulojara.

[271] Origo, "371 Csillag: emlékezés a roma holokauszt áldozataira," *Origo*, 20 May, 2016 http://www.origo.hu/kultura/fesztival/20160520-roma-holokauszt-aldozatok-megemlekezes.html. and Nemzeti Színház, „371 csillag: Bátorság és Roma Ifjúság Napja," *National Theater Press Release*, 9 May, 2016 https://nemzetiszinhaz.hu/hirek/2016/05/371-csillag.

of the Hungarian presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Association, in spring 2016, also included a strong emphasis on Roma victims from Hungary. Throughout these iterations of governmental remembering, Zoltán Balog, the minister for human resources appeared as the senior representative of Hungary and was represented by a deputy state minister on occasions when he could not be present (for instance the 16 May commemorations in 2016 and 2017).

Importantly, the government has not given a primary role to the National Roma Self-Government in the commemorations. The commitment of the self-government to participating in, and observing, the anniversaries has also been uneven. The pro-government (Fidesz) member of parliament, Flórián Farkas, former head of the National Roma Self-Government and long-standing president of its dominant member organization (*Lungo Drom*), was not only not present, but his office also failed to issue communications about the issue – despite the day being observed since 2005 according to the parliamentary resolution.[272] In 2015 and 2016, his successors organized small-scale commemorations, while, increasingly, the Roma NGOs institutionalized their own commemorative rites by the Roma Holocaust memorial.[273]

The choreography of the central government-sponsored events itself contributes to the meta-text emerging out of the performances of a disciplinary governmentality. In these, it is the non-Roma representative of the government that delivers the keynote speech. Roma, Hungarian Roma in particular (domestic political agency) are a not accorded an equal or even secondary position.[274] Roma culture is utilized largely as living props: music and/or dance is presented but Roma voices remain, paradoxically, the rarest occurrence in the memorialization of Roma history and a foundational event of Roma identity.

The main public acts of memorialization, where senior government figures appear, accomplish therefore the re-enactment and staging of the colonial subject that performs its "exotic" art, the white male appears as possessing the power of logos, making sense of the world and marking out Roma future and also interpretations of the Roma past. Without fail, emphasis falls on the following elements and omissions:

1. Hungarians carry a burden of responsibility for the Roma (and also for the Jewish) Holocaust, which constitute important parts of global and national history.
2. The Holocaust must not be repeated.

[272] According to press records and government logs, Farkas spoke briefly on the subject, once, in 2014, at the unveiling of a memorial in Bük, a village. Cf. Magyar Hírlap, "Egymás tisztelete a kulcs, amely kapukat nyithat mindannyiunk számára," *Magyar Hírlap*, 2 August, 2014. http://magyarhirlap.hu/cikk/2054/Egymas_tisztelete_a_kulcs_amely_kapukat_nyithat_mindannyiunk_szamara
In 2013 he participated in a commemorative mass held at Budapest's main church. At the same time, his office never offered an explanation for the removal of the commemorative plaque on the wall of offices of the Roma self-government in 2011, reinstalled in the same spot by his successor and political ally in 2015.

[273] Dávid Dercsényi, "A roma holokauszt emléknapja: Balog Zoltán és a Jobbik is előkerült a beszédekben." *HVG.hu*, 4 August, 2017 http://hvg.hu/itthon/20170804_Roma_Holokauszt_emleknap_Balog_Zoltan_es_a_Jobbik_is_elokerult_a_megemlekezo_beszedekben.

[274] In 2015, Romani Rose was invited to deliver an address at the May 16 commemoration.

3. Omission of antecedents, pre-WWII discrimination and of continuing discrimination after 1945 (denying the validity of the Holocaust as a trope for interpreting Roma life in Hungary both in its historical and present-day dimensions).
4. Omission of naming perpetrators from Hungary and of distributing responsibility across society.
5. Disciplinary warnings to Roma to work with non-Roma, take control of their lives, etc., focus on social and economic success (thereby frequently effacing the Roma as ethnic/national group at the time when the genocide against them is being commemorated).

Importantly, on 2 August 2009, the last attack in a series of racially motivated murders claimed the life of a Roma mother and seriously wounded her 13 year-old daughter. The emancipatory dimension of the anniversary was thereby given poignancy, and independent Roma organizations have since included mention of the coinciding tragedy, symbolizing how racial violence had not been eliminated with the defeat of Nazism.[275] Before the canon of remembrance relative to these events was consolidated and disseminated, this was also true of virtually all Roma organizations and even of some pro-government local politicians.[276] By 2013, both a self-identifying Roma Fidesz Member of the European Parliament and a minister of state chose to include this linkage in memorial addresses.[277]

The annual communiqués of the Ministry for Human Resources were engaged in reinterpreting the anniversary as a disciplinary tool.Relevant press releases repeatedly juxtaposed the racial murders with the killing, by an angry mob composed of Roma, of an innocent non-Roma Hungarian in the aftermath of a roadside accident. The emphasis on all lives being equal has been thus deployed in these communications in a manner that immediately disciplines while also promising to protect.[278] This intervention is the clearest boundary-drawing move of governmentality that proposes to pacify and secure all in the present, while refusing to acknowledge history as either a burden or a potentiality for re-framing the future. As the discourse of disciplinary governmentality was becoming increasingly functional and regulated from 2014 on (with the canon emerging during the Holocaust Memorial Year), the linkage between the historical genocide and the racially motivated killing spree was severed, sustained only by segments within civil society. For the period from 2014 to 2017, there is no data of national-level government politicians adopting the mode of remembering which emphasizes the moral relevance of the Roma Holocaust for a present still burdened with racist thought and action.

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[275] Magyar Kurír, "Imádsággal a közöny ellen – Megemlékezés a pharrajimos és a kislétai gyilkosság évfordulóján," *Magyar Kurír – Katolikus Hírportál*, 3 August, 2017 https://www.magyarkurir.hu/hazai/imadsaggal-kozony-ellen-megemlekezes-pharrajimos-es-kisletai-gyilkossag-evfordulojan.

[276] Romnet, "Roma Holokauszt emlékművet avattak Piliscsabán," *Romnet*, 10 August, 2011 http://www.romnet.hu/hirek/2011/08/03/roma_holokauszt_8211_emlekmuvet_avattak_piliscsaban.

[277] Maté Nyusztay, „'Soha többé ne lehessen kirekeszteni!' – Megemlékezések a roma holokausztról," *Népszabadság*, 2 August, 2013 http://nol.hu/belfold/e14__ennek_a_szornyusegnek_bele_kell_egnie_a_nemzet_emlekezetebe-1403973.

[278] András Becker, "Az államtitkár üzent," *Magyar Narancs*, 20 March, 2012. http://magyarnarancs.hu/velemeny/balog-zoltan-79254.

On several occasions, major controversy engulfed the commemorations themselves, as well. In a 2014 radio interview, minister Balog denied the fact that Roma were deported to German camps from Hungary, a mistake he later corrected and for which he apologized.[279] At the same time, the logic that could produce this unwitting and unintended denial (at the personal level of cabinet minister Balog) has remained operational. A vision of the past in which Hungarian crimes are difficult or impossible to name and specify, where guilt is continually displaced to some "Other" whose evil character absolves the majority society. Unintended gaffes such as Balog's statement (in the midst of the Memorial Year) are mistakes, but also naturally occurring cracks through which the governmental logic of steering Roma into the fold with the majority through forced reconciliation becomes evident – if only for a glimpse. In 2015, two weeks prior to the anniversary, the thesis about the lack of historical consciousness amongst Roma recurred in an address, which positioned governmentality as integrating by providing such a historical consciousness through memory work and publications for the Roma.[280] In 2017, another gaffe followed: referring to Hungarian-speaking Roma in the neighbouring countries as a potential "burden or resource", in the case of whom the chips could fall either way.[281] Once more, an apology followed – but the relevant aspect was the one that was not apologized for. It is the idea itself that Roma can be conceptualized as "a resource", or are to be shaped into one that reveals the logic operating in the government's memory politics, as in the title of official communication at the time of the 2016 memorial. According to the latter, the main message to be drawn from the memory of the Holocaust would be that there are "Enormous reserves in Roma culture in Hungary."[282] In this framework, the Roma appear "useful" as a future body economic, while the utilitarian-biopolitical language of governmentality displaces the emancipatory language of a Roma body politic even in the context of Holocaust remembrance.

Roma-as-resource, the "usable" Roma, envisioned by the governmental logics shaping the discourse, is a self-reliant citizen, rendered unthreatening, not by passivity but by the imposition of a new identity over her/him that prevents Roma identity from operating as a resource of resistance and subversion. For this reason, commemorating Roma agency in the Holocaust as well as Roma resistance are tied to the disciplinary fiction of Roma integrating and becoming "productive" citizens in a redeemed present. A core conceptual innovation of Roma movements – the emphasis on agency and resistance was therefore appropriated and recontextualized, so that it would not operate as an instrument for challenging power and discrimination in the present

[279] Gábor Czene, "Balog, a roma holokauszt és a számháború," *Népszabadság*, 5 August, 2014, http://nol.hu/belfold/balog-a-roma-holokauszt-es-a-szamhaboru-1478325.

[280] Gábor Sárközi, "Sehogy, vagy méltánytalanul – cigánykép a tankönyvekben," *Roma Press Center*, 22 July, 2015 http://romasajtokozpont.hu/sehogyan-vagy-meltatlanul-ciganykep-a-tankonyvekben/.

[281] 24.hu, "Balog Zoltán azt mondta, nem a cigányokra gondolt, amikor tehertételezett, majd még egyszer letehertételezte őket." *24.hu*, 3 August, 2017. http://24.hu/belfold/2017/08/03/balog-zoltan-azt-mondta-nem-a-ciganyokra-gondolt-amikor-tehertetelezett-majd-meg-egyszer-letehertetelezte-oket/.

[282] Ministry of Human Resources, Enormous reserves in Roma culture in Hungary, *Press Release*, 2 March, 2016 http://www.kormany.hu/en/ministry-of-human-resources/news/enormous-reserves-in-roma-culture-in-hungary.

This logic is also reflected in school textbooks. While around 2002, of 12 history books only 3 mentioned the Roma Holocaust and the longest discussion amounted to two sentences, the inclusion of the signifier became widespread over time.[283] Ten years later, Roma history and the Holocaust became part of the mandatory basic curriculum for secondary schools and a repeat of the survey found that every available textbook has mentioned the Roma Holocaust since 2012. At the same time, none contained a sustained discussion and none adopted the activist logic of establishing a narrative of persecution that would link the pre- and post-war eras or the Holocaust with present anti-Roma sentiment.[284] What students encounter is an episode in history, mentioned briefly and acquiring neither referentiality in and for the present, nor an autochthonous historicity where Roma are protagonists. Much as government discourse suggests, the Roma Holocaust occurred "somewhere else". The availability of several thematic auxiliary books[285] does not change the basic outlines of the situation: it remains difficult to determine to what extent they are accessible for schools and used in public education, but by all accounts the extent of this is limited.

As the preceding analysis suggests, two counter-languages are available in Hungary to challenge the disciplinary remembering practiced at official events. The memory language of transnational nation-building, the more recent arrival in the Hungarian context, accomplishes the task with extreme conceptual clarity and innovation, but does not find its way to a broader audience, as – in Fosztó's terms – a hybridized elite language.[286] Regarding even sympathetic appraisals in left-leaning, progressive journals that review projects, the ability of the majority media to reproduce novel conceptualizations is limited at best. While for instance the work at Gallery8 appears to fit seamlessly into a Roma discourse of memory emerging across Europe, they can, at present, have limited impact in Hungary. That is unfortunate, as this counter-language informs and subverts the disciplinary bent of the official commemorative language. As shown above, governmentality does not rely on the denial or even the trivialization of the Roma Holocaust as an event, but on the forced insertion of the *sujet* of the genocide into a broad national fable of unity achieved after suffering. The national story, in the end, is plotted in a manner similar to European memory, as a romance. This clashes with the identity project of the emergent critical-postcolonial Roma elite in Hungary and their allies. As activist-scholar Anna Lujza Szász emphasized, "the memory of the Roma Holocaust constitutes political action, which is rooted in the shared experience of the past, and which aims at gaining acknowledgement for the fact the Roma are part of

[283] Tamás Terestényi, "Fekete pont: A középiskolai történelem- és társadalomismeret-tankönyvek romákkal kapcsolatos tartalmai," *Beszélő* 9, no. 5 (2004).

[284] Anna Balázs et al, *Fekete pont: A cigányság reprezentációja az általános és középiskolai tankönyvekben* (Budapest: Monitor, 2014), 11.

[285] János Bársony and Ágnes Daróczi, *Vrana mámi mesél: Népismeret az általános iskolák 1-4 osztálya számára* (Budapest: Sulinova, 2005). and Gábor Bernáth, Vivien Brassói and Julianna Orsós, *Ha szaladok, agyonlőnek ha megállok agyonvernek: Az európai roma holokauszt* (Budapest: Közép- és Kelet-európai Történelem és Társadalom Kutatásáért Közalapítvány, 2015).

[286] Fosztó, "Diaspora and Nationalism:" 102-120.

the Holocaust. But much more is at play simultaneously: offering platform for reshaping and subverting power relationships between minority and majority."[287]

The second available counter-language is that of the post-1989 progressives, which is not in conflict with the newer approach, rather, it places more emphasis on traditional, movement-type mobilization, working with majorities and constructing an identity that unites both deterritorialized and territorial aspects. It has not lost all valence, as a newer generation has been able to use it as a platform for challenging the crasser aspects of anti-Roma speech acts. The movement *We Belong Here* [Ide tartozunk] is currently the best example of the survival of the older (liberal, rather than critical poststructuralist) discourse of rights, identity and remembering, roughly as Horváth summarized it in the 2003 opinion piece referenced above. Senior figures, from among these intellectuals, such as Daróczi, Zsigó or Horváth co-sponsor commemorative events with the younger generation, of whom Jenő Setét has acquired visibility in media. This is especially true of the 2 August commemorations. The project of developing strong national-level Roma institutions, however, has failed for the time being. Compared to the 1990s, the organizational, counter-hegemonic power has gone largely missing from behind their counter-language, not least as a long-term outcome of a virtual coalition of otherwise opposed political parties, seeking to cultivate docile ethnic leaders and the rigidly observed maxim of the government, have only one Roma partner: the leader of the Roma self-government. Also, this counter-language, as far as the memory of Holocaust is concerned, was constructed to challenge forgetting and blotting out, and to establish it as a valid metaphor for both Roma in history and present challenges. It is less suited to addressing and challenging a discourse that is based on acknowledging the event and historical responsibility, while insisting "only" on the tenets that "things have changed" and that the main challenge before the minority and majority alike consists in capitalizing on the Roma-as-resource.

Resistance to uncovering and engaging with perpetrator legacies is routinely acknowledged as difficult and the outcome of complicated societal constellations that enable norm entrepreneurs to push majorities towards uncomfortable memory work. Similarly, that such work remains incomplete, that its acceptance and reception by various strata in society emerges as fragmented, is more the norm than the exception. A roll-back of public memorialization is, however, far rarer in the absence of radical – usually political – interventions in the processes of memory work.

In Hungary, it seems that at several levels a roll-back has nevertheless unfolded, which is both symptom and cause of the previous generation's current (relative) weakness. It may be identified in at least two components, which are easily detectable. One is the disappearance of Roma self-representations, including in Holocaust memory. Key journals of the 1990s "progressives" have ceased publication due to lack of funding. It was the successive governments of Hungary that provided the core funds for these publications from 1990 on. Throughout the 1990s, funding was provided with some fluctuation to the "established" periodicals, including *Amaro Drom*, *Phralipe* and the more conservative *Khetano Drom* and *Lungo Drom*. Under

[287] Anna Lujza Szász, "Kiszenvedett történelem – A roma holokauszt emlékezete," *Magyar Narancs*, 14 August, 2014 http://magyarnarancs.hu/belpol/a-roma-holokauszt-emlekezete-91324.

the conservative government in power between 1998-2002, *Phralipe* had to close down due to insufficient funding, but *Világunk* [Our World], which had some financial resources available, was launched by activists through the Roma self-government (Right-leaning *Khetano Drom* and *Lungo Drom* profited from the change in government.[288] When first *Phralipe* ceased publication (2001) and later *Amaro Drom*, both the most vocal and most widely read outlets for Roma memory were lost. The unprecedented turn, however, has been the subsequent disappearance from the internet of *Amaro Drom's* archives, which at one point was available at the now defunct amarodrom.hu website and in the National Library's electronic journal collections (epa.oszk.hu). The end result means that to read some of the insurgent Hungarian Roma voices about identity and memory in the context of public life, one has to go into the library (i.e. away from public life), and study these publications as documents, without currency in the present.

The legacy of the post-1989 progressives, has, to a large extent, been erased from the public eye, along with it the story of the discovery of Holocaust memory as an instrument of Roma identity building. The loss of materials for a historical Roma identity project and memory work is also apparent in the disappearance of rroma.net, formerly run by the still operational Roma Press Center, which presented a selection of oral history interviews and other materials about Roma in the Holocaust. Romapage.hu is offline, as is the webpage of the formerly very active Kurt Lewin Foundation. In the institutional sphere, not only have hubs of activism disappeared or had to reduce their scope (Phralipe, Hungarian Roma Parliament). Even the cultural institution Roma House (Romano Kher), which once housed the largest Roma art collection and would be a natural venue for art-based memory work regarding the Holocaust,[289] was first renamed by the Socialist-liberal coalition government, and soon thereafter lost most of its resources. As a result, it lost its personnel, formerly headed by Jenő Zsigó, and today presents at best a semblance of activity. Altogether, the loss of memory in the public sphere, the decrease of public and immediate availability in materials for remembrance amidst, and in stark contrast to, a Europe-wide memory boom is strong evidence for the continuing peripherialization of Roma points of view and experience.

Second, one has to note the lack of mainstreaming of research on the Roma Holocaust. This is by no means intended to devalue the work of dedicated researchers. At the same time, after the 1990s saw two established academics, Szabolcs Szita and László Karsai, both publish extensively on the Roma in the Holocaust, the expectation of mainstreaming seemed at hand. That the two most internationally cited Holocaust experts at the time both chose to systematically study the issue area held out the promise that Hungarian research would potentially lead the way in uncovering the fate of the Roma and the execution of genocide, at least amongst the former Soviet bloc countries.[290] This, however, did not happen – not due to a lack of dedicated researchers but due

[288] Gábor Czene, "Roma lapok: felemás támogatás," *Népszabadság*, 11 May, 2001 http://nol.hu/archivum/archiv-18647-8035.

[289] Dóra Hegyi, "Fontos, hogy ne mimikri, konspiráció, hatalmat megragadó csapat legyünk," Interview with Tímea Junghaus, *Tranzitblog.hu*, 26 July, 2017 http://tranzitblog.hu/fontos-hogy-ne-mimikri-konspiracio-hatalmat-megragado-csapat-legyunk-hanem-egy-olyan-intezmenyt-mukodtessunk-ami-valodi-valtozasokat-tud-elerni/.

[290] Karsai, *A cigánykérdés Magyarországon*. See also Szita, *Tények, adatok a cigányok háborús üldöztetésének*.

to a lack of systematic funding required for longer term, more ambitious research projects. The Holocaust Memorial Year saw the publication of relevant collections, but the fact that these are conference proceedings and none are published by the major academic houses signals that lack of sustained engagement. Many researchers have great local expertise, working in archives and libraries of the county seats, but their research has not been systematically edited into anything approaching a grand, multiperspectival account. Funding for a large-scale online presentation of collected archival materials at the Holocaust Memorial Centre remains lacking, and even their processing has remained painfully slow.[291] Finally, the authors who have the greatest experience in oral history, Ágnes Daróczi and János Bársony, were *ad hoc* offered a grant to prepare in four (!) months a comprehensive account of their work in 2014 – using funds left over from the Memorial Year. The resulting volume was never sold in bookstores and numerous libraries do not have copies. The rights being owned by the ministry for human resources (the funder), and its fate is uncertain, although it is likely that, given the time to make the necessary revisions, Daróczi and Bársony could present a key building block in memory work about the Holocaust.[292]

Altogether, the lack of mainstreaming in research and the ongoing effacement of past memory work in the public sphere has contributed to making the arena of Roma memory politics poorer, rather than richer. The 2014 Memorial Year provides ample examples for mimetic norm following, with an undistributed volume by noted activist-historians, commemorations and speeches, and highlights how the national level can dominate memory politics by controlling resources. Local education projects, such as those run by Péter Heindl in Baranya county, who has promoted extensive intercommunity investigations (Roma schoolchildren studying local Jewish martyrs, etc.), as well as other grass-roots initiatives very much matter.[293] At the same time, these cannot offset the institutional gaps at the national level, nor the dominant and widely disseminated discourse described above.

6. Conclusions

Europeanization, rather than all-encompassing and omnivalent, is today considered a fragmented and incomplete, multidirectional process. Hungary's case is an eminent example of how post-accession trends can reverse even moderate progress induced in part by the

[291] Éva Kovács, András Lénárt, Anna Lujza Szász, "Oral History Collections on the Holocaust in Hungary," *S.I.M.O.N.* 1, no. 2 (2014): 48-65. http://simon.vwi.ac.at/images/Documents/Articles/2014-2/2014-2_ART_Kovacs-Lenart-Szasz/ART_Kovacs-Lenart-Szasz.pdf.

[292] János Bársony and Ágnes Daróczi, *Kali trash – fekete félelem, Pharrajimos – szétvágatás, Samudaripen – legyilkolás: A romák sorsa a Holocaust idején Magyarországon* (Budapest: Cigányságkutató Intézet – Romano Instituto, 2015).

[293] Péter Heidl, "Project Ney Lili," *Romológia* 2, no. 4-5 (2014) http://romologiafolyoirat.pte.hu/?page_id=951&lang=en.

international environment. With minority affairs and identity politics outside of the scope of the *acquis communautaire*, a soft governance converging around open – i.e. voluntary – coordination prevails in Roma policy. In practice, this has very often equalled non-governance. Altogether, "[T]he pitfalls of this new mode of governance … led to a diminishing of democratic accountability and control of Roma related affairs by public institutions and with the devolution of responsibilities to non-governmental and human rights organizations, Roma representatives from public institutions/Roma experts and communities themselves."[294]

The void created by movement away from hard norms and the sense of urgency regarding Roma affairs at the time of the Eastern enlargement around the turn of the millennium has not been filled by either the emergence of soft European governance, nor by NGOs which have been co-oopted or circumvented by prevailing governmentalities co-operating with preferred Roma partner organizations. Concerning Romania, Iulius Rostas observes a marked Roma demobilization, as does the broader survey conducted by Aidan Garry.[295] Where strong structures of Roma influencing have emerged, this causes fewer visible gaps – the relatively continuous history of the activities of the Central Council of Sinti and Roma in Germany, the ongoing partnership with successive governments and the stability of the prevailing governmentality proves this. Yet even in Germany, beyond the aforementioned preferential partnership, organizations and platforms representing a more radical, transnational agenda have remained confined to an NGO sector insulated from policy-shaping. As the Hungarian case shows, East Central European NGOs of the 1990s sought to imitate the successes of the German model, if with a stronger component of the emergent Roma transnational identity politics than those espoused by the Central Council. Instead of governmental partnership, however, as shown in the case of Hungary, a political re-colonization of Roma affairs has taken shape through the co-optation of some Roma organizations and the channelling of government-minority exchanges through the Roma minority self-government structure. This meant in practice that as the first generation of post-1989, independent NGOs were weakened, the government could increasingly re-establish control over policy arenas, including remembrance, while simultaneously ejecting previously integrated Roma intellectuals from the work of policy planning.

In terms of mnemonic practices, at least in Hungary, the processes described above created an ambiguous outcome with regard to the emergent memory culture around the Roma Holocaust. After minimal and slow inroads gained in the 1990s, a decade better seen as the period when a progressive Roma position was formulated and organizationally consolidated, the first decade of the new millennium saw the partial translation of the 1990s politics of memory into mainstream politics. The acceptance of the thesis concerning the responsibility of the majority by the left-wing government in power after 2002, understood as having continued relevance for the present, signalled a German-type scenario unfolding, whereby an activist minority and norm entrepreneurs of the mainstream achieve progress in broadening the memory canon of the political community to include previously invisible or marginal Roma narratives about the past and about identity. This was a significant achievement, even

[294] Anghel, "Contesting neoliberal Governance:" 87. See also Rechel, "What has limited."

[295] Rostas, "The Romani Movement in Romania."

if politics of governmental abandonment were not rolled back as a result of the normative push, suggesting that genuinely long-lasting commitment from domestic political actors for the spill-over of memory politics into other sectors of Roma-related policies was either missing or takes longer to have meaningful effect. The significance of successfully transferring Roma discourse into the government and ensuring its dissemination nevertheless counts as a major achievement of the Roma progressives and their allies in Hungary.

The above process was certainly aided by the international context, notably the emergence of a European memory culture, but the prevalence of a domestic coalition appears clear regarding the dynamic. As in Germany with the discovery of "other victims," in Hungary a post-ethnic reconceptualization of nationhood was the broader domestic dynamic which contributed to Roma memory gaining mainstream visibility and support. This process held out the possibility of simultaneous domestic and transnational Roma identity-building also through mnemonic practices. It offered space for creating a shared notion of self through a transnational post-memory where the descendants of Holocaust victims re-live and interpret the experiences of parents. Such Roma post-memory – also because of its immanent continental, transnational component and the way it generated linkages to the mainstream of European memory – held out the promise of re-constituting the "entanglements" of Holocaust legacies. Roma victims – by inclusion in the canon of Holocaust remembrance – are transformed into universal signifiers that help transform the role of Roma from a continental subaltern into a potential co-constitutor of identiy in Europe. Importantly, this relocation of memory would also impact national dynamics where local perpetrator legacies – especially in the Eastern member states and beyond – remain unresolved and problematic. Majorities in these countries, were they to acknowledge Roma as Holocaust victims, would over time be constrained to also reflect on the violence that made them victims. This violence is more domestic and harder to displace (to Germans, Nazis, etc.) due to its de-centered and locally initiated character in many countries, including Hungary. Finally, many involved in memory entrepreneurship and activism hoped that "entangled" memory reconfigured in this way – as the most important promise of Roma Holocaust memory – would translate into the acceptance, by majorities, of its diachronic validity: functioning as signifier of historical and present-day practices of marginalization and exclusion.

The preceding analysis acknowledges the synergy between norm entrepreneurs, minority leaders and supranational efforts at constructing a European memory canon. At the same time, both the German and especially the Hungarian case confirm the continued prevalence of national level memory games. These are impacted and even shaped by transnational activism as well as supranational norm emergence (within the EU, the Council of Europe and the OSCE), but governmentality moulds frames with remarkable success so as to ensure the continuation of disciplinary policies of remembrance. Post-2010 Hungary was analyzed in the preceding chapter as a case in point. Adoption, by the government, of European norms of commemoration including Roma resistance and the genocide against the Roma in the Holocaust have not prevented a reconfiguration of these frameworks. As a result of such reconfiguration, engagement with perpetrator legacies has remained very limited, also blocking the way to deploying Holocaust memory as a trope referencing present-day racism and exclusion. These "normalisation" techniques of government neither deny nor render invisible the past so much

as displace its memory to a "foreign" perpetrator and prevent it from achieving relevance in the present. Governmentality and majorities in society thus regaining their innocence become free (in an ethical sense) to engage in projects that discipline the Roma subject.

Resistance to the emergent governmentality of normalization, without sustained supranational support and strong domestic coalitions able to build on an emancipatory culture of remembrance, has been migrating into transnational zones of political and cultural innovation. While the long term benefits of a stronger transnational Roma network of institutions and of activists able to think and move together are not challenged by this paper, in the short term at least, the dominance of national governments has been further strengthened by this turn. A number of insights can be drawn from this ongoing process for the perspectives of emancipatory memory work about the Roma Holocaust within and perhaps also on the peripheries of the European Union.

1. Transnational and supranational funding, as well as competence borrowing can help, but only in the presence of domestic agents of change. This characterized the late 1990s, when the intellectual work done in the late 1980s and early 1990s by Roma activists could move towards institutionalization, first within the movement and later beyond the Roma NGO world.

2. "Conquering" majority society, public memory and impacting logics of governmentality are, difficult undertakings, and both the German and the Hungarian examples suggest that a strong political coalition at the domestic level is necessary for it.

3. Without strong local actors shaping the use of international funding, ensuring its dissemination among minority and majority strata of society and producing normative representations of the Roma self and past, dominant political actors have great leeway in co-opting an emergent European culture of remembrance, while resisting the emancipatory dimension of memory work supposed to be inherent in that culture. Such actors can and do engage in mimetic and opportunistic norm following. Hungary appears to be a clear case for demonstrating how a memory offensive conceived and configured within prevailing logics of biopolitics can achieve a recontextualization of memory so that it loses its subversive potential. Instead of emancipation, it is put to use as a disciplinary instrument, where past wrongs and resistance to these wrongs are recounted without permitting the subject to instrumentalize these historical representations of resistance and genocide as stratagems of emancipation.

4. The foci in the work of transnational elites enable, in a country like Hungary, the preservation and further evolution/enhancement of emancipatory, de-colonizing discourses. The transnational elite by itself, however, lacks resources for broader mobilization. Locally embedded NGOs are also a crucial transition belt towards both mobilization of the in-group and gaining the attention and support of majority society beyond groups of committed, "allied" intellectuals. Also, domestic pressure groups incentivize governments to accept or support Roma identity projects, whereas transnational elites hold little clout. The natural partners and allies of the latter, supranational organizations, have little clout in domestic politics of memory up to this day, and, as the Hungarian example shows, they can be pacified with mimetic norm following on the part of national governments.

Altogether, findings strongly suggest the continued ability of domestic majority elites to shape memory and define its valence and applicability in society. It is this hegemony that

is at stake in the memory games. How this appropriation could be reversed, the drive to create docile subjects stopped, and a mobilizing public discussion, not about past events but about the significance of past events for the future, could be successfully instigated is uncertain.[296] The Roma Holocaust has been institutionalized, but at the cost of hijacking it, removing it from its broader historical context and integrating it, instead, into a national history of victimhood where Roma can be commemorated alongside the majority. For progress towards reinstating the Holocaust as a signifier of a moral imperative for the present and a moral resource, the prevailing, adapted governmentality will have to be subverted. The challenge today rests not in achieving recognition of the historical fact but in re-conquering and re-interpreting the image. Work on this has started, as evidenced by projects such as the ones ongoing at Gallery8. Translating these into discourses of (re)mobilization, of public, rather than elite contestation is the next step.

The German and the Hungarian case studies reveal how European, supranational agents have limited clout and interest in impacting Roma policy in member states of the EU. European Roma policy has limited itself to social initiatives, without tackling memory, identity and minority status head on, except for anti-segregation and other basic rights questions. Given that national governments retain their ability to shape remembering, productive outcomes are achieved where there is long-standing commitment to cooperation between government and NGOs, as in Germany. However, even in Germany, governmentality manipulating Roma identity politics and modes of remembering the Holocaust can be pinpointed. In Hungary, governmentality could be seen operating in a more assertive manner, even capitalizing on the dependency of the organizational partner (the national level council and presidium of the local ethnic self-governments), rendering it mute on the subject of the Roma Holocaust and configuring Holocaust memory so as to support its own ambiguous positions. The main conclusion that follows from this is that the situation has changed perhaps less than usually assumed since the struggles of Romani Rose and others in the late 1970s and the early 1980s. Today national-level norm-entrepreneurship and coalition-building appears no less necessary for deepening the identity-building potential of the memory of the Roma Holocaust than it did decades ago.

[296] Anghel, "Contesting neoliberal governance," 87. See also Timofey Agarin, "Travelling without moving? Limits of European Governance for Romani inclusion," *Ethnicities* 14, no. 6 (2014): 737-755.

Supplementary note

Reflections on Art, Memory, Remembrance and Resistance in the Context of the Roma Holocaust through the works of two Roma artists: Katarzyna Pollok and Károly Bari

Éva Blénesi

1. Introduction

There are still many aspects of the Roma past that remain silenced, hidden, or not properly documented. The Roma Holocaust is one of these. This paper aims to reflect on the Roma experience during World War II through the lenses of Katarzyna Pollok[1] and Károly Bari[2] and examine how these two Roma artists paint a narrative picture of the past. While I do not intend to offer a comprehensive analysis of their work related to the Holocaust, I hope to show how these two artists fulfill their complex role as preservers of cultural memory, transmitters and transformers of collective trauma, and vehicles of resistance against hegemonic narratives and forgetting. The reflections on Roma art related to the Holocaust in this paper are limited to these artists' works exhibited by the Tom Lantos Institute as part of the research project entitled *"Roma Resistance during the Holocaust and its Aftermath"*.[3]

[1] Katarzyna Pollok was born in Kiev in 1961, grew up in Poland, and left that country in 1983 during military rule. She has worked as an artist in Berlin – Kreuzberg ever since – often making long journeys around the world, in particular to India and Israel. She has never been to art school but was active in Polish underground punk bands, street theatre, and living theatre. She is the cofounder of Berlin's first vegetarian restaurant and first multicultural alternative radio station. She held her first exhibition in 1988.

[2] Károly Bari was born in Bükkaranyos, Hungary in October 1 1952. His first book of poems *Holtak arca fölé* (Over the *Faces of the Dead* was published in 1970, followed by *Elfelejtett tüzek* (*Forgotten Fires*) 1973, *A némaság könyve*, (*The Book of Reticence*) 1983. In 1985 he published a book of translations of traditional Gypsy verse, *Tűzpiros kígyócska*, (*The Little Red Serpent*); also a collected edition of his poems *A varázsló sétálni indul* (*The Magician Goes for a Walk*); *21 Vers* (*Twenty one Poems*) 1992, *Díszletek egy szinonimához* (*Stage Sets for a Synonym*) 1994; *Csönd* (*Silence*) 2017. Throughout the 1980s he had several shows in Hungary and abroad. He also translated and published intensively post-colonial poetry and edited volumes of anthology of Roma poets from around the world.

[3] This includes excerpts from a lecture by Pollok entitled *Is There Such a Thing as Romani Art?* (*A Sinti artist in a Gadje world)* and a number of artifacts from her *Holocaust Series Nr. 1. Nr. 2*. as well as writings by Károly Bari (*To Be a Gypsy and a Poet*, *The Holocaust in Gypsy Folklore,* and *Gypsies' Memories on the Holocaust*

Via their selected oeuvres, I attempt to glimpse into how they see their role in narrating the past, how the experience of Holocaust becomes an identity construction element, how a particular traumatic event is transformed into a universal experience. It will also demonstrate how these two artists link the Nazi genocide with present day racism, discrimination and suffering, and how they attempt to challenge hegemonic cultural narratives about the Roma and how they relate to their experience during the Holocaust.

Hegemonic cultural representation is a symbolic and political power, which controls the ways in which "the Other's" identity is portrayed or interpreted. [4] "The Roma in Europe are the eternal 'other,' whose exile is in their homeland and their homeland is in their exile."[5] Roma have often been depicted in hegemonic narrative as a "people without memory of history," indifferent to remembering and focused solely on the present.[6] This presumption was partly based on the fact that the Roma were left out of dominant historical, cultural and artistic narratives, and were given no, or only a limited place, in the memory landscape.[7] Before the 1980s, the Roma were excluded from the mainstream art world and were not considered genuine artists, but artisans. The mainstream art world depicted the Roma only as objects of cultural representations, and not as subjects or cultural producers.[8] However, cultural hegemony can be dislodged and ultimately replaced through anti-hegemonic practices. Contemporary Roma artists have started to engage both artistically and politically with their own identity concerns, *bearing witness* through their artwork to their communities' struggles. "As they are caught in the paradox of being at once assigned to the edges of mainstream society and at the centre of this society's discriminatory order of control,"[9] they "are becoming more assertive disrupting stereotypes, prejudices and deprecating myths about Roma culture"[10] in particular, and the Roma community in general. Focusing on their past and roots, and challenging the denial of, and silence about, the Roma Holocaust have become an integral part of their quest for inclusion, respect and recognition and an important building block of group identity.

(Collection and Translation by Károly Bari) which explicitly tackle the question of the Roma Holocaust and some of his poems which can be implicitly associated with this traumatic event.

[4] Courtesy to Maria-Alina Asavei for providing me with the eye opening rough draft of her manuscript entitled: "Resistance and Complicity to Hegemonic Regimes of representation: 'Contemporary Roma Art'."

[5] Katalin Katz, "Story, history and memory: a case study of the Komárom Camp in Hungary," in *The Rom: A a Minority in Europe. Historical, Political and Social Perspectives,* eds. Roni Stauber and Vago Raphael (Budapest: Central European Press, 2013), 69-87.

[6] See Huub van Baar, "Cultural policy and the governmentalization of Holocaust remembrance in Europe: Romani memory between denial and recognition," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 17/1 (2011): 1-17. See also Huub van Baar, "The Way out of Amnesia?" *Third Text*, 22/3, (2008): 373-385.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Asavei, "Resistance and Complicity to Hegemonic Regimes of representation".

[9] "Call the Witness," Roma Pavilion, Venice Bieannale of Contemporary Art, 2011, Introduction. http://www.callthewitness.-net/Introduction, last accessed 16 March 2018.

[10] Maria-Alina Asavei, "Performative approaches in contemporary Roma art," *ArtMargins* online 16 October 2016,http://www.artmargins.com/index.php/2-articles/727-performative-approaches-to-identity-in-contemporary-roma-art, last accessed 16 March 2018.

The memory of the Roma Holocaust is the 'foundational trauma' of Roma identity[11]. The disastrous historical event, shattering the very base of a group's existence, becomes the starting point for a reflective, critical redefinition of a group's identity that results in incorporating that perception as an important building block.[12] Therefore, examining the representation of Holocaust in the work of Roma artists offers a deeper insight into the group's identity[13] building based on transformational experiences related to a traumatic experience[14], as well as their quest for recognition of their painful history within contemporary memory culture, which is largely a 'culture trauma,' privileging traumatic memories as something worth remembering[15].

2. The artwork of Katarzyna Pollok

Some key elements in the self-identification of Pollok and Bari, i.e. being an artist and a Gypsy/Roma, offer common ground for a comparative perspective. However, equally important is that they both consider their fate as inseparably intertwined with their culture, past, tradition and community, which, in turn, is deeply rooted in the common heritage of the Holocaust. According to Katarzyna Pollok's own words, the persecution of her family members during the Roma Holocaust is one of the main experiences underlying her artwork. She explains:

> My father had to hide for many years, but he survived. I don't know where my grandparents are buried. After World War II, he broke with his tradition: there was no other way for him but assimilation. My mother's parents were Cossacks on the father's side, and originally Belorussian on the mother side. All her family also suffered in the Holocaust. My father never talked to us about his roots, and I understood why there was such a silence about his experience during World War II as a Romani child. I saw during the last few years how badly his cultural identity had been damaged and now how strong his Holocaust identity grew. I inherited, on a nonverbal basis, part of his Holocaust identity, which, therefore, is still apparent in my art and life because I shared the experience of my father. Because of his experience I was searching to experiment with new creative ways to express what I believe to be the common heritage of all European Romani: the Holocaust. I try to emphasize the common experience of the two peoples in my works. I learned

[11] Slawomir Kapralski, "The genocide of Roma and Sinti. Their Political Movement from the Perspective of Social Trauma Theory," *Shoah Intervention methods Documentation 2* (Simon, 2015): 39.

[12] This definition draws on the one by Dominick La Capra although it adjusts it so as to be coherent with Alexander's interpretation of trauma as a social-cultural perception rather than a historical event. See Dominick La Capra, "Tropism of intellectual History," *The Journal of Theory and Practic*e 8/4 (2004): 499-529.

[13] Denzin, K. Norman, *Interpretive Interactionism*, (London: Sage Publications, 2002).

[14] Frank R. Ankersmit, "Trauma and Suffering: A Forgotten Source of Western Historical Consciousness," in *Western Historical Thinking. An Intercultural debate,* ed. Jörn Rüsen (New York: Berghahn Books 2002), 72-85.

[15] Michael Lambek and Paul Antze, "Introduction. Forecasting Memory," in *Tense Past. Cultural Essays in Trauma and memory* eds. Michael Lambek and Paul Antze (London, 1996) XI-XXXVIII.

> this in my intensive discussion with Jewish children of survivors. But painting the trauma of the Holocaust is not a Jewish topic. It's ours as well. This experience is common to many of us as individuals. But most important is that it is common to the whole of our people.[16]

When speaking about the main symbols incorporated in her artworks, Pollok highlights the figure of the ancient Egyptian child-god god Ihi. In her accounts, Ihi was hiding like her father, and survived just as he did. She also often incorporates Maat, the ancient Egyptian goddess of fairness and justice, in her artworks, symbolizing a search for justice following the traumatic survival of the Roma genocide.

Perhaps the most powerful piece dedicated to the memory of the Holocaust in Pollok's art is the iconic portrait of Anna-Maria Steinbach, also known as Settela. The powerful image of Settela, standing by the closing doors of a train at Westerbork concentration camp, became well-known and was used in many documentaries and books. The "girl with the headscarf" became a symbol of the persecution of the Jews and of Jewish children victimhood. However, in the early 1990s, the Dutch journalist, Aad Wagenaar, started an investigation into the identity of the girl and discovered that she was not Jewish but Sinti. In the composition, the figure of Settela is placed in the centre of the palm of the Hamsa Hand which protects against the evil eye.[17] The haunting eye of Settela becomes *an eye in the eye*—the eye that sees everything and from which nothing can escape its gaze. It invokes the all-seeing deity, which links the power of vision to wider power and knowledge. As in many major religions the eye watches out for the person, and warns of and protects from evil encounters, the tragic experience of Settela is transformed into a powerful reminder of "never again" and a warning to future generations.

The figure of Settela appears also in another of Pollok's composition, this time placed between the two fingers of an amulet. Pollok also incorporates the figure of the Egyptian god, Ihi, in this portrait referring to both Settela and her father. Both Settela's father and the god-child Ihi were musicians: Settela's father played the violin, while Ihi is the lord of the systrum, the musical instrument which drives away evil powers. As the son of Hathor, the deity who welcomes the dead into the next life, Ihi can see the path to the underworld and is guide and protector to the dead. According to Egyptian belief about the afterlife, the deceased must know the path in the underworld, and needs protection against dangerous inhabitants and deities in that underworld.[18] Moreover, the figure of Settela is surrounded by a garland, very similar to those Indian women wear around their necks. This might refer to Settela's Sinti origin and its embeddedness in Indian culture. Garlands can take the form of a *gajra*, which women used as a floral decoration for their hair. The tradition of garlanding is one of many rites in Indian weddings. When the groom garlands his wife, it is believed he bestows half of his spiritual energy on her. Likewise when the bride garlands the groom,

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Hamsa is a palm-shaped amulet, used as sign to protect against misfortune. Hamsa Hand in the Jewish community is also known as the Hand of Miriam, while its Arabic equivalent is the Khamsa or Fatima Hand. In both Jewish and Muslim culture the amulet serves as a protective symbol throughout the Middle East and North Africa.

[18] Richard H Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*. (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003), 132–133.

she similarly shares her spiritual energy with him. This exchange is said to mean the couple will revere one another as gods in their hearts and respect each other. This bestowing of spiritual energies ultimately symbolizes the union of two souls in marriage. However, in Pollok's painting, Settela is not surrounded by a garland of flowers but of leaves, which may refer to Settela's tragic fate: Deprived of the opportunity of experiencing fulfilled love and marriage. Also, neem leaf garlands in Indian culture are offered to the female goddesses Kali and Durga. Kali is associated with healing and protection against negative energy and Durga is worshipped to ward off evil spirits. One possible interpretation of the simultaneous use of these symbols is the artist's aim to magnify their symbolic protective powers: To preserve Settela's memory, as well as to protect against present-day racism.

In a series of Holocaust–related artworks by Pollok, figures of other iconic Roma victims also emerge, including Sidonie and Rukeli. The tragic fate of Sidonie Adlesburg became known to larger audiences when Eric Hockel's novel *Abschied von Sidonie* [Farewell to Sidonie] was published in 1989. The novel focused on the tragic fate of a Sinti girl, who, despite of being adopted by Austrian parents, was still deported to Auschwitz, where she died. Unlike in the Settela composition, Pollok does not place the portrait of the girl in the centre of an amulet but within the framework of a tableaux, or icon. Yet, the symbol of Fatima's Hand is present in the painting, along with angels, the guardians of the dead. White is the dominant colour of the painting: In many Eastern cultures, white can symbolize death, mourning and unhappiness, but it is also the symbol of cleanliness and purity. The central white colour is surrounded by red and contrasted with blue in the four corners of the composition. The opposing meanings of the colours and different symbols create a feeling of relentlessness. The Hamsa hand—symbol of protection for women for fertility and motherhood— is juxtaposed with the figure of a girl of fragile age, Sidonie, deprived of the chance of experiencing not only motherhood but, even, early adulthood. The figure of the child and those of the surrounding angels are also contrasted as they connote opposing transcendental qualities: Children in iconography represent the death of the innocent, whilst the flying angels represent rebirth.

Johan Wilhelm Trollmann, nicknamed Rukeli (meaning "tree" in Romani language), became famous in the late 1920s due to his spectacular and victorious fights as a boxer and became an iconic figure of resistance. In protest at the discriminatory procedures against him and Roma in general, Trollmann appeared in a match against Gustav Eder with his body and face covered in flour and his hair dyed blonde, as a caricature of an Aryan, expressing his protest against the racial discrimination of the Nazi regime. Despite his rare talent and popularity, he did not escape Nazi persecution. In hope of saving his life and family members, he underwent sterilization, divorced his wife and left his daughter. In 1942, he was arrested and interned in Neuengamme concentration camp. He was recognized as a boxer and was forced to train troops during the night, in addition to daily forced labour, so his health deteriorated. His fellow internees faked his death and managed to transfer him to a nearby camp, where he was again recognized by a fierce Kapo[19] who challenged him to a fight. Trollman won, but the Kapo took revenge on him

[19] Kapo is a prisoner given privileges for taking on responsibilities in the camp.

by beating him to death with a shovel.[20] The colour black dominates the painting and gives it a more sombre visage. It creates a feeling of anxiety and fear of the unknown. In most Western cultures black is the symbol of grief. Against the black background, the figure of the boxer appears strikingly white, thus, Rukeli's dark skin colour fades away. The artist plays with colours, emphasising the relational character of our perception. It makes the viewer reflect on the reversibility of colours and their associated meaning. From the artist's perspective, the message is clear in terms of which colour is more fitting as a real attribute of Rukeli, and which colour a more relevant attribute of the environment within which he was forced to live. In contrast to the previous compositions, the amulet is missing, replaced by other emblematic figures taken from Egyptian iconography, and painted red. The other elements include stylized laurel leaves and are white in colour. They could be an ironic reference to the victorious boxer who only became a laureate posthumously, in 2003, and their white colour a symbol of the innocence of the boxer in a hostile environment. Further compositional elements is the barbed wire spanning the entire composition. These are complemented by newspaper collages and random numbers, as well as wheels, or propeller-like round elements. The numbers and the barbed wire directly connote the concentration camp and the numbers of inmates. The propeller, or wheel-like elements, may refer to the archetype of time, the eternal return of suffering and pain, but also to the perpetual motion of the annihilation machinery.

The artworks commemorating "Settela", Sidonie and Rukeli play a crucial role in Pollok's artistic endeavours. They focus on Roma victims of the Holocaust, a historical event that is a key factor in the formation the artist's identity. They are also the embodiment of values the artist considers key ingredients of Roma art: Openness, embracing, and accommodating values belonging to distant cultures and initiate trans-dialogical communication with them. Through her work, Pollok challenges the reductive vision of the majority perception of Roma as a peculiar ethnic enclave. She demonstrates that Roma engage in transcultural dialogue that is universally valid. This helps us understand the dialogicity between the particular and the universal in the context of the Roma Holocaust, i.e. the quest by Roma for recognition and respect of their Holocaust victimhood, as part of their particular identity and their inclusion in the mainstream narrative about the Holocaust.

3. The work of Károly Bari

Cultural memory is the potentiality that allows us to build a narrative picture of the past and through this process we develop our identity.[21] For centuries, the preservation of cultural

[20] "Spiegel Online International" June 30, 2010. http://www.spiegel.de/international/zeitgeist/a-fight-for-memory-monument-honors-sinti-boxer-murdered-by-the-nazis-a-702938.html.

[21] Jan Assmann, "Communicative and Cultural Memory," in *Cultural Memory Studies. An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook,* eds. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 109-118.

memory was the task of the poets. In his essay entitled *To be a Gypsy and a Poet: Reflections on Poetry, Prejudice and the Past* Bari clearly articulates his perception of the role of poets, particularly those of marginalized communities: "A poet who is the child of a scorned people can go in one of two directions: He can either aim for the heights or descend to the depths. I believe he must do the latter: work his way down to the very core of reality that is made of both tangible and inapprehensible things. The lower he can plunge, the greater the force that will uplift him will be. The more profound his knowledge of life's lower end is, the higher his poetry will reach. And if his work is recognized by the world, this can be regarded as a victory over the prejudices directed at his ancestral community"[22]

The symbol of descending to the depths correlates with the metaphor of the pearl diver with whom Bari identifies in an interview. [23] The pearl diver is the one who has to plunge deep into the ocean in order to bring the pearl to the surface. The pearl metaphor is well known as a symbol of productive suffering.[24] The pearl is created through a process that takes place inside an oyster's shell when an intruder – a grain of a sand – enters the shell and wounds its flesh, which in turn produces a protective layer, a coat of smooth cement, creating a beautiful and rare gemstone. We may discover an analogy between the life of the shell and minority existence, in the way we may regard it as a self-protective strategy, in response to negative external circumstances, that transforms loss into a new, stronger identity. As the Roma Holocaust shatters the foundation of the group's existence, it becomes the role of the poet to initiate a redefinition of identity that incorporates the memory of the traumatic event and transforms it into a constituent element of a new collective identity.

In an attempt to create this new identity, Bari turns to folklore as one of the building blocks of Roma culture. He draws attention to the unifying potential inherent in Roma folklore and its transformative power at converting losses and tragedies into an artistic manifestation of collective cultural heritage. Indeed, in the context of Holocaust, this also carries an additional message: there are no hierarchies between folk art of different peoples, and there are no hierarchies of their losses or victimhood, so connecting the particular Roma experience with universal suffering.

While in his essay on *The Holocaust in Gypsy Folk Poetry* Bari does not give a comprehensive account of the folklore genres that draw on the subject of Roma genocide, he does give a presentation of its typical features. By so doing, he aims to reveal how the generalizing power of tradition interweaves the separate strands of individual tragedies into a testimony of communal suffering. He also explains that it was always the duty of the elderly members

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[22] Károly Bari "To be a Gypsy and a Poet" (trans. Iván Sanders) *The Hungarian quarterly* 145 (1997): 3-7.

[23] András Mezei, "Megkérdeztük Bari Károlyt – Milyennek látja Bari Károly?" in Bari Károly, *Költő, folklórkutató. Interjúk, recenzók,és más írások tükrében* (Gödöllő: Petőfi Sándor Művelődési Központ, 1999), 60.

[24] The symbol of the pearl (and the grain of sand) has, since the beginning of the 1920s, become very common in Hungarian literature in Transylvania. It is the symbol of "productive suffering", which became a kind of moral reaction to the historical and psychological trauma that they experienced due to the Treaty of Trianon. See Éva Cs. Gyímesi, "Gyöngy és homok: Ideologikus értékjelképek az erdélyi magyar irodalomban," in *Honvágy a hazában: Esszék, interjúk, publicisztikai írások, ed.* Éva Cs. Gyímesi (Budapest: Pesti Szalon Könyvkiadó, 1993), 21-106.

of Gypsy communities to make known any community member's personal experiences relating to hostile manifestations of the world, dangers affecting the community as a whole, and send a warning signal to other members and future generations. "The troops of itinerant Gypsies always left signs behind them whatever they went, for other clans. Ribbons in coded colours, or dolls fashioned into certain forms from dark rags were tied to roadside bushes, and ancient Gypsy runic signs carved into the trunks of trees, in order to tip off caravan-dwellers who came by later to any lurking dangers." [25] Later, Bari explains in his essay their significance in the context of the Holocaust: "The body of Gypsy folklore that perpetuates the Holocaust in folk memory fulfils the same function as those signs left beside the highway by the caravans of old. It conjures up the polymorphous faces of hatred, like a row of admonitory dolls and utters the names of the prejudices whose tentacles reanimate the dark host of effigies time and time again".[26] With this reference, Bari links the past with the present, and tradition with cultural unity today, and the traumatic experience of Holocaust with present-day racism. Whilst so doing, he is also connects the memory of the traumatic event to a moral duty to remember and warn future generations. Memory, thus becomes not only a carrier of a knowledge about a tradition but also a practice of memory sharing, internalized to the extent it became part of the community's identity.

Bari illustrates the generic features of the folk songs related to the Holocaust with a *Lager song*:

Little bird, o little birdie,
Fly far away, carry the news,
Tell how I'm in constant terror,
Tell how I'm in constant terror!
German lager, how hard it is,
German lager, how hard it is,
The prison guards are so evil,
The prison guards are so evil!

Hey there, Hitler, curses on you.
May God trample upon your face
Like people walk upon the streets,
Like people walk upon the streets.

Machine guns are barking away,
Machine guns are barking away,
My pursuers are getting close,
My pursuers are getting close.

God, give me some of your fortune,
Give a little bit of your own,
Help me get onto trackless tracks,
Help me pass along trackless tracks.

God, send me a drop of rainfall,
God, send me a drop of rainfall,
Mingle it up well with snowflakes,
Mingle it up well with snowflakes!

Mingle it up with snowflakes,
Mingle it up with snowflakes,
So the green shoots of grass may grow,
So the green shoots of grass may grow!

Cover the trail of my footprints,
Cover the trail of my footprints,
So I may find tranquillity,
So I may find tranquillity!

[25] Bari, Károly, "The Holocaust in Gypsy Folk Poetry," *Hungarian Quarterly,* 42 (2001): 64-70.

[26] Ibid.

God, oh God! How you have thrashed me,
God, oh God! How you have thrashed me,
Perhaps nobody more than me,
Perhaps nobody more than me!

I've lost all my family,
I've lost all my family,
Oh, what can I do, all alone,
Oh, what can I do, all alone!

German lager, German lager,
There a gun was always barking,
All my family was wiped out,
All my family was wiped out!

Bari explains that "it is an archaic form of song poetry, the dirge or *zhalvini gilyi* that is best fitted to expressing the camp experiences. The improvised song performances of survivors never mention the tortures suffered in the concentration camps, presumably because the pain and fear that these caused is indescribable".[27] However, Bari also describes how *Lager songs* benefited from the ancient rites. In line with ancient "Gypsy" performance customs, songs about Lagers are always presented with the participation of the audience. The community sings together and hums along an accompaniment to an improvised text that the performer fashions, and which is related to his or her own past. This turns the individual suffering into a community experience, but by doing so, provides support to grieving community members.

> The most common components of the zhalvini gilyi are those giving voice to loneliness and to the pain of those who have lost members of their family. They express the defencelessness that these tragedy-scarred souls feel in the world, describing the grief, homelessness and misery that have become their lot. Pertinent here, as a loss, is that in Gypsy thinking the blood ties of clan signify a person's greatest security, so that loss of one's family is equated in archaic consciousness with the community's vulnerability and loss of ability to defend itself.[28]

For Bari, it is of utmost importance that he deals with the traumatic past of Roma Holocaust in the context of folklore. This approach is key to Bari's perception of the process of self-identification, identity construction, dealing with memory and the past, and their interrelatedness, since he considers folklore as a cultural cement. Bari claims, that for centuries, the image of the Gypsy was based on fantasy, superstition and vicious rumour, and official reports of criminal proceedings. "The lives of stigmatized Gypsies must have seemed so inferior and degraded, so utterly devoid of redeeming features, that the general feeling, probably, was that they didn't deserve to be saved."[29] Therefore, the systematic collection, translation and processing of traditional folk art and sharing its richness and depth with a larger audience was a form of resistance, a way of counteracting these tendencies by the

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

artist. For Bari tackling the problem related to Holocaust in the context of folklore served exactly this purpose.

The reader of Bari's oeuvre may also discover further analogies between different works by him. The poet – similar to the little bird from the folk Lager song — fulfills the role of the transmitter between the internees of the camp and the outside world, and the dead and the transcendental world. Although Bari's poetry does not talk directly about the memory of the Holocaust, his poems may open up channels for remembrance. The evocative power and polyphony, inherent in Bari's poems, e.g. *The book of reticence,*[30] enables the reader to abstract from the current situation and become the recipient of a higher level of understanding of the message of the poem, where elements of a concrete prison merge into an extended vision of a Lager, and the inconceivable humiliation and suffering related to the Holocaust.

The book of reticence

You will die! You will die!
Every night the dew-booted bugs like
escaped convicts will find refuge
in the sockets of your eyes
as they escape from camps
resounding with the barking of leaves,
as they run from the fate of trembling stamens,
the crew-cut residents of red tulip barracks.
Hiding in the rain's silver cupboard
even the garden whispers of death
…

Suffering is continuously present in Bari's poetry; he often describes the painful experience of the feeling of being singled out, living in poverty and experiencing discrimination. In his poetry we find depths of experience that can only come from a life full of hardship and suffering, one that he endured as a child, and one that he was forced to undergo as an adult. In his poem *Suffering set me on the road* he also speaks about the tension created by the lyrical subject's attempt to detach from the painful past and his inability to escape from it:

Suffering set me on the road

My Gypsy village with its starving smoke
crumbling walls, wind ripped-roofs
wrapped in trouble up to here,
dangled its raw poverty into the world.

[30] Károly Bari, "The book of reticence," in *Winter Diary*, trans. Dezső Benedek, Endre Frakas, and Laura Schiff (San Fransico: Mercury House, 1997), 51-57.

Suffering set me on the road,
across the sun-burned plains,
through the depths of cool valleys,
to test myself,
to forge stars from blood, from sweat
to rip from my plundered sixteen years
the words of my cursing mother.

My blood blazing with hell-fire, its charred shirts
dressed me as a stranger,
on the sparkling screen of my past I see the shack
from which my stubborn faith drove me into solitude,
from which noble poverty chased me into the world
to scud like a dragon across the open land.

My heartbeat drives fate from its place,
ablaze, the rags of remembrance flicker now and then,
my face cools, hardness into my childhood.
My forgotten bitterness worms into my days
and again and again my sadness sinks me back
into my burnt-out past, my threadbare memories.

Suffering in the poem is associated with the micro-universe of the lyrical self and with the extended form of this intimacy: The home environment. The main attributes of this created "reality" relate to both abstract and visible manifestations of suffering: Starvation, poverty and danger. As the lyrical self dislocates from the concrete home environment, the "geographic" area of the poem opens up into a larger unit. The intimate micro-world is supplemented by more general elements of landscape. As a result of departure from home, spatial elements tend to lose their concrete and identifiable character; departure from home leads to feelings of solitude, and disrupture from family and community. Suffering creates a vicious circle: It is a push factor to escape from the well-known world and find refuge in the unknown, and at the same time also serves as a pull factor, an eternal longing to return, to find a way back home.

The traumatic past of the Holocaust is indirectly linked with poverty, marginalization, exclusion, and wondering: their never ending experience of being singled out and subject of harassment. Therefore, the present-day suffering due to exclusion, marginalization and discrimination finds an echo in the memory related to the cataclysmatic past and *vice versa* as they mutually reinforce each other. Moreover, the personal experience of suffering and that of his community find a common ground in the experience of the traumatic past.

The role of the artist with a mission—as conceived by Bari—is to give voice to this suffering and help articulate the narratives about this past and put it into the service of the community. As a poet with a mission, Bari considers that it his moral obligation to deal with the

traumatic past for many reasons: For the sake of preservation and keeping its memory alive , so resist forgetting, but also resist the mainstream ethnic ghettoization of remembrance, which claims that Roma lack the knowledge of their past. Last, but not least, by focusing on the Holocaust, Bari aims to resist ignorance and exclusion from mainstream remembrance.

For instance, in the poem entitled *Hazánk* (Our Homeland- See Annex 1), the use of the motif of suffering as an identity building element, along with the religious symbol of Tefillin[31] serves as a basis for an analogy between Jewish and Roma experience. There are several layers in the poem that reinforce this analogy: Key among them is the correspondence between Tefillin and wrinkles on the face, and between the wrinkles of the face and the groove on the soil of the homeland. Both *face* and *homeland* are powerful symbols of individual and collective identity in Bari's oeuvre, as the one of Tefillin is in the Jewish faith. The merging of the two symbols serves as a reinforcement of the commonalities between the shared values and shared suffering, and of the common fate of the two peoples as victims of the Holocaust.

According to Bari, between 1942 and 1945 approximately 600,000 Roma were killed in, or en route to, death camps, of which 50,000 Roma were dispatched from Hungary alone. In his essay, entitled *Holocaust in Gypsy Folk Poetry,* he cites Mrs. József Székely, a Roma woman from Zalaegerszeg who survived and recalled the traumatic events:

> The Arrow-Cross men and the police came on November 3rd. They told us to get ready to leave, along with the children, because they were escorting us to a new workplace. Except that they didn't take us to work but led us to the railway station, packed us into wagons and transported us to Komárom. When we reached Komárom, the men were separated from the women and children. We were there for three weeks. The Arrow-Cross men continually beat and kicked us – the children as well. If they went looking for food, they were trashed with clubs. Some had arms broken, others both legs, so badly were they beaten. We had to sleep amongst worms, in filth, in pools of water. The children died one after the other; those who were still babes in arms all perished. Many old people also died, starved to death. The Arrow-Cross men just tossed their bodies onto carts with pitchforks and took them off somewhere…. We were deported… The next stop for Gypsies then, was Dachau.[32]

Due to his extensive ethnographic field research work, and his fluency in various Gypsy dialects, Bari was perfectly positioned to build a trusting relationships with community members who opened up and talked about their Holocaust experience. In his interviews conducted with Holocaust survivors, or people recalling the traumatic period, the respondents gave a detailed description of their experiences. Mrs. Pilis (Budapest) recalls her memories in relation to a Gypsy caravan crossing her hometown, Baja in order to escape deportation.

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[31] Tefillin are a pair of black leather boxes containing Hebrew parchment scrolls. A set includes … The Torah commands Jewish men to bind tefillin onto their head and upper arm every weekday, in fulfillment of the verse (Deut. 6:8).

[32] Bari, "The book of reticence," 51-57.

She tells of how they come across a young Gypsy woman lying in a ditch on the outskirts of the town, and helped her give birth to her child, how she joined the caravan immediately after her delivery, and how she later found out that their pilgrimage came to a tragic end: All members of the caravan were shot dead by German soldiers on the outskirts of the town. The other interviewee, Gyula Balog (Rákospalota) speaks in vivid detail of his Holocaust related memories, starting from his deportation and temporary imprisonment in Komárom; his journey on the train to Győr then to Dachau and Buchenwald; his escape from Buchenwald and his journey home. Each stage that he evokes has its own tragic element. In Komárom he had to witness how the bodies of children who starved to death were thrown into rubbish dump; on their way to Győr, how he had seen the bombing of a train transporting women and children and how those who tried to escape were massacred; how, in Dachau, a young Gypsy man from Nyírbátor, who tried to escape, was crucified and exposed outside the barracks and froze on the cross in the cold winter to the horror of the other prisoners. He also describes his everyday experiences in the concentration camp; his and his uncle Matej's escape from Buchenwald, how they hid themselves in the forest, and how they tried to survive on leftovers from a rubbish dump near Weimer; how he had eye-witnessed the killing of his uncle on their way home, in the forest near the Czech border.[33]

4. Conclusion

Aesthetics and political art are often described as opposites. Indeed, many art experts "proclaimed the end of art because it has lost its aesthetic import in the hands of ideological interests."[34] However, Maria-Alina Asavei's aesthetic theory accommodates critical-political art, and she claims that the coexistence of politics and art does not undermine the aesthetic dimension of art.[35] According to her, "political art is art that critically intervenes in relations of power, and does not merely reflect on them. In its narrow, critical sense, political art is not merely a container of political messages (as propaganda is) but it is politically polyvalent in its criticality."[36]

The political activism of the two artists described in this paper focuses not only transforms the traumatic past of a community into a building block of a stronger new identity, but also draws attention to the fact that there is a latent link between the Holocaust and present day racism and exclusion. Moreover, it also aims at transforming the majority society into one that incorporates the narratives of minorities, as part of a "common" past. Testimonies

[33] Károly Bari, "Memories on the Holocaust," trans. Károly Bari *Múlt és Jövő* 3 (1991): 1.

[34] Maria-Alina Asavei, "Political-Critical Art and the Aesthetics," PhD diss., Central European University, 2013.

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

embedded in the work of the artists are an important tool of remembrance. Furthermore, when artists, as eyewitnesses of their own personal and community experiences, deploy their skills to drag us into their stories, as if we were also part of the happenings, they becomes our stories too. This is particularly important in this case, as by incorporating the memory of the Roma Holocaust into the artistic framework not only claims a space and recognition in mainstream art, but also incorporates the specific experience of the Roma into the corpus of the mainstream historical and cultural narrative about the Holocaust and the past.

Annex 1

Hazánk

Ráncokkal szíjjazta arcunkat
e földhöz az idő, e csontokkal-kártyázó
temetőhöz ráncokkal kötött, nem jön
tavasz, nem jön tél sem, hogy eloldozzon,
szívünket éjszakánként álom-ekékkel szántja körbe
a sötétség, ideszülettünk virággyökerek étkéül;
megsirattatni magunkat a szélben hófehér esővé ijedt
almafákkal, mert még szeretőnk sincs, ki könnyet ejtsen
értünk, elszöktek, elfutottak csalódva, hajnali füvek tornyain
harmat harangokat kondított halálba a léptük, ez hát
a hazánk, ez a káromkodásainkra-feszített
szegénység, dobravert életünkért a nyomorúsággal-alkudó
kalmár, nem rejtőzhetünk mezők vállaira taszított
homály mögé innen; zúzmara-szőrű ágak mögé nem
rejtőzhetünk, törvények, szerelmek vigyázzák
szökésünk, éjszakák fekete csontjaiért marakodó
kutyák, lobogni, zúgolódni itt tanított
a tűz, suttogta nekünk villámmá dühödve:
csillaggá feketedsz hajlongó sors!

In Károly Bari, *Elfelejtett tüzek* [Forgotten Fires]
(Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1973), 15.

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