GYPSIES AND THE PROBLEM OF IDENTITIES

Contextual, Constructed and Contested

Edited by

Adrian Marsh & Elin Strand

SWEDISH RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN ISTANBUL

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Papers presented at the First International Romani Studies Conference in Istanbul, at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, April 10 - 12, 2003

Edited by Adrian Marsh and Elin Strand
Preface by Karin Ådahl
Afterword by Rüdiger Benninghaus

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This publication is based upon the presentations held at the First International Romani Studies Conference in Istanbul that took place at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul (SRII) April 10-12, 2003 (*Contextua l, Constructed and Contested - Gypsies and the Problem of Identities*). The conference was organised by Elin Strand, at the time a scholarship holder at the SRII, and Adrian Marsh, a PhD student from the University of Greenwich in London. The idea to organise a conference focussing on Gypsies in Turkey and the region, came about after a series of successful Romani Studies seminars, September 2002 – April 2003 arranged at the SRII by us. Neither would have been possible without the encouragement, and support from the Swedish Consulate General in Istanbul (Dr Ingmar Karlsson), and the Director of the SRII (Dr Karin Ådahl). The General Consulate of Sweden in Istanbul financed the conference and has supported the publication of this volume. We are grateful for the continuing institutional support of the SRII, before, during and after the conference, as well as for embracing Romani Studies, as part of its research programme. This SRII *Transactions* publication is an evidence of their continuing commitment to Romani Studies in Turkey and the region.

We are indebted to many people who have helped and guided us along our way. We would like to thank Dr. Ingmar Karlsson in particular, for his continuous commitment to minority issues, and his belief in our work. Our warmest thanks go to Annika Svahnström, Consul for her support, and Yasemin Akkaya, of the Consulate. The staff of the Consulate was also sterling in their practical support of the Conference, and the reception that took place on the first evening and second evenings. In this regard, we cannot forget to mention the surprise appearance of Mr Balık Ayhan, and his manager, who organised a performance at the Consulate with Annika Svahnström, introducing the conference guests to the rich heritage that is Romani music and dance in Turkey. Music during the conference was also provided by the extraordinary Ahırkapı Büyük Roman Orkestresi, and the hard-working Romani musicians of Nevizade, who play in the bars and restaurants of Beyoğlu. We were fortunate to have members of the Romani communities from Kuştepe, Gaziosmanpaşa, Dolapdere, Tophane, (Mr Muzaffer Orucu), Mr Erdinç Çekiç and his family (from the Edirne Edçinkay Romani organisation), and head of Kağithane municipality (Mr. Hüseyn Irmak). Other colleagues from the Laz, Kurdish and Alevi communities, brought important elements to the discussions about identity, and demonstrated the need for comparative analysis amongst the Romani Studies researchers. We would like to thank Rüdiger Benninghaus for his enthusiasm and active participation both during the conference and with this publication. Our appreciation also goes to Dr Bernard Streck, Dr Thomas Acton and Dr Donald Kenrick

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The then Secretary of the SRII, Sidsel Braaten was instrumental in helping us from the very beginning and we would be remiss indeed not to thank Havva Yamaç, for her invaluable care of us all, then and now.

All these events are collaborative, and we would like to thank all the other founder members of the iRSN; Udo, Ana, Mustafa and Dirk, and our Chairperson, Birol Oğuz, and Secretary, Alev Hawes. Together as a team we have managed to achieve much more than we would have done individually, and we are grateful for all their hard work, and mutual support. We have also been grateful for the reviewing of the majority of these articles by Dr Jan-Olof Rosenqvist, and Professor Hancock's paper by Dr Hans Lejdegård.

Istanbul, October 2005

Adrian Marsh

Elin Strand

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Preface

The Swedish Research Institute has been working for almost fifty years in Turkey and since 1974 in the Dragomanhouse, to serve as a resource for Swedish and Nordic researchers. During these decades many scholars have visited the institute and many interesting topics have been researched, lectured on and discussed. Still, it was almost a surprise to me as the new director, although well acquainted with the activities of the Institute for decades, to find two young scholars working in the institute, venturing with great energy and enthusiasm into a new field of research in the Turkish and Near Eastern context. Elin Strand and Adrian Marsh had found a common interest in the studies of the Romani peoples in Turkey and the Near East, as well as Cyprus and the Balkans. At my arrival in 2002 they were already well established in Turkish academic circles and the Turkish society with an international background from studies in England. During the past three years they have continued their research work as well as organizing conferences, seminars, workshops, academic courses and teaching in Turkey and in Sweden, in cooperation with Bilgi university in Istanbul and Malmö Högskola (University) in Sweden, with the strong support of the Swedish Research Institute and not least the moral and financial support of the Swedish Consulate General, the section for cooperation between Sweden and Turkey. Today Elin Strand and Adrian Marsh are peers in the field of Romani studies.

It is a pleasure to see their first major publication appear in Transactions, the scholarly series published by the Swedish Research Institute. The Institute housed this conference, of which the proceedings now appear in the present volume, as well as seminars and workshops organized by Elin Strand and Adrian Marsh during the past three years. In the process we have watched research in the field advance and knowledge about the Romani peoples grow in scholarly circles here in Turkey as well as in Sweden. It is a topic that deserves attention to promote understanding of, and knowledge about the conditions and culture of the Romanlar, and also to change attitudes and perspectives on the Romani people in the new Europe now extending its borders, encompassing and confronting new worlds.

Istanbul, October 2005

Dr Karin Ådahl
Director of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul

Introduction
In Memoriam: the scholarship of Nabil Sobhi Hanna and Angus Fraser

ELIN STRAND AND ADRIAN MARSH

Angus Fraser was a pivotal figure in the transition from old-style Gypsylorism to the new Romani Studies. One of the last scholar-mandarins of the English Civil Service, he rose to become head of Customs and Excise, while in private life he was the world's leading expert on George Borrow. His keen critical intellect led him to read practically everything that had been written on Romani people in several European languages, and upon his retirement from the civil service he came to write the definitive synthesis of existing historical knowledge about them. At the same time, through his membership of the Advisory Council for the Education of Romany Travellers and other groups, he became practically involved with Romani politics in his later years. His history may now be the yardstick against which current historical revisionists define themselves; but his massive scholarship, and willingness to comment on others' works, and to point out slips of memory or interpretation, means that he leaves a gap not easily filled.

London September 2005
Dr Thomas Acton

I had the privilege of meeting both Angus Fraser and Nabil Sobhi Hanna in person, and I had admiration for both as people and scholars. Angus Fraser's breadth of knowledge of the history of the Romani people is encapsulated in his book entitled simply The Gypsies (1992). *I have drawn on it many times and knew I could cite his sources in the knowledge that they were accurate without the need to ever check. The Gypsies is the standard work on the history of the Gypsies and likely to remain so for many years. It does not stray into sociology and folklore as do most other books that purport to be histories, but concentrates on the subject.*

Nabil too moved away from his background as an educated Egyptian Copt, to get close to the members of a Gypsy group in Egypt whom I would call the Helebi. *For me his research on the language was always the most interesting, but his book* Die Ghajar (1993), *is a valuable contribution to*

a field which has been much neglected, probably because of the reluctance of the average Egyptian to get too close to these outsiders.

Angus Fraser and Nabil Hanna are worthy of the dedication of this volume and their works will be an inspiration to a new generation of Romani Studies scholars.

London October 2005
Dr Donald Kenrick

Nabil Hanna was a scholar always willing to share his work with others, and at the time that I was in Cairo in 2000 and met him, he expressed a strong determination to follow-up his study by returning to the community of "Sett-Guirahna", to continue the work started in the early 1980's. He invited me to join him in this enterprise, and extended his kind hospitality to a second visit the following week, despite his failing health, where we discussed how we might go about this exciting research, but sadly his untimely death meant that such an opportunity never arose. I hope that this work will form the basis of a more extensive study in the future, building on the foundations laid by Nabil Hanna's research.

On those occasions when I met Angus Fraser, he was always interested and encouraging, even providing the title of my first conference paper at the event organized on the occasion of Thomas Acton's elevation to the Chair of Romani Studies at Greenwich University. His encouragement to look at the history of the Gypsies from the "other side of Europe" has remained with me ever since.

Istanbul November 2005
Adrian Marsh

CONTEXTUAL, CONSTRUCTED AND CONTESTED: ETHNICITY & IDENTITY

The first international Romani Studies conference in Istanbul, was both an end in itself, and the beginning of a process. It marked the completion of a series of activities that our newly founded research network, the iRSN[1] had undertaken, under the auspices of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul during 2002-2003; a Romani Studies seminar series, slide shows and various meetings. The conference also marked the revival of an academic platform for Romani Studies scholarship to develop further in Turkey and the region, after a break of nearly half a century[2].

The title of the conference may need some elaboration; scholars and researchers involved in the field of identity studies are familiar with the

notion that ethnic identities are the product of the context in which they are constructed. Ethnic identities and the boundaries that define them, are more often than not contested. The debates about the nature of identity have encompassed those who would suggest that it is something we are born with, unchangeable and *primoridial* in connection to others. These are suggested as stemming from the "givens... of social existence, being born into a particular religious community, speaking a particular language, or even dialect of a language, and following particular social practices."[3] Others would argue that such notions of "ineffable, overpowering and coercive" primordial "sentiments" are "bankrupt [conceptions]... for the analysis of ethnicity", as they are ultimately unanalysable and socially unconstructed, "theoretically vacuous and empirically indefensible"[4]. The nature of identity was much discussed during the conference proceedings, and those who adhered to these, and other positions were ardent in their defence of such. The overall perspective of the conference participants coalesced around a central conception of identity that was more sophisticated than these extremes, both acknowledging the significance of *notions* of biological contiguity, what van den Berghe called "social races"[5], and the realities of fictive and imagined communities, the socially constructed relationships that bind groups and divide them from others.[6]

The construction of ethnicity and identity relies upon the negotiation of, and frequently the contestation over symbolic elements and myths, language and memory. The resilience of these symbols, or their reinvention, and reiteration in the historicised present requires the conflation of history and memory, the re-enactment of the ritual (the religious ceremony, the commemoration of the past losses in war, the 'moment' of communal unity), chosen from a 'usable past' and inserted into the eternal, narrativised 'now'. In this sense, the necessity of history in the construction of ethnicity is one that has often been overlooked or ignored by the process of abstraction, in the pursuit of ideal types or models. This persistence, represented as continuity, is one of the main concerns of what has been termed "ethno-symbolism"[7]. In the discourse of identity, the notions of resilience and authenticity are frequently central to the establishment of the community, combined with a culture of superiority, embedded in the myth of the glorious defeat, the semantic reversal and recapitulation, masquerading as soul-searching and historical revision. The eternalised soul of the nation is placed in the urn of the unknown warrior, and the annual remembrance of the "un-victory" becomes a means of demonstrating the moral superiority of the vanquished, over the victor[8]. By such means, the construction of identity, of ethnicity is achieved, through "romancing the past"[9].

In this process, the essential component is the Other, those outside the boundaries whose identification is perceived to be aligned with a

different constellation of symbols, landscapes and history-as-memory. These markers are the means of exclusion, the definition of the not-I, not-we. The contestation of these boundaries is at the heart of the notion of identity, as they are negotiated through tension and conflict, and claims to belonging are reliant upon the degree of conformity ascribed, and self-ascribed, to individuals seeking inclusion. The variation that exists within ethnic groups may be greater than that which separates them from others in some cases, especially in the instances where there are few physiognomical markers to rely upon. Scandinavians may have to rely upon linguistic differences to identify ethnic Swedes from ethnic Norwegians, for example, as might Scots and English people. Amongst Egyptians and Bosnians, confessional adherence has become of primary importance in ethnic identity (Copts and Muslims, Catholics, Orthodox and Muslims), leading to 'ethnicised' discourses of difference to combine with notions of authenticity and resilience, autochthony and autarky. In northern Scandinavia, the perceived location of ethnicity is combined with tensions over land-use and privileges, or access to natural resources, where the development of the *Kväner* identity has been counterposed to the assertion of a *Saami* identity, in claims of indigenousness. The cultural construction of these differences as ethnic boundaries is, as Barth has argued, a product of the identification of culture-bearing aspects of ethnic groups as primary, in some sort of continuous and consistent expression[10]. As the shifts and changes in cultural expressions amongst ethnic groups are clearly at work over historical time, the fixedness of such cultural expressions is open to question, and can only be established with the kind of reductive reasoning that suggests the ethnic group is a sealed unit, moving through temporal and geographical space to emerge, pristine and untainted by accretion or change through contact with others. In essence then, cultural differences as ethnic group markers can only lead to further contestation about who, or what constitutes the ethnicity.

Similarly language can be one of the primary indices of ethnicity in many of the assertions about particularity and separateness. The shared, continual use by a group of a language or related dialects, is frequently cited as one of the prerequisites of ethnic identification, yet without acknowledging the mutability of language use. During the early mediaeval period, the notion of *gentem lingua facit* (language makes race), was being expressed by Isidore of Seville (560 - 636CE), in Book 9 of his *Etymologiae* or *Origines*,[11] and the relationship between sharers of the same tongue was described in terms that reflect the idea that ethnic groups arose from differing languages, not vice-versa: "those who speak the same language are entwined in tighter bonds of love"[12]. From this, the contiguity of language and ethnicity became widely accepted and was frequently mobilized in claims of affinity (as when Robert Bruce claimed "a common language and common custom" between the Scots

and Irish, in opposition to the English in 1315). The conflictual nature of these claims was also recognized; "wars and various tribulations have arisen from the diversity of tongues". Language change, such as the disappearance of Wendish in the early modern period, could mark the demise of distinct ethnic groups, or their assimilation into wider groups, as with Prussian for example. On the other hand, the shifts in language use that occurred on the peripheries of mediaeval Europe did not always lead to the absorption of the ethnic group by another, even when it was a matter of colonialist policy to seek the extirpation of that tongue (in the lands of the Teutonic Knights, for example, or English-dominated Ireland under the Angevins).[13] The loss of languages in these circumstances has not meant a concomitant erasure of ethnicity. Similarly in modern Turkey the predominance of Turkish has not meant the eradication of ethnic identities that have alternative bases for identification, such as religion amongst the Aramaeans of both Syrian Orthodox and East Syrian Christian denominations.[14] Again, as Barth suggests, the classification of groups of people on the basis of particular cultural traits, such as language, is dependent upon an ahistorical notion of cultural change and accretion. Does loss of language lead to loss of ethnicity? If so, are the Sorbs and others who self-identify as alternative to the dominant linguistic culture around them, legitimate in their claims of other ethnicity based upon factors that place language relatively lowly on the criteria for identification?

Smith has suggested that

> "Among religiously inspired communal 'myth-symbol complexes' and their cultures, we find repeated movements of cultural renewal in the face of external threats or inner divisions, which revitalise the sources of their communal energy and cultural power. Taking the ideal community as their focus and concern, sacral *mythomoteurs* and their cultures inject a popular, dynamic element into communal consciousness which is lacking in the more dynastic or even political kinds of 'myth-symbol complexes.' By locating the ideal community in a specific place and archaic time, the religious 'myth-symbol complex' gives the members of the *ethnie* a sense of destiny which stems from a transcending historical perspective beyond immediate events and vicissitudes. That allows oppressed *ethnie* sustained by sacral *mythomoteurs* to entertain hope of a 'status reversal' by which they will be restored to their former state of grace."[15]

The key element of religion in ethnic identity is clear here; the ability to sustain notions of belonging across time and distance relies upon the mythologizing of origins in the process of "romancing" and creating a "usable past"[16]. Religion, in this view, like language is neither a sufficient nor necessary marker of ethnicity. However, it has been argued that

religion, due to its supra-human nature, is a particularly intense ethnic determinant, serving both as a sustaining and dividing factor, on an intra and inter-ethnic level. Since there are few multi-religious ethnic groups, "religion is the root of ethnic differentiations"[17]. In this conception of religion and its relationship to ethnicity, the cultural expression of confession once more becomes a determinant of the ethnic group that expresses it, and Barth's criticism is again relevant. The subject of religious identity was much discussed by the participants of the 2003 conference, particularly with regard to the Alevis, whom it was strongly argued, could not be 'entered' by those outside the group. Others fiercely responded with arguments that countered this, and the debates that ensued encapsulated this problem of using an *emic* cultural trait as the primary ethnic determinant. The notion that few groups are multi-religious is clearly at odds with the evidence of multi-religious ethnic communities such as the Kurds, Arabs, Turks and Gypsies.

The conception of the problem of Gypsy identities was one that was treated differently in differing presentations, as will be seen from the chapters themselves, but one of the clear, shared perceptions that might be said to be common to all, is what Incirlioğlu described as reading culture 'lightly', not paying sufficient attention to the involuntary, ideological and coercive nature of cultural boundaries. If ethnic identity, and its cultural expressions are chosen, elective and voluntary, then the problems associated with marginality become issues about self-help, not social exclusion. Culture is a product of the economic, social and political structures of society, not merely an aspect of the discourse surrounding identity. The common theme of Gypsy identity, across differing economic, social and political structures is one of contestation, and often, but not always, one of marginalisation. As editors of this collection, we would like to stress the importance of recognising that all identities are ethnic and that all ethnic identities are constructed. In popular discourse, however, minority ethnic groups ("the others") are often the ones defined and described as *ethnic*, while individuals belonging to the majority culture constitute the *norm* ("the we"). What makes Gypsy identities particularly interesting in discussions of ethnicity is that these questions become accentuated and pushed to the fore: the Gypsies have no nation state, territory, a holy book, or religion of "their own".

PREVIEW OF CHAPTERS

This volume proceeds from an appreciation of two scholars in the field of Romani Studies, who made invaluable contributions through their lives and works. In his account of their meetings, Bernard Streck recalls the importance of Nabil Sobhi Hanna, whose works on the Dom Gypsies of Egypt are still the only major source of information about

these people[18]. After some thirty years or so, Nabil Hanna's *Sett Guiranha* study stands the test of time, describing as it does the occupations, language and habitations (though not the location; Sett Guiranha being a cryptonym) of some of the least well-researched Gypsy groups in the world. We hope (the editors) that this work will form the basis of a more extensive appreciation of Nabil Hanna's research. Thomas Acton's and Donald Kenrick's short descriptions of the life and work of Angus M. Fraser illustrate the difficulty of summing up his prolific scholarship and the unique contribution of his history of the Gypsies, in anything less than a major biography. The complexity of Fraser's shifting positions mirrors, to a degree the changes in paradigms that have marked Romani Studies in the post world-war period (1945-), and his relationship to wider scholarship demands an extensive analysis, and recognition. His activism in the field of Gypsy and Traveller Education should be noted here, as it was his role to often advise and impress those who needed to hear when devising government policy. "The Gypsies", published first in 1992 and reprinted and revised subsequently, stands as the "bench-mark" for those of us engaged in tackling the issues and complexity of Romani history-writing, and is likely to remain so for a long time to come.

In the opening keynote chapter by Thomas Acton, his deconstruction of the paradigm within which power relationships between Gypsies and non-Gypsies have been developed sets the epistemological guidelines for the entire collection. In this discussion, Acton identifies the role and responsibility of Romani studies scholarship to challenge and criticize stereotypical and racist ways of thinking, a product of the restrictiveness of nation-state ideology. Acton suggests that the international Romani emancipation movement 'is in dialectical opposition to the limitations of the nation state, [precisely]... because of its "trans-national" character and its "non-territoriality"'. In a Foucauldian context, Acton's epistemological starting point is that "knowledge is an interpretation of the world that you can make stick". Only through empirical and historical investigation can we reach a deeper understanding of the social processes that have shaped Gypsy-gadjo relations, and that will lead to new questions, knowledge and possibilities of social change. The re-writing of Gypsy history is also a re-writing of European experience and subsequently, requires a re-assessment of European identity.

In the next chapter Adrian Marsh examines the frequent use of the Firdausi's legend of Bahram Gūr and the *Lūlī*, as a source for early Romani history. Through the deconstruction of this text, Marsh demonstrates the need to contextualise any analysis, of the circumstances in which this Persian epic was created, who it was created for, and how it has been interpreted in Romani studies. In his chapter, Marsh argues that

uncritical and unexamined references to these kinds of narratives, as a means of explaining Gypsy history, frequently fails to illustrate the complexity of Romani origins, and perpetuates a reified understanding of the factors involved. Thus, the "knowledge" reproduces an essentialised, mythologised and orientalised version of Romani history.

In the third chapter, Paul Polansky offers a contrasting approach to the study of the origins of the Gypsies. Polansky's assertion is that there lies a direct relationship between sayings, legends and beliefs, the "folklore" of any given population, and the origins of a people. In this sense, Polansky proceeds from the position that many of those who investigated the questions of origins and identity in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries adopted, and might be characterised as the continuing "Gypsy-lorist" approach. This position has come to be a short-hand concept for much that is perceived to be negative in continuing Romani Studies, as Matras has pointed out at the recent Second International Romani Studies conference in Istanbul (Istanbul Bilgi University, May 2005). Polansky's work invites us to reconsider the place of such investigations, and whether it is possible to practice this approach whilst refuting the inheritance of scientific racism, so prevalent in the work of many so-called "Gypsy-lorists" of the past. Using oral histories of Roma in Kosovo, supplemented with historical sources, his contention is that there is a correspondence between certain cultural practices and customs found in "the land of the Gypsies' ancestors", namely India. These "collected experiences or sayings..." he argues, "shed light on the origins of a people". Polansky also adopts the unusual position of suggesting that "I... do not believe you can trace the origins of any people solely through linguistics", one that might be seen to challenge the following chapter by Ian Hancock.

In the fourth chapter, Hancock uses a "lexical inventory" as a means of mapping the historical migrations of the Gypsies. Hancock re-examines and reconstructs the social and linguistic history of the Romani people and the Romani language, thus sharing his revised views on the origins of the Gypsies. His current position is that the Romani people have been "a composite one from the very beginning", that they have common ancestry from India but were formed as an ethnic group in the West (i.e. Byzantine Empire), and that the migrations from India to Anatolia were multiple, taking place over at least one century, and perhaps two (i.e. no single exodus). Through a detailed examination of common lexical elements, Hancock argues that the proximity of Romani to certain other Indic languages and dialects, demonstrates clear affinities pointing to his conclusions. The primary one is that the origins of the Romani people are to be located in a military context, within a very narrow time-frame

and due to specific circumstances. Hancock's revision of his own, and review of other's positions, challenges definitively the notion that there is any mystery about the origins of the Gypsies. His text points to new directions for the continuing inquiry for Romani Studies scholars now, and for the foreseeable future.

In Valery Novoselsky's discussion about the Roma in Israel we are, once again reminded of the heterogeneity of the Gypsy peoples. Himself from a mixed Jewish-Romani background, Novoselsky provides us in chapter four, with an overview of Gypsy and Romani groups in the state of Israel. Whilst the existence of Dom Gypsies in Israel and Palestine is something that may be familiar for Romani Studies scholars (although, as Williams points out in his chapter, "the contemporary history, language, cultural developments and current situation of the Dom have largely been neglected"), hitherto less has been written about Jewish Gypsies, or what we may term, Romani Jews. Indeed, as Jews and Gypsies have so frequently been compared and contrasted with each other, on the basis of being diasporic minorities in the European context, the example of mixed Jewish-Romani communities demonstrates the fluidity of ethnic boundaries. Novoselsky describes the fact that in Israel, as almost everywhere else in the region, the Roma "do not intend to reveal their Romany identity to other Jewish and Arab inhabitants", and remain a disparate group seeking to "find one another, someday".

The relationship between ethnic and religious identity is the topic of the following chapter. In it, Elin Strand presents a comparative picture of Romani ethno-religious identities in Europe, with those of the largely Sunni–Muslim–Turkish–Gypsy identity in Turkey. Based upon her interviews with Turkish Gypsies in Istanbul, she has found that the expressed identity of Gypsies in Turkey is primarily *Turkish* and *Muslim*, and only lastly, *Roman* (the singular of *Romanlar*, the preferred, self-ascribed term for many Gypsies in Turkey). An emphasis on a separate ethnic identity does not appear to be desirable, in the context of the notions surrounding ethnic identity in the Republic. The most important point in this article is the challenge to the oft-repeated statement regarding Romani religiosity, that the Gypsies have no faith of their own. Strand suggests that this assumption is based upon "a series of value judgements that places monotheism in a superior position to that of religious syncretism", implying that the Gypsies, like many people, incorporate differing "folk elements" into the context of everyday religious practice, but the standards set for Gypsies (as for other subjects in the purview of anthropologists), are ones that would produce similar results in any population. Strand also raises some important concerns, with the advent of EU accession for Turkey in the future, about the realisation of a *trans-national* Romani identity. In the light of the

expanding Gypsy Evangelical Church in Europe, and its connections in the ethno-political arena of Romani emancipation and representation, a culturally inclusive Gypsy identity may have difficulty incorporating the Muslim, Turkish *Romanlar*.

In the midst of at times heated theoretical debates and vigorous disagreement over concepts and ethnonyms, there is the risk that one looses a sense of proportion and a wider perspective. Well aware of the discrepancies that can sometimes arise between academic perceptions and conditions "on the street", we include the work of the iRSN photographers, Mustafa Özunal (chapter seven) and Stefan Bladh (chapter ten). Both use black and white photography in their graphic essays, but deliberately try to avoid the tradition of representing Gypsy people in ways frequently seen elsewhere in the media, especially as "colourful and poor, but smiling" Gypsies. Instead, they manage to reveal the poverty, hardship, and discrimination, whilst capturing the dignity and individuality of the people whose lives they seek to portray. Mustafa Özunal's and Stefan Bladh's images were shown at the conference, as a means of reminding the participants who was at the heart of the discussions about Gypsies in Turkey. This graphic framework is reproduced in part here, to illustrate some of the arguments and points made in chapters throughout the volume, but most importantly to speak to us on their own behalf, as witness to the people and places in which Gypsy lives are led.

Özünal undertook a journey, an odyssey almost through western Anatolia to encounter groups of Romani people in fields, in isolated and marginalised settlements, and in the roaring heat of blast furnaces and steam hammers. His perspective is one that never allows us to forget whom we are looking at, as they are most often staring back, demanding a response from us that we are perhaps inadequate to supply. In a complex echo of Norman Rockwell's *American Gothic* portraiture, we are confronted with a reality that demands a voice in our sometimes reified deliberations.

The role and importance of visual representation of the Romani cultural heritage is also considered in chapter eight, where Eva Hansen and Kennet Johansson share the experiences from Malmö Museer (in southern Sweden), and their work towards creating an exhibition of Romani people in this region of Scandinavia. The ultimate aim of the project, as they tell us, is the "creation of a *Romani* cultural centre" and eventually a museum. A premise of their approach is that Romani people themselves should execute the initiative, be involved in the selection of artefacts (many being provided by project members), and implementation of the project. The museum should be a platform from which Romani people can project their own images of themselves. In a similar vein to

Acton, Hansen and Johansson criticise previous social paradigms where the production of knowledge, in this case the interpretation and (mis) representation of Romani culture, has been carried out by non-Romani society. The establishment of a Romani museum is, in this context, a portal through which Romani people can provide wider society with new knowledge and an changed understanding of their culture.

The topic of self-representation continues in the following chapter, when Irka Cederberg discusses Romani literature and introduces the International Roma Writers Association. Whilst the wealth of Romani oral literature is more known, less attention has been paid to the increasing number of Romani intellectuals, writers, poets and novelists, who are engaged in the production of written literature. Cederberg cites the author Mariella Mehr who wants her writing to act as a mirror in which *gadje* can reflect upon the experience of Romani people, in their interactions with them. Literature is, as Cederberg argues, the way "to make *Romani* literature widely known and respected – both among Roma and non-Roma", and the IRWA is dedicated to this aim.

Stefan Bladh's photographs act as a counterpoise to the work of Mustafa Özünal, and focus most intensely upon one family of *Abdals*, or heterodox Muslims, who lead a peripatetic life between Izmir and Istanbul. Bladh's aim is to follow the family through ten years of their lives, providing a unique long-term insight into the experiences of individual members, and the group as a whole. But this is not a piece of research, detached and objectified by the distance through the camera lens. At times, his work seems close, almost intimate, crouched as he is behind the shoulders of one family member gazing out at another. Yet there is detachment in the oppressive weight of the over-arching motorway structures under which these people are forced to live, ignored and irrelevant to the speeding traffic of the city above.

Suat Kolukırık explores in chapter eleven the identity perception of the Tarlabaşı Gypsies in Izmir. The social contextuality of identity construction is discussed here, with reference to Gypsy–*gadjo* relations, in a concrete reflection of some of Acton's earlier concerns. Stereotypes and discrimination are powerful factors in determining how these Gypsies choose to define their ethnic identity. Kolukırık describes the various conditions and settings in which the Gypsies prefer to "hide", assert, resist or transform their identity. In a similar way to Strand, Kolukırık finds that an emphasis on a Turkish nationality is frequently being expressed as the preferred identity amongst Gypsies, suggesting a deliberate attempt to associate and integrate oneself with the dominant society. As he concludes, notions of identity are "*contextually dependent* upon the perceptions and opinions of the society around the Gypsy

communities" in Izmir, something which may surely be extended to other circumstances throughout the rest of Europe.

In examining the development of human rights and policy formation toward Roma in the rest of Europe, Eva Sobotka describes the shifts in norms influencing policymaking. Until the fall of communism, the Roma were regarded as a "social problem" needing to be resolved through crime preventative measures. By 1989, the discourse had shifted away from previous exclusionary attitudes to embrace notions of diversity and human rights policies. Sobotka gives an exhaustive and comparative overview of different approaches and responses to treaty-based processes by European states, and suggests the role of the human rights activist has been central in this process. The perspective here is one that some activists from Romani communities may find challenging, as the struggle for rights has taken place (and still takes place) primarily in the settlements, caravan sites and *mahalles* where Romani people live, and it is possible to see the human rights professionals as responsive to these, rather than proactive. Romani resistance has been part and parcel of the lives of Gypsies from the beginning; as Fraser remarks in his *Introduction*, "when one considers the vicissitudes they have encountered... one has to conclude that their main achievement is to have survived at all." It is important to see, however, that the struggle for Romani emancipation is one that both Gypsies and non-Gypsies have been engaged in, albeit in various forms, from the days of Hoyland in the early 1800's.

In chapter thirteen by Udo Mischek we encounter the locus of Gypsy resilience in this region, the *mahalle*. Mischek introduces the notion of the *mahalle* identity, to illustrate the common bonds shared by a local (mixed) population in an urban arena. Mischek supports his definition with a historical explanation of the *mahalle* as the primary social forum. The impact of inward migration, particularly since the 1950's, to the city of Istanbul, and the large-scale emigration of older communities, have had a dramatic demographical effect on the *mahalles,* reducing their cosmopolitan and pluralist character. Still, Mischek argues, the *mahalle* remains "the basic unit in identity construction" for the Gypsies in Istanbul.

Gypsies in Istanbul and Turkey as a whole is the subject of the following chapter by Ana Oprișan, where she provides us with an overview of the history, locations, and culture of the Gypsies in Turkey, as well as their linguistic and religious affinities. The diversity of the Gypsy communities in Turkey are as pronounced as they are elsewhere in Europe, which she suggests has its origins in the framework of the Ottoman taxation system. This, as recorded by Cantemir in the

seventeenth century, Oprișan also suggests, explains the complex position of Muslim and Christian Gypsies in the Empire. The plurality and heterogeneity of the Gypsy people in modern Turkey is illustrated and exemplified through references to various Gypsy communities, in this historical context.

The next chapter by Adrian Marsh is an addendum to the previous one by Oprișan and aimed at clarifying the complex taxation system of the Ottoman Empire and how it related to Gypsies. Much confusion exists over the issue that both Christian and Muslim Gypsies had to pay tax. A popular misconception is that Muslims did not pay tax. Thus, the example of Muslim Gypsies being taxed is frequently presented as evidence of discrimination against Gypsies regardless of their confessional identity. However, Marsh suggests that the complex tax policy directed toward Gypsies in the Ottoman Empire was inherited from the Byzantine tax practices. Marsh's conclusion remarks that more research into this area is needed, as with a clearer understanding we may reach a new understanding of Gypsy identity both in the past and present Turkish society.

The Domari-specialist Bernard Streck commemorates his friend and colleague Nabil Sobi Hanna in chapter sixteen. Streck's text was read at the opening of the conference, in whose memory (with Angus Fraser) it was held. Sharing the memories of Hanna's work and their collaboration, Streck illuminates an area of study very much under-researched, confirming William's own findings. With Streck's penultimate remark, that "the social scientific, and anthropological study of the Gypsies of the Orient has hardly begun", we point to the directions that continuing Romani Studies scholarship must take up in the future.

Gypsies in the quondam Ottoman lands are the subject of the subsequent chapter, in which Elena Marushiakova and Vesselin Popov give a detailed account of Turkish Gypsies in the Balkans and the parts of the former Soviet Union. The authors describe the complex factors and variations of identity that have emerged amongst Turkish-speaking Gypsy communities of the region. The retrenchment of the Ottoman Empire, and the establishment of nation-states in the nineteenth century Balkans, has had a profound influence on the Gypsies' identities. Nationalised religions and the policy of instituting "official" languages contributed to shifting expectations and aspirations amongst Bulgarians, Rumanians and Serbs, for homogeneous entities that were bounded by ethno-nationalist ideologies. The reality of the imperial legacy, a tangible heritage in differing confessional and ethnic populations, has proved the "worm in the bud" of doctrinaire political populism in the region. The large communities of Roma in these lands has illustrated that

this inheritance is so much more complex than can be ascribed to the influence of "the Turk", as the repercussions of imperial collapse can be traced to the Serbian, Latin, Byzantine, Ottoman and Soviet empires, at least. In the period prior to the arrival of what one source describes as "Romītī" in this region, we might add the late Roman, Avar, and Bulgarian polities in addition.

The ways in which contested boundaries relate to the residents in a "Gypsy" neighbourhood in Ankara is discussed in chapter eighteen. Emine Onaran İncirlioğlu reasons around linguistic, social, cultural, and economic boundaries in one of the most deprived areas of the Turkish capital called Çinçin Bağları. The territorial boundaries of the area are contested and shifting depending on who is defining them. Borrowing Foucault's term *heterotopia*, Incirlioğlu illustrates how the neighbourhood is defined as a place inhabited by the "other". İncirlioğlu's penultimate remark invites us to reflect upon the apparent paradox in bringing together the concept of "boundaries" with a trans-national people like the Gypsies.

The last chapter of the publication by Allen Williams describes the contemporary situation of the most neglected group of Gypsy peoples called the Dom. Whilst the problems faced by the Dom of Jordan are similar to those of a large number of Gypsies in the world (poverty, low educational achievement, discrimination and unemployment), Williams argues that the Dom undoubtedly are the most marginalised section of Arab society. Strategies adopted by Dom individuals include "passing" as Palestinians, in order to make their way in Jordanian society. Allen discusses the negative consequences of these measures, such as social isolation and emotional problems, and the inexorable decline in the use of Domari language.

The collection as a whole reflect the wide variety of backgrounds that the contributors represent; academics (sociologists, historians, folklorists, ethnographers, linguists), journalists writing in an immediate reportage style, cultural workers and museum managers, community activists, scholars and students. Whilst the reader might find this heterogeneity resulting in certain un-evenness, we firmly believe that this mixture exercised a fruitful and dynamic influence on the discussions during the conference, allowing for a multi-dimensional and holistic approach to the study of Gypsy identities – contextual, constructed and contested.

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Romani Politics, Scholarship, and The Discourse of Nation-Building

THOMAS ACTON

Is Romani nationalism Zionism without an Israel? And what has gone wrong with the *gadjo* (non–Romani) mind that they can think of posing the question this way? This chapter will seek to use epistemological analysis to explore the way in which partial deconstruction of traditional discourse around the Roma, fails to challenge the pathologies of nation - state ideology. It will be argued that since the international Romani movement is in fact a product, and beneficiary of globalisation (Acton, 1999), it is in dialectical opposition to the limitations of the nation state, because of its "trans-national" character and its "non-territoriality". This movement is trans-national, as the Pope himself pointed out (Woytyla, 1992) and trans–local, because its fundamental method in politics is to play one level of political power off against another; and the absence of a territorial base for political action or power is an inherent constituent of this method.

In a world in which the nation-state is taken as the norm, the temptation is always to present the Roma as just any other nation, ignoring the way in which the construction of nations by arbitrary territorial ethnic majorities through armed force, over the past 500 years, has victimised Roma and other ethnic "minorities". So it is suggested that the International Romani Union's *Declaration of a Nation* in 2000 (see Acton and Klimova, 2001: 216 - 7), manifests a lack of capacity to transcend the discourse of the nation state, resulting from a failure to conceptualise and challenge European ideology as a whole, and nationalist discourses in the Balkans, in particular. This is not because of a lack of will to do so; nationalist discourses that relegate the Roma had to be challenged by Romani intellectuals, to show that they can "play the game" as well as the *gadjé*.

Marushiakova and Popov (2000) have brilliantly demonstrated how Romani myths of origin mimic the nationalist histories of Balkan

states. More sympathetically, Friedman (2000) shows how early efforts at Romani language standardisation use the tools developed to achieve standardisation in other east European countries. The attempts of Emil Scuka and the IRU presidium to play the *gadjo* "game of nations", is at one level understandable because it seems to be the only game in town. I will argue however, that whilst Roma organisations do play this game, some potential international negotiating partners, such as the United Nations Development Programme (2002), continue to wheel out the same old racist stereotypes, in the same old pseudo-scientific camouflage. This shows that somehow the old game has to be transcended. This chapter concludes by suggesting that new forms of historical scholarship, rooted in questions from the lived experience of Romani/Gypsy/Traveller people can help deconstruct the constraints of the conventional wisdom.

KNOWLEDGE/POWER

Foucault (1980) crystallised contemporary thinking as to how the exercise of power establishes what is seen as knowledge. Knowledge is an interpretation of the world that you can 'make stick'. In that sense, the exercise of scholarship is dependent upon the political practices that open up the space for this; but those political practices can be oppositional, as well as supporting, of existing state power. Political clashes of interest create the possibilities of choice, or alternations in knowledge. This makes it possible to ask how can scholarship help political practice, and how one form of knowledge can help – or clash with – another form? We can thus see an apparent disjuncture between academic and political/policy knowledges, and between both and technical knowledge. These different knowledges repackage the discourses in answer to different questions, as the table below shows:

Question	Form of answer	Example
What should we do?	Policy	Vehicle blueprint Mother-tongue education OSCE Stabilisation Policy
What do we know?	Existential/Academic knowledge	Mechanics Linguistics Romani Studies
How should we do it?	Techniques	Engineering Pedagogy Administration

All participants in Roma – *gadjé* relations ask all of these questions ,and their answers constitute their knowledge. Knowledge/power, in this chapter thus refers to a presupposed understanding of events and their consequences, *which leads to* a power to predict and adapt events and institutions. Before we can work for changes, either *individual* (in ourselves or clients), or *social*, we have to have an understanding (theorisation) of the possibility of change. If we try just to intervene at one level or in one area, our new knowledge of process at that point is outweighed by all the existing knowledge/power in other parts of the system.

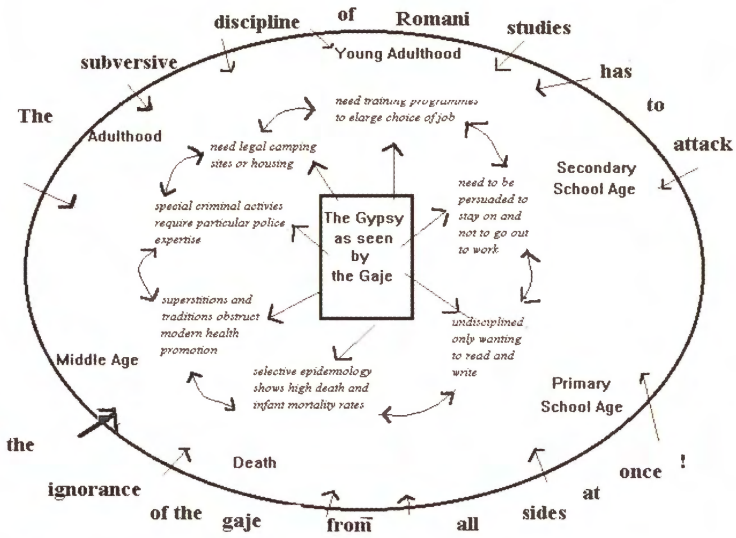

Diagram One

Within diagram one we can see a vicious circle of mini-discourses around which the stereotypes circulate. Policy thought sees the Gypsy/Traveller life cycle as one big series of problems.

> *At their birth they suffer high infant mortality,*
> *and then, when they are kindly allowed to come into school as though they were ordinary children,*
> *they show themselves undisciplined, and only wanting to learn to read and write without a thought for high culture or science;*
> *which means it's a real brute of a job to persuade them to stay on at secondary school rather than going out to work with their parents,*
> *which means that for older teenagers we need special training programmes to enlarge their choice of a job so they can understand and participate in the ordinary economy;*
> *so while they are doing that they need special help to get legal camping sites or social housing,*
> *for which they often appear quite incomprehensibly ungrateful,*

and - oh dear! - engage in characteristic criminal activities requiring a very special police expertise;
and because their traditions and superstitions obstruct modern health promotion they have high death and infant mortality rates,
which is the thin edge of the wedge and the point where we came in.

There are anti - racist practitioners in each of these policy areas. There are teachers trying to respect Romani culture within the curriculum. There are health workers who respect Romani/Traveller understandings of propriety and cleanliness, and can work with and not against the grain of them. There are some people running both public and private camping sites who are themselves Romani/Traveller, and there are even anti-racist police officers, and the slow emergence of police officers prepared to reveal their own Romani heritage (Anon. 2005). But each of them are working primarily in their own field. Teachers may work hard to pursue anti - racism in school, but if the school is set in a racist environment, this limits what they can do - and limits their own thinking as to what is even possible.

Therefore we need to shift to an approach to intervention which is

- holistic
- embedded in a dynamic perception of how shifts in power/ knowledge occur.

This means - and this is the most important message of this entire collection - that historical investigation, study and knowledge are not optional extras, the private indulgence of a few intellectuals and romantics - but vital for any group or individual seeking self- determination. They are too important to be left as the playthings of manipulative nationalist politicians. In other words, if political practice, community activism, and policy planning are to change rather than reinforce the deeply embedded structures of Romani -*gadjo* misunderstanding they have to be grounded in a profound understanding of how Romani - *gadjo* relations have developed.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE STAY WITHIN THE CIRCLE?

An almost tragic example of what happens when conventional ideologies are not challenged can be seen in the UNDP (2002) report, *Avoiding the Dependency Trap*. It is likely that unless vigorously challenged, this will be seen as a foundational part of the international knowledge base for years to come. It proclaims itself to be a work of empirically based social science, carried out by qualified social scientists, and based on five random sample surveys of around a thousand

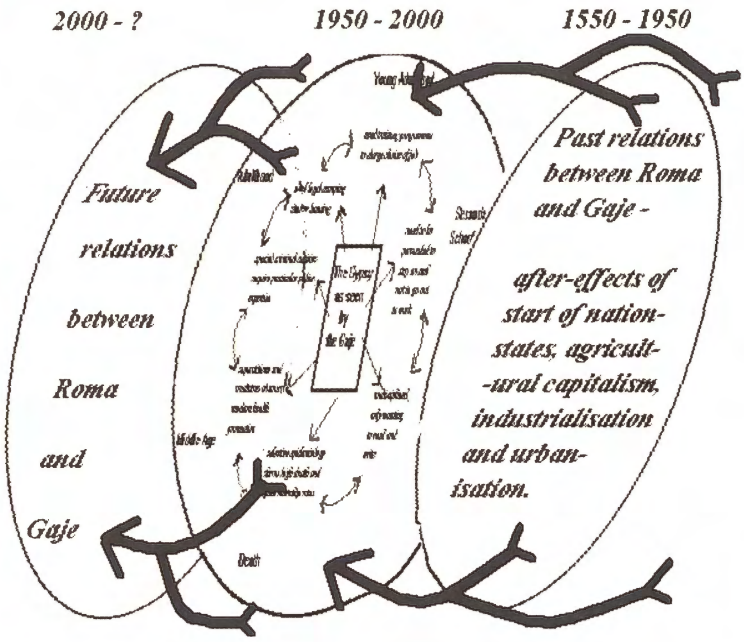

Diagram Two

Roma in each of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and the Slovak Republic. On its front cover it is endorsed by some of the great and the good of Romani Studies, who really should have known better. Its general thesis is that Roma are caught in a "dependency trap", that is they are over-reliant on state benefits, which sap their will to stand on their own two feet. It calls for "integration, not assimilation" – but claims this is what policies of the five states the report examines are aimed at. In the achievement of this, it claims that Romani political movements are largely irrelevant, and does not mention Romani religious movements. It also says that the Romani language is largely irrelevant. It is very dismissive of previous scholarship and research in general, and claims, rather surprisingly to have reached a new position that supersedes both the old socialist experts and the new cultural experts.

Most people who are acquainted with previous scholarship and research, as opposed to busy politicians disposed to believe what they want to hear, will be unconvinced. The most recent European Union report (FC, ERRC & ERIO, 2004) clearly shows that throughout this region Roma, so far from being excessively dependent on over–generous state benefits, are actually systematically discriminated against and receive much lower rates of state benefits than non – Roma. Case for case, Roma are profoundly less able to depend upon the state than non – Roma, and indeed many Roma are only able to survive by a combination of (often legally repressed) economic activities *and* poor state benefits. Structurally racist economic discrimination, including in such basic state benefits as

education and health care, is a major reason for the out-migration that we have seen of Roma from eastern Europe since 1989.

How did a scientific report reach such conclusions, at variance with experience? It is necessary to examine their scientific methodology quite carefully. They (the UNDP report authors), claim their sample of 5,034 Roma is a random sample. Their commendably transparent account of their sampling procedure, however, shows that it was no such thing. The only possibly random element was in the selection of areas from which the sample was to be drawn (although these areas were pre-selected to contain Roma). It was assumed the national census results adequately reflect Roma population structures in terms of rural/urban, age and sex distributions! Then within these neighbourhoods, clusters were selected by "representatives from local government administrations or social assistance services"! (UNDP, 2002: 86-7). A "cluster" is a term refined by Claus Moser (Moser and Kalton, 1971), to refer to small populations which could be seen as representative, or contributing to a representative sample, when *all* its members are taken. In fact within those clusters, individuals to fit the right age and sex quotas were selected by "representatives from local government administrations or social assistance services".

Actually between 5% and 14% of the respondents (except in Hungary) denied they were Roma at all (UNDP, 2002: 87). They were just people whom local officials guessed were Roma – because they "fitted" the Roma social profile (i.e. they "matched" stereotypes of poverty/ criminality). In fact this is not a representative sample of Roma at all. It is a sample of poor people, some of whom were Roma, stigmatised as *Gypsies* by social professionals. This is not a random sample; it is a sample selected by exactly those dedicated professionals who, the report's writers believe, are administering the kind of help which can provide the Roma with the way out of the dependency trap.

Nonetheless, despite the sampling bias, the detailed results are by no means as supportive of the report's conclusions as the authors suggest. For example, their evidence that Romani politics is irrelevant is that "only" 20% of the sample declared their faith in Roma politicians. (UNDP, 2002: ch.8). But what would be the result if we asked non-Roma how much they trust non – Roma politicians? Only journalists rank lower in public esteem. Despite the fact that they were being asked a leading question by non –Roma agents of authority, less than 50% of the sample accepted the suggestion that they can pull themselves up by their own efforts, provided the government weeds out trouble-makers and moneylenders.

On the basis of their results, the authors make a number of overtly discriminatory, and occasionally quite bizarre recommendations. They

recommend not paying social security and child benefits in cash, but giving food stamps and vouchers, so the poor Roma don't go and waste them on alcohol and cigarettes (UNDP, 2002: 82) They also suggest tackling discrimination in the employment market, not by outlawing it (as all EU countries are now required to do), and then enforcing the anti-discrimination laws, but by praising companies participating in public work projects for employing Roma (UNDP, 2002: 81). Why the authors think such segregated make-work projects would end the dependency culture is unclear.

In defiance of the now overwhelming evidence to the contrary marshalled by Matras (2002), Romani in this report is seen as not a language but a range of underdeveloped incompatible dialects. In place of any mother-tongue teaching, or teaching the English language, they call for Roma to be taught in local languages (rather as the Afrikaaners insisted on people being taught Afrikaans in apartheid South Africa). About 50% said their children had language difficulty in school – but the authors treat this as an argument *against* a multi - lingual approach. (UNDP, 2002: 58–9) As in Britain, an approach which labels itself as being socially inclusive, is actually bringing back the cultural deficit model of ethnicity in school by the 'back door' (c.f. Acton and Dalphinis, 2000). If the authors are so keen on local languages, why, one might ask, is the report in English, not Slovak, the language of its place of publication? Ridiculous question! English is the language of power and of the report's sponsors (UNDP, 2002: 84). If we taught Roma English or international Romani, they'd only want to come to the West. Much better to make sure they are monolingual Slovak-speakers – that'll keep them where they belong!

One could multiply examples of stereotyping. There is the problematisation of high birth - rate and of money - lenders in chapter 4, which suggests we shouldn't trust Roma with credit or children. In Chapter 7 there is an earnest proclamation of the authors' belief in a specifically Romani criminality, including a wonderfully patronising mock – indulgent account of "the crop – stealing phenomenon." But let us turn to the more hopeful question of what kind of Romani Studies can combat this?

THE ROMANI STUDIES RESPONSE, AND ITS CRITICS

Many of the authors in the collection *Between Past and Future: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe* (Guy, 2001) have strongly argued for multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary approaches in Romani Studies, on precisely the grounds of a need for a holistic approach to misconceptions about the Roma. This however, has been strongly

criticised by those who support the existing policies of east European governments, notably Zoltan Barany (2002a: 18; 2002b: 874), who has come out strongly against this suggested approach, saying we should work only within established disciplines. He accuses specialist Romani Studies "activist authors" of "simultaneously ignoring the Gypsies' responsibility for their own predicament and belittling the efforts of states and organisations to assist them". I have argued elsewhere (Acton 2003) that this critique reflects residues of racist ideology, and that in this Barany follows the example of a long line of European scholars who have constituted the canon of policy – applied academic study of Gypsies, from Grellmann to Herman Arnold and Josef Vekerdi (via Pott, Ritter, Bartels and Brun, Sus and many others). They produce a synthesis from within existing paradigms, which confirms existing prejudices.

The UNDP (2000) report is 'Barany – lite' – without the explicit insults or sneers or language of blame (at least, not often), but firmly declaring that the solution to the Gypsy problem are policies that will change the nature of the Roma themselves to fit them in to the new client mini nation – states of Eastern Europe. But Romani Studies cannot just ignore the fact that such conservative syntheses emerge again and again; we have to theorise how such anti – Gypsyism is constructed. A start has been made by Herbert Heuss (2002: 53), who defines anti – Gypsyism as "a construct which [*sic*] hypothetically assigns social phenomena (mostly of an undesirable nature) to the minority group who call themselves the Roma" He says of it:

> Any theoretical charting of its history... requires an analysis of how the strengths of Romani culture expose and provoke the pathologies of European culture; that is, a recognition that if we are ever going to transform "swords into ploughshares" we are going to need smiths (*ibid*: 52).

This suggests that to prevent the co – option of programmes for Roma/Travellers into pre – existing ways of thinking, we need a solid, empirically and historically – based criticism of those ways of thinking. In other words renewed Romani politics, and social, educational and economic policies requires changes in the organisation of our knowledge base (and not just for Traveller children). We have to make sense of what has happened differently, to how we have done so in the past. Above all this requires work by Roma/Travellers themselves.

THE DEVELOPING INTEREST OF ROMA AND TRAVELLERS IN HISTORY

For most of the last 35 years we have been told "of course Gypsy children will not be interested in history". The present volume is evidence

that this may have changed. *Gadjo* history, which simply omits Roma from history, may have been uninteresting to these children, but the process of inserting Roma back into history is an instant attraction. Even in England we can see signs of this. Illustrated children's Gypsy history books (Acton 1981, 1997) sell out to Roma, Gypsies, and Travellers. The UK *Romani and Traveller Family History Society* (http://website.lineone.net/~rtfhs), founded in the early 1990s just keeps growing and publishing history books by Travellers, whilst their journal *Romany Routes* has now been in press since 1994 (Doyle and Keet - Black, 2004). At over 500 subscribing members, they are the largest Romani formal organisation in the UK – ever. Although the kind of Romani cultural politics common in some other European countries has hitherto been rare in England, it is now being pioneered in England by the Polish Roma asylum–seeker based *Roma Support Group* (Ingmire, 2004).

One of the effects of the education programmes of the last 30 – 50 years across Europe is the growth of a stratum of Romani intellectuals, interacting all the more frequently across ethnic barriers, as a result of post – 1989 increased migration. An interdisciplinary Romani Studies, increasingly carried out by Roma themselves, is the key facilitator of the integration of such work with policy and professional studies. The 'quick fixes' of short training programmes will only start working if they are underpinned by continuing in – depth study that can really contextualise Romani and European experiences in each other. In rewriting their own history, Roma are also giving Europeans back part of *their* story. Restructuring state policy toward Roma in Europe will also be a re – humanising of inter - cultural relations in general.

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"...the strumming of their silken bows": The Firdawsī Legend of Bāhram Gūr & Narratives of Origin in Romani Histories

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The reference to the Firdawsī legend is one that is frequently cited in Romani Studies texts, histories of all *Gypsies*, articles and newspaper reports (see Hancock, 2000: 9; Lori, 2003, for examples in connection with the Dom), yet almost no context or explanation is given as to who Abu 'l-Kasīm Hasan b. 'Alī of Tūs, or Firdawsī (c. 329 AH/940 CE-411 AH/1020 CE) was, why he wrote the *Shāhnāma* or *Shāhnāmè*, "Book of Kings" (c.1010 CE; see Huart, 2003: 918a; Warner & Warner, 1905-1925), and in what historical circumstances it was produced. Hamza al -Isfāhānī b. al-Hasan, ibn Mu'addib (c. 280 AH/893 CE-360 AH/971 CE), in his *Chronology* (*Ta'rīkh sinī mulūk al-ard wa 'l-anbiyā'*) of c.961 CE, is an earlier source for the Bahrām Gūr legend, for those attempting to construct a "narrative of journey" for the Romani peoples during their earliest history (see for example, Marushiakova & Popov, 2001: 11-12). Other "characters" (such as King Shangūl of Hindūstān) have been merely treated as parts in a shadow-play, without investigation of whether these have any basis in historical fact; like Karagöz, the Turkish Gypsy puppet, introducing himself to us as a diversion from our worldly travails, they form a "backdrop" for the story. Within this seminal text, however, significant clues to the history of the Gypsies lie, little explored in the discourse of Romani Studies.

Effectively with this tale, the perceived connection with an Indian origin for *Romanichals* (English Gypsies), and by extension all Romani people, was confirmed, and an early date of departure apparently established by the appearance of the *Lūrī* or *Lūlī* in Persia at the time of Sāsānid Shāh Bahram

Ghūr, (420-438 CE). Hamza al-Isfahani also seemed to report an earlier version of the same episode in his *Chronology*, c.960 CE. With the production of an English translation of the *Shāhnāmā* in India (see Macan, 1829) and a paper by Harriott (1830: 518–558), in the Royal Asiatic Society's Transactions series, this story was seized upon as an explanation and 'welded' to the linguistic arguments surrounding Romani origins. These suggested that *one* original migration had left the north-western Indian region at a relatively early date, before separating into the three distinctive linguistic branches of Romani, Domari and Lomavren somewhere in the Persian lands (Marushiakova & Popov, 2001: 5). The most influential of proponents was John Sampson, "...the leading English language Romani scholar of the early twentieth century" (Hancock, 2002: 3), who published his work on the dialect of Welsh Gypsies in 1926. Through discussions of this Romani monogenesis theory in the pages of the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society [JGLS]*, Sampson's work was widely disseminated, and almost immediately challenged by Sir Ralph Lilley Turner in his *JGLS* article on Romani and Indo-Aryan (1926: 251-290). Turner argued that he remained unconvinced of a singular origin for both Domari and Romani (Fraser, 1992: 21), as the linguistic ancestors of each were related to differing groups of Indian dialects, not the same. Despite this criticism, and continuing challenges from more recent scholarship regarding Persia and claims for such early origins, both the Firdawsī 'legend' and the monogenesis theory are still frequently cited in discussions of language and Romani history (see Mayall, 2004: 119-25; Fraser, 1992: 20-22, for summaries).

Some of the implications of this debate between Sampson, Turner and others, were that it effectively focussed on key differences; firstly that the origins of the Rom, Dom and Lom peoples as one *proto* or ancestral population, or "...the conviction that all Gypsies, dispersed at all points throughout the world, were originally from a single stock." (Mayall, 2004: 119) Secondly, that these groups stem from entirely separate and distinct ancestry, sharing similar historical circumstances surrounding their emergence as Gypsies (Hancock, 2000: 11). To some extent, the polarisation of the two positions with their supporters and adherents has characterised the field of Romani Studies ever since, in that these positions have become coalesced around notions that we might broadly define as *ethnicised*, or socio-historical discourses of origins (see Mayall, 2004: 3). Here we might discern a crucial contest in the study of the Gypsies, between those who are committed to a view of Gypsies as a distinct and identifiable ethnic group, with a history coterminous with other ethnic histories (see Kenrick, 2004; Hancock, 1987, for examples), and those who would see the claims to ethnic identity as an aspect of political mobilisation, but not adequately convincing in the context of scholarship and research (Willems, 1996). In this context, the legend of Bahrām Gūr becomes more than merely an interesting anecdote from an

early mediaeval Persian source that may refer to an episode in Romani history; it attains the status of "evidence" of claims to this coterminous history, and the *ethnicised* discourse of origins.

The context of the debate is important to establish, as it is essential to our understanding of the competing discourses and, more importantly the longevity of this 'myth' and its role. It is my intention to critically examine the principle elements of this oft-repeated legend; Hamza al-Isfanhani's extraordinary *Chronology* of pre-Islamic and Islamic dynasties of Persia; Firdawsī's epic of the struggle between good and evil, precipitated by murder, and perpetuated through a bloody cycle of revenge between the sons of *Tur* (nomadic *Turanians* from Central Asia) and those of *Īraj* (the sedentary Iranians). In addition, it is important to examine the processes whereby these elements came to play a seminal role in the development of *Gypsylorism* and later, Romani Studies, and examine the translations and references that were, and continue to be authorities in the discussion of Gypsy origins. Finally, it is critical to decipher the character of the Sāsānid Shāh, Bahrām Gūr (Vahrām V, 420-438 CE) in these works, before referring to *amīr*, later *sultān* Mahmud of Ghazna (389 AH/999-421 AH/1030 CE), the archetypal *ghāzī* ruler of his age, and emulator of much that is described in the cycle of legends about Bāhram, if we are to attempt to understand the intentions of the authors of these episodes, on their own terms.

I will suggest in this chapter, that we have a series of narratives recording the 5th century arrival in Sāsānid Persia of a contingent of allied Sindi mercenaries of *Rādjput* origin, the remnants of which became conflated with an eleventh century group of Domari itinerant singers, dancers and musicians, in attempts to provide a plausible genealogy for the latter. This group was part of the wider community of Gypsies that came to include elements from the later forced migrations of Sultān Mahmūd, those known by the epithet of *Kāoli* (now *Kawlī* or "from Kābulī", i.e. the central Ghaznāvid territories), and the descendants of an earlier *Zutt* population, especially from the ancient Indian colony at al-Lūr (Minorsky, 2003: 817b). The varied and differentiated character of the Gypsy communities of modern Iran are, I argue, an outcome of this picture of complex origins, and the continuing policy of forced population movements by the late Ottoman state in the lands contested by the Safavīds and their *Sunni* opponents, the House of Osmān (Windfhur, 2003: 415b-421b). It is also the case that the processes of the emergence of Gypsy identities in Persia, can be described in a way that mirrors the equally differentiated and complex picture found in Europe. In the context of the semi-mythical chronicles and poetic epics of early mediaeval Iran however, I suggest the tale of the Shāh and the Gypsies must be seen as unreliable evidence of the early arrival of any ancestral migrations of proto-Gypsy populations.

HAMZA AL-I*SFAHĀNI*'S CHRONOLOGY, FIRDAWSĪ AND THE SHĀHNĀMĀ

The chronicler and philologist known as Hamza al -Isfahāni b. al-Hasan, ibn Mu'addib (c. 280 AH/893 CE-360 AH/971 CE), was an accomplished scholar. He was especially known for the meticulous lexicographical study of misspellings caused by the ambiguities of the Arabic script in Persian literature, a study of Persian festivals, an extensively annotated *diwān* of the most famous poet of the 'Abbāsid period, Abū Nuwās al-Hasan b. Hāni' al-Hakamī (130 AH/747 CE-198 AH/813 CE), a collection of the proverbs and expressions of Persia, a work concerning superstitious beliefs and amulets amongst common people in Iran, and a political and biographical history of Isfahān (Ar. *Isbahān*). His greatest work was the remarkable *Chronology*, detailing the history of the Islamic and pre-Islamic dynasties of Persia, and his survey of world history has been studied in western Europe since the eighteenth century and often translated since (Gottwald, 1844-48). It would appear that although Hamza al-Isfahāni was acutely aware of his position as a Persian man of letters, and as such, maintained some prejudices towards the Arab conquerors of Persia, he nevertheless combined a thorough and original scholarship and a critical use of the best available sources, whatever their provenance. His work "...demonstrates the breadth of enquiry amongst Islamic scholars and the curiosity at work in Muslim scholarship in tenth century Persia" (Rosenthal, 1984: 156a).

His reference to the legend of the *al-Zutt* comes in his description of the life of the monarch, Varakhān V (420-438), known to us as Bāhram Gūr, or the "wild ass" (onager) , because of his strength and prowess. A number of stories regarding this monarch are given, including one relating to the "Treasury of Jamshid", a much-celebrated ruler of ancient Iran whose wealth Bāhram discovers whilst out hunting and distributes to the poor, thereby enhancing his character through this act of kindness. This particular legend has its origins in the Shāh's policy of tax remissions that he carried out at points during his reign (Huart, 2003: 939a). Hamza's *Chronology* partly belongs to that tradition of *nasīhat al-mulūk* or "mirrors for princes" (like the *Qābūs-nāma* of Qay Qāwūs b. Iskander, 485 AH/1082-3 CE), a prominent feature of Persian elite culture, and element of statecraft in later Islamic imperial systems, such as the Ottomans (Bosworth, 2003: 984b-988b). The legend which most concerned Gypsylorists, and scholars of Romani Studies, occurs a little later in the text, where he describes the story of the origins of the *al-Zutt* from the 12,000 Indian musicians, sent by the King of India for the entertainment of Bāhram's bibulous, but penurious subjects. The story serves as the model for Firdawsī's later tale, and follows the familiar

Persian pattern of beneficence on the part of the monarch in contrast with the thriftless *Zutt* (Fraser, 1994: 34), as a 'foil' for Bahrām's virtues. The wide use made of the works of Hamza by later Islamic scholars doesn't detract from the fact that there are some problems with his work. His lexicography suggests highly unlikely etymologies for Persian words rendered ambiguous in Arabic script, revealing a proclivity for invention and a bias towards looking for 'evidence' to support his contentions about the superiority of Persian, over Arabic (Bosworth, 2003: 985b). Additionally, his claims that the 12,000 al-Zutt dispersed into the Persian lands and multiplied, would seem to be contradicted by his assertion that their contemporary numbers were small, yet he offers no explanation for this disparity. Nonetheless, the use of Jewish, Greek and Armenian informants for sections of his histories reveals a striking comparison with other examples of panegyric courtly composition, and a concern with veracity that others noticeably lacked (Robinson, 2003: 76).

Abu 'l-Kasim Hasan b. 'Alī Firdawsī was born 941 CE at Bazh in the Tabaran area of Tus, to a family of *dikhans*, or landowners in the village. He died in 1025-26 CE/416 AH (Browne, 1902-24: 90). Like Hamza, Firdawsī was a passionate Iranian with a profound knowledge of the early legends, myths and histories of Persia, gleaned from both Arabic and Persian sources. Some of these became incorporated into the 60, 000 verse epic *Shāhnāmā*, and again like Hamza, Firdawsī made use of a wide variety of sources in producing his "Book of Kings'. He also extracted portions from the work of his compatriot, Dakika, who had been assassinated by a Turkish slave sometime in 370 AH/980 CE, after which Firdawsī had begun to compose the *Shāhnāmā*. Dakika's rendering of "an ancient book" that he refers to in his introduction, no doubt provided an initial inspiration; until this point Firdawsī had been the composer of some lyric verse and short, epic passages (Ménage, 2003: 918a). Despite his historical association with Mahmūd of Ghaznā, Firdawsī only approached the ruler of his day when he had exhausted his own resources and cannot be counted amongst the other panegyrists, poets and historians brought to embellish and celebrate the court of the Sultan, frequently against their wishes, as can be judged by Mahmūd's famously miserly response to the poet (Browne, 1902-24: 91). Firdawsī's achievement only serves to illustrate the transcendence of the epic over much of the other literary output of the period (Huart, 2003: 918a).

An important distinction between the *amīr* and poet was in the matter of faith; Firdawsī was of the *Shi'i* branch of Islam whilst Mahmūd was apparently *Sunni*. Having secured the protection and sponsorship of Mahmūd's first vizier, himself of *Shi'i* persuasion, Abu 'l-Abbas Fadl b.Ahmad al-Isfarayini (994-1010 CE), Firdawsī set about revising and extending his work, especially those passages where he expressed his

praise of Mahmūd, after the description of the death of Rüstam, for example (Warner & Warner, 1905-1925: 112, 118)

> Abú'l Kásim! our great Sháh's hand is still
> Thus generous alike to good and ill.
> He never slackeneth in bounteousness,
> And never resteth on the day of stress,
> Delivereth battle when the times demand,
> And taketh heads of monarchs in his hand,
> But largesseth the humble with his spoils,
> And maketh no account of his own toils.
> Oh! may Mahmúd still rule the world, still be
> The source of bounty and of equity!

As we might deduce, the *amīr* was busy securing his reputation as *Yamīn al-Dawla* 'defender of the faith', and *Amīn al-Milla* 'protector of the *umma*', and a prince on a par with Rūstam or Bahrām himself, but with the fall of the vizier Abu 'l-Abbas, Mahmūd's intolerance for heterodoxy apparently became more pronounced (Ménage, 2003: 919b). The infamous and paltry reward that Firdawsī received upon submitting his *magnum opus,* was clearly a reflection of this somewhat opportunist change in opinion on Mahmūd's part. That it was opportunist is without doubt; the support of heterodox, sometimes shamanist Central Asian elements in the Khorāsān region where Iranians were predominant, was crucial to Mahmūd's early military successes in his expansionist programme (Bosworth, 1991: 65b-66a). His role as the pre-eminent *ghazī* warrior was always tempered by pragmatism, and his maintenance of his Hindū troops, especially when deployed against rebellious Muslim subjects, indicates that this ideology was part and parcel of the Ghaznāvid ruler's self-fashioning. Firdawsī may have expected a more tolerant and generous reception, if he understood the role of the poets and authors at Mahmūd's court as part of this process of promulgation of myth and majesty, and so his disappointment is understandable, as he almost certainly saw his work as vastly superior to theirs.

THE PROBLEM OF LANGUAGE AND MEMORY

The primary problem concerned with both poets' work has been defined by most scholars as a question of origins (Fraser, 1992: 11-32). Central to this problem and its exegesis, has been the endeavour to establish a coeval time-line, matching the conclusions of those researchers for whom the analysis of the Romani languages has provided the necessary 'framework' for developing the history of the Gypsies (see Sampson, 1926; Turner, 1926: 145-189; 1927: 129-138; Gjerdman & Ljundberg, 1963; Kochanowski, 1979: 16-52, for examples). Frequently this

has been at the expense of clearly establishing the relationship between language and memory, as recorded history. The pursuit of evidence relies upon commonly assumed connexions, as when Marushiakova and Popov refer to the Firdawsī episode as

> ...the events described, although told in a semi-legendary fashion, and in much later times, are rooted in historical fact and can be taken to refer to one of the initial stages of Gypsy migration (2001: 11)

The main criticism of such presentations of "historical fact" might be summarised as follows;

> Statements of this kind, even when they are partially true, ignore the principle that in order to establish an historical connexion between A and B it is not enough to bring forward evidence of their likeness to one another, without showing at the same time that the actual relation of B to A was such to render the assumed filiations possible, and that the possible hypothesis fits in with all the ascertained facts... (Nicholson, 1914: 8-9)

Fraser (1992: 42) clearly cautions against reliance upon the single factor of language to determine history, when he writes "... it is prudent to take stock of possible oversimplifications which the linguistic approach to prehistory... [i.e. early Romani history]... may encourage." As such, the lexicostatistical endeavour has resulted in a number of debates and disputes, assertions and arguments, based upon abstracted notions of Romani history and migration in general, which have been adduced from linguistics. In this context, reference to historical sources has often been selective, and subjectively driven by the predisposition to support particular narratives. Uncritical use of sources in some instances has led to misidentification of Romani peoples as other groups; a case in point being the equivalence drawn between early Byzantine references to *Atsinganoi* or *Athínganoi* and the *Gypsies*, despite Byzantine chronicler's detailed knowledge of individual heretical groups and their beliefs (see Hamilton & Hamilton, 1998). Once again, Fraser's scepticism proves salutary,

> Too often the assumption has been made, in looking for traces of the Gypsies, that any reference to a migrant group pursuing a Gypsy-like occupation can for that reason be equated with them...(Fraser, 1992: 35)

In this current discussion, the case of the *Lūrī*, *Lors* or *Lori* who are described in the Persian sources have been firmly located in this discourse of origins, despite the problems of identifying who is exactly meant by this description. As evidence of an early departure from India

for the Roma, they have been mobilised to support arguments between scholars, which have become extremely well worn in the discipline through repetition. Indeed, it is almost axiomatic that the legend of Bahram Ghūr and the Lūrī must appear in the early stages of any "history" or description of the Gypsies (Simmons, 2000). Many of these accept the basic story as representing a factual, albeit couched in legendary terms, account of the earliest migration (Simmons, 2000 almost uniquely notes, "... modern scholars dismiss this story as romantic fiction"; see also Hancock, 2004). Such wide circulation has this particular episode had, that English folk-singers like Fred Brookes can write a song about the subject and unquestioningly present it as part of the Romani "tradition". The historical veracity of the story, the analysis of the descriptions Hamza al-Isfahani and Firdawsī (the two best known redactions) in either symbolic or semiotic terms, the textual analysis offering wider perspectives and a more nuanced understanding of the descriptions, have not been undertaken by Romani Studies scholars to date. Despite the previous interpretations of this episode, and if taken at face value, the story of a group of musicians from north-western India transplanted to Persia in the mid-fifth century CE remains just that. I would suggest that without further analysis it is neither incontrovertible proof of a Romani presence in Sāsānid Persia, nor is it yet a clear case of mistaken identity, and thus the continuing uncritical use of this legend of Bahram Gūr and the Lūrī in any narrative of Gypsy history is indefensible.

THE ORIGINS OF THE "ROMANI" CONNECTION

The origins of this legendary identification are to be found in a piece written by a Colonel John S. Harriott (frequently misidentified as Captain James Harriott), of the East India Company Army c.1830. Colonel Harriott later became a Major-General of Her Majesty's Army in India (1838) and was a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society, to whom he had submitted his treatise, *Observations on the Oriental Origins of the Romanichal*, as part of their Transactions for that year (1830: 518-558). Harriott was the kind of soldier-scholar familiar in both this milieu and period (such as Captain George Grenville Malet, who wrote a history of Sind in 1855), similar in many ways to the more famous Sir Richard Francis Burton KCMG, also an East India Company officer during these years. Harriott's treatise closely followed upon a translation of the Persian epic *Shāhnāmā* in four volumes by Turner Macan, published in Kalkhata (Calcutta), with the majestic title *The Shāh Nameh... carefully collated with a number of the oldest and best manuscripts and illustrated by a copious glossary of obsolete words and obscure idioms...* that included a life of the author in Persian and English (1829). Other European translations of Firdawsī's poem followed this, indicating an especial level of interest in Persian literature by western European scholars at this time. A French translation by M. Jules Mohl in seven

volumes, *Le Livre des Rois* (1838-78), an Italian verse translation published in Turin, by Pizzi (1886-88), in German by F. Rückert (1890-05), English by A. G. Warner & E. Warner (1905-25), and a Gujarati version by J. J. Modi, (1897-04), were all subsequently produced, to say nothing of selections in Danish (Christensen, 1931), Dutch, Turkish and Özbek (see Ménage, 2003: 918a). The reasons for this rapid development in translations of Firdawsī might be seen in a number of factors to do with European, especially British influence in the region, as this was becoming dominant and the Empire strengthened control over the Indian sub-continent, its resources and especially its trade. According to geopolitical logic, parts of the "Middle East" were indispensable to the defence of this acquisition, in that the imperial mission was seen to be justified by the earlier Muslim invasions of Firdawsī's patron, *Sultān* Mahmūd of Ghaznā. As Sir Henry Miers Elliott wrote in his preface to the collection entitled *The History of India, as Told by Its Own Historians, The Muhammadan Period* (1867-77: 3)

> ...and drawing auguries from the past, he [the reader]... will derive hope for the future, that, inspired by the success which has hitherto attended our endeavours, we shall follow them up [the Muslims]... by continuous efforts to fulfil our high destiny as the rulers of India.

Thus, the work of Harriott, and others like Burton, must be seen in the complex light of European Orientalism, and part of the process Said has described as dignifying

> ...all the knowledge collected during colonial occupation with the title "contribution to modern learning" when the natives had neither been consulted nor treated as anything except pretexts for a text whose usefulness was not to the natives... (1987: 80)

Crucially for nineteenth century European and Ottoman Orientalists, the article by Harriott suggested the possibility of being able to "institute new areas of specialisation; to establish new disciplines; to divide, deploy, schematize, tabulate, index, and record... every observable detail..." (Said, 1987: 86; see also Makdisi, 2002: 768-797), about an Oriental population at Europe's heart, the *Gypsies*. The appearance of a group of itinerant musicians and thieves in Firdawsī's great epic, confirmed (for Harriott and his readers) that the connection of the English *Gypsies* and the Indian origin of their language, could be made securely. This confirmation underpinned the founding of what was later dubbed *Gypsylorism*, as a new discipline and area of specialisation, a means of categorising "natives" in the colonies and at home, and of conceptualising the other in both settings. It is no coincidence that the investigations of Harriott, Burton, and the later Gypsylorists are primarily intended to extend this categorisation, this "mapping" of the

Gypsies in their various "habitats". As Hancock (2004) has written, in his introduction to the life and work of Jan Yoors,

> ...the same colonialism and the European domination of non-western peoples were feeding into notions of a hierarchy of human groups. From the new sciences of botany and zoology the move to classifying human populations was a natural step, and the idea of "races" and their ranking occupied much of the scientific and nationalistic thought of the day. Populations resulting from unions of different "races" were believed to inherit the worst characteristics from each, and thus only the genetically pristine or "True Romany" counted for anything.

Whilst the work of Yoors was, Hancock argues, markedly different (Hancock, 2004), Harriott's study was intended to demonstrate the inheritance of *genuine* Gypsies, and those that followed him continued to promote this true/false dichotomy.

THE INTERPOLATIONS OF COLONEL HARRIOTT

This trope of authentic/inauthentic followed upon both the much earlier deduction of Romani as an Indic language, by István Váli, Jacob Bryant, Jacob Rüdiger, and Heinrich Grellman, in the late eighteenth century (Hancock, 2004), and the notion of the "counterfeit Egyptians" (Fraser, 1990: 43-69) that had been present since the mid-sixteenth century (Fraser, 1992: 85-6). The migration to Persia in the fifth century appeared plausible, as it was alluded to in the *Shāhnāmā*. The story suggests that Bahram Ghūr was visited by his Indian "father-in-law", Maharaja Rao Shankal of Sind, who offered to send him 10,000 Lūrī musicians to entertain the ordinary Persians who were imbibing their wine without musical entertainment (Hancock, 2004; Marushiakova & Popov, 2001: 5; Fraser, 1992: 35); although Hamza al-Isfahani states the figure of 12,000, whilst others suggest 4,000 in number (Minorsky, 2003: 816b). The king was however, displeased with these Lūrī and dispensed with their services before the year was out. A number of inaccuracies have crept into the story, so that the most recent recapitulations of it have conflated and reversed some important details. The 1905-25 translation by Warner and Warner (vol. vii, chap.39: 148-150), refers to the episode in the following way:

> *§ 39 How Bahrám summoned Gipsies from Hindústán*
>
> Thereafter he sent letters to each archmage,
> Gave clothing to the mendicants, and asked:-
> "In all the realm what folk are free from toil,
> And who are mendicants and destitute?
> Tell me how things are in the world, and lead

My heart upon the pathway toward the light."
An answer came from all the archimages,
From all the nobles, and the men of lore:-
"The face of earth appeareth prosperous,
Continuous blessings are in every part,
Save that the poor complain against the ills
Of fortune and the Sháh. 'The rich,' they say,
'Wear wreaths of roses in their drinking-bouts,
And quaff to minstrelsy, but as for us
They do not reckon us as men at all.
The empty-handed drinketh with no rose
Or harp.' The king of kings should look to it."
The Sháh laughed heartily at this report,
And sent a camel-post to king Shangul
To say thus: "O thou monarch good at need!
Select ten thousand of the Gipsy-tribe,
Both male and female, skilful on the harp,
And send them to me. I may gain mine end
Through that notorious folk."
Now when the letter
Came to Shangul he raised his head in pride
O'er Saturn's orbit and made choice of Gipsies,
As bidden by the Sháh who, when they came,
Accorded them an audience and gave each
An ox and ass, for he proposed to make
The Gipsies husbandmen, while his officials
Gave them a thousand asses' loads of wheat,
That they might have the ox and ass for work,
Employ the wheat as seed for raising crops,
And should besides make music for the poor,
And render them the service free of cost.
The Gipsies went and ate the wheat and oxen,
Then at a year's end came with pallid cheeks.
The Sháh said: "Was it not your task to plough,
To sow, and reap? Your asses yet remain,
So load them up, prepare your harps, and stretch
The silken chords."
And so the Gipsies now,
According to Bahrám's just ordinance,
Live by their wits; they have for company
The dog and wolf, and tramp unceasingly.

This text is the fullest English edition available (it may be found at http://erga.packhum.org/persian), and generally considered to be the best critical edition, hence referring to it here. Harriott appears to have

translated the text himself in his essay of 1830, although he may have been using the four volume 1829 Turner Macan edition. This redaction differs markedly from the Warner in some respects, most notably in Macan's translation of the apocryphal story of Firdawsi's fabulous reward and extended sojourn at Mahmūd's court (Ménage, 2003: 919b). The most obvious difference between Harriott and the later version, is the use by Warner and Warner of the terms *Gipsy* and *Gipsies*, in place of his rendering of *Lūrī*. The tale in both is more clearly defined in terms of numbers, and the change in conditions for these Lūrī, in their "contract" with the Shāh. The translation continues as above, until the final part where Harriott renders the text "...and support themselves by means of their songs, and the strumming of their silken bows..." (Harriott, quoted in Fraser, 1992: 35). Their dismissal also contains an interesting difference, in that "...the Luri, agreeably to this mandate, now wander the world, seeking employment..." and thieving on the road by day and by night", details not contained in the Warner translation. In this instance, Harriott's insertion of ideas already associated with the concept of "Gipsie" are clearly recognisable; the happy acceptance of their fate, as decreed by Bahrām, to wander, play and sing, and the association of criminal activities with this perambulation. We can detect the ideas of the author of the 1775-76 *Wiener Anzeigen* articles, and Heinrich Grellman's 1783 *Die Zigeuner* at work here (see Fraser, 1992: 191-93), and Harriott's prejudices about Gypsies have been interpolated in the text anachronistically, as the Warner translation suggests. The extent to which Harriott is reflecting wider prejudices is also an interesting point; despite the use of the term *Gipsies* by Warner and Warner, they do not seem to find the concomitant pejorative associations of petty larceny in the Firdawsī text. Clearly the Warner edition has been influenced by the widespread acceptance, by the time of the publication of their translation, of the tale as presenting us with something about the origins of the *Gypsies*, so that the term in the Persian text has been equated with the English term. In his introduction to volume vii where this tale appears, Edmond Warner makes mention of the inclination of "Professor Nöldeke... to consider Bahrām's importation of the Gipsies [sic.] from Hind to Īrān historical" referring to Theodore Nöldeke's note in his *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article on the monarch and his reign (Warner, 1905: n). Again, this reflects the notion that Lūrī can be equated with the English term, *Gypsy*, but this does not prompt Warner and Warner to "gloss" the Firdawsī text in the anachronistic way that Harriott's earlier version does.

The other differences in terms of the Harriott translation and the Warner edition of Firdawsī are more significant, if less immediately apparent in the former. The Indian ruler (Shangūl), is referred to elsewhere in the text as the "noble chieftain of the Sindian host..." (Warner & Warner, 1905-25, § 31: 125), and in a following section *Rai* or

Rādjā (§37: 140), but the majority of the interaction between the Shāh and the King (§36-§38), takes place in Kannūj, as it is rendered (Warner and Warner, 1905-25, vii, §29: 118), suggesting that the Gangetic basin is the heart of the King's territory, which extends over the Sind. There is a long narrative of various fabulous deeds and exploits on the part of Bahrām in Hind; he wrestles with the court champion after a feast (§28: 117), and other feats, that precedes the reference to the Gypsies in the poem, in the tradition of the heroic literature of the *Khwaday-namag* (The Book of Lords; c.590-628). These deeds culminate in the King of Hind offering one of his three daughters to Bahrām as a wife:

> "O thou Joy of hearts! thou hast prevailed.
> Attempt no greater feat. I will bestow
> My daughter on thee as thy wife, for thus
> Shall I be profited in word and deed.
>
> (Warner & Warner, 1905-25, §32: 1127)

Herein lies the origin of the identification of the Shāh as the son-in-law of Shangūl; he is married at Kannūj to the "moon-faced maid" named Sapīnūd, with whom he flees the intrigues of Shangūl to keep him in Hind, and returns to Īrān (§34:131-134). Reconciled to Shangūl, he calls upon him for the Lūrī (§39: 148-150). It is in the consideration of this point that I will turn to a closer examination of the *Lūrī, Lūlī* and the *Zutt.*

AL-ZUTT AND THE LŪLĪ

If we examine the literature associated with this tale (see Minorsky, 2003: 816b), it suggests that the term *lūrī* or *lūlī* is itself used inconsistently from an early point. Hamza al-Isfahānī refers to the musicians in the story as al-Zutt in his *Chronology* (c.350 AH/961 CE), but thereafter the terms used by subsequent poets are related to *lūlī, lūrī, lōrī.* In the translation by M. Jules Mohl of Firdawsī (1838-78: 76-77), the translator renders the term *Lūriyān*, and in his 1841 translation of the *Mudjmil al-tawarīkh* (c. 520 AH/1126 CE), Mohl extends this term to *al-Lūrīyūn al-sūdān*, or "the black Lūrī" (515-534). al-Tha'ālibī writes in his *Ghurar al-siyar* or *Ghurar akhbār mulūk al-furs wa-siyarihim* (c.429 AH/1037 CE), that the Lūrī are descended from these "black" *al-Lūrīyūn al-sūdān* (Zotenberg, 1900: 567), and following this, other Persian poets refer to the "blackness... like night", of these people (there is no suggestion that these people actually originate in the Sudan; see Minorsky, 2003: 817a). They are also described by writers as *shūkh* "petulant", *bunagāh* (that is their way of life is "irregular"), and most interesting of all in the context of the *Shāhnāmā*, *shangūl* meaning "extremely joyful", "carefree in their happiness" (Minorsky oddly suggests this term means "elegant" in his discussion; 2003: 817a). Modern connotations associated with the

term *lūlī* are similarly glossed (see Digard, 2003: 413b), whilst there are a significant number of terms associated with Persian Gypsies, both in terms of occupational identity and regional designations (Minorsky, 2003: 817b; Digard, 2003: 412b-13a), to which I shall return in the following section. This shift from *al-Zutt* to *Lūlī, al-Lūrīyan, al-Lūrīyan al-sūdān*, is not merely an differing terminology, as demonstrated by the consistency with which the latter term is used. It represents an *alternative* narrative, a interpretation differing from Hamza, to the dominant discourse created after Firdawsī's text. I would suggest that Hamza is attempting to include in his *Chronology* an historical account relating to an Indian population in Persia, defined as *al-Zutt*, one that provides a plausible genealogy for groups defined as *Lūlī* or *Lūrī* five centuries later. Hamza is also attempting something else in his writing, for his text is one that is not concerned with praising present rulers, but with detailing the Iranian past, in contradistinction to the less glorious present.

Firdawsī's praise for Mahmūd, and his descriptions of Bahrām are intended as a reflection of the characters of each, and an exemplar of the princely qualities embodied by both monarchs. There is also the clear description of the frivolous, feckless characters of the *Lūrī* sent by the King of Hind, Shangūl, almost certainly intended to pander to Mahmūd's own prejudices about Hindūs, and their rulers. The cycle of events that leads to this episode demonstrates the duplicity of the Indian princes through the characterisation of Shangūl. The Hindū monarch is portrayed as deceitful (§29), and cunning, intending upon bringing Bahrām to destruction by persuading him to challenge a huge wolf (§30), and then a terrible dragon (§31). He even plots to have him beheaded at his court, a deed so scurrilous that even his chief advisor will not countenance it (§32). Although the two are reconciled eventually in the tale, after Bahrām marries Sapīnūd and the couple flee to Iran, Firdawsī does not fail to point out the Indian remains "an idolater", whilst Bahrām, he suggests, is "a worshipper of God", although he presumably means *Ahura Mazda* in this instance (§36), but may equally betray something of the poet's heterodoxy. This clearly is intended to draw attention to the *Shāh's* similarity to the *Sultān.* In this (as in Bahrām's reply to Faghfūr of Chin §35), the contrast is drawn with the inferiority of the non-Persians, in their claims to majesty, their dealings with monarchs, and their bravery and prowess. The argument could be made that Firdawsī was clearly appealing to Mahmūd *as a Persian monarch* in the line of the king of kings (*shāhanshāh*), and equally that Mahmūd perceived himself to be so. Like earlier episodes in Iranian history, the Ghaznāvids had secured their position over their previous *Samānīd* masters through these qualities, and thus had every claim to be considered *shāhanshāh.* This aspect of Mahmūd's kingship ideology bore strong resemblance to that of the previous *Sasānīds.*

In this change in terminology as regards *al-Zutt,* or *Zott,* and the *Lūlī,* an ambivalence arises that if uncovered, may offer both the connection between the various *ethnonyms*, and provide an illuminating perspective upon the origin of the Gypsy populations of Persia and elsewhere in the region. Minorsky has identified, in his article on the term *Lūlī*, that the origin of this name is in the early Arab scholars' description of the inhabitants of a town in Sind, called by them Arūr or al-Rūr (2003: 679a; 817a). The Arab conquest of the region had taken this town sometime before 95 AH/714 CE, according to the historian al-Balādhurī c.850 CE (Hitti and Murgotten, 1916–1924: 439-440). Muhammad Ma'sum "Nami" Mir records that Alore was

> ...a very large city on the bank of the Mihran (the Indus); that there were many very fine buildings in it; that outside and around the town there were gardens full of trees, having good fruit, and that everything was to be found there that the inhabitants and travellers might desire

and it was the royal residence of *Rai Suheeris* (Malet, 1855: 7). It fell to Muhammad b. l'Kasīm on "...Thursday, the 10th day of Rumzan, in the year Hijree 93 (A. D. 711)" (Malet, 1855: 17). The linguistic shift from Arōrī/Rūrī to Lōrī/Lūlī, Minorsky argues, occurs after the translation of Indian Alore into Arabic al-Rūr, dissimulation of the two "r" letters, being a common occurrence (2003: 817a). The groups identified in the *Shāhnāmā* and other works, are seen as descendants of the presumed captives from this, the most important city in Sind, after the Arab conquest in the beginning of the eighth century CE. This strongly suggests that the origins of the Dom are to be found in such populations, a point I have argued elsewhere (Marsh, forthcoming, §3). What has happened in this particular case is, I suggest, that the general term *al-Zutt*, or *al-Zott*, the Arabic term for *Djāt*, has given way to the specific term *Lūlī*, but that both have their origins in the same region (Ansari, 2003: 488a). The semantic shift reflects a change in the presentation of the relationship between the Sasānīd *shāhs,* and the *Gūpta* kings of India, and the reconfiguration of relations in the wake of Arab conquest.

The interpolation of the fabulous episodes relating to Bahrām Gūr and Shangūl King of Hind, in a narrative depicting the prowess and bravery of the *Shāh*, is a device to explain the alliance of the Sāsānids and the Gūpta monarchs, in the face of a common enemy, the Hephthalite Huns, *Hunas* or *Hayātila* (White Huns). The origins of communities of Indians as allied troops assisting the Persians in their defence, lies at the heart of the story of Bahrām Gūr, I suggest. The struggle against the Hephthalites was one waged by the *shāhs* over two centuries, from the initial attacks of the *Chionite* Huns in c.350 against Shapur II. After a treaty between these combatants, the Huns refrained from full-scale assaults

upon Iran until Bahrām Gūr's reign, and it is likely that sometime in the early 420's, the *Shāh* defeated the Hephthalite king, dedicating his crown, the Hephthalite queen and her servants, to the *Gushnasp* fire-temple at Shiz (Morony, 1987: 74). Later onslaughts were more successful however, and the Hephthalites came to dominate Persia and India. However, the role of victorious allies that the Hindūs had played in relation to the fifth century Sasānīd *shāh* became problematic for the later, Muslim Persian chroniclers, as the Indians maintained their Hindūism, even after the Arab conquest of Sind, thus remaining "idolaters", whilst the Sasānīds could at least be represented as believers in one "God" (*Ahura Mazda*), and in some senses closer to the monotheism of Islam. The legend of the *Lūlī* functions as a semiotic dislocation describing this shifting relationship, giving an ignoble origin for people who may once have been valued and respected. The final echo of their former occupation is found in the phrase relating to the "silken bows" (Harriott) and stretching "the silken chords" (Warner & Warner). It was the practice of archers, just prior to battle, of stretching the silken bow-strings by plucking them to produce a low, threatening "thrum", as infantry would beat their shields with their swords. The origins of the harp in the hunter's bow is well-known, but this would seem to be a case of the conflation of original community of allied troops with the later-arrived *Lūrī.*

HARRIOTT, HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

In the context of the above arguments, the seminal role of John S. Harriott, in the identification of the story of the *Lūlī* and Bahrām Gūr, and the origins of the *Gypsies*, must be re-evaluated. Harriott's translation of this section of the *Shāhnāmā* (1830: 518-58; Warner & Warner, 1905-25: 148-150), interpolated anachronistic notions relating to the character of *Gypsies*, as these had been defined in European scholarship since the 1770's, and had been part of popular prejudices and stereotypes for a great deal longer. Harriott's glossing of these notions upon the text of Firdawsī's story, added an additional layer to an already complex text; one that contained elements of the less subtle panegyrics being produced at the court of the *sultān* Mahmūd of Ghaznā, as a supplication in times of the author's needs, yet retained a transcendent narrative and structure that lifted it beyond these material concerns. Firdawsī's religious heterodoxy may have added an additional motive to those of Mahmūd in awarding the aged poet a meagre pension for his monumental work, but the text itself displayed a clear intention as regards the comparisons of Bahrām and Mahmūd in this tale, and the tropes of the deceitful and dishonourable behaviour reflected the prejudices of both poet and *sultān* towards the Hindūs, I suggest. Harriott's colourful redaction of the text concerning the *Lūlī* or *Lūrī* has fundamentally been at the base of a positive identification, for many

scholars, with the *Gypsies*, yet this reference has not been systematically or rigorously interrogated by either *Gypsylorists*, or modern Romani Studies scholarship. Upon examination, the translation by Harriott displays a number of aspects that throws doubt upon any connection with *Gypsy* origins, and I would argue that the continuing use of this referent is an aspect of the *mythologising* of Romani history, that must be separated from the actuality of that history, even whilst it may continue to be described as an aspect of Romani historiography. The legend of Bāhram Gūr and the Lūlī must be recognised as an *orientalised* narrative, as it has been portrayed by Harriott, reflecting nineteenth century racism (built upon eighteenth century prejudices) towards Gypsies, and part of the discourse of colonial imperialism, justifying European rule in India and interference in Persia and elsewhere in the region. To continue to perpetuate this discourse in Romani Studies and Gypsy scholarship, is to accept the racist paradigm that framed the questions of origins and identities Europeans drew up regarding the *Other*, be they "Indians" in India or in Europe. To deconstruct this *myth* of origins, is to refute the reductive simplicity of European models of *narratives* of origins for distinct, and homogeneous ethnic groups, during this crucial period of imperial expansion, couched in terms of "the white man's burden" (Rudyard Kipling's imperialist paean of 1899), or "manifest destiny" (coined by John S. O'Sullivan in 1839). Romani history writing must challenge and confront these narratives, whilst avoiding the *essentialism* that accompanies a great deal of the self-fashioning of *ethno-history*, especially at the expense of much-cherished myths like that of Bāhram Gūr and the Lūlī.

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3

Using Oral Histories and Customs of the Kosovo Roma as a Guide to their Origins

PAUL POLANSKY

Four years ago I had the unique experience of being the only non-Rom to live 24 hours a day, for three months in a United Nations IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) camp in Kosovo, exclusively for Roma. These Roma, about 5,000 in number, were from eleven different clans or castes. Normally, these castes would never come in contact with each other, but they had been thrown together as a result of the ethnic cleansing of all minorities that took place after NATO troops arrived in Kosovo with the returning Albanian majority.

Because I had lived for several years with the Roma in the Czech Republic and had written three books about them, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees asked me to come to Kosovo in July 1999, one month after the war, to advise them on their ever-growing number of Gypsy IDPs. It was supposed to be a three month job, but four years later, I am still in Kosovo, still living with Roma, although no longer in a camp, but in their homes. Here, I would like to share with you what I have learned about the Kosovo Roma, and the oral histories I have collected from them.

Throughout this chapter you will sometimes see me referring to the Roma as *Gypsies*. I hope I do not offend anyone by using this word, but there is one compelling reason why most Roma in Kosovo today call themselves Gypsies instead of Roma. The English word Gypsy has saved many of them from being murdered. Because of that, many are now very proud of that term. Others, to save their lives, now call themselves *Egyptian* and swear on their children's heads that their ancestors came not from India, but from Egypt, despite the fact that most of their grandparents spoke *Romani*. Although the UN in Kosovo called our IDP centre a "Roma camp" only one-third of the camp spoke Romani. I was prepared for this because in the Czech Republic most Czech Roma under the age of forty do not speak any Romani either. Especially in the bigger cities, such as Prague, most Czech

Roma have lost their language, traditions and customs. Even the word "pani" (water) was absolutely unknown to two-thirds of the dark-skinned people in our UN camp in Kosovo.

Those two-thirds of the approximately 5,000 Gypsies in the camp would fight you if you called them Roma. Most Kosovar Albanians thought the Roma had collaborated with the Serbs because Kosovo Roma spoke Serbian and lived in ghettos on the edge of Serbian villages. The majority of IDPs in our camp called themselves *Ashkali*. Those who did call themselves Roma, however, insisted in identifying themselves by their Romani "caste," and in the camp they made sure they had their own little area where other "Roma" were not encouraged to join them. So the *Kovachi* Roma lived in their own little corner of the camp, while the *Vlahy*, *Gurbeti*, *Gabeli*, *Rabagia*, *Chergari*, *Arlia*, *Tare-Gone*, *Pudja*, *Korane*, and Serb - Roma segregated themselves from one another as well.

As I was soon to find out, these "castes" seldom intermarried, and each had its own particular dialect of Romani. Many scholars today might prefer the politically correct term of "clan," but I use the word "caste" because the Kosovo Romani system of self - identification is based on occupation, or at least on the occupations of their ancestors. Having once visited some twenty different castes in India in search of the origins of the European Roma, I also found that these Kosovo Roma maintained their system not only according to profession, but also according to some of the same traditions I found in the various sub - castes of the *Dom* in Indian Punjab. In our camp of 5,000 there was only one unique similarity in all these clans or castes: their oral histories.

Long before I ever met my first *Gitano* in Spain in 1963, I had been a collector of oral histories. It started out as a hobby when I was in college, hearing the stories of my grandparents who had been born in the old country. I later expanded on their stories by collecting stories from relatives and neighbours. Later, I enlarged my collection to include stories told by the Afro-Americans I met in Milwaukee when I interviewed Fr Gruppi, a Catholic priest cum human rights activist who became known as a "nigger lover" because he actually lived with black Americans in their shabby homes in the inner-city ghettos. Needless to say, he was a big influence on my life and today I try to follow his example of living with the poor if you really want to help and understand them.

What is an oral history? For me it is not usually a long epic tale detailing the origins of family or clan. More often than not, there is just a single statement, which encapsulates the experience of a particular person or family. When gathered together with many other similar statements.

In our UN camp in the blistering hot days of July and August 1999, trying to survive without much water, the first oral history I collected from the Kosovo Roma happened when I cursed the sun. For one instant our corner of the camp with screaming children and shouting parents became so quiet I could hear myself thinking. Then, as if I were a child who had just broken the most expensive antique in a millionaire's home, I was taken aside and told I would have a life of *bilatcho bah* (bad luck) if I ever cursed the sun again. Since that time I have collected several proverbs that Roma remembered from their ancestors about the sun.

These are some of them:

When a Romani woman takes her bread out of the oven and it looks especially good, a neighbor might say, "It looks so good, the sun must have made it."
If you hate someone, you can say, "I hope the sun kills you."
When a child dies and a visitor asks about him, the mother may say, "He was as happy as the sun, his face was like the sun."
If a Rom tries hard to do something, but fails and is saddened by that failure, you can say, "He can not beat himself with the sun."
If you hate someone, you can ask the sun to burn them.
Every evening the sun goes to its mother, every morning the sun is reborn.
If you want a crying child to shut up, you can yell out "zajdisalo," but you can never use this word against the sun, only bad people do that.
If you always have bad luck, you must ask yourself, "Did I ever offend the sun?"
Roma love the sun as they love their own children.
If you want a Rom to promise he is telling the truth, you must get him to say, "Yes, I swear that on the sun."

As with all of their traditions and customs, the Roma in our camp did not know the origin of these sayings about the sun. They only knew that it was one of their biggest sins to curse the sun. Before explaining what I perceive to be the origin of these Romani proverbs about the sun, I would first like to tell you about a few more oral histories I collected in the camp. The most popular one that everyone seemed to know was about the "house snake."

All Roma in Kosovo believe they have a house snake. There are different versions of this story, some say your house snake lives under the house, others say in the roof. But all agree that the house snake brings much *latchi bah* (good luck) to a home, so if the snake is ever killed or dies, you might be doomed to a life of *bilatcho bah*. Although all Kosovo Roma seem to know this story, it was not new to me. I had heard similar versions in the Punjab where it is considered "good luck" to see a cobra

near your home. But what does this story tell us about the Kosovo Roma? For me, it confirms that before beginning their wagon-treks, from their origins in India, they were a sedentary people who lived in homes. They only became nomadic after leaving India. And why does a house snake bring you good luck? Because a snake eats vermin. If you don't have vermin in your roof or under your home you probably have less disease, i.e. *latchi bah*. How important is *latchi bah* in the lives of the Kosovo Roma? I wrote the following poem, which I thinks sums up what it means to them.

Latchi Bah

Resting his knees on his carpeted floor
and his butt on his heels, Sadri expounds
his views on bride prices and religion
while his wife and daughter serve him
Turkish coffee and Russian tea.
Today he heard I don't believe in God.
Laughing at me as if I were mentally retarded,
he asks how I could come from the richest
country in the world and not believe in God's favors.
Although he has never been in a mosque,
Sadri proclaims he is a good Muslim,
that there is only one God, and no man
should turn his back on Him.
Not believing in God, Sadri explains,
is almost as bad
as not believing in
latchi bah.

Another story that always intrigued me was that the ancestors of the Kosovo Roma, at least the Kovachi Roma, left their homeland as Buddhists, and only changed their religion after they were a long time in Armenia and had been offered jobs in the Balkans if they became Christians. For me this is very interesting because the first coal mines in Kosovo were started in 1302 by Catholics from Dubrovnik. They founded in that same year near the mines the village of Letnica, and built a Catholic church, which later was dedicated to the Black Madonna. Although most Gypsies in Kosovo today are Muslim, they have always made a pilgrimage every year on August 15th to Letnica to offer gifts to the Black Madonna and pray to her for a year of *latchi bah*. Many Romani women who say they are Muslim wear gold crosses around their neck, under their clothes. Whenever their children are sick they make their way either to Letnica or the nearest monastery to light a candle.

Not all oral histories that the Kosovo Roma have told me are as pure as the ones I have just mentioned. Some are agglomerations of

stories attached to other stories that probably have no origin among the Roma, but have been used to either save their own story or to try to understand a tale whose origin has long been forgotten. A case in point is the story of Vasalica. The Kosovo Roma have two important feasts every year apart from their Muslim celebrations. Those two feasts, which they feel, are only for Roma are the Feast of Vasalica from January 12 to January 14, and the feast celebrating the end of winter called *Herdelezi* from May 6 to May 8. What does the word Vasalica mean to a Kosovo Rom, especially the Kovachi Roma, and why is the feast celebrated? This is the story I was told:

THE LEGEND OF VASALICA

Long ago about 10,000 or 20,000 Kovachi Roma were in a country where they had no rights and the people of that country wanted them to leave. The Roma moved to another country to find more freedom. One day the King of that country told them to move again because he didn't want them in his country. In order to leave, they had to cross a bridge over a big river. At this time they experienced a very bad winter. This group moved on and on and on. In that group was a woman by the name of Vasa. She was lame in one leg and was always far behind the group with her husband. When the group got to this very long bridge, there were so many Roma that the bridge collapsed and all the people died in the river. That day was the 14th of January, and after some time Vasa arrived with her husband and saw the tragedy. She and her husband moved into a cave to survive the very hard winter. They had very little food with them, so within a few days they were very hungry. But near to that cave were many geese. To survive, they killed a goose every few days. They spent all winter in this cave eating geese, so when the summer came they moved on to the next country. Vasa and her husband had a lot of children and so today her descendants, the Kovachi Roma, celebrated the 14th of January, to remember her survival. Only the Kovachi Roma celebrate this day and for this day they eat only a goose and celebrate this day in the name of Vasa (Vasalica).

That is the Kovachi Roma version of Vasalica. But this is the Serb-Roma version. The Serb-Roma by the way are Orthodox Christian while the Kovachi Roma are Muslim.

ANOTHER VERSION OF THE LEGEND OF VASALICA

The Gypsies once had a great and powerful empire. Their emperor was called Pharaoh. He was a very severe and just man. He ruled over many people, even over the Hebrews. One day he set out to war and came to the sea. Because God loved him, he commanded the sea to divide, so Pharaoh went by dry land to the middle of the sea. Then in his folly he

said. "God himself fears me, so what must men do?" Then God asked him, "Whose power is this?" Instead of saying, "Thine O God," the Pharaoh said, "Mine." Then God was angry and commanded the sea to come back, and Pharaoh and all his army were drowned. Only those who had passed through the sea and those who had not gone in were saved. Then God sent Saint Basil to those who had not passed through and Saint Basil said, "Will you keep my feast if I take you to the other side of the sea?" "We will," all the Gypsies answered. Then Saint Basil prayed to God and God created a goose. The Gypsies climbed one by one on to its back and it carried them over to their companions on the other side of the sea. Saint Basil ordered them to keep his feast and to kill geese on this day.

Another Christian version of this Serb-Roma story is that the only survivor when God joined up the sea was one hunchback woman and one blind man. Then God asked them, "Why are you two still alive?" "God preserved us," the woman said. "Do you fear God?" he asked. "If we did not fear God, He would not have saved us." Then God revealed himself. He said, "Let Gypsies be born from you, let them be merry, and gay and make other people glad." Then he asked what feast they were going to keep. "We will keep the feast of whomever carries us to the other side," the woman said. Then God made a goose that carried over first the woman and then the man. Then God said, "Keep the feast of Saint Basil. It was he who saved you. On his day kill either one, three, five, seven or nine geese. Not knowing where to go the man and woman made a little hut and lived in it. They had children and all forty-one tribes of the Gypsies, are descended from this couple that Saint Basil saved.

Perhaps Vasa, the Romani woman, never lived, or at least that was not her real name, but the tragedy that befell the Roma on their exodus out of India might be the real story that has been saved. Perhaps this Romani oral history actual relates to the naming of the Hindu Kush because that mountain range received that name about the same time the Roma were leaving India. Hindu Kush means "Hindu Death."

I know many linguists have tried to determine the origin of the European Roma solely through their studies of the Romani language. I personally do not believe you can trace the origins of any people solely through linguistics. One of the big surprises of the DNA studies conducted over the past several years on the people of Iceland determined that their female chromosomes did not come from the Scandinavian countries as everyone expected from studying Icelandic linguistics, but from Ireland. I believe a DNA study of the Romani people will throw up some very interesting results too.

I once tried to interest one of my sons into doing a DNA study of the European Roma. He specialized in microbiology at Cambridge University and

was looking for an interesting study for his PhD. I discussed the issue with his professors at Cambridge and they were as excited as I was. Cambridge University has one of the best DNA labs in the world and they were prepared to do the testing. I had in my own way already followed an oral history track back to a place in southwest Punjab, which I thought, could be followed up by DNA testing. In brief, I have always found in following back a genealogy line using oral histories, that a family or clan knows only the last place their ancestors came from. So I approached a Romani family in Prague and asked if they knew where their ancestors had come from. They knew that five generators earlier their ancestors had come from a small village in eastern Slovakia. I went to that village, and found many Roma still living there. They knew of no relatives in Prague but knew that their ancestors had come from a small village over the Hungarian border. In that village in Hungary where I found a large clan of Roma they told me their ancestors had come from another part of Hungary, further to the east. Thus, village by village, I followed these ancestral stories back to Kosovo.

In Kosovo I was told by many Roma that their ancestors had come from Turkey or Armenia. Those who told me these stories called themselves Ashkali. I asked why they called themselves Ashkali. Some told me that was what the Turks called their ancestors, others told me that was the village where their ancestors had come from in Egypt. Despite spending many weeks in the British library in London looking for a village by the name of Ashkali in Egypt I never found one. The only village or town by the name of Ashkali in the world is situated in eastern Turkey, which a hundred years ago was in the Armenian lands. Today 70% of the population of Ashkali is, you guessed it, Gypsy.

Here I used the word Gypsy because once you get out of Europe you never hear the word Rom (only Dom) mentioned again until you get to present-day Pakistan where the *Balistan* tribe of Shin in Astor and Gilgit still call themselves Rom. Interesting, at least for me, is a one-liner I heard from an old Kovachi Rom in Kosovo who can neither read or write but told me he had heard from his ancestors that the Dom were the cousins of the Rom.

I have yet to visit Ashkali in eastern Turkey, but from what I have read about these Gypsies, they carry the oral tradition that their ancestors came from Persia. In Persia I have read that many Gypsies there carry the oral tradition that their ancestors came from Kabul. And in Kabul most Gypsies are called Multani because their ancestors hundreds and hundreds of years ago came from Multan.

Which leads me back to the first oral history I mentioned to you about the sun. More than a thousand years ago the greatest sun temple in India

was in Multan[1]. Pilgrims came from all over India and the Orient bringing gifts of gold. But in 985 AD events occurred which eventually changed the whole aspect of sun worship in Multan. The *Qarmatian* heretics[2], recently expelled from Egypt, sought and found refuge in the remote provinces of the Indus valley. Not only did they find refuge but flourished especially around the area of Multan. However, they were appalled by all the pilgrims coming from all over India to worship the sun, so the Qarmatians attacked the temple, broke the idol of the sun into a thousand pieces, massacred the attendant priests and chased the true sun-believers away.

Nevertheless, the Qarmatians made or found many adherents in Multan. The Qarmatian heresy took deep root in the area. In 1175 Muhammad of Ghor (see below, *Ed.*), led his forces to Multan and delivered that place from the hands of the Qarmatians who suddenly disappeared from recorded history. Is it possible that the Qarmatians to save themselves joined the Multani nomadic outcaste tribes that fled north to Balistan where the Shin - a tribe widely spread throughout the Indus valley- gave them refuge, their language, and their caste name of Rom? It certainly is interesting that from that point on, Gypsies in central Asia, Persia and Armenia still to this day say their ancestors came from Egypt.

Probably the oldest oral history I have heard from European Roma, not just the Kosovo Roma, is that before their ancestors made their summer wagon treks, they always prayed to Abraham to look after them as they did for him when he made his journey from Ur to the Palestine. Did the Qarmatians bring this oral history with them to India?

More than 150 years ago many Gypsiologists thought they had traced the origins of the European Roma back to Multan, then discarded that theory when a linguist by the name of O'Brien proved that the *Jat* language in Multan in the late 1800s had very little similarity with Romani. But 1,000 years ago it was not just the Jat language that was spoken by all the different tribes around Multan. Some of them even spoke Egyptian, i.e. the Qarmatians.

Certainly that SW area of Punjab, according to Rose, the British author of the castes of Punjab, was one of the few places that always carried on the tradition of paying very high prices for their brides as the Kosovo Roma still do today. In fact, it is not only the high bride price that the Kosovo Roma have in common with the nomadic tribes still found around Multan but also many marriage customs such as covering the bride's head with a red blanket while she travels from her home to the groom's home.

Multan was the principal city of the Punjab before the 11th century. It was conquered by Alexander the Great who left a Greek force there.

Later Multan was conquered by the Kushans, then by *Hephthalite* or White Huns. If ever you wanted to find a multi-ethnic city, Multan was the place, maybe the only place in Punjab, before the Roma left India.

European Gypsies are a mixture of different Indian and Aryan types. Some are very dark, some very white. Most have dark brown eyes, others have blue or green eyes. Some Gypsies have freckles. Most have black hair, some have light brown hair, and some are even blonde. Some are tall and lean, others heavyset. The Gypsies of Europe seem to have many different types of ancestors in their DNA pool. Although they speak the same language, they don't have the same physical features.

In Multan the menial classes are the sweepers, a Dom caste known as *Kutanas*; also the *Mirasis* who were bards, genealogists and musicians to the Jats; there are also three vagrant castes in Multan, *Ods*, *Jhabels* and *Marths*. All are sub-castes of the Dom. Many Roma in Europe have the tradition that it is bad luck to curse the sun. From antiquity until the 11th century, Multan was known as the city of the sun. Hinds from all over India came to worship and make large offerings of gold to a sun idol of Hindi mythology in Multan. Even though one of the rulers of Multan was a Buddhist, the sun God was still worshiped and pilgrimages still made. Kali, the black woman God, was also worshiped in Multan.

Multan was the capital of an important province in Sindh until 631 A.D. In 664 Arab conquerors of Sindh penetrated as far as Multan but didn't take it until 712 A.D. when the district fell along with the rest of Sindh. Muhammad bin Kasim, who conquered Multan for the Caliphs of Baghdad, took more than 6,000 prisoners, mainly the wives and children of the Multani defenders put to the sword; many of these Multani women and children were sent back to the Caliphs in Baghdad as slaves.

For three centuries Multan remained in Arab hands and became a thickly populated area. Well-irrigated by several rivers it resembled the lower-delta region of Egypt. In 915 AD the Arab geographer al-Masudi (born c.280 AH/893 AD, *Ed.*) wrote that Multan was a strong Muhammadan frontier town under a king of the Koreysh tribe and the centre of a fertile and thickly populated area surrounded by 120,000 hamlets. He said only Egypt at that time had a denser population and in his writings he implies that Multan was a little Egypt.

From oral histories I have collected from the Kosovo Roma, they said their ancestors kept getting kicked out of each country they lived in; sometimes they were chased away by soldiers. They were still Buddhists when they arrived in Armenia, but before they were allowed to emigrate and work in the Balkans they had to convert to Christianity. Many stayed in Armenia but later came with the Turks to the Balkans.

In Kosovo many Gypsies called themselves or were called Ashkali which is a Persian word for garbage or people associated with garbage. In Multan the largest Dom caste there today are the street sweepers.

After four years of living with the Kosovo Roma I have discovered that they have very few traditions and customs of their own. *Herdelezi* is a Persian/Turkish Muslim holiday; Vasalica has a Christian connection, many of their customs are Albanian, Serbian and Turkish combined.

In January 1999, six months before I left Prague for Kosovo, I visited the Dom of Bikaner. I was fascinated by them because they not only looked like the *Gitanos* I had as neighbours in southern Spain for almost 30 years, but they had the same mannerisms, gestures, and almost the same music. Later when I got back to Spain and showed my *Gitano* neighbours the photos I had taken of the Dom in Bikaner no one believed I had been in India. All swore I had taken those photos in Andalucia. One old *Romni* (married woman) even told me that she recognized one of the women in my photos as living in the next village to her. I personally have no doubt that if I took the Dom of Bikaner to any *Gitano* village in Andalucia no one could tell the difference between these people until they started to speak. But what oral histories have the Dom of Bikaner kept about the origins of their ancestors? Very few; but the ruling Brahman families of Bikaner still tell the stories of their origins in Multan and how they left there a 1000 years ago, chased out by the invading Muslim armies, taking with them their lower caste household help, transporters and musicians.

REFERENCES

1. The Hindū temple of Multān was tolerated by the early Muslim conqueror of Sind, Muhammad al-Kāsim (in an unusual acknowledgement of the *ahl al-dhimma* status of Hindūs, in this context), and remained a centre for pilgrimage until its destruction by the Fātamid Ismā'īlī leader, Halam b. Shaybān, in the later 4th/10th century (dates are unclear from the sources), who erected a mosque in its place. The Ghaznāvid Mahmūd b. Sebüktīgīn, attempted to extirpate the Ismā'īlī dynasty in Multān in 396 AH/1006 AD and 401 AH/1010 AD, but the invasion of the Ghūrid Mu'izz al-Dīn b. Sām, in 570 AH/1174-5 AD wrested control from the schismatic Karamatī Ismā'īlīs. Thus, the details of this oral history are an imperfect record of the event at best; *Editors' note.*

2. see Madelung, W. (2003), for a detailed history of this schismatic Ismā'īlī sect; *Editors' note.* "Karmatī" *in* P. Bearman *et al* [eds] *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, WebCD Edition,* Leiden: E.J. Brill, vi: 660a

4

On Romani Origins and Identity: Questions for Discussion

IAN HANCOCK

For the past several years I have been working on a book in which will be presented in detail the linguistic and historical data from which I have been attempting to reconstruct the social and linguistic history of our language and our people. The present paper is an overview of my position to date. Those of you familiar with my work know that it has taken a circuitous route over the years in an ongoing effort to refine it, and no doubt it will be modified further as it continues. Thus in my earliest writing I supported a fifth-century exodus from India and accepted the established three-way *Rom-Dom-Lom* split; I no longer do. I argued for a wholly non-"Aryan" ancestry, but no longer believe this to have been the case nor, indeed, that "Aryan" is even a genetically relevant label. I saw the migration from India to Anatolia as having been a slow one, consisting of a succession of military encounters with different non-Indian populations; I no longer think that it happened in that way. I have argued, sometimes strenuously, that our people were one when they left India, one when they arrived in Anatolia, and one when they entered Europe. My findings are leading me more and more to believe that they were not. Working especially closely with three other scholars, themselves also of Romani origins—Kenneth Lee at Newcastle University, Ronald Lee at the University of Toronto and Adrian Marsh at Greenwich University—I have come to modify these positions considerably. The ongoing research of Marcel Corthiade and Jan Kochanowski in France has also been useful to some extent in reaching these newer hypotheses[1], and I am especially grateful to Vardan Voskanian for generously sharing his materials and his ideas. Three or four years ago, I invited several non-Romani scholars to join me in a team effort, but this didn't materialize; perhaps it can be revived now, and a future conference be devoted solely to the question of Romani origins. As its title indicates, the following raises a number of questions, some of which are raised at the end of this paper.

My principal position here is that three salient, and hitherto not adequately considered, aspects of the contemporary Romani condition

rest upon the facts of our history:

FIRST that the population has been a composite one from its very beginning, and at that time was occupationally rather than ethnically-defined;

SECOND that while their earliest components are traceable to India, Romanies essentially constitute a population that acquired its identity and language in the West (accepting the Christian, Greek-speaking Byzantine Empire as being linguistically and culturally 'western'), and

THIRD that the entry into Europe from Anatolia was not as a single people, but as a number of smaller migrations over perhaps as much as a two-century span of time.

Together, these account in part for the lack of cohesiveness among the various groups self-identifying as Romani, and for the major dialect splits within the language. We might see each major post-Byzantine group as evolving in its own way, continuing independently a process of assimilation and adaptation begun in northwestern India. Thus the descendants of those who were held in slavery until the 19th century, and those whose ancestors entered Spain in the 15th century are today very different, the former—the *Vlax* Romanies—have been heavily influenced genetically, culturally and linguistically by Romanian and the Romanians; the latter on the other hand—the *Kalé* Romanies—have been influenced in the same way by Mozarabic and Spanish, and both populations have furthermore been separated by a more than six century span of time. Thus any originally acquired characteristics they might still share, which constitute the genetic, linguistic and cultural so-called "core of direct retention," are greatly outweighed by characteristics accreted from the non-Romani world. The reunification (or more accurately *unification*) movement urged by such organizations as the International Romani Union or the Roma National Congress seeks—as I do myself—to emphasize the original, shared features of each group rather than those acquired from outside which separate them; yet for some, that original material is now scant, and creating for them any sense of a pan-Romani, global ethnicity would require the kind of effort that is, sadly, very far down on the list of day-to-day priorities and, pragmatically, would be difficult to instigate. It also calls into question the legitimacy of the exclusionary and subjective position taken by some groups who regard themselves as being "more" Romani than others.[2]

1. WHO WERE THE ANCESTORS OF THE ROMANIES?

In Hancock (1995) I demonstrated that the generally accepted scenario of an early single migration out of India with a subsequent

split into Domari, Lomavren and Romani (*i.e.* Middle Eastern, Armenian and European Gypsy) once it had passed through the Persian language territories, could not be maintained in light of the percentages of shared and non-shared Iranic items evident in each today. That Domari and Romani had independent origins had already been suspected by Colocci (1907: 279), who urged caution in drawing too sweeping a conclusion from the available data:

> To imagine that just because the Gypsies of Europe and their brothers in Asia share a common linguistic core, one should therefore conclude that there was a single exodus of these people [out of India], and furthermore that the unity of their language argues against more than one migration, seems to be a conclusion which is only slightly weakened by the still nebulous state of the documentation. Unity of language might well prove unity of origin; but there could still have been different migrations, chronologically and geographically, without that fact being too apparent from the lexical adoptions acquired by the mother tongue in the countries through which they passed; all the moreso since those migrations were very rapid. To conclude, therefore, that the unity of their exodus rests upon the recognition of the unity of the substrate of their language, strikes me as a proposition which shouldn't be universally accepted without [first incorporating] the benefit of a [lexical] inventory.

Fraser (1992: 39), also cautioned that

> despite Sampson's insistence that both sprang from a single source, some of Domari's dissimilarities from European Romani create doubts about how far we can assume that the parent community was uniform.

And most recently, Windfuhr (2003: 415a), referring to Turner (1926, 1927) and Samson (1923, 1926) wrote

> they reflect three distinct historical layers of Indo-Aryan innovations, which suggests three successive westward migrations, rather than a single one [3]

An examination of the earliest words in the Romani language suggests a number of things: firstly that there is little in the original, 'first layer' Indian vocabulary that reflects a nomadic or itinerant population, but rather it points to a settled one; and secondly that while there are not many original words for *e.g.* artisan or agricultural skills, there are quite a few military terms. There are Indian words for *soldier* and *attack* but not for *farmer* or *harvest*; there are words for *sword* and *spear* but not for *plough* or *hoe*; there is a word for *horse* but not for *buffalo* and so on.[4] Given these lexical clues and the likely time period (discussed

below), and given that the Indian words and grammar in modern Romani point to the languages spoken in the north-western part of India and to nowhere else, an examination of Indian history for evidence of any military activity during that time and in that area is a natural next step—but first, the time period must be established.

2. THE DATE OF DEPARTURE

It has been claimed repeatedly that the speakers of the language that developed into modern Romani left India some time between the fifth and ninth centuries; those who support the traditional *Shah Nameh* explanation, which is routinely repeated in even the latest books on Romanies, would place it in the 5th century. Others, like myself, see military activity as the reason for leaving, but still argue for an early date of departure: "they left perhaps as early as in the sixth century A.D., probably due to repeated incursions by Islamic warriors"[5] (Barany, 2002: 9).

On the basis of lexicon, Kaufman (1984: 12) has asserted that

> There is no way that Romani could have avoided Arabic loanwords unless it had entered Iran before 700 AD. Speculations that do not operate within these constraints as axiomatic are idle; it is totally irrelevant that there may be some historical evidence of troubles in, and outmigrations from, India around 1000 AD, and I am getting bored with hearing again and again the speculation that the Gypsies may have left India at such a late date.

Halwachs (2000: 5,24) is also persuaded that the lack of adoptions from Arabic is a decisive factor in dating the time of departure:

> As Romani lacks Arabic loans, it is to be assumed that the Romani speakers left the Persian area before its arabization . . . and following this moved on to the Byzanthinian area of influence . . . Experts still disagree on the point of time of the Gypsies' emigration from the north-west of India. If we consider all the different statements, the resulting period of time is somewhere between the 5th and 10th centuries after Christ. In the second half of the first millennium, emigration most probably did not happen all at once but took place in the course of various waves.

In an earlier monograph (1977:3), Kenrick too believed that

> [t]he Romanies of Europe must have come through Iran before 600 ADC—the first Arab invasions—this is the only possible explanation for the large number of Iranian words and the small (infinitesimal) number of Arabic words found in the Romani vocabulary.

though in a more recent statement (*Patrin*, 14:viij:00), which will appear in the introduction to his forthcoming book, he moves that estimation two or three centuries forward:

> My basic theory at the moment is that the Roma of Europe are mainly offspring of the defeated Zotts of Zottistan [in AD 855]. These were divided by the Arabs into two groups; one was sent to Ain-Zarba where they were in due course massacred by the Byzantine Greeks—maybe the women taken as slaves. The other group went to Khaneikin and thence to Europe. They were mainly buffalo keepers (see Rishi's article "Panjabi love of buffalo milk" [1976]) but obviously in Zottistan had developed other trades. We know there were musicians there. Some other Indians joined them and adopted Romani as their language, intermarried, &c.

In his UNESCO-sponsored book, Alain Reyniers (1998: 25) writes of

> ... Une sortie étalée le Ve et le XIIe siècle ... Après une première étape en Perse, les Tsiganes se seraient divisés en deux groupes. Le premier se serait dirigé vers le Moyen-Orient et l'Egypte. Le second se serait déplacé vers le nord-ouest.[6]

Another recent publication (Marushiakova & Popov, 2000: 5) supports the traditional view, and places the presence of Romanies in Persia before AD 900:

> According to most linguists, the formation of the Gypsy language began sometime in the 6th or 7th century, while from the 8th-9th centuries onwards, it developed as a separate language under the influence of the majority languages spoken in the area: Persian, Armenian, Greek. Wandering for several centuries throughout the lands of what are today Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, and to the south of the Caspian Sea, the Gypsies (and their language) divided into two separate branches, speaking the so-called "ben" and "phen" dialects respectively, this being an important stage in the development of the Gypsy language and the Gypsy community as a whole. Reaching the land of northern Mesopotamia and the eastern boundary of the Byzantine Empire towards the end of the 10th and beginning of the 11th centuries, the Gypsies split into three major migration groups—the *ben*-speaking Dom, who took the southern route, or stayed in the Middle East, and the *phen*-speaking groups of Lom, who took the northern route, and Rom, who took the western route.

In discussing Romani history Price (2000: 207) says "At some indeterminate period, not later than the ninth century AD, the Romanies were on the move again [out of India]." Miklosich (1874) put the date of

departure at somewhere between AD 500 and AD 700, while Sampson (1923: 157) argued for the ninth century. Fonseca (1996: 94) provides an account that concludes "the earliest Gypsies would have left India at least by AD 720." Most recently Djurić, on having "discovered" that Romani has a middle voice, has claimed that the language must date back to before the time of Christ (2003). Any claim to a pre-AD 1000 date of departure, however, must be challenged on the basis of an examination of the historical development of the Indo-Aryan languages. Specifically, by examining the re-assignation of neuter-gender nouns after the neuter gender began to disappear from the Apabhramśas by the end of the Middle Indic period. This is accepted as about the year AD 1000; Masica (1991: 8) gives the New Indo Aryan period as

> "1000 AD - present . . . the modern Indo-Aryan languages properly and henceforth called New Indo Aryan . . . date from approximately AD 1000." The transition was clear-cut, and the date significant. Bloch (1965:29) says "it is of great importance to indicate the chronological break, which isolates the whole of neo-Indian [from Middle Indic]."

"The three genders [of Old Indic] continue [in Middle Indic] but the masculine and the neuter come closer together" (Sen, 1960: 75). The OIA neuter gender was systematically lost, the change spreading towards the northwestern part of India, where some three-gender NIA languages are still found to this day, *e.g.* numbers of Central (Đauraseni) languages, such as Bhili, Gujarati and Khandeshi as well as some Southern (Maharasthri) languages such as Marathi. Nevertheless

> . . . the most widespread NIA system is a two-gender system, in which the old masculine and neuter have merged. (That is not to say that there have not been some reassignments of OIA gender ...e.g. the NIA descendants of OIA *agni-* 'fire,' which is masculine, are mostly feminine"), as is Romani *jag*, as well (Masica, 1991: 221).

It is significant that the languages most *like* Romani—Hindi, Panjabi, Rajasthani, &c, are not three-gender languages. If pre-Romani had left India before the end of the first millennium AD, which is to say during the MIA period, it would have retained its three-genders, and the fact that it is a two-gender language today would oblige us to accept that the loss of the neuter, and its re-assignation to either masculine or feminine, took place outside of India. Kenrick is of this opinion, believing Persian to have been the factor of change:

> Il y avait trois genres (comme en allemand), au moment où les Tsiganes ont quitté l'Inde, mais le neutre a disparu au Moyen-Orient, sans doute sous l'influence du parsi (1994: 54).[7]

Out of contact with other Indian languages, this re-assignation would have been random; however, comparing those Romani nouns deriving from neuter source-forms in Sanskrit and/or Prakrit, with their equivalents in Hindi, we find that the match is 98.7% (one mismatch out of 35 items compared) for the masculine set, and 60% for the feminine set, 86% for both masculine and feminine matches. The approximately 2:1 ratio of masculine to feminine Indian-derived nouns in Romani also accords with the re-assignation of OIA neuters mainly to the masculine set. While he did not discuss the date of the presence of pre-Romani in India or recognize its relevance to ascertaining the time of its separation, Lesný had already noted the reassignation of OIA neuters in MIA nearly a century ago:

> Die mittelindischen lautlichen Prozesse haben bekanntlich bewirkt, dass auch das Geschlecht eine Änderung erfahren hat. Marati und Gujarati haben noch die ursprüngliche Einteilung in drei Geschlechter behalten, Bangali unterscheidet eigentlich kein Geschlecht, Hindi, Panjabi, Bangali, Sindhi, Kashmiri und Naipali unterscheiden nur nur das männliche und das weibliche Geschlecht. Diese nordwestlischen Gruppe reiht sich auch die Zigeunersprache an, indem sie auffallenderweise in bezug auf die Änderung des Geschlechtes mit derselben überinstimmt. Ich will die zahlreichen Neutra, die zu Maskulinen geworden sind, übergehen und erwähne nur zwei Substantiva, die sowohl in der genannten Sprachengruppe als auch in den Zigeunermundarten Feminina geworden sind: *agni* masc. 'Feuer', MIA *aggi*, Marati, Gujarati, Hindi *ag* f., Panjabi *agg*, f., Sindhi *agi*, f., Kashmiri *agun*, m., Romani *jag*, f. *aksi* 'Auge', MIA *acchi*, n. oder f., Marati *aksi* n., Gujarati *ankh* f., Hindi *ank* f., Panjabi *akkh* f., Sindhi *akhi* f., Kashmiri *acchi* f., Romani *jakh* f. (1915-1916: 422).[8]

Since the loss of the neuter gender had begun to take place while the NIA dialect groups were still in formation, this means that pre-Romani was still in India at the time that this was taking place, *i.e.* still a part of the Middle Indo-Aryan cluster. Even if pre-Romani were derived from various Indian languages, as I maintain, the case still holds; a gender match with Sindhi or Panjabi yields the same result.

If we assume that Sampson's "single race speaking a single language" remained intact until it had passed through Persia, then we would expect the Persian words it picked up during that period to be shared by Romani, Domari and Lomavren; but they are surprisingly few: just 16% between Romani and Domari, 7% between Romani and Lomavren, and 12% between Lomavren and Domari. By way of comparison, on the other hand, over 50% of the Persian words in Romani are shared by Urdu. These, together with other comparative material, will be listed in my forthcoming book.

3. THE NEUTER NOUNS

Following are the Romani nouns under discussion. All are traceable to the OIA neuter nouns listed in the left-hand column. Several have been omitted from the table because their etymology is questionable, or because they are nominal forms in Romani that descend from verbal or adjectival (*i.e.* genderless) forms in OIA (capitalized letters indicate that they are retroflexed sounds; see Table One):

Table One.

1 āṇḍa	a(nr)ro m.	"egg"	Hi *aṇḍā* m.
2 agra-	agor m.	"end"	Hi *aga* m.
3 ārta-	arro m.	"flour"	Hi *āṭā* m.
4 dāru-	daro m.	"tree"	Hi *dār* m.
5 dravya-	drab m.	"medicine"	Hi *darb* m.
6 dugdha-	thud m.	"milk"	Hi *dūdh* m.
7 dvāra-	vudar m.	"door"	Hi *duwar* m.
8 ghara-	kher m.	"house"	H *ghar* m.
9 hṛdaya-	ilo m.	"heart"	Hi *hiyaa* m.
10 kāṣṭa-	kašt m.	"wood"	Pashai *kašta* m.
11 khāta-	xavoj m.	"ditch"	Hi *khawā* m.
12 kṛmi-	kirmo m.	"worm"	Kash. *kemis* m. D. *kīrma* m.
13 lāngala	nanàri m.	"comb"	Hi *nāngal* m.
14 lāvana, lūni	luno m.	"sickle"	H *launi* f., Bihari *launī* f.
15 maṇḍa-	manrro m.	"bread"	Hi *mã:ṛā* m. Pahari *maṇḍa* m., Dumaki *man*, m.
16 māmsa-	mas m.	"meat"	Hi *mās* m.
17 mukha-	muj m.	"mouth"	Hi *munh* m.
18 mūtra-	muter m.	"urine"	Hi *mut* m., Panj. *mūtar* m.
19 nakha-	naj m.	"finger"	Hi *nah* m.
20 nakka- (P)	nakh m.	"nose"	Hi *nāk* m. Kash. *nākh* m.
21 nāman-	(a)nav m.	"name"	Hi *nām* m.
22 pānīya-	pa(n)i m.	"water"	Hi *pānī* m.
23 peṭṭa- (P)	perr m.	"stomach"	Hi *peṭ* m.
24 rakta-	rat m.	"blood"	Hi *rātā* m.
25 rūpya-	rup m.	"silver"	Hi rãp m.
26 śhiras	šero m.	"head"	Hi *sir* m.
27 shṛnga-	šing m.	"horn"	Hi *sinh:g* m.
28 sthāna-	than m.	"place"	Hi *thān* m.
29 supna-	suno m.	"dream"	Pkt *suvina-*, Sind. *Suhaṇo* m.
30 suvarṇa-	sumnakaj m.	"gold"	Hi *sona* m.

31 tālu-	taloj m.	"palate"	Hi *tāluu* m.
32 triśūla-	trušul m.	"cross"	Kumauni *tisūl* m.
33 varṣa-	beršˇ m.	"year"	Hi *baras* m.
34 varṣati	brišind m.	"rain"	Hi *barasnā* m.
35 yukta	džuto m.	"pair"	Hi *jūtā* m.
36 agni	jag f.	"fire"	Hi *aag* f.
37 akśi-	jakh f.	"eye"	Pkt. *akkhi*, Hi *ā:kh* f., Panj. *akkh* f.
38 ashru-	asvin f.	"tear"	Pkt *assu*, Hi *ā:sū* m.
39 busa-	phus f.	"straw"	Hi *bhus* m.
40 cuccuya-	čuči f.	"breast"	Hi *cūcī* f.
41 damstra-	thar f.	"molar"	Hi *dāh* f.
42 dukkha-	dukh f.	"pain"	Hi *dukh* m.
43 haḍḍa	her(oj) f.	"leg"	Hi *haḍḍii* f. Kash. *aa* f. Panj. *haḍḍī* f.
44 madhu	mol f.	"wine"	Hi *mau* m.
45 mala-	mel f.	"dirt"	Hi *mal* m.
46 pattra-	patrin f.	"leaf"	Hi *pāt(tī)*, m., Gujerati *pātrun* m.
47 pubba-	phumb f.	"pus"	Siraiki *pū* f., Marathi *pū* m.
48 rēcuyati	rril f.	"fart"	Hi *rīh* f.
49 śūrpa	suvli f.	"basket"	Hi *sūplī* m., Gujerati *supṛī* m.
50 trāsa-	traš f.	"fear"	Sindhi *Trāha* f., Kash. *Trās* m.,

4. DOMARI

The additional claim I make that the Domari language and its speakers left India much earlier than did Romani and its speakers, might also be supported by the evidence of gender. Macalister (1914: 9,11) says that

> There are three genders [in Domari], *masculine*, *feminine*, and *neuter*. The last is now all but obsolete, but recognisable only by the form of the accusative singular . . . As in most Aryan languages, neuter substantives have no accusative form different from the nominative. This is now the only criterion for distinguishing neuter nouns. But even here they appear to be in process of assimilation to the masculine or feminine declension, and developing analogous accusative forms.

Sampson (1926: 125) has contested this, though it has to be assumed that he is only querying Macalister's claim that the modern Domari language has three genders; he would have known that three genders existed in the speech of the original population, which he maintains left India "at least as early as the end of the ninth century" (Sampson, 1926: 28-29). He says "the Nuri 'neuter' of Macalister has no historical basis, and is to be understood merely as a term applied by this collector to nouns denoting inanimate objects in which, as in European Gypsy, the form of the accusative singular is identical with that of the nominative." Unfortunately, Macalister does not provide genders in his Domari vocabulary, though he lists some examples of each in his grammatical outline (15-16): *béli, záro*, "friend", "boy," m., *cóni, júri*, "girl," "woman,"f., *páni, ag,* "water," "fire," n. Kenrick, however, in his current series of Domari lessons (2000: 2), says "some dialects also have a traditional (historical) neuter gender, ending in a consonant." A fuller categorization indicating gender is now in the process of being retrieved from native speakers in Jordan by Nseir (The University of Texas).

Besides losing the neuter gender, Indo-Aryan also lost the dual number that characterized its Old period. Romani lacks this entirely, but according to Macalister (*op. cit.*, 9), in Domari "faint traces are not wanting of the former existence of a *dual*, but this is almost wholly obsolete." It is a pity that Macalister did not provide actual examples of these, since if they had indeed existed in Domari, it would suggest an improbably much earlier separation from India; thus Masica (1991: 226) says

> [t]here are only two numbers, singular and plural, in NIA at best. OIA had three, but the old dual quietly disappeared at the beginning of MIA,

but he has MIA *beginning* around 600 BC (*op. cit.*, 51)—far too early to match with the rest of the linguistic data we have on Domari. If Domari does indeed show evidence of a dual number, this is probably influence from Arabic, which has it (and not Persian or Kurdish, which do not).

5. LOMAVREN

On the basis of its lexicon Lomavren, the language of the Lom or "Bosha" in eastern Turkey and the Caucasus would seem to stand somewhere between the two migrations that gave rise to Domari and Romani. On the one hand it shares items with Romani which differ from their Domari equivalents, thus

ROM	LOM	DOM	
bul	bul	blos	"buttocks"
čumid-	čum-	meštersk-	"kiss"

devel	level	goča	"god"
džukel	čükel	snōta	"dog"
gili	gilav	gref	"song"
giv	giu	gēsū	"wheat"
khel-	khel-	nač-	"dance"*
kolin	koli	šiše	"chest, breast"
mol	māl	pīrə	"wine"
nasval-	nasvav	meštak	"ill"
per-	par-	kwiyə-	"fall"
puč-	puč-	šo-	"ask"
sov-	səv-	setak-	"sleep"
ther-	thar-	waša-	"get, have"
vaker-	pakr-	šərde-	"speak"
xandž-	xant-	hərwšer-	"itch"
xin	xenav	higera	"feces"

and on the other, it shares items with Domari which are absent (or which have not been replaced) in Romani:

ROM	LOM	DOM	
avrjal	baraj	bare	"outside"
buti	kam	kam	"work"
čiken	tel	tel	"grease"
dar-	bi-	bīər-	"fear"
drom (< Greek)	panth	pand	"road"
gav	lei	dei	"village"
kin-	li-	li-	"buy"
maškar	mandž	mandž	"middle"**
phabaj	ansev	sev	"apple"
pi(n)rro	pav	paw	"foot"

The complete lack of Greek lexical items in Lomavren shows that the ancestors of the Lom never made it into Anatolia, or else that they passed through it before Greek was established there. It furthermore shares only five items from Persian with Romani (Some 19 have been identified in Lomavren altogether (Voskanian, 2002), and over 100 in Romani (Hancock, 1995). Significantly, not one such item in either language is from the Middle Persian (Pahlavi) period; all are from the modern period, which dates from the early 10th century, thus further undermining the argument for a 5th century passage through the area. Furthermore, there is only one indisputable item of Kurdish origin in Lomavren (*cf.* perhaps ten in Romani).

*Domari has *kēlər* "play," its secondary meaning in both Romani and Lomavren.

** *Mindž, miž* has been euphemized to mean 'vulva' in Romani, if it is not originally an adoption from Lezgian (a Caucasian language) *miš*, ditto.

Another feature that distinguishes Lomavren is that in that language, New Indo-Aryan /a/ was not raised to /e/ as it was in Romani: (LOM *las*, *khar*, *par-*, *phan-*, *thar-*, ROM *deš*, *kher*, *per-*, *phen-* *ther-* "ten", "house", "fall", "say", "have", *cf.* Hindi *das*, *ghar*, *par-*, *bhan-*, *dhar-*), and a further indication of the latter's later date of separation from India is in the behaviour of initial Middle Indo-Aryan /v/, which became /b/ in New Indo-Aryan (including Romani) but not in Lomavren or in Domari:

OIA/MIA	DOM	LOM	ROM	(*cf.* HINDI)
vāla "hair"	*wal*	*valis*	*bal*	*bāl*
vaṭa "stone"	*wat*	*var*	*bar*	*baṭ*
viś "sit"	*wesar*	*ves*	*beš-*	*bais-*

On the other hand, both Romani and Lomavren share a sound-shift not evident in Domari: the devoicing of voiced aspirated stops, thus

ROM	LOM	DOM	(*cf.* HINDI)	
kher	khar	gar	ghar	"house"
khil	khəl	gir	ghī	"butter"
khuro	khori	gori	ghoḍā~	"horse"
ph(r)al	phal	bar	bhāī	"brother"
phus	phus	bis	bhās~	"straw"

Nevertheless, some Lomavren items appear not to have undergone this: *banth-*, *bakhot-*, "shut", "break", *cf.* Romani *phand-*, *phag-*, Domari *ben-*, *bæg-*. It is intriguing that both Romani and Lomavren share the secondary meaning of the verb "sit" to mean "reside", not paralleled in the modern languages of India, and that the early speakers of both languages relexified the original Indian *trušula* "trident" (presumably in its religious context as the one held by the god Shiva) into new religious contexts: Romani *trušul* "cross" and Lomavren *tərusul* "church".[9] It is also the case that the Romani word *xulaj* "host" (from Persian *xudāy*, and not, as Voskanian (2002: 182) has convincingly shown, from Kurdish *xola* 'god') exhibits the same phonetic rule that is general in Lomavren, *i.e.* the shift of /d/ to /l/ (*cf.* LOM *xula*, do., and the items *level*, *lei*, *las* above), suggesting a common point of separation—though it is the *only* Romani item that does this.

If the argument is maintained that Romani only crystallized into an ethnic mother tongue under the influence of Byzantine Greek and that prior to that it was a military koïné and not a native language, then we might suppose that this nativization did not happen to pre-Lomavren but rather that its speakers were quickly assimilated into the eastern Armenian speech community, retaining Indian words solely as lexical items conforming to Armenian morphosyntax and phonology. Though the processes giving rise to each may or may not differ, this has resulted

in an ethnolect similar in many ways to the Anglo-Romani dialect of the British Romanichals (Hancock, 1984).

6. THE MILITARY FACTOR

For roughly the first quarter century of the second millennium, north-western India came under a series of attacks by Muslim troops led by General Mahmud from his headquarters at Ghazna (today called Ghazni and located in Afghanistan). Between AD 1001 and AD 1026 these Ghaznavids, as they were called, made seventeen forays into the Hindu-Shahi kingdom as far as Kashmir with the intent to spread Islam; they were successful and with only a couple of exceptions were able to win each confrontation with the Indian armies, sometimes taking many hundred of prisoners, as in the encounters at Kabul and Peshawar. It is to those Hindu soldiers that we look for the ancestors of the Romanies.

The Indian military detachments were made up of the fighters and their camp followers, the people recruited to tend to the duties associated with war. They generally outnumbered the soldiers themselves, and like the soldiers came from many different backgrounds and spoke many different languages. That Romani has a mixed Indian origin is not a new idea; it had occurred to Leland over a century ago, who wrote (1882: 332-333) that Romanies

> speak an Aryan tongue, which agrees in the main with that of the Jats, but which contains words gathered from other Indian sources. This is a consideration of the utmost importance, as by it alone can we determine what was the agglomeration of tribes in India which formed the western Gypsy.

Leland (about whom I nevertheless have reservations regarding much of what he has written), *loc. cit.,* elaborating upon a hypothesis first proposed by Sir Richard Burton (1851, 1875) also referred to the military, as well as to the Ghaznavid factor in the move out of India (though the Jat language, Jataki, is considerably less like Romani than is Hindi-Urdu—see Burton, 1849) "Jat warriors were supplemented by other tribes... they were broken and dispersed in the eleventh century by Mahmoud".

The soldiers themselves, whatever their social backgrounds, were given honorary warrior, or *kshatriya*, caste status and were called *Rajputs*, or "sons of princes." The administrative language of both the government and the military in the Hindu Shahi kingdom during that period was medieval Persian, though the local population spoke different Indian and Dardic languages natively; it is well documented that such a situation gave rise to the Urdu language as a military lingua franca, combining elements from Persian and a number of different Indian languages

(its very name *Urdu* in fact means "battlefield"), and we can speculate that Romani began to emerge under the same circumstances; for want of a name I have called this hypothesized contact language *Rajputic* elsewhere (Hancock, 2000). It shares over three times as many of the same Persian words with Urdu as it does with Domari, and it includes numbers of synonyms traceable to separate Indian dialect groups, *i.e.* it cannot be linked with any single Indian language but has features from several of them. For example, there are three different words for "burn": *xačar-*, *thab-* and *phab-*. The first descends from OIA *ksāti*, the second from *daghda-* and the last from **bhabh-*. The first is mainly represented by the Central neo-Indic languages (Panjabi, Pahari, Jaunsari, &c.), the second mainly by members of the eastern group (Bengali, Oriya, &c.), while there are no descendants from the last other than in Romani. Except for Romani, no Indian language has descendants from all three forms, though the first and second exist in Shina, Sindhi, Panjabi, Kashmiri, Nepali and Gujerati.

There are two words for "wash," *xalav-* and *thov-* (from OIA *ksātlayati* and *dhauvati* respectively). In India the first is restricted to Pahari and Kumauni; the second is widespread in all dialect groups. Only Kumauni (besides Romani) has both. There are two words for "sing": *gilab-* and *bag-* (from OIA *gīta-* and *vādyāte* respectively), the former restricted to Dardic and Sinhalese, the latter to several mainly Central and Eastern Indian languages, but no language in India includes both. There are three Romani words for "to scare," *trašav-*, *darav-* and *šas-*, from OIA *traśati*, *dāryati* and *śāsati-*; only Romani has all three. The first is restricted to Sindhi, Lahnda, Panjabi and Kashmiri, the second to Assamese and Gujerati, and the third to Bengali. The first and third occur in Nepali and Oriya, and the second and third in Hindi alone. Numbers of these synonym clusters in Romani have been collected, and their analysis is still in progress.

We might assume that there were even more such clusters among the speakers of Rajputic, some items from which were ultimately selected and others of which were discarded. This would account for the uneven distribution of some Indic items in the European Romani dialects—some restricted to the Northern dialects (which includes Iberian) only, for example, and would explain why *e.g.* Lomavren selected *hath* for "hand" while Romani (and for that matter Domari) have the earlier (and Dardic) forms with /-s-/ (*vast*, *xæst*).

7. APPEARANCE IN THE WEST

Having established a date for a continuing presence in India, we need now to look for the earliest documentation of a Romani presence in the *West*, because the window of time between both dates must cover

the timespan during which their exodus took place. While most earlier scholars have placed the migration out of India some time well before AD 1000, some have placed it as late as the 12th century—most recently Kochanowski, who argues for a departure of Rajputs following the Muslim invasions led by Mohammed Ghori in AD 1191 (2003: 341)[10]. There are two likelier and earlier possibilities, the first, dated AD 1068, from Byzantium reported the presence of "Lors" in that city but that may have been a reference to Luri, *i.e.* Dom, rather than Romanies, but the second, dated some time in the latter part of the 1100s clearly refers to *Atsinganoi* and *Æguptoi*, then as now the most usual names for Romanies. Fraser's important lexico-statistical analysis of Romani puts the beginnings of its split into the different dialect groups in the Byzantine Empire at around AD 1040 (Fraser, 1989).

8. THE SELJUQ FACTOR

If this provides an explanation for where and how the pre-Romani population may have begun, we are left having to explain how it reached the Byzantine Empire, the period of its history barely ever addressed in the scholarship[11]. The link may well be another military people, the Seljuqs, who defeated the Ghaznavids in AD 1038 and who took their prisoners of war to use as their own fighting force. Seljuq historian Edmund Bosworth writes that "Indian troops passed from the Ghaznavid to the Seljuq armies; troops, if not formally made prisoners of war, often joined the bandwagon of the winning side" very willing to turn against their captors, while Leiser surmised that "after the Seljuqs defeated the Ghaznavids they 'appropriated' their prisoners of war; such action was fairly commonplace in those days," and citing the work of the Turkish historian Köyman, which provides several sources, goes on to say that "after the victory at Dandanqan, soldiers from throughout Khurasan, 'some of whom may have served the Ghaznavids,' joined the Seljuqs." Wink (1991: 23) describes the "large numbers of Indian captives [who...] under the Ghaznavids did become important." That they were indeed used to fight for the Ghaznavids is documented by Ikram (1989: 31), who writes of the "Hindu contingent" of the army of Mahmud's son Masud "fail[ing] conspicuously against the Seljuqs" during the 1038 confrontation (see also Reynolds (1858), Pipes (1981) and (2000), Bosworth (1961) and Crone (1980) for descriptions of medieval Muslim armies, and Lal (1994), Levi (2002a) and (2002b) for slavery in India).

The Seljuqs, a Sunni Muslim people of Turkic origin, were not only successful in their attacks to the south but also attacked and defeated Armenia to the north. Located to the south-east of the Byzantine Empire, Armenia fell to the Seljuqs in AD 1071 and the foundation was laid for the establishment of a new sultanate called Rum, occupying

former Armenian and some Byzantine territory in Anatolia—the area that is today Turkey. Fraser, supporting the conclusion reached in the important earlier work of Soulis wrote that "the appearance of the Gypsies in Byzantine lands is *undoubtedly* connected with the Seljuk raids in Armenia" (emphasis added). But while it is documented that "*Indians*" were brought into Byzantine territory by the Seljuqs "usually in a military capacity," nowhere are those Indians referred to specifically as either Rajputs or Rom. We would not expect the former, since it is an Indian word and only a minority of the Indians would have been Rajputs in any case, and if, as is proposed here, the Romani population did not come into existence *until* the Byzantine period, then "Rom" had not yet become a label.

9. ANATOLIA AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE ROMANI PEOPLE AND LANGUAGE

Almost a century ago Colocci (*loc. cit.*) saw the move from India to the Byzantine Empire as having been "very rapid;" but if it took only two or three decades, the stay in Anatolia itself lasted for over two centuries, and was crucial to the emergence of the Romani people. As an already ethnically and linguistically mixed population, bound together by former occupation and now social circumstance, the Indians not only intermarried with each other but with the local people as well. Byzantine society was ethnically diverse and included many different peoples and languages, though the lingua franca was Greek and the national religion Orthodox Christianity. Children newly-born into this community must have been exposed to a variety of languages, including the Rajputic of their own parents and the Greek being spoken all around them. We may well suppose that the Romani language, and the Romani people, came into existence in the Byzantine Empire during this time; this being the case, reconstructing proto-Romani as a discrete pre-Byzantine Indian language is not possible, though a more detailed description of Rajputic is underway.

The influence of Byzantine Greek in the makeup of the Romani language cannot be underestimated; not only does it constitute the second largest percentage of the pre-European vocabulary after the Indian words, being found in every semantic area (even in the numerals), but it has also contributed to fundamental areas of the grammar, such as the different words for the definite article 'the', losing the Indian grammatical feature of *ergativity*, and the change of the basic NIA syntactic ordering from subject-object-verb to subject-verb-object. Rajko Djurić argues that Romani's "middle voice" demonstrates its antiquity; however this may just as easily have been acquired from Greek, as well as the shift of the Indic dative to the Balkan accusative. Athematic final and

non-final affixes of Greek origin include *inter alia* *-in*, *-os*, *-is*, *-mos*, *-mata*, *-itza* (also Slavic), *-itko*, *-me(n)*, verbal *-as*, *-is*, *-azo*, -izo, *-isar-* and *-ar-*. The synthetic construction modeled on Greek πίο (in Romani *po*, relexified by *maj*, *meg*, &c., in other dialects) before comparative adjectives (*po-baro* "bigger") replaces—or was selected—in some dialects rather than the Iranic/Ossetic enclitic *-der* (*bareder* "bigger"; see Hancock, 1995:33 for further discussion of this).

10. INTO EUROPE

The subsequent move up into Europe was also the result of Islamic expansion, this time initiated by the Ottoman Turks, who eventually sacked Byzantium in AD 1453 and extended their influence up into the Balkans, though it would be wrong to think that this migration happened all at one time. The bubonic plague (the "black death") had reached western Anatolia by 1347 for instance, and this forced a general migration across into Europe that surely included some Romanies, since they were blamed for having introduced it. Linguistic evidence points to the Romani language existing in three distinct overlapping strata across Europe; there are very few Greek words in at least one European Romani dialect (Istriani, spoken in Slovenia), suggesting a very early move out of Anatolia before the heavy lexical impact of Greek had affected it.

Not only was Islam a key factor in the move into Europe, as it was in the move out of India, but both events also shared a military aspect, since the Ottoman Turks used the Romanies "as direct participants (in their militia), mainly as servants in the auxiliary detachments or as craftsmen servicing the army" as Marushiakova & Popov have written. By the 1300s, there were specifically military garrisons of Romanies at both Modon and Nauplia, in Venetian Peloponnesia, today southern Greece. The Romanies had arrived in Europe.

We do not know how the various groups of Romanies first entered Europe. Most presumably crossed the Bosporus at Constantinople, though it has been suggested that others left Anatolia by boat across the Aegean or even the Black Sea. In whatever way they reached the Balkans, they continued to move on in all directions, being reported in almost every country in Europe by 1500.

11. CONCLUSIONS

I am well aware that these hypotheses have been challenged by some of my colleagues, and I welcome that. We are all working towards the discovery and documentation of Romani history, and if theories can be shown to be baseless, then we can eliminate those lines of pursuit and

move on in other directions. So far, however, I have not seen any *specific* counterarguments, and would like the following points to be addressed. Perhaps a future conference might be organized to deal solely with these questions:

- If the migration out of India pre-dated AD 1000, how may we account for the reassignment of formerly neuter nouns in Romani and their matching reassignment in languages still spoken in India;

- If the migration through Persia and the acquisition of Persian words took place in the 5th century, why are all such items in Romani, Lomavren and Domari from Modern (*i.e.* post- 9th to 10th century) Persian?

- If the ancestors of the Romanies were not a military force, how may we account for the significant number of military terms of Indian origin in Romani, and the corresponding paucity of *e.g.* agricultural terms? Consider also the further non-linguistic arguments for Rajput identity made in Hancock (2000). And if they were military but not Rajputs, who else could they have been?

- How may we account for the significant number of homonyms in Romani which are traceable to separate Indo-Aryan dialect groups, and which are not paralleled in languages still spoken in India? And if they *did* parallel Romani at an earlier time but have been lost, where is the evidence for that?

- How may we account for the fact that Romani shares three times as many Persian-derived words with Urdu as it does with Domari?

- If the population left India in small groups spread out over several centuries as has been claimed, how did those groups manage to find each other and regroup subsequently?

- If the Indians left as entertainers, traders, etc., how did they get to Anatolia?

- If the Indians left as a military force, how did they get to Anatolia?

- If, as Soulis and Fraser have said, the Seljuqs were *undoubtedly* responsible for the entry of (pre-) Romanies into Anatolia, what were the circumstances of this? Where did the Seljuqs find them and why would they have bothered with them if they didn't already constitute part of the Seljuq advancement?

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For a fuller version of this article, which is to be part of a forthcoming book, please visit the website of the Romani Archives and Documentation Center: http://www.radoc.net

1. Though I am only speaking for myself in the present paper.
2. "Pan-Roma-ism" has led to the application of the word *Roma* to Romani populations that have never called themselves that, and even to populations that are not Romani at all. Thus the Reuters story released on July 16th 2003 carried the headline "*The Pogrom starts again: Roma-hunting in Iraq*," although the population, called *Kawaliya* locally and which says it originally came from Syria is presumably Kauli. In the same way, other reports of the same incident (*e.g.* El-Liethy, 2003) refer to the population as "Gypsies," thus creating an association in the minds of western readers with the "Gypsies" in their own countries. Gafarová (2003) does this when she writes about the Liuli Gypsies of southern Kyrgyzstan, describing them as "freedom-loving people" who are characterized by "brightly coloured clothes, hot passion, together with singing and dancing around the campfire," and referring three times to international human rights organizations paying attention to Roma and Sinti. The article, however, states that the Liuli came into Kyrgyzstan from Iran, where "for many centuries they had moved from place to place." Their situation as Gafarová describes it is terrible and in desperate need of attention. But the Liuli are not Romanies, and it is clear that the link with Romanies has been made solely on the basis of the common label "Gypsy," which has been applied to a great number of unrelated peoples. That is now evidently starting to be the case for *Roma*
3. Gernot L. Windfuhr (2003) "Gypsy dialects" *in* Ehsan Yarshater [ed] *Encyclopaedia Iranica,* vol. 11, fasc 4, New York: Bibliotheca Persica, 415a–421b; see also overview in Hancock, 1988, also idem, 1995, 25-32
4. In his typically unbiased way, Vekerdi (1981: 245, 250) writes: The complete lack of terms for agricultural activity indicates that the Gypsies' Indian ancestors were not concerned with any kind of agricultural productive work ...the etymological analysis of the Gypsy vocabulary proves that the Gypsies' ancestors did not pursue either agriculture or hunting ...their livelihood seems either to have been based on primitive gathering ...or to have been entirely dependent on the producing society ...Romani *čōr* 'thief' comes from Old Indian *cōra*, and the corresponding verb *čōrel* also goes back directly to an Indian verb.
5. At this period the attacks on India were by the Huns; Islam had not yet begun its spread into India, which did not start for another two centuries when the Chālukyan armies drove back the Arab Muslim invasions at Navasari, in Maharashtra in AD 732.
6. 'A staggered exodus of the 5th and 12th centuries ...after an initial stage in Persia the Gypsies were divided into two groups, the first was directed towards the Middle East and Egypt, the second was displaced towards the North.' (trans) H. Hawes [Editor's note]
7. There were three genders (as in German) at the time the Gypsies left India, but the neuter disappeared in the ME undoubtedly due to the influence of Farsi.' (trans) H. Hawes [Editor's note]

8. As it is generally known, the middle-Indian vocal processes also caused the gender to change. Marati and Gujarati have kept the original classification into three genders, Bangali actually does not differentiate a gender, and Hindi, Panjabi, Bangali, Sindhi, Kashmiri and Naipali only differentiate the male and female gender. The Gipsy language is part of this Northwest-Indian group, by – with regard to the changing of the gender - strikingly coinciding with it. I would like to ignore the numerous neuters that changed into male forms and will only mention two nouns, that became female both in the referred language group as well as in the gipsy idioms: agni male (m.) "fire", MIA aggi, Marati, Gujarati, Hindi ag female (f.), Panjabi agg, f., Sindhi agi, f., Kashmiri agun, m., Romani jag, f. aksi "eye", MIA acchi, neuter (n.) or f., Marati aski n., Gujarati ankh f., Hindi ank f., Panjabi akkh f., Sindhi akhi f., Kashmiri acchi f., Romani jakh f. (1915-1916: 422) (trans.) Robin Gosejohann [Editor's note]

9. The Armenian words in Romani for "godparent", "incense" and "Easter" (*kirvo, xung, Patradji*) point to Armenia as the place where Christianity was first encountered.

10. Kochanowski actually argues for two separate migrations, the first following AD 855 when the Jatts joined forces with the Byzantine army against the Muslims, eventually giving rise to the Sinti and the Kalé Romani populations (both shown by Bakker (1999) to belong to the Northern group, Corthiade's (1994) Stratum 1), and the second, described here, which developed into the Rom (Kochanowski, 2003:327). He derives the word *Sinti* from *Sindhi*, and the word *Jatt* (*Zutt*) from *Goth*. If the modern Romani population is in fact a blending of two migrations separated by nearly 340 years, then it leaves unaddressed a number of fundamental linguistic questions. In the framework of the hypothesis presented in this paper, Kochanowski's first date is too early, and his second too late.

11. Sway (1988:32) says "Linguistic evidence indicates that after one hundred years . . . the Dom separated into two major groups . . . the Ben Gypsies [*i.e.* Domari] wandered into Syria [and the . . .] ancestors of the European Gypsies, the Phen Gypsies, traveled from Persia to Armenia." Marushiakova & Popov (*loc. cit.*) write only of their "wandering for several centuries throughout the lands of what are today Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, and to the south of the Caspian Sea . . ."

5

European Roma in the State of Israel

VALERY NOVOSELSKY

The information on the presence of European Roma in the territory of modern Israel, can be traced from the year of its establishment in 1948. Two years ago a lecturer at the Hebrew University, Mrs. Kathi Katz, told me about the immigration of a group of 300 mixed Jewish-Romani, families as a part of a bigger predominantly Jewish, *Aliyah* (modern Hebrew, meaning "repatriation" to Israel), from Bulgaria during the years, 1948-1951. According to the testimonies of local tabloid newspapers, the majority of these people, and of their children and grandchildren, are still living in Haifa (Jaffa), and do not intend to reveal their Romany identity to other Jewish and Arab inhabitants of this town. Only Bulgarian Jews who live near by, know they are Roma.

There is the significant time lapse between the coming of this group, and a small number of Hungarian Roma working in Israel as entertainers and entrepreneurs since 1988. These have been referred to recently on the *Patrin* mailing list[1]. But, contrary to these groups, there exists much more evidence of a Romani presence in Israel, which is due to the immigration of about 1,000,000 people from the former Soviet Union since 1989. There are hundreds, if not thousands of people from mixed Romani-Jewish origins, or of Romani background, living in Israel as ordinary citizens or permanent residents.

According to my own limited research (personal encounters, telephone conversations and postal correspondence), with and about Romani individuals in the Israeli state, I can suggest that they might be categorized in the following order:

- Families where one spouse is of Romani (or partly Romani) origins, and the other of Jewish origins (or partly Jewish background).
- Families where one spouse is the descendant of Romani adherents of Judaism (usually from Poland).
- Individuals from a mixed background who have made their *Aliyah* alone.

- Roma from Romania, Bulgaria and the former Yugoslavia, who are working as *Gastarbeiter* in the construction industry, together with their non-Romani compatriots.
- Foreign Roma serving at various Christian missions.
- Romani musicians and artists living and working in Israel periodically.

WHAT WAS DONE

During my research, I have also carried out a number of differing initiatives, including writing a personal letter to the editor of a "Jewish Fork" edition of *Novosti Nedeli*, a Russian-Israeli newspaper, which was published in response to the article "It is time to get away from the stereotypes"[2] It was also possible to publish the story of an Israeli scholar, Barukh Podolsky, on Romani-Jewish connections, in a "Jewish Fork" edition of the same newspaper.[3] During the visit of the Moscow musical group, *Chavale* (led by Viktor Svetlov), to Haifa, I was able to support Russian Roma individuals in July 2002. I have also published an article about the "Gypsy topic in the Israeli press", posted in March 2003 to the on-line magazine *Notes on a Jewish history* (in Russian).[4]

PROJECT

The establishment of a Romani Cultural Association in Israel, has been one of the aims of this project, which began with a media campaign, conducted in Russian Israeli newspapers over the period April-May, 2003. The intention here has been to raise the profile of the Roma issue, and to connect isolated Roma individuals living in Israel. A small advertisement has been placed in the advertising section of seven Israeli newspapers, published in Russian.

SOME FACTS ABOUT ROMA IN ISRAEL

There are several groups of Gypsy people in Israel, including approximately 600 extended families, originally stemming from Bulgaria. There are also some 3,000 Domari people, resident predominantly in east Jerusalem and the Gaza strip. There is also the presence of a Dom organisation, the Domari Society of Jerusalem, founded in November 1999, and led by Amoun Sleem.[5] In recent times, the size of the Dom community in the region has fallen quite dramatically. Some left the country during the period leading up to 1948. However, the greatest migrations occurred in the aftermath of the 1967 war. Many of the Jerusalem Dom spent the duration of the war seeking sanctuary in the Church of St. Anne. Many of those who fled found refuge in Jordan,

Syria, and Egypt, from which some return for short visits to friends and family. Many of these have "hidden" their identity by claiming to be Palestinians, and are reluctant or unwilling to reveal themselves as Dom (see the chapter by Williams in this volume). Some two hundred families resided in the region prior to 1967, but that number has fallen to approximately seventy families at present. Positively, the Dom have been able to sustain their culture, especially with the foundation of the Society. It is committed to protecting the increasingly little-spoken language of the Middle Eastern Gypsies from extinction (Domari), and the Society attempts to inform Dom children about their culture and heritage. It also provides some humanitarian assistance to the local Gypsy community (especially with the support of the Dom Research Centre), and to promote knowledge amongst non-Gypsies about the community's traditions and its rich culture.[6] As mentioned previously, there are a number of foreign Roma amongst the Balkan people working in Israel.

There are a number of factors that affect the everyday life of the Gypsy communities in Israel, unfortunately predominantly negative. Foreign articles that are reprinted in the Israeli mass media, convey many of the familiar, and unpleasant prejudices associated with the Roma. There is also a lack of information about Roma derived from Romani sources, to counter these. Positively, there is a virtual absence of anti-Gypsyism among Israeli Jews, in contradistinction to the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe, amongst whom such sentiments existed in the past.

Culturally, the picture is interesting, where the use of Romani language (*Romanes*) is present amongst multi-linguistic families, those where Russian, Hebrew, and English are spoken. There also exists knowledge about the cultural life of Romani people in the CIS (Russian Federation), and in Europe. Romani language is being used in long-term correspondence and telephone connections between individuals and organisations. There has also been the development of the web-based Roma Network, bringing information and news to Romani organisations and individuals world-wide.

Religiously, the picture is one that shows a mixture of adherents to Judaism, and Christianity, amongst Gypsies in Israel. No one claims to be an atheist, however.

In political affairs, there is currently no active participation of Israeli Roma in the local political life, and little knowledge of the engagement of Roma in political life abroad. The Israeli state has not developed official policies toward the Roma or Dom, and does not support scientific research regarding the Gypsies of the country. There

has been some limited research conducted by the Dom Research Centre.[7] The Roma living in Israel with whom I am personally familiar with, show great sympathy toward Zionism and the Jewish state. Most do not share my own pro-Palestinian views; however, those views relate to my own partly-Jewish origins, and not to my partly-Romany background. I criticise Zionism as a Jew, but not as Rom.[8] The issue of the Roma Holocaust is very much present, with relatives of victims living with the memory of what has happened to Gypsy populations in Europe during World War II. There exists a certain level of denial, and marginalisation of the Roma Holocaust, amongst some Israeli scholars.

Socially, conditions of life for the Roma in Israel are not especially Romani culture. The strongest aspiration amongst Gypsies in Israel is to find one another someday.

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8. http://www.homeru.com/israil_5.html

6

Romanlar and Ethno-Religious Identity in Turkey: A Comparative Perspective

ELIN STRAND

In this paper, I discuss ethno-religious identity amongst Gypsies in Turkey. Many assumptions about Gypsy religiosity exist and I will challenge some of these by contrasting the Turkish context with Europe where the Gypsy Pentecostal churches are spreading very rapidly. Essentialist statements are easily made in discourse of identity and I am aware that in contrasting "the Turkish picture" with "the Western context" there is a risk of reducing the existing differentiations within each setting. However, the aim of this exercise is to describe some general tendencies, and try to give some answers to the question of how Turkish *Romanlar* define their religious identity, and how it relates to their ethnic consciousness. It is beyond the scope of this presentation to provide a detailed account for all Gypsy groups and their preferred ethnic and religious identity in Turkey. My arguments will primarily be drawn from Istanbul, where I have conducted most of my fieldwork. It is important to be aware of the heterogeneity of the Gypsies in Turkey, who, depending on context and circumstances, may define themselves as Turkish, Kurdish, *Roman*, *Dom*, *Lom*, *Çingene*, Christian, Muslim and/or *Alevi*. The Turkish Gypsies are frequently called *Xoraxané* Gypsies, in the literature of the Balkans (see Marushiakova and Popov 2005, in this collection). As explained by Oprișan and Grigore, Muslim Roma identify Islam with the Ottoman empire: "We are Muslims, so we believe in the God of the Turks" (quoted in Oprișan and Grigore, 2001:32). One could also speculate if the name comes from the *Qur'an* (the Holy Book); Gypsies of the Qur'an, i.e. Muslim Gypsies. An alternative theory would be to see this name as deriving from the notion of "coming from Khorāsān" (north western Iran). Scholars researching *Alevi* identity argue that this is "...a cliché, often used in ancient chronicles and hagiographies [and] ...mainly refers to the idea of migration" (Mélikoff, 1998: 2)[1]. With further research (autumn 2005), I will be able to present a more nuanced picture of the ethno-religious elements present in Turkish Gypsy identities. The purpose of this text is to describe the relationship between ethnic and religious identity in a largely *Sunni* (orthodox) Muslim context, by making

contrasting and comparative references to Gypsies elsewhere in Europe. The issues of *Euro-centrism* and authenticity will also be focused upon.

The notion that "Gypsies do not have a religion of their own" is almost axiomatic, and this statement appears in encyclopaedias and other ethnographic materials written about Gypsies throughout the world (see for example Etzler, 1955: 282). This idea has been criticised by Romani Studies researchers who argue that such a perception is based on an ethnocentric understanding (Strand, 2001). The above perspective also reflects a series of value judgements that places monotheism in a superior position to that of religious syncretism, with the latter being seen as a deviation from a normative religious model (Marushiakova and Popov, 1999: 81-82). Most Gypsies in Turkey are Sunni Muslims, but many still celebrate festivals such as the spring festival (*Kakava*) during the 5th/6th of May.

Admittedly, arriving in Istanbul approximately seven months ago, I brought with me a number of assumptions with regard to religion and Gypsy identity. Having completed my MA thesis on Gypsy Pentecostalism (based on field research amongst *Kalderash* Roma in London), I intended to continue the research on the role of the autochthonous Gypsy Pentecostal movement in the forging of trans-national identities. Its connection with Roma emancipation movements constituted the basis for my analysis of what I perceived as being the two major arenas in Western Europe for the construction of trans-national identities. My conclusions were that both the ethno-political organisations (ERTF for example) and the Gypsy evangelical churches offered their members a means of "re-discovering" their ethnic identities in social contexts created and maintained by Gypsies themselves. Whereas in Western Europe, there is a strong connection – and frequent overlap – between the politically active and evangelical Gypsies, in Turkey this is not at all the case.

There are no Gypsy evangelical churches in Turkey, and no mushrooming Gypsy NGO sector of the kind we find in Western, Central and Eastern Europe. Some would argue that this situation with regard to the NGO sector is due to the lack of education and the inexperience of establishing and running an association. Others would attribute the lack of mobilisation amongst Turkish Gypsies, to the widespread poverty that forces people to think about their immediate needs. These are people who do not have the "luxury" of allocating time (nor do they have the resources to pay membership fees), to an interest organisation. Some of my informants have ascribed the lack of mobilisation amongst Gypsies in Turkey to the Turkish system, which they say discourages people to establish ethno-political organisations. Not only is the process

of establishing an NGO in Turkey an extraordinary difficult process bureaucratically, but it also demands substantial capital investment. A sum of $200,000 must be deposited in a bank account, to remain as guarantee against any debts incurred by the putative foundation. Moreover, the law requires a commitment to not engage in political activities that may be defined as "ethnically separatist". Although many Turks would say that Gypsies in Turkey do not constitute a threat to the unity of the state, as do certain other minority groups, this caveat is potentially restrictive as to the activities that may be legitimately engaged in by any organisation. The absence of prominent ethno-political associations is one of the factors that usually lead to relatively little attention and interference from the authorities. Not surprisingly, there have been almost no functioning "Gypsy" organisations in Turkey until very recently.[2] Cultural festivals are traditionally held, such as the *Hıdrellez* celebrations, and these are becoming increasingly popular amongst Turkish people at large, encouraging what might been seen as a revival of interest in Gypsy culture. The government at both national and local level has supported these events (at Edirne, and Kağithane for example). Whilst the celebration of one's culture may be politically acceptable, defining one's ethnicity always attracts suspicion.

It goes without saying that I had to redesign my research project by shifting the focus to new questions, whilst I still retained some of my initial concerns. The extent to which Gypsies in Turkey were attracted to the notion of a "nation without a territory", as the International Romani Union (IRU) declared Roma to be, at the World Romani Congress in Prague in June 2000 (see Acton 2005, in this collection), was one example. The responses elicited to this question are relevant to the issue of ethnic and religious self-ascription, as they reflect individual notions of identification with national, or religious movements within the Turkish borders, and their relationship to external structures.

The actual picture of Turkey's social, cultural and religious heterogeneity can be seen as a continuation of the ethnic and confessional diversity of the Ottoman Empire. However, in the period after its decline, and the foundation of the Republic (1923), the Republicans wished to create an homogeneous ethno-cultural state, and promulgated a series of programmes aimed at achieving this through education and cultural reforms. Despite these attempts, Turkey has retained its complex mosaic of differing peoples, some of whom attempt to assert an alternative collective identity that sharply conflicts, during certain historical periods, with the ideological commitment to a cohesive, unitary nation-state. Yet underlying the surface of the nationalist desire to achieve ethno-uniformity, there remains at large "an Ottoman Empire of the mind", to use Nicole Pope's phrase[3], a recognition of the complexity of

identity (Pope, 1998). This has had a particular impact upon the social position of Gypsies in Turkey.

The *Romanlar* I have spoken with in Istanbul emphasise that they are Turkish and Muslim, thereby matching the Turkish ethno-religious norm. Neither passive, nor particularly "assertive" (in comparative terms), about their Gypsy identities, their preferred and primary identification is Turkish. This predominant Turkish identity sometimes manifests itself through contra-identification with the Kurdish population. In a number of interviews, I have listened to my *Roman* respondents haranguing "the Kurds" by assigning them a whole range of negative attributes. The Kurds, according to several of my respondents, are largely separatist, traditional, mean, violent, and "a closed group". A young man spoke in the same sentence of how he hated "all forms of discrimination and prejudice, and the Kurds".

Roman ethnic identities seem also to be constructed within the context of the local community (*mahalle*), and are based upon knowledge of family origins usually stretching some generations into the past. In fact, their identities are only partly defined in contradistinction to non-Gypsies (and then, most often vis-à-vis the Kurds, as mentioned earlier). Frequently, these are expressed in ways that differentiate Gypsy groups, between those who are defined as *Abdals* (see Bladh's photo essay, in this volume), or who are known to pursue "unclean" occupations. This also involves the linguistic separation of groups that are described as *çingene*, and those who claim the status of *Romanlar*. The phenomena of the role of locality in identity construction may be termed the formation of *mahalle identities* (see Mischek´s chapter in this collection).

The emphasis on an ethnic boundary – markers, separating Gypsies from *gadjé* (non-Gypsies), a notion seminal in much ethnological work on Gypsies, does not seem to be of such importance here, though further research must clarify and corroborate this. The people with whom I spoke, were indifferent to – and at times puzzled by – the aims and objectives of the IRU. One man recalled that their community in Tophane had been approached by:

> [...] a Gypsy from another community who brought leaflets and posters saying that he represented us! But we would never approve of him. We had our own leader (pc. Tophane community, December 2002).

A similar response to the question about the Roma nation, came from a *Roman* man in Gaziosmanpaşa who was familiar with the notion of an Indian *ethnogenesis*, and the IRU, the two corner stones of European Romani identity. He had also been approached by "a couple of *yabancı*"

(foreigners) Gypsies, a few years ago interested in recruiting him, but as far as he was concerned he already belonged to a nation. I found it rather interesting that he used this word to describe a group of eastern European Roma: the word *yabancı* contains more elements than the English word foreigner. It derives from Ottoman-Turkish notions of "stranger", "alien", "outsider", and by implication, non-Muslim.

I believe that here lies the crucial difference between the *Romanlar* of Turkey and the Roma in Europe. A Muslim *Roman* identifies himself/herself more with a Turkish Muslim, albeit he/she is *gadjo*, and less with a foreign (Christian), *yabancı* Rom.

There is the conviction amongst some Roma activists in Europe that the Gypsies in Turkey need to be "awakened" (sic.). Perhaps the absence of ethno - nationalism amongst the *Romanlar* is being misinterpreted as a lack of awareness of their "plight". I do not wish to romanticise the conditions under which a majority of the *Romanlar* in Turkey are living; poverty, discrimination, and social marginalisation are part of the reality for a large number of Turkish Gypsies. In terms of reported police abuse and human rights violations that occur, these cannot automatically be explained in ethnic terms, as not only Gypsies are victims. Poor migrants and other deprived people are also subject to such treatment.

There certainly is a societal discrimination towards the *Çingene*; derogatory and mocking expressions, and negative portrayals of them are still widespread in media, and are rarely challenged. On the other hand, Gypsy music is widely appreciated, and it is quite common that Turkish couples choose a *Roman* band for their wedding parties[4]. The problems that many *Romanlar* are facing are of a socio-economical nature; unemployment and poverty are obstacles also shared by many Turkish people. It is the case that the Gypsies are almost always amongst the poorest groups, and thereby amongst the lowest in the social hierarchy. There are *Romanlar* who are politically active, but they usually join existing national parties. The ultra-nationalist MHP (National Action Party) has made some attempts to recruit *Romanlar*, and has tried to establish offices in a number of Gypsy *mahalles*. This phenomenon of Gypsies sympathising with the extreme right could be seen as a drastic contrast to the eastern European context, where far-right movements identify the Gypsies as targets, and has been one of the major reasons for the large number of Roma seeking asylum in Western Europe.

Turkish Gypsies that have attempted to confront these and other social problems in the past, not by establishing or joining a trans-national movement, but through existing national or religious movements, are often perceived by other European Gypsy activists as living under a

false ethnic consciousness. An interesting question is what will happen as Turkey approaches EU accession, and the issue of *Roman* representation within the European Roma Traveller Forum (ERTF) that now is being considered[5].

This leads me to consider another question of how truly trans-national (and religiously inclusive) the European Gypsy identity is, that has been constructed in this context. The Gypsy Pentecostal churches have secured political representation in the ERTF, with one of the committee members, the Swedish Pentecostal Pastor Lars Demetri, being elected on the basis of representing the "Christian Roma" (Catholic, Protestant, Baptist, Methodist, Orthodox[6]). Whilst there clearly exists an articulated mission to work ecumenically across Christian denominations, absorbing the Muslim *Romanlar* may prove to be a challenge for the powerful advocates of these ethno-religious movements. Unless a successful synthesis emerges, there is a risk that these movements, in defining *Gypsy-ness*, display what Kaufmann calls "symbolic inequality", the result of the difference between those who possess many ethnic traits (such as being a *Vlach* Romani - speaking, Pentecostal Christian, for example), and those who exhibit fewer (Kaufmann, 2000: 1095). An example of this mechanism is that whilst ERTF welcomes Turkey, and recommends the Turkish Gypsies to send their representatives to this European plat form, they expect - and to a certain extent require - the Turkish Gypsy representatives to speak English, French or Romani. These criteria are currently hard to fulfil, as few Gypsy representatives in the Turkish context possess those language skills. The Turkish *Romanlar,* may find themselves adapting to European notions of *Gypsy-ness,* in order to activate a common Romani heritage, shared with Roma elsewhere.[7]

CONCLUSION

I would argue that Gypsies in Turkey have the option of activating multiple identities, operational under differing conditions. The role of Islam may explain why the *Romanlar* identify themselves more with their "brothers in faith", i.e. the *umma*, than with other Gypsies in Europe. When the *Romanlar* in Tophane go to the mosque they pray together with Turks, Arabs and Kurds, and although there are tensions between these peoples, there is no notion of establishing separate ethnic based places of worship (in contrast to "nationalised" Christianity such as Greek, Serbian, Russian or Bulgarian Orthodox Churches, for example). Those *Romanlar* who are, or will be, interested in participating in a wider trans-national network, may have to be prepared for a cultural clash in a forum that is already dealing with conflicting interests, reflecting the wide range of countries the Gypsy representatives come from, and differing priorities.

Gypsy organisations in Europe should also be prepared to encompass the values and traditions of the *Romanlar*. It is likely that one of the potential tensions will be about religion and its role in Gypsy culture and politics. With such strong evangelical, messianic elements permeating the Gypsy movements in Europe ("the Gospel should be preached to Gypsies in all countries"[8]), a truly inclusive trans-national unity may be difficult to translate into reality. If *Roma-ness* is continually defined with European Christian and evangelical elements, together with an emphasis upon Indian origins and "separateness", the opportunities to include the *Romanlar* in the wider Romani political movement may never arise.

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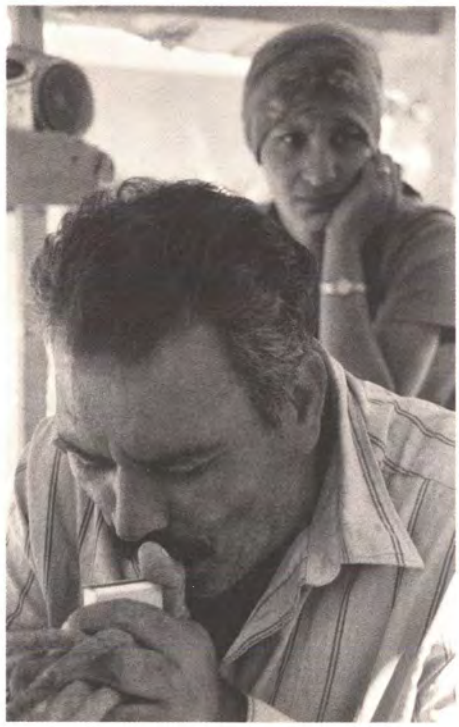
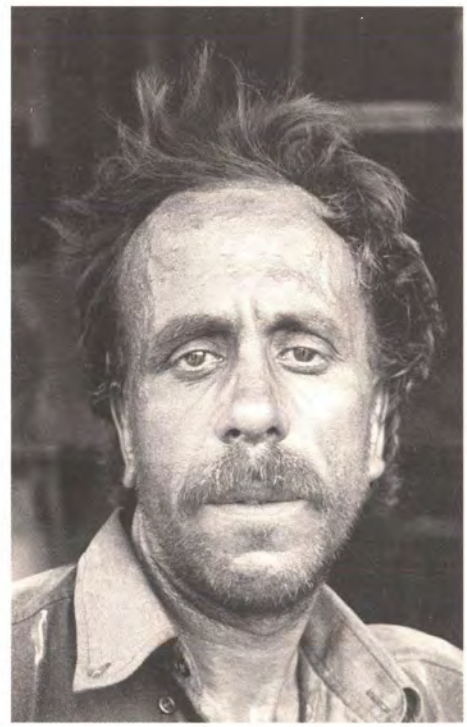
1. Mélikoff writes: "The road followed by the migrants, generally coming from Central Asia or Transoxania, passed through Khorāsān and followed the Caspian shore into Iranian Azerbaijan. It was the usual road that avoided the Iranian desert. So the mention "coming from Khorāsān" meant that the people were not autochthones, but immigrants" (Mélikoff, 1998).
2. Since the Romani Studies Conference in 2003, there have been a number of Romani associations established in Edirne, Muratli/Tekirdag, Mersin, Samsun, Izmir, Aydin/Soke, and Istanbul. Erdinç Çekiç is the chairperson of Edçinkay Dernek in Edirne. See http://www.cingene.org/ for more information.
3. Nazım Alpman has discussed the ambiguous attitude of the majority population in Turkey towards the Gypsies: "many people are addicted to Emir Kusturica´s Time of the Gypsies and its soundtrack. A nice hug with love merges to the *Romanlar*, but everything remains on the white screen. This love finishes with the film" (Alpman, 2003).
4. European Roma and Travellers Forum. See http://www.ertf.org/for more information. The Edçinkay Association initiated and organised a meeting, inviting representatives from the Romani NGOs in Turkey (see footnote 2). They met in Edirne in October 2005 and agreed to form a national Romani federation. Two representatives were elected as delegates to the ERTF (pc Ana Oprişan, October 2005).
5. I am indebted to Lars Demetri for information about the directions and developments within the ERTF and the Gypsy evangelical movement in Europe.
6. See also Hancock's discussion on "Pan-Roma-ism" in chapter 4: "[...] It also calls into question the legitimacy of the exclusionary and subjective position taken by some groups who regard themselves as being "more Romani" than others" (Hancock: this collection).
7. Quote from a public speech by an English Gypsy Pastor (Pastor Nino), International Roma Day, April 8th, 2001, London.

7

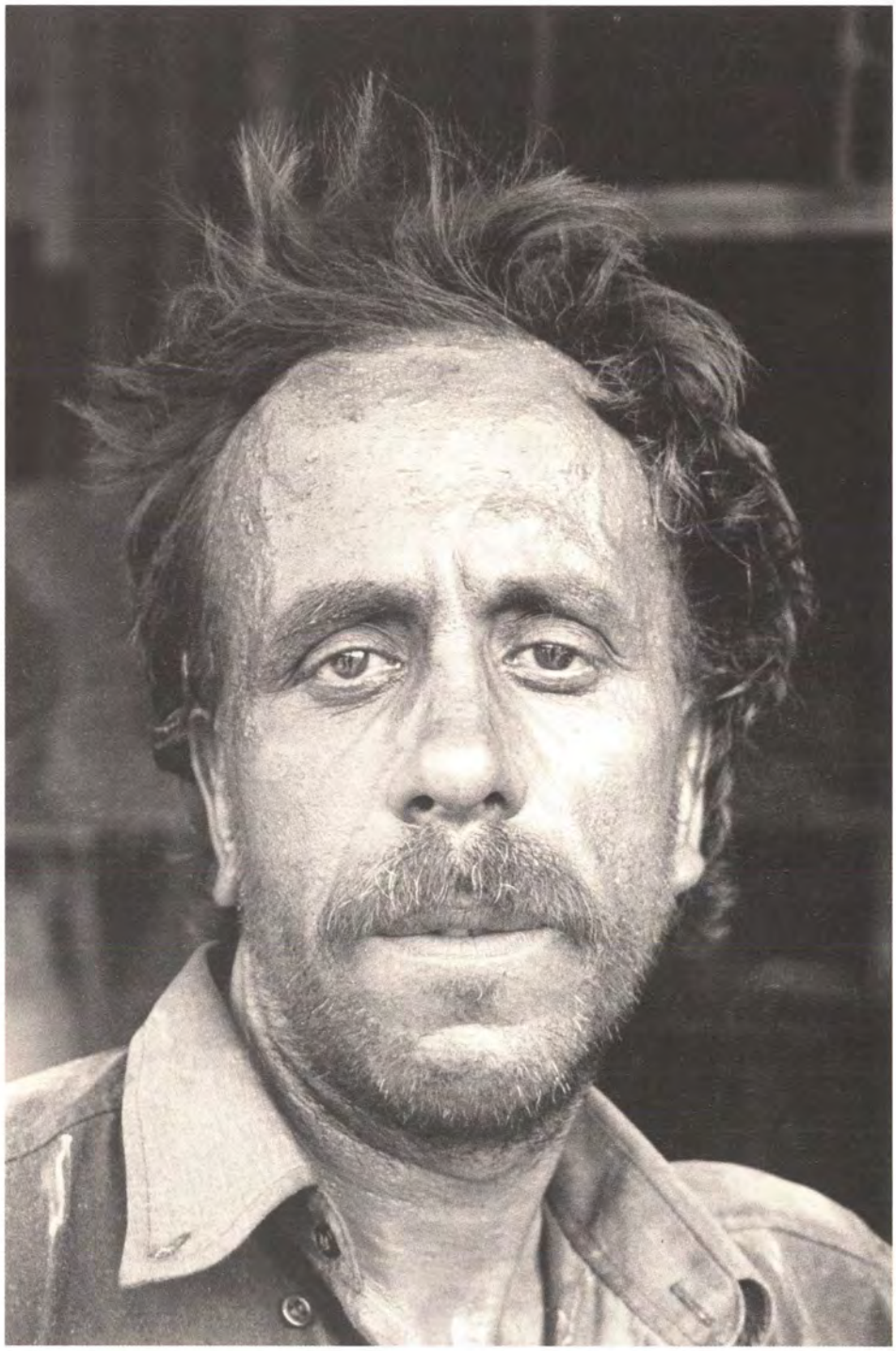
Makuş ma! Me de Rom Sinom! Images of Gypsies in the Turkish Lands 1

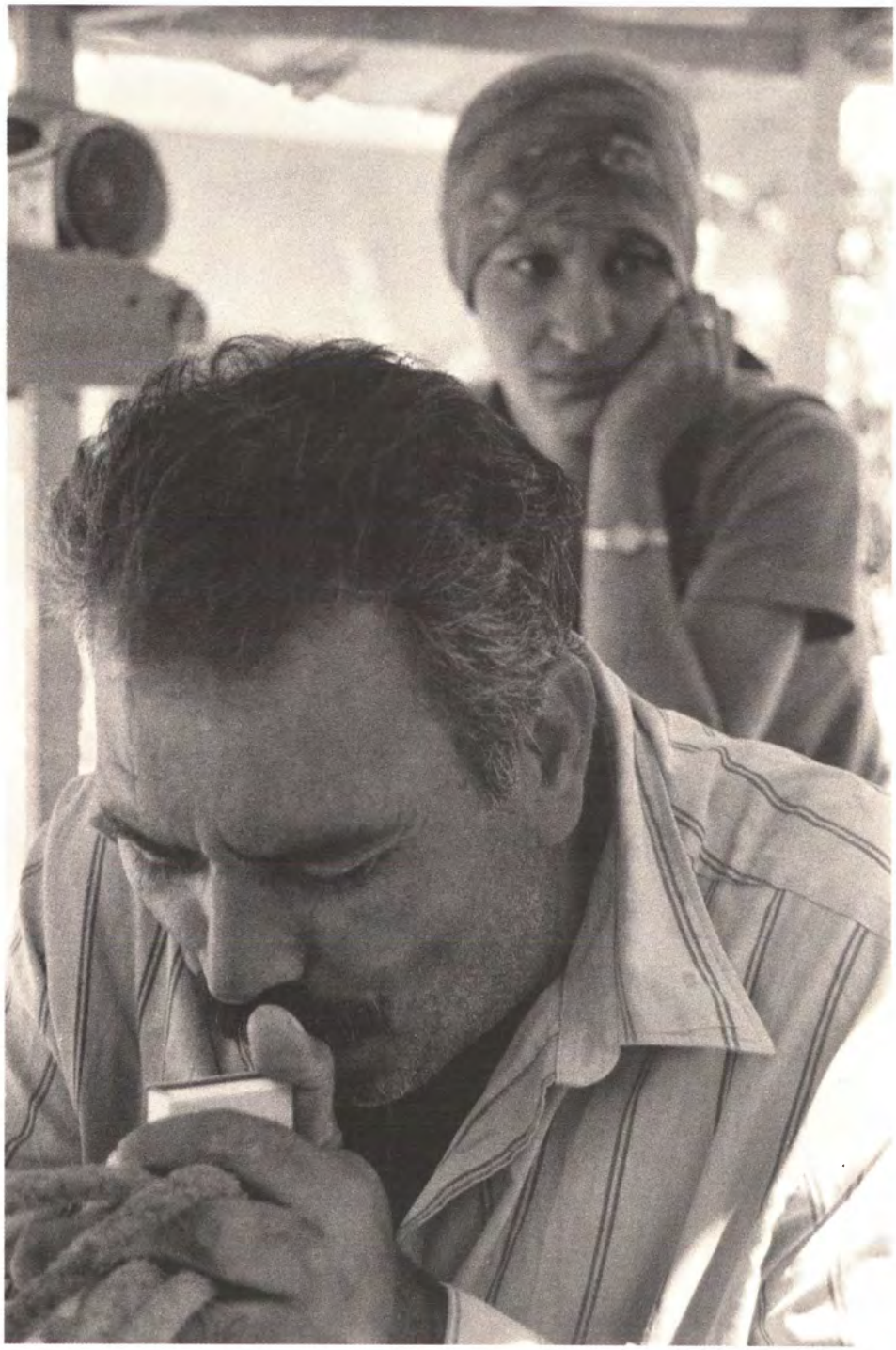
MUSTAFA ÖZÜNAL





Mustafa Özünal journeyed across western Anatolia in the summer of 2002, documenting the Romani people and communities he came across. His work has been shown at the Istanbul Romani Studies Network seminar series, and the Istanbul Slideshow Days 2004, and at Malmö Museer in Sweden, and his photographs appear in a number of international magazines.





8

The Cultural Heritage of the *Roma* and *Resande* represented in the Malmö Museer

EVA HANSEN & KENNET JOHANSSON

The Romani people have been in Sweden for 500 years. Yet, we know almost nothing at all about them here. There is little or no mention of them as a "national group" in the history books, and they have been largely ignored, especially when it comes to expressing their culture in museums, or even in the wider public context. In 1999 the Romani people - together with other minorities including *Saami,* Finnish, and Jewish groups - were granted recognition as a national minority in Sweden.

The Swedish government further expressed their intent to protect and safeguard Romani cultures, and to ensure that they be regarded as a part of the Swedish cultural heritage. With this decision, they also drew attention to the need for Sweden's minorities to have their own cultural centres. The Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs was asked to consider how Sweden's minorities could take their rightful place in the national cultural life. The creation of a Romani cultural centre was prioritised, and Malmö Museer received a grant to investigate the possibilities. The Museum worked together with one of the national organisations for Romani people in Sweden, Roma National Union, and other Roma associations to create a national Romani museum and cultural centre in Malmö (the city in Scandinavia with the largest Romani population).

MALMÖ MUSEER AND THE MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Malmö Museer is the largest museum in southern Sweden, with approximately one hundred employees, more than a million artefacts, and three million photographs. The Museum has nearly 250,000 visitors a year. It is a city where the population has many different backgrounds, and is considered as one of the most multicultural in Sweden. To achieve the goal of being a museum representing all of Malmö's inhabitants it

is essential for Malmö Museer to work with all groups from this rich cultural and ethnic mosaic, including Romani people. This is a new approach for the museum, and we started this process three to four years ago. About the same time the Museum Director was contacted by a *Roma* woman, Monica Caldaras, with the idea of setting-up a Romani museum in Malmö. We then organised a working group that included representatives from the *Roma National Union* and the different *Roma* organisations and Malmö Museer to work out how a National Romani Museum could be organized, and might work[1].

In 2002 Malmö Museer were awarded the Swedish Museum Associations' *Museum of the Year*, an honour for all involved. One of the specific reasons named was the work we had been conducting with Romani people.

TOWARDS THE CREATION OF A NATIONAL ROMANI MUSEUM IN MALMÖ

An important condition for the proposed museum is that the initiative comes from the Romani people themselves, and further, that they will run the institution. To achieve this there is need for training and professional competence with regards to the specialized work that museums and culture heritage involves. It is important that the museum becomes a place where the Romani people can present their own picture of themselves, and their surrounding world. A link in this chain is to raise the educational level among the Romani people. As recently as 40 years ago, they were denied any opportunity of even attending schools in Sweden, and as a result, general literacy and education levels are still low. Many of the older generation are non-literate, and those who have college and university education are still fewer in number. Malmö Museer has given the task of developing an education plan to the Uppsala University's *Institution for Archives, Libraries, Museums, Ethnic, and Culture Studies*. Grants have now been awarded to develop this work, from the *Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs*. The intention behind this is that specific education will provide insights into the theoretical and practical work that museums entail, including the complexities of archive and library work.

In 2002, the preliminary surveys for a National *Romani* Museum in Malmö were completed, and duly presented to the government. The final report, *Romani Kultura* was circulated to all those who contributed, as well as to politicians, the government and others. This work, together with the developing relationship with Roma associations, is now continuing through the following projects:

WOMEN'S GROUP

The initial Romani working group was, for the most part, made up of men. In 2002 we started a Romani women's group to address this imbalance. The Women's Group plan, amongst other things, to present one kind of traditional Romani wedding as performance art, as well as staging fashion shows showing the style of some Romani women's clothes, traditional as well as modern.

STUDY GROUPS

Together with the *Association for Adult Education,* Malmö Museer has initiated study groups around the general theme of Romani cultural histories, using food, wedding traditions and other aspects, as a means of easily accessing aspects of some Romani cultures. In these classes there are both Romani and *gadje* (non-Roma).

ROMANI NATIONAL DAY

The Ganges, the River Jordan, the Seine, the Rhine, the Thames, the Amazon, together the Malmö Museer (the Museum is based in the old city castle), were all scenes of the celebration of the Romani Millennium Jubilee, 8th April 2002. Wreathes and candles were set adrift upon the world's waterways - including the moat surrounding Malmö Museer. The *River Ceremony* was celebrated for the first time the world over, to draw attention to the fact that it was a thousand years since the Romani people began their journey from India [historically, the invasions of Mahmūd of Ghaznā into India, and his capture of thousands of Hindūs, begins c.997-ed]. The 8th of April is also the Romani International Day - *Gypsy People Worldwide Day.* 2002 saw the first real celebration of this event in Sweden, and it received a lot of media coverage. The International Day was celebrated again at Malmö Museer in 2003 with a festival of lights, music and food, and attracted around 300 visitors. The celebration has since then been a regular event in the annual calendar of Malmö Museer.

THE ROMANI, THE ROADS, THE PLACES

The Romani, The Roads, The Places began in 2002, and is being produced with help from the *National Heritage Board.* The project involves documenting and displaying the material and intellectual testimony of the Romani people's nomadic life in Scania *(Skåne)*, southern Sweden, during the 20th Century. The museum wants to shed light - by using the communities' memories of this time - on the Romani cultural landscape, and highlight a marginalised cultural heritage. An important part of this is the co-operation with other institutions, and our contact with the rural folklore societies, who have shared their memories and archives of Romani life in the region.

ROMANIES AND RESANDE - BEYOND ROMANTICISM AND RACISM

Romanies and Resande - Beyond Romanticism and Racism, is the name of the exhibition that Malmö Museer, and the Romani working group opened in November 2003. In the exhibition we highlight several different themes from a *Roma* perspective.

- The everyday life of the Romani people – in contrast to *gadjé* prejudices
- *Investigated and Investigators* – the means by which Romani peoples' lives were documented, measured and categorised by others
- Personal narratives and individual memories from Romani people themselves

The main purpose of the exhibition is to focus upon:

- Origins, mobility; the earliest Romani migrations into Sweden
- Travellers and the Swedish Welfare System; how the Swedish welfare system, created in the 1940s, excluded Romani groups
- Changes and continuities from the 1960s; when the situation for *Roma* was marked by these, in respect of accommodation, education and increasing modernisation on the one hand, and the continuity represented through traditions, kinship patterns, and societal discrimination

The exhibition is still going on, with a great number of visitors – Romani people, citizens of Malmö, tourists, school classes, governmental representatives and scholars.[2]

CONCLUSION

Romani people are one of the most persecuted groups in Europe. In many countries they face open discrimination and violence. In Sweden the situation is better, but certainly the Romani group are treated as second-class citizens. We have to remember that it is not more than four decades since Romani people in Sweden had no housing rights, and were not allowed into our schools, and societal exclusion is still present. When a minority group cannot make their culture understood, others (from the majority society), take over the preferential right of interpretation when it comes to describing them. However, museums can redress this

and give this cultural inheritance back its genuine legitimacy and status. Knowledge about the Roma would also remove much of the prejudice and stigma that has surrounded their culture. Therefore the creation of a national Romani museum is seen as a priority that can no longer be ignored.

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1. At Malmö Museer Acting Director, Eva Hansen, and Project co-ordinator Sofie Bergkvist are carrying out the work together with the Romani working group. We are interested in developing further international contacts and hearing from those interested in collaboration. For more information please contact us at either of the following addresses: eva.m.hansen@malmo.se or sofie.bergkvist@malmo.se
2. The exhibition has now concluded, but plans are afoot to bring it to other regions as a mobile show – ed.

9

The International Roma Writers Association

IRKA CEDERBERG

There is an old Romani tale about a learned Gypsy king, who was the owner of an enormous library, overflowing with works by Romani writers. The king was also the owner of a donkey, whom he wished to give an education, so he gave the donkey books to read. However, one day there was a terrible rainstorm. The king was swept away by the water, and was drowned; the donkey survived, but remained tethered in the stable and soon became hungry. He began to eat the Romani books, and very soon had eaten his way through all of them. This is how the learned Gypsy king died, and how all Romani literature came to be lost. This, in turn, explains why the Roma have no books where they can read in their own language, and learn from the collected wisdom of their people.

However, is it really true that there is no Romani literature? That might have been the case, one hundred years ago perhaps – but only if we discuss written literature. There has, of course, always been an extensive Romani oral literary tradition. And it would certainly be inaccurate today to claim that there is no written Romani literature. The previous few decades have brought forth a steady current of literature written by Roma authors.

The language of the Roma is Romani, an old language with roots in Sanskrit, in India, from where the Roma began their forced migrations approximately one thousand years ago. Today the language exists in about 60 different varieties or dialects.

For a long time indeed there was no written Romani literature, but there is a veritable oral treasure-store that has been carried on through tales and poems over the centuries, from generation to generation.

Already two hundred years ago, there were *gadjé* – non-Roma – who attempted to codify some Romani grammatical rules, but only in the 20th century did the first written works in Romani appear. The earliest known piece is an essay by the Russian Aleksander Germano in

1915. Germano also translated works from world literature into Romani, like Pusjkin and Gorki (Hancock, 1998: 11).

The Romani poet Rajko Djurić, who was born in Serbia, last year published his book Die Literatur der Roma und Sinti, "The Literature of Roma and Sinti", a literary history, and the first of its kind. Djurić initially describes what he calls the Romani folk literature, *i.e.* orally transferred myths, tales and songs. The book also contains an annotated bibliography of the works of Romani writers in Europe, country by country.

Today there are Roma active in the intellectual and literary sphere not only in Europe. The anthology *The Roads of the* Roma (Hancock, Dowd and Djurić, 1998), contains poems by Roma writers from all over the world. The preface is written by Ian Hancock, a professor of linguistics in the United States, and one of the world's leading Roma intellectuals.

"If we are indeed a people without any kind of literary heritage, then we are obliged to wonder why, in the few years since the opening up of eastern Europe, Gypsy literature has flourished in such overwhelming abundance..." He continues, "...this cornucopia of poetry and prose did not spring into existence overnight and without being nourished; it came from somewhere, and its origins run deep and old in the Romani experience, and lie in a long era of being silenced." (Hancock, 1998: 10)

Today there are about eighty active Romani writers in the world. They write in different languages, and all of them do not speak Romani. As an expression of the growing literary activity and awareness amongst the world's Roma, last summer the world's first International Romani Writers' Association was founded in Finland.

IRWA is multilingual but aims at strengthening and developing the Romani language. The aim of the organisation is indeed to make Romani literature widely known and respected – both among Roma and non-Roma – and, using a variety of means, to encourage the younger generations of Roma to write.

Mariella Mehr is one of the founders of IRWA. She belongs to the small group of *Jenische* Roma, who live mainly in Switzerland, Austria, Southern Germany, France and Italy. As a child, Mariella Mehr was a victim of Switzerland's brutal assimilation policy towards her people, a policy that was administered by the well known and once highly respected semi-government agency, *Pro Juventute*. As late as the 1970's, *Pro Juventute* "snatched" Romani children from their parents and brought them to institutions for children, with the intention of crushing Romani culture.

Mariella Mehr has published poems, plays and novels and has received several literary prizes. She writes about her traumatic childhood in orphanages and other institutions. She says she writes for *gadjé*. With her stories of the violent childhood she had to live through in the world of the *gadjé*, she wishes to hold up a mirror for them, and show them how she perceives their treatment of her by them, so that they may see themselves reflected in her gaze. For a few years now, Mariella Mehr has lived in Italy. She does not write in her mother tongue, *Jenisch*, but in German. She says she enjoys writing in a foreign language, "It provides a distance. I can use the language as a tool in quite a different way."

Even though Mariella Mehr feels that it is important to develop and establish Romani as a modern literary language, she does not think it is necessary for all Roma writers to express themselves in Romani.

"It is part of our history that we have wandered many different roads and learnt many different languages. So why should this not be expressed in our literature, in all these different languages?"

The first president of IRWA is Veijo Baltzar, a Finnish *Rom* and an author. He has published many novels. *Phuro*, the latest, was published last year (2002), and is being translated from Finnish into many different languages. A few publishing companies have joined the International Romani Writers´ Association in order to develop a Romani library with bi-lingual Romani literature.

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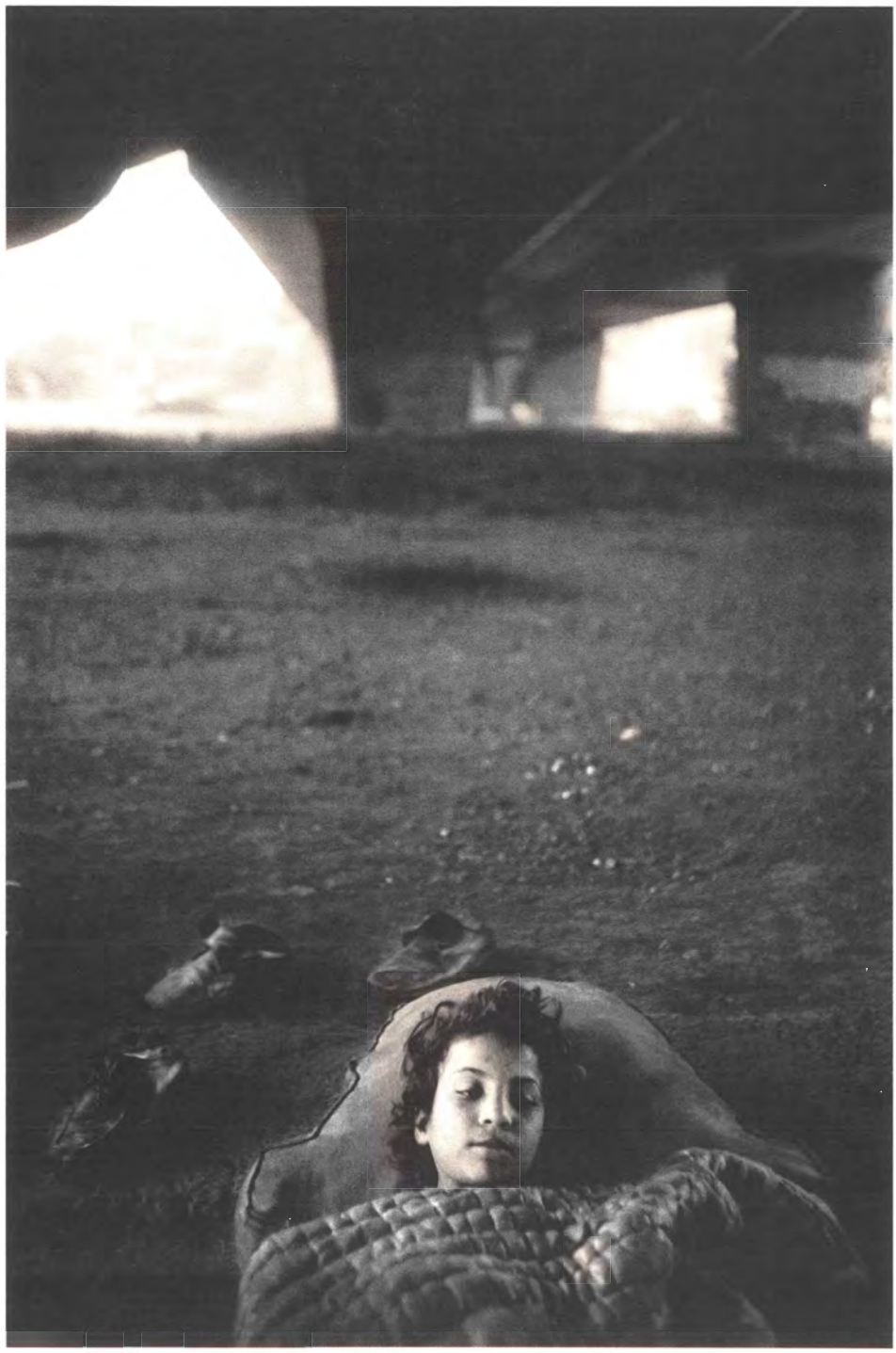
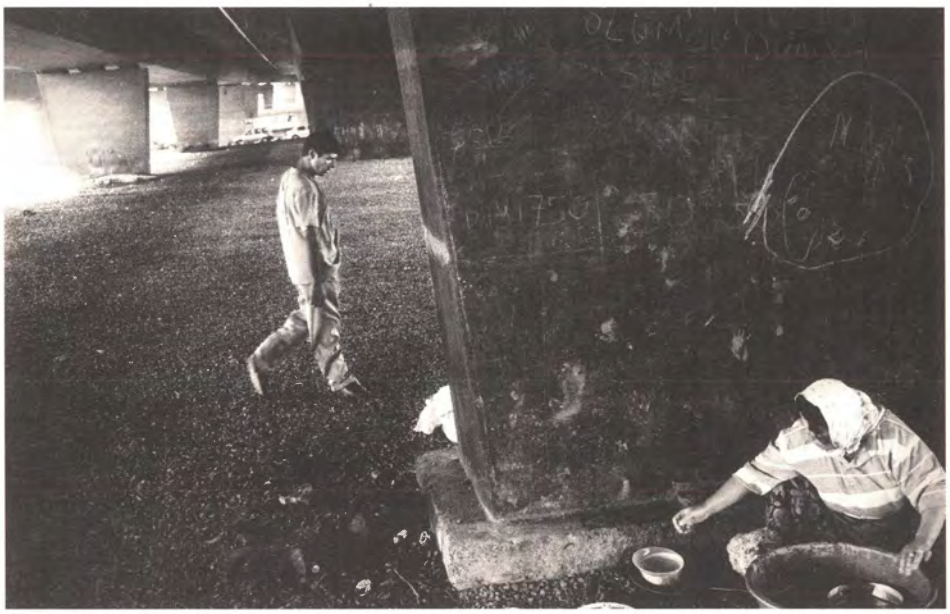
10

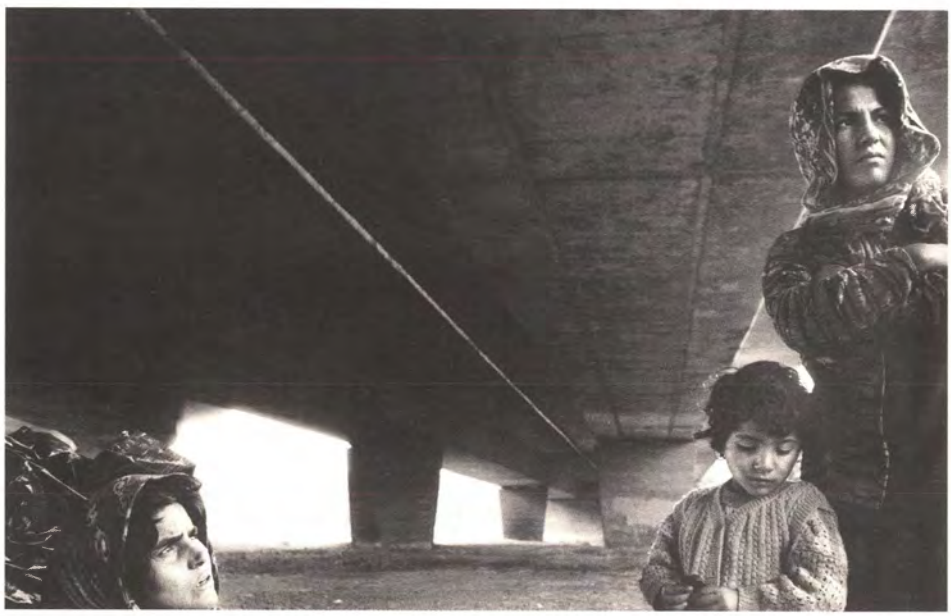
The Abdals of Sulukule: Images of Gypsies in the Turkish Lands 2

STEFAN BLADH

Three years ago I first met the Kaplans, a Turkish Abdal-Roman family living a nomadic life. They were staying in poor conditions under a motorway bridge close to the larger Roman community of Sulukule, in Istanbul. I have been following this family, documenting their lives. Unfortunately they are beset by the same poverty and problems today, as when I first met them, and the Sulukule community faces enforced relocation.








Z. TREM

11

Perceptions of Identity Amongst the Tarlabaşı Gypsies, Izmir

SUAT KOLUKIRIK

The name *Gypsy* or Romani, which is used to define certain groups in Turkey, designates a problematic area. The difficulties in determining and defining the dynamic characteristics and margins of the identity Gypsy, render this problem to be a constant challenge. In this context, the most consequential question requiring an answer seems to be "Who is a Gypsy?" and/or "Who accepts the definition of Gypsy?" According to Peter Alford Andrews (Andrews, 1992: 194) and Ali Rafet Özkan[1], who have drawn up taxonomies of the groups defined as Gypsies in Turkey, the Gypsies have different names in differing geographical regions. Özkan states that the terms *Romani* (Western Anatolia and Thrace), *Mirti* (*musicians,* Van and Ardahan neighbourhood), *Elekçi* (*sieve-maker,* Central Anatolia), *Poşa* or *Boşa* (a term for Armenian-speaking Gypsies in the region of Erzurum, Artvin, Erzincan, Bayburt and Sivas), *esmer vatandaş* (*dark-skinned fellow*), *Göçebe* (*nomad*), *Arabaçı* (*horse-carter,* in many cities of Anatolia), *Sepetçi* (*basket-weaver,* Mediterranean and Aegean Regions), *Cano* (region Adana), are all used to define the Gypsies (Özkan, 2000: 4). Additionally, the Gypsies who have migrated from Bulgaria and settled in Kayseri, Adana, Osmaniye, Sakarya and Çorum are called *Haymantos*, and a group of Gypsies in Erzurum are identified as *Şıhbızınlı*. *Kıpti* is also a common name given to the Gypsies. The name *Kıpti*, just like "Gypsy" in English, is used in order to identify the Gypsies as *Egyptians* or to define them as a group of people who have migrated from Egypt. *Dark-skinned fellow citizen* is a euphemism generally used in official publications (Özkan, 2000:31). However, we do not have sufficient concrete data about the Gypsy populations corresponding to the groups and names referred to by the researchers, and the relationship between them.

Nevertheless, it should be stated that these denominations used for defining Gypsy groups in Turkey are not new. Neither is the confusion created by these names, because the Gypsies, as a consequence of their *diasporic* identity, have been ascribed different names in every country and region they have passed through, and/or migrated to (Özkan, 2000:31). The most significant characteristic of these identifications is the fact that they symbolize a *rebirth* and a new existence for the Gypsies. The name *Romani*

corresponds to a notion of this new existence for the Gypsies in Turkey. Moreover, the Gypsies, or Romanies have a rightful claim to this new existence. There are humiliating, degrading and derogatory associations ascribed to the term "Gypsy" in Turkish (*çingene*), that are likely to make it difficult to alter in usage. Literary examples are to be found in the work of Ahmet Mithat Efendi's 2001 book, *Çingene* (*The Gypsy*), Osman Cemal Kaygılı's 1972 volume, *Çingeneler* (*The Gypsies*), Melih Cevdet Anday's *Raziye* from 1992, Metin Kacan's hugely popular 1999 novel, *Ağır Roman* (*Cholera Street*). The 1998 Turkish Dictionary published by the Turkish Language Association includes several descriptions that assign negative characteristics to the definition of "Gypsies". In these works, Gypsies are described with terms such as *shameless, barefaced, impudent, uneducated, wild, nomad, one who exchanges his wife, non-Muslim, dirty, cunning, quarrelsome, foul-mouthed* and *thief*. In the 4th article of the Settlement Law No. 2510, enacted in 1934 by the Turkish Grand National Assembly, the Gypsies are mentioned alongside anarchists, spies, undesirables, and people who were not to be accepted as immigrants to the country. In addition to literary works, there are many myths and jokes that perpetuate the Gypsies' unfavourable position in society.

This chapter aims to explore the identity perceptions of Gypsies, and to introduce the structural analysis of Gypsies' identity construction, in the context of the *Tarlabaşı* Gypsies in Izmir. How these are shaped in relation to space, time and social relations will also be analyzed. In other words, the study will shed light on the perception of the "other" in society, as well as the ways in which the group or society, by creating the "other", deciphers itself.

The Tarlabaşı Gypsies, who form the research area in this study, are descended from groups that have migrated from Thessaloniki (Greece) to Turkey in accordance with the population exchanges resulting from the Lausanne Treaty of 1923. The examples provided in the study rely upon transcripts obtained from field research by using "in-depth interview" techniques (Lieblich, 1998).

THE PERCEPTION AND PRESENTATION OF IDENTITY

The discourse that Tarlabaşı Gypsies use in their daily lives constitutes an essential basis for identity maintenance. As a matter of fact, the discourse of the interviewees embodies a reflexive attitude against the opinions of the society about the Gypsies. The common emphasis in these discourses, which are the social representations of Gypsy or Romani identity, refers to "us" or to identity and identity perceptions of the group. Furthermore, these discourses are concrete indicators of the Gypsies' point of view towards the society they live in, and are closely related to the Gypsies' status and social context. More significantly, these discourses

point at a hidden and *resisting* identity. Therefore, the perceptions of identity of the Tarlabaşı Gypsies, and the ways they reflect this identity, constitutes an essential point in acknowledging and comprehending the Gypsy culture. This characteristic is a powerful reference about why, and how the Gypsies use and transform definitions of their identity within society under different social conditions. However, in general terms, definitions and references to self - identity are observed to be quite flexible. The names "Romani" and "Gypsy" are frequently used independently and interchangeably, as reflected in the following statements:

> "*My people have been saying for twenty years that they are Romani or Gypsy. We hid our identity, since we were excluded from society. I will not deny my origin, I am a Gypsy. The settled ones call themselves Romani. We have a home and a country. Romanies are more congenial people. A Romani is never ungrateful. A Romani never forgets a favour done for him*".

Another distinctive discourse that attracts attention in these statements is that the term *Romani* is referred to as a quite new definition. In addition, the interviewees emphasized that they were defined as *immigrants* when they first arrived in Bornova, Izmir. Undoubtedly, the primary reason for such a definition is built upon the fact that an immigrant identity is perceived as having a higher social status, and does not lead to negative attitudes in social contacts. On the other hand, the interviewees' self-definition as Gypsies, designates a point of stress concerning identity and *belonging*. As definitions of identity may change and take shape according to space, time and forms of social contact, the following expressions prove to be important paradigms in reflecting the flexibility of definitions of identity:

> "*We live under the same flag. We are facing discrimination ourselves. I am a Gypsy, yet I am a Turkish citizen. Gypsy or Romani, it doesn't matter. There is no difference. Gypsy sounds offensive; Gypsy is used for the wanderers. I am indeed a Gypsy child and I have never hesitated saying it everywhere. Everybody is different. Romani sounds more acceptable to people. They later learned how to be a Romani.*"

Taking these observations and statements as a point of departure, the names used by Tarlabaşı Gypsies to define themselves will be analyzed under the following headings, in order to decipher the perceptions of this community about their identity.

THE TERM *ROMANI*

The interviewees introduce themselves to the *gadjo* (non-Gypsies) as *Romanies* before all else. In this respect, the statement "*We*

are Romanies and we are different than Gypsies" reflects the interviewees' effort to distinguish themselves from those *Gypsies*. The primary reason for bringing the Romani name into the foreground is the fact that being a Romani is more desirable and acceptable, than being a Gypsy, in the public discourse. In other words, the acknowledgement of being a Romani is rather the desire of the interviewees to present an *alternative* identity. This can also be considered as an attempt to create a new perception by *transforming* their identity. The ones who say "*I am Romani*" recognize their Gypsy identity at the same time as they understand that being a Romani is "*a respectful definition*". Another factor lying behind the interviewees' choice to define themselves as Romani, is the notion that this denotes a settled way of life. The expressions "*We are the residents of Bornova*" and "*We have a home, a place and a country*" indicates a sense of place and belonging. Accordingly, the discourse and references to a settled way of life, used by the interviewees, may be evaluated as an emphasis on a similarity with the *gadjo*, and a result of the Gypsies' effort to create a sub-sphere of existence for themselves.

THE TERM *GYPSY*

In the context of defending the term *Gypsy*, statements like "*Why should I conceal myself? I am a Gypsy*" may be interpreted as a significant indicator of interviewees recognizing their Gypsy identity. However, the interviewees use, and claim the identity of *Gypsy* most often amongst people who are familiar with them. In relations with the *gadjé*, who do not know them, they identify themselves as *Gypsies*, only when their expectations are not met, or their primary self-identity is *contested*. This attitude constitutes the transformation point of identity in a reciprocal relationship between the Gypsies and the *gadjé*. Under circumstances when being a Romani person is assigned a superior status and their *Gypsy-ness* is negated, the term is used among the interviewees in accordance with the Gypsies' definitions of the *gadjé*. As reflected in their expressions like "*Gypsies live in tents. They do all kinds of mischief. They can even slaughter a man*", *Gypsy-ness* in this context, is being described and criticized. This attitude of hiding oneself or "passing", reflects an effort to establish an affinity with the *gadjé*. Furthermore, this attempt embodies a strategy, characteristic in terms of maintaining business relations between the Gypsies and individual *gadjo*.

A HUMANISTIC APPROACH

In their discourses, the interviewees also equated concepts like *equality*, and *brotherhood*, with a humanistic understanding. As reflected in the statement "*I do not discriminate between people, I have an open mind*

towards everybody", the emphasis is upon the idea that no "race" can be superior to another. The Gypsy's desire to be like the *gadjo* can also be seen in the expression "*I am a world citizen and I am a perfect, equal person like anybody else living in this space, I am alive*". Nevertheless, the hidden point in these humanistic expressions reveals that the Gypsies are being confronted by discrimination, and they are not wanted by the wider society. This situation is the main issue in all the interviews with Gypsies. This, in a way, may be interpreted as a sign of the Gypsies' tendency to distinguish their "race" from the others.

TURKISH CITIZENSHIP AND BEING TURKISH

As in their discourse around notions associated with humanistic values, the Gypsies construct a discourse around the idea of Turkish citizenship, to create a state of equality and a semblance, or space, for themselves in society. The expression "*I am a Turk, I own a Turkish identity card*" is an indicator of this understanding. Yet, the Gypsies who emphasize their Turkish citizenship, or Turkish nationality in this discourse, are predominantly the ones who feel the need for integration with the *gadjo*. The idea that being Turkish is more prestigious plays an important role in this acknowledgement. Whilst the effort of identifying oneself with the powerful stands out as a dominant characteristic, they turn back on their Gypsy identity when they are negated or rejected by society. In a general context, the emphasis on Turkish citizenship may be considered as the result of a sense of belonging to the nation-state in which they live.

THE *GADJO* (NON-GYPSY) AND COUNTER IDENTITY

The Gypsies interviewed used the term "gadjo"[2] to define non-Gypsies. *Gadjo* stands as a counter identity that addresses non-Gypsies, as in the expressions:

> "*Gadjo is a non-Gypsy. Gadjo means one who is not Romani. It is a name given by our elders. We use it for Turkish people, the people from Crete and the others. Gadjo is the one who is not from our culture*"

The term *gadjo* indicates the "other" who is "racially" and culturally different from the Gypsies. This differentiation is stated in a clearer way in some statements like "*A gadjo always reminds you the favour he does for you, but a Gypsy never does that*". Therefore, the term *gadjo* is a significant point in drawing the "racial" and cultural border between the Gypsies and non-Gypsies; since differentiation from, and solidarity with, are encoded and constructed over the boundary definitions of *gadjo*.

CONCLUSION

The majority of Tarlabaşı Gypsies avoid mentioning their Gypsy identity when they enter relations with non-Gypsies. The pejorative adjectives and meanings associated with the term *Gypsy* in Turkey, certainly plays a determining role in the factors underlying this situation. Romani identity is placed in the foreground, in case of a contacts with a non-Gypsy, while the term *Gypsy* is reserved for used amongst people from their own community. Thus, the Tarlabaşı Gypsies use the term *Romani* in the context of redefining their identity, while they emphasize that *Gypsy-ness* is a characteristic of the nomadic groups. Accordingly, Gypsies are identified with nomads, and Romanies are equated with settled communities. Yet, *Gypsy-ness* is not to be restricted to being equated with a nomadic life. As a matter of fact, any undesirable behaviour is ascribed to Gypsies in society, and Gypsies themselves may sometimes use the same negative associations when referring to each other. This may sometimes be in the context of describing another member of the same group, or it may designate a member of another Gypsy group, or even whole groups.

Since the term *Romani* is associated with more positive notions, the interviewees used this to define their identity, in relation to non-Romani groups, and prefer to use this term in their dealings with officials. In this respect, Romani identity has come to be a bridge between Gypsies and the wider society, a key to establishing relationships with the *other*. Here then, is a curious paradox; a Gypsy is accepted in society when she or he says *"I am Romani"*, but rejected when they declare their Gypsy identity. As a matter of fact, this situation is the main reason why the Gypsies who *activate* their Romani identity, react so fiercely against the criticisms directed to Gypsies and Gypsy identity. Although they claim another identity by saying "*We are Romanies*", both the Gypsies themselves, and the *gadjo* are aware that they are in fact being identified with, and defined as, *Gypsies*.

Finally, it is important to emphasise that the use of the terms *Gypsy* and *Romani* among the Tarlabaşı Gypsies of Izmir, is *contextually dependent* upon the perceptions and opinions of the society around the Gypsy communities. For this reason, many Gypsies avoid revealing their Gypsy identity in their social relations. Subsequently, the difficulty of not being able to express their own identity remains a recurring problem for the Gypsies.

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1. Ali Refat Özkan's book, produced for the Education Ministry, was the subject of a protracted legal battle for defamation, brought by the respected Gypsy activist, Mustafa Aksu, who succeeded in having it withdrawn from circulation, on the grounds of its racist stereotypes and prejudices – Ed.
2. *gadjo* is singular, and *gadjé* plural, referring to non-Gypsies.

12

Human Rights and Policy Formulation Toward Roma in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland

EVA SOBOTKA

Human rights, and the influence of treaty-based, and trans-national political processes on policy formulation towards Roma (as in many policy issue-areas, i.e. environment, equality between women and men, the rights of national minorities), are an innovation of the 1990s. The most remarkable change in Roma policy making, that took place c.1998, was a shift in norms, which opened up space for new voices by altering contexts, and making new types of action possible. These, as with campaigns for Roma rights for example, emerged virtually out of nowhere. In the absence of any norms about Roma or about discrimination, Romani claims about discrimination and racially motivated violence could not be heard. Once such norms are developed, stating that Roma have a right not to be harassed, Romani claims can be recognised as coming from legitimate voices. With norms about equality in place, marginalized actors (or their advocates), can harness the rhetoric of equality to make their case for equal treatment, and to call into question the "naturalness" of the dominant, racist, and mostly non-written, norms.

State policies towards Roma, in order to become human rights policies, had first to break away from pre-1990 policies, where the dominant trend had been that of assimilation, either by forced administrative measures or by methods of assimilation combined with social integration. Secondly, they required a firm rejection of the exclusionary and racist nature of policies following the end of communism. Here we could cite especially the refusal, and failure of state authorities, to adequately address the growing level of racially motivated violence against Roma across post-communist states; or the Czech citizenship law, which stripped many Romani long-term residents, and

Czechoslovak citizens, of their citizenship. Local government ordinances aimed at Romani migration control appeared in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland, as a response to Roma migration during the early 1990's. They developed a dynamic of restrictive policies, aimed at the Romani population in general. Last, but not least, segregated education in most post-communist states, has been another issue that became clearly unacceptable after 1989. Václav Havel, the President of the Czech Republic, took note of the significant post-communist situation; "When the curtain rose humanity suddenly found itself face-to-face with a truly multicultural, and multi-polar world" (Havel, 2001: 3).

Human rights advocates, the main actors in the mobilisation of norms, have since the early 1990's systematically campaigned for Roma policy changes. While in the early 1990's, human rights campaigns had a moralising nature, by the end of the 1990's, the Roma rights advocates had pursued systematic, uncompromising styles of campaign, based on possibilities made available through the international system.[1] Before norms could have any impact on domestic policy making towards Roma, they had to first create possibilities for their use by (1) adding issues and (2) adding meaning (Petrova, 2002). International governance systems, offering political processes such as the human dimension meetings of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, or participation in advisory bodies of the Council of Europe, and treaty-based processes under the UN Conventions and the ECHR, were utilised by human rights advocates, with the objective of making states ashamed of their Roma policies, and achieved the formulation of human rights policy objectives.

It is essentially governments who define agendas and actions of human rights research, monitoring and reporting, and even advocacy, by the presence or absence of policies in accordance with international law (Petrova, 2002). States with powerful human rights objectives as part of their foreign policy, in particular the United States, have significantly contributed to keeping the Romani issue high on the trans-national agenda. This has helped human rights advocates to craft the language of Roma rights, and interact in an environment of racist or exclusionary Romani policies. Consequently, changes in the meaning of what constitutes suitable Roma policies has taken place. To understand rapid policy development requires understanding of the political importance of meanings — perceptions of what a thing, person, policy, or action *is*. There are two notable factors, which caused shifts in issues and meaning during 1990's.

Firstly, Roma have been increasingly seen as national minorities. In some states, this new meaning and definition was received with hesitation – as individual states did not see, and did not wish to see

Roma defined as a national minority, arguing that because of a lack of distinctive factors, Roma do not qualify as a national minority. In this sense, debates on "the special situation of the Roma" and "their unique status" proceeded, with governments tending to recognise Roma as "a social strata" and often, an "ethnic group". In the early 1990's, politicians in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary called for policies towards the Roma to be adopted with a "migration prevention" objective. Later in the 1990's, these were fostered by certain types of academic writing, speculating about the design of good policies towards Roma – whether such policies should be drafted similarly to those affecting national, and ethnic minorities, or immigrants (Barša, 2001: 243-258). For instance, in 1997 the Slovakian government argued,

> At present the issue of the Romanies is not characterized by an appurtenance to a national minority (national principal). The issue associated with the Romani national minority are perceived as a matter of social, cultural and educational positions and assistance, based on a universal civic principle of integration into the society (Brief Information 1997; Conceptual Intends 1997).

In Hungary, a distinction in the *Law on Minorities* (1993) was made between national and ethnic minorities, where Roma were categorized as an *ethnic minority*, although the rights granted were similar to those awarded to *national minorities*. In the Czech Republic, Roma have been similarly seen from early 1990's, although the *Law on Rights of National Minorities* was not adopted until 2001, and remains inadequate in addressing issues of representation of the national minorities. In the course of drafting the law, the state administration and a majority of the parliamentarians, viewed a minority law as "some sort of medieval measure, unfit for the modern societies, and possibly endangering of Czech identity" (Sobotka, 2003). Here, the firm refusal of collective rights through an over emphasis of individual rights, contributed to the stagnation of policy formulation toward the Roma. Secondly, human rights as a concept, and especially the principle of non-discrimination, has been increasingly applied in analyses of the situation, and consequent policy proposals. In sum, shifts in usage of terminology were first achieved by advocacy organisations, lobbying for Roma rights, and subsequently adopted by governments.

Moreover, it is important to understand how norms influence the changes of meaning of an object of policy. With regard to the Roma, we have witnessed a shift from governments defining the issue as "a Gypsy problem" in the early 1990's, and drawing an analogy with crime prevention and increasing internal security (i.e. police power, municipalities' power), to 'issues for Roma community", with

implications for human rights policies, and increasingly inclusive notions of national diversity. This has not been just a euphemism on the part of governments, but a real shift in the understanding of who the Roma are, and what policies have needed to be developed. On a broader level, we have witnessed a shift in the concept of security (Havel, 2003).

MECHANISMS OF NORMATIVE CHANGE

Following the fall of communism in 1989, policy making towards Roma has been increasingly influenced by the human rights political processes (OSCE, Council of Europe), and treaty-based mechanisms (ICCPR, ICCSER, ECHR, FCNM, etc). During the 1990's, the policy towards Roma, discussed at trans-national and domestic levels, has been torn between minority rights, and human rights concepts. While the first mostly concedes positive rights to groups, the later assigns negative rights to individuals. In the light of the unique situation of Roma, which has been characterised by gross human rights violations, both concepts are beset by limitations (Gheorghe & Acton, 1995: 29; Gheorghe, 1991b).

The national minority concept, bound with the territoriality principle, does not fully apply to the situation of Roma. Gheorghe argues,

> In my opinion, participation in this system may tend to skew or deform the process of ethno-genesis, inventing a false perspective which does not stem from our needs (Gheorghe & Acton, 1995: 29; Gheorghe, 1991b).

Acton and Gheorghe (2001) mention an example of a Romani group *Kalderasha.* Hardly, they argue, could one imagine that when *Kalderasha* from New York, Paris, Warsaw, Berlin, Vienna and elsewhere meet, they would frame their discussions about their situation, using minority rights concept as a reference point. Similarly, the human rights concept does not accommodate the aspirations of some Romani politicians for meaningful (i.e. trans-national), political recognition. Lastly, the extreme poverty of some Romani communities has also led to a *developmental* approach in policy making towards Roma (Ringold, 2000; World Bank, 2002; Ringold, Orenstein & Wilkens, 2003).

Three levels of influence that exist in Roma policy making – trans-national, state and local level – had to be mobilised in order to achieve effective human rights norms in policy making. While criticism raised by advocacy organisations at the trans-national level was communicated to governments, and ultimately led to a policy response, the same cannot be said about the relationship between national governments, and regional, or local administrations. With the increasing adjustment of

state Roma policies to a human rights approach in number of countries, local administrations have blocked efforts to facilitate change in Roma policies, by adopting openly racist ordinances, or policies aimed implicitly, or explicitly on being rid of the Roma. The most infamous case was probably the wall in Matiční Street in Ústí nad Labem, in the Czech Republic. However, it would be wiser to see this incident as the tip of the iceberg, rather than as the most extreme case.[2]

The Council of Europe's 1953 *European Convention* is perhaps the most highly regarded international instrument in the field of human rights. It does not protect minority rights *per se*, rather it establishes a broad scope of fundamental rights for individuals. Article 14 of the Convention provides that

> The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secure without discrimination on any grounds such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

In many ways the *European Convention* is similar to the UN *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR). Unlike ICCPR, the *European Convention* maintains an established court, whose judges are drawn from the member states. This court has the authority to receive petition from any person, non-governmental organisation, or group of individuals claiming to be the victim or victims, of a violation by one of the "High Contracting Parties". The court may also hear complaints brought by one state party against another. Most significantly, the court is empowered to adjudicate such claims. In the event of a violation of the *Convention*, the court may issue a judgment and the judgment may include an order to the violating party to pay damages to an aggrieved plaintiff.

The European system, to which Roma rights activists familiarly refer to as "the beauty of Strasbourg", does have some significant shortcomings. Firstly, the *European Convention* is limited by the terms of its own text. Unlike the ICCPR, the *European Convention* only prohibits discrimination with respect to other rights that are specifically included in the *Convention* itself. In other words, states party to the *European Convention* may discriminate with respect to rights contained in their national constitutions or laws, but not included in the *Convention*. In an effort to plug that very significant gap, the Council of Europe adopted *Protocol 12* on November 4, 2000. This amendment to the *Convention* (somewhat similar to the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment, or Article 26 of the ICCPR), provides that any right set forth by law shall be secured without discrimination. It also prohibits discrimination by

public authorities. *Protocol 12* will come into force after 10 countries have ratified it. At present, 27 of the Council of Europe's 43 member states, have signed *Protocol 12*, but none have yet ratified it.

In addition, the *European Convention* is limited by the types of remedies it may apply. Although the court can award damages, including significant monetary damages, it does not have the power to strike down laws that violate the *Convention*, and it cannot force, or compel governments to change practices that systematically violate the *Convention*. For example, there is a case before the Court brought by Romani plaintiffs from Ostrava, in the Czech Republic. They allege that the education system in the Czech Republic is, *de facto*, segregated by race. In the event that the court finds in favour with the plaintiffs, it can only award them damages, but does not have the power to order the overall desegregation of Czech schools. Whilst some states have been willing to change laws or practices that would otherwise potentially form the basis for repeated suits, others (notably Turkey) have been less willing to do so.

Several other treaties are relevant to the protection of minorities; the ICCPR, mentioned above, the *Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*; the *European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*; and the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*. The two torture treaties are relevant in that minorities are disproportionately the victims of police brutality. These four treaties function in similar ways. Firstly, they establish a committee of experts. Secondly, they establish an obligation for states party to the treaty to report, within a specified time interval, to the committee on their compliance with the treaty. In their review of states' reports, as well as in consideration of specific cases or situations that the committee may be authorized to consider, these bodies provide authoritative interpretations of treaty law. They do not, however, adjudicate cases, or have the power to sanction states.

Generally speaking, the UN system does not play a very significant role in Europe, given that the enforcement machinery of the *European Convention* is so much more effective than that established under the United Nations. Having said that, in light of the increasing human rights problems that Roma, and other minorities have faced in Europe over the past decade, particularly in central and southern Europe, the UN's Committee against Torture, and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, is viewed by some non-governmental organizations as a significant forum where pressure can be brought to bear upon key countries. The 2001 UN World Conference against Racism,

Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (and the many preparatory events associated with it), has served as a vehicle for a number of European non-governmental organizations. There are also minority treaty-based mechanisms in place – namely the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* and the *European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages*. However, neither treaty specifies remedies in cases of violations.

The treaty-based processes have conveyed change through (a) using human rights speech about the Romani issues and, (b) reminding individual states of their international obligations to uphold human rights. Formulation of queries to governments has forced governments ultimately to respond in a language used by the trans-national bodies. Hence, treaty-based processes have facilitated changes in discourse. The implementation of human rights has improved the fulfilment of international commitments by states, and with a decision of the European Union, meant that positive treatment of national minorities within EU-accession states, should be a condition of membership.

Within the political process, which greatly influences policy making towards Roma, falls the *human dimension* of the OSCE. Here, the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti, housed as it is within the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, has significantly contributed to increasing the attention on the Romani issue. It was established in 1994, with a High Commissioner for National Minorities, and a seat in the Hague established in 1992. The Council of Europe has established the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), and a number of committees where policies are being discussed (family, social matters).

The political processes of IGOs – the CoE, OSCE and the EU – were constructive in conveying policy change at the domestic level through (a) building cognitive maps on Romani issues and transforming stereotypical, racist state understandings of who Roma are, into the world society human rights perspective, (b) providing a meeting point for NGOs calling for improvement of Roma rights and states, (c) issuing calls on states for Roma policy improvement, and (d) singling out the Romani issue in international politics. While the IGOs have contributed in many positive ways, their capacity for successful influence essentially depends on the willingness of states to comply, respond, or communicate on the issues affecting Roma. The IGOs are to be viewed as channels of influence, where state interests meet with NGO's demands.

For example, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), a political body for monitoring all expressions of

intolerance, racism, and discrimination in the member states, was established by a decision of the Council of Europe on 9th October 1993. The ECRI is mandated to consider all necessary measures to combat violence, discrimination and prejudice, notably on grounds of race, colour, language, religion, nationality and national or ethnic origin, faced by persons, or groups of persons. The ECRI issues country-by-country reports that list all the concerns of the Commission about individual states. Prior to publication, the content and concerns are discussed with the state individually, in a 'confidential dialogue', and the state has the right to block the public release of these reports.

The Commission is also drawing up a series of general policy recommendations addressed to the governments of all member states. In 1998, the ECRI issued the *ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 3: Combating Racism and Intolerance against Roma / Gypsies*, noting that Roma / Gypsies suffer throughout Europe from persistent prejudices. They are victims of racism that is deeply rooted in society, and these prejudices lead to discrimination against them in many fields of social and economic life, and are major factor contributing to the social exclusion of Roma.[3]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSES

Between 1945 and 1989 in most communist states, issues of policy towards the Roma were usually drafted and supervised, by the ministries of social and family affairs, and the ministries of the interior. Policy objectives were those of "crime prevention", "assimilation", and "raising the level of educational attainment". Since 1970's, the Czechoslovak Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the Ministry for Social and Family Affairs, has pursued a policy of enforced sterilisation of Romani women, and to some extent a similar policy has been implemented in Hungary.

After 1989, Romani parliamentarians were elected for a short time between 1990 and 1992 in former Czechoslovakia, and 1994, in Hungary respectively. Until 1988, nationalism, and addressing issues for the Roma solely through the "civic principle" concept, was characteristic of policy formulation and outcomes, in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia. In 1998, in the Czech Republic first debates in the pages of daily newspapers addressed the issues of a policy of affirmative action, equality and civic principle, as facilitating processes leading to integration of the Roma. The authors of the articles were mostly former dissidents active at that time in domestic human rights organisations, who later became actively involved in policy making towards Roma. Not only, have they influenced the discourse and debates around Roma policy formulation, but have also effectively urged the government for some sort of incorporation of human rights policies.

The conceptual responsibility for drafting policy was moved from the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior, Education, Labour and Social Affairs, to a more inter-ministerial approach. In addition to this, the government invited Romani representatives, usually active in the non-governmental sector, to work with representatives from ministries on policy formulation. While advisory bodies on Romani issues (or wider national minorities), existed prior the policy changes in 1998 and 1999 respectively; the major change was in creating connections with policy processes at the trans-national level. The advocacy organisations working primarily in pointing out flaws in international norms implementation finally received a response and were able to develop a dialogue with people responsible for policy making towards Roma at the national level. Until 1998 in the Czech Republic, and 1999 in Slovakia, the response to international human rights criticism came primarily from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Department on Human Rights, given the task of defending the interests of these states abroad. After 1989, advisory bodies on Romani issues in both countries became involved in communication with the OSCE, and the Council of Europe, which led to a direct influence of the trans-national discourse of Roma rights becoming incorporated into the policy drafting process.

The greater involvement of advisory bodies on Roma policy issues with trans-national processes, and their active response to criticism in policy making towards Roma, is characteristic for Roma policy making and the influence of a human rights framework on policy making after 1998. However, the structure and processes of policy formulation within advisory bodies still allows a predominantly social policy approach. This is due to the weight of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs as well as the Ministry of Interior and Culture, in their traditional role in Roma policy making. Since the attention to the human rights agenda is based entirely in having an advisory role within the government (through the Council for Human Rights), the Ministries remain largely uninfluenced by human rights thinking or ideology. This flaw in a lack of human rights structures within the state administration is hardly a normative problem, but an issue of organisational psychology. Bureaucrats opposing human rights rhetoric as alien to Czech, Slovak or Polish culture, do so due to their experience of responding to advocacy organisations. Hence, a lack of incorporation of human rights into the policy making process remains a problematic issue.

In a course of the 1990's, the Czech government adopted two framework policy documents, which are worth of mentioning; the *Report on the Situation of the Romani Community in the Czech Republic and the Government Measures Assisting its Integration into Society in 1997* (hereafter *Report...*), and the *Concept of the Government policy towards members of*

the Romani community, supporting their integration into society (hereafter *Concept...*), in 2001 (686/1997 and 599/ 2000). While the *Report...* carries a socio-cultural perspective, the *Concept...*, specifies three approaches to Roma affairs – human rights, nationality, and a wider socio-cultural perspective. The practice of Roma policy implementation in the Czech Republic shows, that the socio-cultural approach usually prevails.

The Slovak government adopted three framework documents on policy towards Roma. In 1991, Resolution No. 153/ 1991, entitled *Principles of Government policy towards Roma*, laid out areas for improving the situation of Roma. The subsequent adoption of a policy paper drafted by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, issued in April 1996, and entitled *The Resolution of the Slovak Government to the Proposal of the Activities and Measures in Order to Solve the Problems of Citizens in Need of Special Care*, rejected the approach identified in the 1991 Resolution, and reframed policy towards Roma as an issue of social policy.[4] In 1999, the Slovak government adopted a redrafted policy towards Roma; the 'Strategy I' of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the *Solution of the Problems of the Roma National Minority and the Set of Measures for Its Implementation Stage I*, outlining areas of action. Updates on the priorities of the Slovak government on issues of Roma community, especially plans of action of the Commission for Romani Community Affairs and Council for National Minorities and Ethnic Groups, do not include a broader development of anti-discrimination and minority rights discourses. For example, in the area of political representation, the documents remain silent.

Hungary's, *Short-term, Mid-term and Long-term Measures* are the principle policy documents on Roma, again focused on the socio-cultural aspects of life for the Roma. Recently, a most significant development of policy in the area of human rights, have been shifts in educational policy, where the Ministry of Education's Department for Desegregation, under the leadership of former Romani activist, aims at ridding the Hungarian education system of the segregation of Romani children into so called "Gypsy classes", or "Gypsy schools."

In Poland, the international norms influence upon Roma policy change came a day late. The UK and Sweden, alarmed by the increasing number of Polish Romani asylum seekers, pressured the Polish government to adopt the Małopolska programme, an experimental program aimed at improving life of Roma in the spheres of housing, schooling, justice, police relations, health and culture. The program itself remains under implemented, due to an insufficient budget allocation by the national and local governments. It has been geographically restricted to the Małopolska province in the south of Poland, an area inhabited mostly by the Carpathian (*Bergitka*) Roma (EUMP 2002: 422). The Program

itself is a under funded, and its expansion in other provinces of Poland in the course of the next ten to twenty years, as many Romani leaders and government representatives have observed, is unlikely to happen (Sobotka, 2003: 250).

IMPLICATIONS FOR ROMANI IDENTITIES

As Roger Brubaker has argued, social scientists far too easily talk of groups, when what we should be examining is the process by which 'groups' occasionally and momentarily form (Brubaker, 1996:24). As a result of the influence of political and treaty-based processes, as well as human rights activism which arose around the Romani issue in the 1990's, Roma or their advocates, increasingly speak the language of political and civil rights. In the early 1990's, both governmental and Romani representatives tended to speak of Romani problems as "social and economic" – as both sides acknowledged the high unemployment rate among Roma. Today, although government officials still deny that Roma face human rights violations, Roma demonstrate a new understanding that work place discrimination, and segregated schools are the causes of high Romani unemployment. This new understanding has carried over into communities' abilities to self-organize. A good example comes from Bulgaria, where in 1999, some 70 Romani non-governmental groups banded together, and wrote a policy programme for Roma that included a demand for anti-discrimination legislation. They were effectively able to force the Bulgarian government to adopt their platform, instead of the weakened version drafted by the government.

While Roma and their advocated increasingly speak the language of political and civil rights, policy outcomes at national levels are still heavily influenced by traditional views of what informs good policy towards Roma. Within the advisory structures, the ministries of the Interior, Culture, Labour and Social Affairs, take a lead on formulating *ad hoc* projects, frequently aimed at reducing levels of social deprivation. Issues such as segregation, or social exclusion from access to housing, are being tackled primarily through policies aimed at strengthening the socio-economic situation of a Romani person. However, issues of discrimination in access to housing, or the criminal practices of forced segregation by local governments, or discrimination in employment, are in the long term, the real causes of deprivation in the socio-economic situation of Roma.

In addition, a larger illusion is maintained, one that definitely avoids the promoting the notion that human rights is above politics, a set of moral trump cards whose function is to bring a political disputes to closure and conclusion. At best, rights create common framework

that can assist parties in conflict to deliberate together. Common language, however, does not necessarily facilitate agreement. As there is no unarguable order of moral priority in rights claims, we cannot speak of rights as trumps. The idea of rights as trumps implies that when rights are introduced into political discussion, they serve to resolve any discussion. In fact, the opposite is the case. When political demands are turned into claims about "rights", there is a risk that the issue at stake will become irreconcilable, since to call a claim a "right", renders it non-negotiable, at least in popular parlance. Therefore, it is necessary to find out how to express basic values currently expressed as rights in ways closer to that which constitutes the common good.

Governmental policies towards Roma, formulated during the 1990's are ambivalent on issues of increasing representation of Roma. Whilst in the Czech case,[5] this has been defined political representation of the Roma as one of its main objectives, the Polish 'Malopolska Programme'[6] includes no concrete means of promoting the participation or representation of Roma in legislature or the state administration, despite the aim of achieving full participation of Roma at the level of civil society. The Slovak *Strategy*[7] emphasises the need to provide opportunities for the Roma to participate in resolving "their own problems," yet fails in conceptualising the means whereby this objective may be realised. While the state administration, a primary implementer of Roma policy, is in a position to increase the presence of Romani bureaucrats, it has no means of increasing Romani representation in the Parliament. In parliamentary democracies, the electoral process and the organisation of political life in political parties is the key for an increasing presence of Romani representatives.

As I have argued, the adopted approach towards Roma is mostly based in social policies, hence even the broader understanding of the Romani issue is one of having to deal with social problems, and deprivation. Political parties in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland, are least exposed to issues of human and minority rights for Roma. They are also closed structures, refusing to accept Roma as potential candidates on their electoral lists. Slovakia in this respect represents an exception, where there is a tradition of including Roma on electoral party lists of mainstream and majority parties, yet in constituencies impossible to win. However, for the integration of Roma in societies, and for human rights policies challenging the resistance of local authorities, political parties should take the lead, with state administrations, in an effort to comply with international norms. Until then, we will probably see more social policy towards Roma, re-establishing the issue as a matter of solving social problems.

What the socialists called a 'social problem', the post-communist states have gone head over heels to redefine Romani exclusion, as a problem of difference. We have heard arguments such as, 'They are treated differently not because they are Roma, but because they lead a different way of life', the implication being, that Romani views are inconsistent with the views and traditions of majority societies. From one side we have witnessed rhetoric about universal human rights, whilst on the other the resistance of states to comply with such. Later compliance has led to an 'ethnic' Romani policy, incorporating human or minority rights rhetoric, yet still under the influence of domestic social policy. This is partly due to a cumulative social policy "experience with the Gypsies", and the Ministry of Interior, Labour and Family Affairs and Culture, and partly due to a lack of the incorporation of human rights approaches in the ministries and local authorities.

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Strategy of the Government of the Slovak Republic for Solving the Problems of the Romani National Minority and the Set of Measures for its Implementation - Stage I, adopted by the Dzurinda government on 27 September 1999

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1. There are notable exceptions of NGOs, which have skipped the early 1990s moralising in favour of thorough human rights advocacy work (E.g. Human Rights Project in Bulgaria, some researches of the Helsinki Committee in Romania and Hungary).

2. In April 1998, inhabitants of three family houses at Matiční street in the north-Bohemian city of Ústí nad Labem petitioned the municipality to build a wall (fence), claiming that the "anti-social" behaviour of their Romani neighbours, inhabiting two blocks of low subsidised housing, was unbearable. Between April 1998 and September 1998 the Inter-Ministerial Commission on Roma Community Affairs did not get involved and the site was visited by some NGOs, such as the Helsinki Citizens Assembly – Roma Section, European Roma Rights Center and a few journalists. The national government, lacking the institutional framework for forming human rights policy, did not challenge public discourse, which defined the whole affair as a social issue. Between October 1998 and September 1999, the newly established Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights got involved in trying to facilitate dialogue with the local municipality. The municipality in Ústí nad Labem Neštěmice resisted pressure from the international organisations, calling Matiční street a racial segregation attempt. However, the international community was quite persistent in their criticism, which steadily intensified. In March 1999, during consideration of the question under its early warning procedure, members of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination voiced concern that the government was not doing enough to prohibit an unlawful act of racial segregation. The Committee expert, Mr. Ion Diaconu, expressed deep criticism about the government's decision to take measures only if the wall was actually going to be built (Roma Rights 1999: 8). For example, a statement by European Envoy to the Czech republic, Mr. Ramiro Cibrian, says: "should the wall be constructed, the Czech Republic could not be considered for EU membership." The commissioner responsible for EU enlargement, Mr. Günther Verheugen, visited the site and warnings came from all over Europe; Romani Union, a Spanish Roma organisation, British Deputy Home Secretary John Battle, Macedonian Romani organisation Drom, Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission etc (Roma Rights 1999: 8). The European Roma Rights Centre issued a warning statement before the construction of the wall, saying: "the wall would cordon off a Roma ghetto in Ústí nad Labem" (Roma Rights 1999: 7-8). The President of the Czech Republic and the Commissioner for Human Rights, Petr Uhl, spoke strongly against the construction of the wall. Inability to reach an agreement between the Commissioner for Human Rights and the municipality, caused the government to change its negotiator. The municipality especially resisted the human rights rhetoric of the Commissioner. The succeeding 'independent' negotiator Pavel Záhřecký, a former Ministry of Interior employee, started negotiations in October 1999. With the new negotiator's rhetoric, the definition of the problem changed. Pavel Záhřecký did not speak in terms of human rights or racial discrimination and dismissed previous statements and concerns of the Commissioner as a mistake: "the act of building a fence had nothing to do with racism, and did not lead to segregation. Both sides agree that all information comparing the fence in Matiční to a symbol of racism is an unfortunate mistake."

It was only after builders started building the wall that the Prime Minister of the Czech republic, Miloš Zeman, spoke strongly against its construction on October 7: "The wall in Ústí nad Labem divides the Czech Republic from the European Union" and the Czech parliament voted against the legal validity of the decision of the Ústí nad Labem municipality council on October 13th, the day of the Matiční wall construction. The wall was taken down, though an agreement between the government and the local municipality allocating three million Czech crowns (£68,681) to the local municipality and seven million (£159,090) to the owners of the three houses, *de facto*, built a virtual ghetto. As one inhabitant of the 'Romani housing complex' commented: "I would normally celebrate the demolishing of the wall, but now even when thinking back about all our disputes, I feel ashamed that our neighbours will be moving out. We wanted to get rid of the wall, not our neighbours."

3. ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 3: combating racism and intolerance against Roma/ Gypsies

4. The resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic to the Proposal of the activities and measures in order to solve the problems of citizens in need of special care [Uznesenie vlády SR k návrhu úloh a opatrení na rešenie problémov občanov, ktorí potrebuju osobitnů pomoc , na rok 1996] from April 30, 1996, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Government of the Slovak Republic

5. *Concept of Governmental Policy Towards Members of the Roma Community Supporting Their Integration into Society* adopted June 14, 2000

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13

Mahalle Identity *Roman* (Gypsy) Identity under Urban Conditions

UDO MISCHEK

To describe *Roman* identity I will use a model with differing levels, to establish an impression of how Romanlar, and perhaps other minorities, construct their distinctiveness in the urban conditions. During my fieldwork, I first tried to define what I thought might shape both group, and individual identity. I asked questions about which *tribe,* or extended family people belonged to. The answers in this respect were not especially fruitful, and I was not able to progress my research very far. I soon discovered that the questions I was asking made no sense at all to the Romanlar. Either people were not aware of these facts, or I began by asking the wrong questions, and their identity was constructed along other lines.

Tribal relationships may be embedded in peoples' knowledge, but are not always considered as important. Migration patterns can yield information about these, but today these tribal affinities are not recalled very accurately. What is important is the *mahalle*, the quarter that people live in. Relationships in this quarter create a shared identity, in opposition to the "outside" world. They divide the inhabitants from the other townspeople, whether *gadjé* or other Romanlar. Before I give examples of different strategies of identity construction, I will present a short historical account of the mahalle, as it is described by Ottoman social historians.

THE MAHALLE IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

According to Ottoman scholarship, the notion of mahalle organisation was implemented after the conquest of Istanbul. The mahalle, that might be described as a small quarter or neighbourhood, was centred upon a small mosque (*mescit*), a church or a synagogue; in other words, a place of communal worship. While there was a structural order in setting up a new Islamic Istanbul, in the public sector this meant building mosques, *medreses* (religious schools), and markets. There were

no official regulations of how residential areas should be constructed. This was due to the notion that the state should not interfere into the private sector and the mahalle, was defined as a sphere of privacy. The government did not infringe upon the intimacy of the mahalle; there were no regulations and planning, except for fire prevention or other incidences that might be a threat to the whole city (Inalcık, 1998: 263). During Ottoman times, mahalles were autonomous sectors of the city, were "...the Muslim community, and other religious communities lived, in their separate districts, their private lives." (Inalcık, 1998: 263). From the classical period to the post 1827 reforms, the *imam* and the *muhtar* were the responsible persons for the collection of taxes imposed on the Ottoman subjects. The social structure of the mahalle was not divided according to class, so that low income, and well-to-do people lived together. The system prevalent in much of Western Europe, with the lower classes segregated in their own quarters outside the centre, was not reflected in Istanbul. Although the physical appearance of the city, and hence of the mahalle, changed during the Balkan Wars, First World War, and the period of modernization at the beginning of the 20th century, the "social composition was not radically affected." The mahalle was still the "basic community at the local level" and mahalles were the "centres of economic and social life" (Duben & Behar, 1991: 27, 30). Greeks, Armenian and Jews – and I have to add *Çingeneler* and Romanlar - were part of the cosmopolitan understanding of being an indigene or *Istanbulu*, where the mahalles of the Christian were not excluded (Erder, 1999:161).

The radical changes to alter the mahalle social structure came in the 1950s as the mass migration from the rural areas to Istanbul started. This affected the mahalle on an elementary level. Now the original population of certain mahalles became more complex and the mahalle changed its social identity. The rural background was from this point, the most important principle of organisation, and mahalles became *ethnic* quarters where people with the same provincial origin, settled. The mahalle became a quarter around a nucleus of immigrants from the rural areas, which attracted more and more kinship groups to settle in the same area. This chain migration was the yeast for "...the construction of reciprocal exchange relations and networks based on mutual confidence...", but on the other hand, migration created new sorts of conflicts "...among the rival networks established by diverse newcomers" (Erder, 1999:166). These forces are still in action today.

ROMAN IDENTITY

To explain Roman identity I will make use of the concept which Marushiakova and Popov introduced. This concept is flexible enough to be adapted to different contexts, as I will show. The authors use three levels of identity construction: level one is the intra - community

identification, level two the recognition of other communities, as related, and level three refers to the nationhood hence, describing oneself as a member of a certain nation state. In other words, a Gypsy from Tophane might define himself or herself as a member of Tophane community, as an Istanbul Gypsy, or as a Turk, in relation to different contexts.

But this concept has to be adapted to Istanbul's conditions. Here even the intra community identification is very restricted and intermingled with the second level of conception. Much clearer is the recognition of other quarters, although solely on negative terms. It is generally accepted that there are other Gypsies in different quarters, but these other settlements are always attributed bad attitudes, or an offensive lifestyle. Segregation and mutual dislike are expressed nearly towards all other Gypsy mahalles. The tendency to "downplay" other Gypsies is not used on an individual level; it is active for the description of the lifestyle of another group in another quarter. This denomination of the other Gypsies as *bad* expresses two related discourses. First, one's own identity is created in contradistinction to surrounding Gypsy-quarters, and secondly, an explanation is suggested regarding the Gypsy in general. In the last case, people rely upon a common basis of stereotypes that Turkish society propagates to describe Gypsies and their behaviour. It shows that Gypsies make use of commonly shared knowledge. This points to a participation in this society and its basic assumptions. This makes sense, if these stereotypes are rooted in common values that both sections of the society know and understand.

If we look inside one community, we can find how the self is always constructed in relation to the *Other*, whether this is on a mahalle or family level. Whilst your family is never bad, all others have faults. Even in the same family, the tendency of 'separating out' is to be found, and sometimes the parents' own children are categorised in this way; but to prevent a total collapse of the system certain countermeasures were invented. One of these is - I would call it - mahalle endogamy. Nearly every wedding is celebrated between bride and groom stemming from the same mahalle, but even here you feel the notion of division in work, as in some quarters you have separate celebrations: one for the groom and one for the bride. Another way of strengthening the fragile mahalle solidarity is by including other communities settled in the mahalle with their struggles. This was the case with the Greek and Armenian minorities when weddings occurred, and is shown by friendship ties that cut across the different sections of the mahalle to create a general mahalle identification. This is exemplified by the friendship between Tayip Erdogan and the well-known Gypsy bandleader, Balik Ayhan, who are said to have lived in Kasımpaşa in the same street, and played together in the same football team.

MAHALLE IDENTITY/

What unites different Gypsy groups in the city is the mutual dislike of other groups, especially Kurds and Arabs, who are often blamed for the desperate conditions many Gypsies live in. Even if there are no Kurdish people in one quarter, the Kurd is chosen as the Gypsies' *opposite,* in response to which their identity is constructed. This does not lead to common action amongst several Gypsy communities, nor does it led to the creation of political associations aimed at improving the situation. Here again we find the tendency in Gypsy discourse to make use of pictures operable in the majority discourse of society, where the Kurds are still seen as a group that might raise political conflicts. The Kurd is conceived of in this discourse as the symbolic *Other.*

The third level, referred to above, is used especially under conditions of migratory work. Those of the Roman community who went to Germany did make use of the concept of *nationhood,* and activated their *Turkish-ness* in Germany, although I would suggest this has changed in the present. As in the Turkish community, the *Gypsy-ness* was assessed and a family's reputation was based on this assessment.

BÜLBÜL AND TOPHANE

Bülbül and Tophane (to be more exact Haçımımıh Mahallesi), are both part of the Beyoglu area, but situated at different spots. While Tophane is located on the Bosphorus waterfront, Bülbül is to be found on the other side of Beyoglu, towards the Taksim Square. Both quarters are inhabited by Romanlar, though not by any means, exclusively. In Tophane, the quarter is shared with Arabic-speaking Turks from the Siirt area in south-eastern Turkey, whilst in Bülbül many of the inhabitants are of Kurdish origin. In both quarters, in the shared space, several conflicts developed, resulting especially from competition for economic resources and housing. Both Roman communities share a dislike of the Kurdish and Arabic speaking Turks, whom they consider as a threat, due to their political and economic power.

The historical context can also be compared; while Tophane was a Greek mahalle, Armenians mostly settled in Bülbül, hence both quarters were Christian dominated. In 1980, both groups finally left the mahalles, and most young people emigrated to Greece, leaving only a few Greeks and Armenians still living in these areas. The exodus of these groups is a fact much regretted by Gypsies in these areas, who claim to have had good relations with Greek and Armenian Christians. The past is remembered in both Roman communities as a time where life was much easier than today, although Romanlar themselves are Muslims. The Greek and the Armenians provided the Romanlar with jobs, money and housing. Cleaning for old Greek or Armenians is still an occupation appreciated by Gypsy women. All these advantages vanished when the

Christian minorities left, and were replaced by migrants from south-east Anatolia.

But while in Bülbül the Roman community was able to defend their urban space, and use it for their economic activities in the formal and informal sectors, this was not the case in Tophane. Here the Romanlar suffered a greater loss after the Greeks departed and the Roman-services were no longer in demand. On the contrary, here the immigrants from Siirt were competing for the same economic niche, and were much more successful.

The differences between the two mahalles also have roots in the history of Gypsy settlement. In Tophane, Gypsies came in the 1950's to Istanbul who were born mostly in the Black Sea-town of Zonguldak, about 500 km away. The principle of chain migration which has so heavily influenced Istanbul's demographic appearance, was equally active here. A common rural background is important, and identity has been created by stressing the common origin of Zonguldak. In this quarter, the old *tribal* sections, are still remembered (*kolos, amushak, mangusar, karno, kalburcu*). There is a certain hierarchy where *kolos* have the highest rank, although this is said to be of no importance.

Bülbül on the other hand, claims to be an old settlement, and although it suffered from radical town planning policies of the 1980's – the former quarter called Cöplük was demolished – it has managed to preserve its character. The Gypsies of Bülbül do not remember the *tribal* groups very clearly, and stated that these were for them not so important at all, as they refer to themselves as *yerli* – meaning "from this place". The "old town" dwellers drew not so much on tribal names, which they thought would fit quite well for rural Gypsies, but not for town citizens. In Bülbül, I was told that belonging to a certain family (*sülali* or *taifa*) is still important. Compared to the people in Tophane, those in Bülbül are more prosperous. They have been able to purchase their own houses in the quarter – mostly bought from the Armenians leaving – and even rent these houses to new migrants coming from Africa. These African immigrants sometimes work for Roman entrepreneurs on a very poor basis, mostly in recycling firms.

Not all mechanisms attributed to the Ottoman mahalle described in the historical section could be found at work today, but some common features can be identified. Until now, despite the significant changes, the mahalle is still the basic unit in identity construction for Roman communities in Istanbul. This is evident in intra Roman discourse about the different Gypsy mahalles, and is clearly exaggerated in the tendency of mahalle marriages. In this discourse, a lot of basic assumptions are expressed which are part of other large debates going on in Turkey. So

concepts of culture, of West and East and of town, life are constructed and used for identification of the "Self" and the "Other". And this should be stressed – in contrast to European conditions – the symbolical "Other" is not the Gypsy.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to go deeper into the concept of political organisation. I made use of the concept of segmentary lineages and their cephalic political systems which was introduced into anthropology by the British social anthropologists, Evans-Pritchard and M. Fortes and Middleton and Tait in the 1940`s and 1950`s.

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14

An Overview of the *Romanlar* in Turkey

ANA OPRIŞAN

LOCATION AND IDENTIFICATION

Because of the problems of self (as opposed to *other* or *haetero*) identification, when it comes to defining the *Romanlar* (Romani people), in Turkey, it is sometimes very difficult to establish who is being referred to in the articles and monographs that deal with the Turkish Gypsies. Their presence in different areas can be hard to confirm, as can their relationship to certain self-contained religious communities. In Istanbul, they live in specific *mahalles* (neighbourhoods), such as Kasımpaşa – Çürüklük, Küçükbakkalköy, Tophane, Üsküdar Selamsız and possibly the oldest settlement in Sulukule. Besides the sedentary Romanlar, there are nomadic groups (like the *Sepetçi* and *Abdallar*), who leave the places they lived in towns and villages to follow a pre-established itinerary from spring to autumn, for occupational reasons. The trade in baskets in the region, including much of Cycladic Greece, is carried on by the *Sepetçi* for example.

The Romanlar in Turkey are called *Çingene*, *Kıpti*, *Poşa* or Boşa (in Eastern Anatolia), (in Hakkari, Mardin, Siirt and South part of Van Gypsies are often identified as *Mıtrıp*, an Arabic term for musicians), *Karaçi*, or by their occupational sub group name, like *Arabacı* (the ones who use horse carriages), or *Demirci* (iron smiths) or *Kalayıcı* (tin smiths). The authorities formally used another name for the Roma in Turkey, a term registered in their official identity cards that was "esmer vatandaş" ("brunette citizen"). In use until the 1960's it is still remembered and rejected by the Gypsies today. Many of these are pejorative, such as the latter, and the term Çingene is contested, with some notable activists such as Mustafa Aksu attempting to reclaim the term, and reverse its negative associations (much as Gypsy" has been reclaimed by English *Romanichals* as a political and cultural *ethnonym*). In the past, when identity differentiations were much clearer, a group of Greek Christian Roma was also identified as *Yunan Çingeneleri* meaning "Greek Gypsies".

ROMANLAR IN TURKEY/

LANGUAGE

Romani is spoken in the local communities of *Rumeli,* or European Turkey (Thrace and Marmara regions), the Poşalar area of Van, in eastern Turkey, and elsewhere in some communities of Anatolian Gypsies. Linguistically, there are also dialectal differences from one area to another, and from a sub group to another. Even if the Romani language is gradually less used than before, it must be said that very little research has been carried out in this field in Turkey so far, and our knowledge of Romani dialects in Turkey is very limited indeed. In the Romani language spoken by the Gypsy people in Turkey, you can encounter words from some Turkish dialects spoken in Anatolia, and from Armenian, Kurdish or Greek. Among some more itinerant groups, in particular areas of Anatolia, the language is more obviously a *creole*, Romani being mixed with Kurdish, Turkish or Persian. In these cases, linguistic code switching is frequent.

Year	*Kıptice* as "mother tongue"	2nd Language	Total	Population of Turkey	%
1935	7.855	Not recorded	7.855	13.629.488	0.58
1945	4.463	193	4.656	16.157.450	0.28

Information regarding the language spoken by the Romani people in Turkey appears in the government population censuses (see above), from 1935 and 1945. Herein, Romani language is identified as *Kıptice,* the language of the Kıptî, or *Copts*, i.e. Egyptians, a term from the Ottoman period that suggests the association between Romani people and Egypt, as elsewhere in Europe.

The 1935 census showed that 3,847 men and 4,008 women (a total of 7,855 people spoke *Kıptice* as their mother tongue). The question here is what exactly the enumerators meant by the term *Kıptice,* and what those who spoke it understood it to be. It is likely that this reflects a level of Romani language use by those who claimed to speak *Kıptice* as their mother tongue, but to what degree is not possible to ascertain. The Gypsies at this time (and since) were also the group with lower literacy levels than others. According to the census in 1935, only 141 men and 25 women of Romani origins could read and write, presumably in Turkish.

According to the 1945 census, there were 4.463 people who spoke *Kıptice* (some level of Romani) as their mother tongue; 193 people spoke Romani as their second language, suggesting a total of 4,656 Romani speakers recorded,

mostly amongst the large numbers of Gypsy people living at that time in Edirne, Çanakkale and Istanbul. According to the 1945 census, most of those described by the enumerators as being "without a religion" (in Turkish, *dinsiz*), were those who also spoke *Kıptice* as their mother tongue; from those "without a religion", 23.7% or 133 people were recorded as being *Çingene*. What we see here is some assumptions, or common prejudices, encapsulated within the official record: illiteracy, and a lack of religiosity.

RELIGION

Even if a greater part of the sedentary Romani population were Christian in the Ottoman past, the nomadic Romanlar assert that they are Muslims. Despite this, they frequently manifest different syncretic forms of religion, which have nothing to do with Islam (observing Christian saints' days, for example). More interestingly, the traditional spring festival of *Hırdelezi* or *Hıdrelez/Hıdırellez* celebrated by Roma throughout the Balkans on the 5th and 6th of May, has much older roots in pagan celebrations of rebirth and renewal, and is also observed by the non-Roma *Alevi,* or heterodox Muslim population in parts of Turkey.

The picture appears more complex still, with the *Poşa* of Tokat, in the Van region, seen today as orthodox *Sunni* Muslims, who in the past practised Armenian Orthodox Christianity. Gypsies in parts of south eastern Anatolia would seem to be closer to the *Çuki, Alevi* and *Ismā'īlī* forms of heterodox Islam, whilst some Mırtıp are of the *Shafī* Muslim rite. Whilst the religious identity of the Gypsies in the South East Turkey is less clear, the Romanlar of Marmara and Thrace are mostly Sunni Muslims of the Hanefi rite (like their Muslim brothers in Bulgaria and Romania). The whole question of the religious affiliation of Turkey's Gypsies is one that requires a great deal more research before making any confidant assertions, however.

GROUP IDENTITY

Romani identities in Turkey are frequently occupationally based (as they are in other parts of south eastern and central Europe). Confessional identity also has an influence, and the area where individual Romani people live is important in how they define themselves too. Those who live in Tophane (Istanbul) may choose to primarily define themselves as Turkish, Muslim, and "Tophane Romanları". This is conceived of as different from other Gypsies living in Sulukule for example (whom they may describe in pejorative terms).

A great part of the Roman people do not like, and would not accept the term "Çingene", due to its pejorative meaning that, over time, has

become associated with negative expressions such as "*Çingene düğünü*" (a "Gypsy wedding" – something which is not done as it is supposed to be done), "*Çingene kavgası*" (a "Gypsy fight" – one that is overly violent), "*Çingene borcu*" ("Gypsy debt" – when a debt is tripled by other debts), "*Çingene çalar, Kürt oynar*" ("the Gypsy sings, the Kurd dances" – the wrong people in the wrong place, or an unprepared person doing something he cannot actually do). As another example of the negative associations and prejudices attached to Romani people, the term *Poşa* or *Boşa*, is a pejorative, and has been ascribed to the Armenian communities of Taşköprü and Boyabat areas of Kastamonu, despite the fact that these are clearly not Romani people.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A great many Romani people came to the Balkans as part of the Ottoman Empire's military organisation, in the sixteenth century. In many of the official records from the period, the Gypsies are recorded as *Çingene, Çingane* and *Kıptî* or sometimes, *Kıbtî*. The first tax register or *defter,* concerned with the Romani population of the *Rumeli Vilayeti* (Balkan region) was conducted in 1475. A decade or so later (1487-89), another tax registration was conducted, to ascertain the status and liabilities of the Christian Gypsy population, who had certainly been in the region prior to the Ottoman conquest. One of the more comprehensive and detailed tax registers of the *Rumeli Vilayeti* refers to the period between 1522-1523, and contains details about the numbers of the Romani households, references to their religion and confessional identity, the areas populated by Gypsies, their occupations and their legal status. There were a great variety of taxes applied to the Romani people, almost at the same rates as the ones applied to the Christians, regardless of whether they were Muslim Gypsies or not. The Ottomans adopted a similar approach with the *Special Law for the Roma of the Villayet of Rumelia*, issued by Sultan Suleiman the Great in 1530, and in the *Law for the supervision of the Roma Sandjak,* issued in 1541 (the *sandjak/sancak* was not a territorial and administrative unit, but defined a category of Roma who served in the Ottoman army, or who were liable for taxes *in lieu* of military service), Muslim Gypsies being apparently taxed at higher rates than their confessional neighbours.

In *defters* from the classical Ottoman period, the Romani population was described in detail (age, occupation, marital status, etc.) and grouped into taxable communities (*cemaatı*), each community having its supervisors, or *çeribaşı*. The *cemaati* were not always identified with territorial units and included the nomadic Gypsies as well, the so-called *gezende,* from the Turkish verb *gezmek* – to travel.

Between the 15th and 16th centuries, Romani people increasingly converted to Islam, for a variety of reasons including confessional (becoming part of the *umma*, or Muslim community of believers), financial (although this was not particularly important, as taxes for Muslim Gypsies were only slightly less than those of Christians), and historical (the long association with the Ottomans). In the 19th century, with territorial changes to the Empire, the Muslim Romanlar became a majority.

The societal status of Gypsies in the Ottoman Empire was rather complicated, due to the fact that they had a special role in the social and administrative organisation of the Empire. Even if the population was divided broadly in two important categories (Muslims and non-Muslims), the Romanlar had a special status, being differentiated on the ethnic criteria (like Jews and some other groups in the Ottoman Empire) without a clear distinction between Muslim and Christian (regarding taxation liabilities). Generally, their condition was similar to that of the local population, with the exception of some minor privileges awarded to the Muslim Gypsies who worked for the army. The status of the Gypsies in the Ottoman Empire was certainly superior to that of the Roma in Western Europe, during the same historical period. An example of this was the fact that many Romani slaves fled from the vassal principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia (modern Rumania), to find a safe haven in the Empire.

Dimitrie Cantemir, in his *The System or the Structure of the Muhammadan Religion*, written in 1722 at Sankt Petersburg and published later in *Opere complete*[1], wrote of the Ottoman Gypsies in the following extract:

"...about the Gypsy people, who are numerous in the Turkish country"

> The Turks and together with them the other Muslims say that the people of the Gypsies are related with Pharaoh and state that the large Empire of the Pharaohs, exalted in the Holy Scriptures, belonged to the Gypsies; and they also say that the same people (when Moses and all the Lord's prophets cursed it), having no knowledge of letters, books and any other divine or human law, spread all over the world, by the mercy and the commandment of God. The Gypsies who believe in Muhammad consider themselves to be perfectly pious by this only title, but beside this, they do not look for the commandments and the conditions of the Law; they ignore all of it without doing or preserving anything the Law says; there are no prayers of any kind, no fasts and they don't want to even hear about Mecca; instead of sympathy they commit larcenies, frauds, charms and witch crafts (all forbidden for the Muslims).

The Sultan Suleiman, the first Ottoman emperor with this name (named also the Law Maker), when he had elaborated and enhanced his political canons and other regulations adequate to administration, wanted to enforce a law also for the Gypsies and, in this respect, he commanded that all the older Gypsies get together, no matter if they were Christians (because many of them walk around in the name of Jesus, linked by the Greek or by the Armenian church), or Muslims. And he asked everyone about his family and what religion he had. Some of them confessed they believed in Christ, but others in the Prophet Muhammad. Then, the Sultan fixed for the ones believing in Muhammad a place to stay in Constantinople's outskirts (where there was the old church of Blacherne). He gave them *imams* and *hodjas* to teach the old people and the children the Mohammedan Law (*Şeriat*) and other arrangements and Muslim ceremonies, then to teach them to frequent the mosque, to veil their women and to make marriages according to the religious Law.

But six months passed after this event and the *imams* saw no Gypsies coming to the mosque. They heard that they had celebrated marriages without imam's presence. It was this reason whereby the Sultan understood the bad situation they [Gypsies] lived in. Hearing this, the Sultan decreed that every Gypsy person had the liberty to choose their religion, adding also the favour to exempt from any tax the ones who confessed the Muhammadan religion. Making this decision public, he asked the tax collectors to record the number of the Gypsy people and those who said they were Christians were liable for the *haraç*, and began to pay the taxes. After six months, the tax collectors found that none admitted to being a Christian Gypsy. Then, the Sultan commanded that the Christian Gypsies had to pay the *haraç* together with other Christians in the Empire and the Muslim Gypsies must pay double. This decree is still in power [1722] and this is the reason why all the Gypsies who believe in Muhammad (and there are a great number of them) pay double taxes. If the Christian Gypsy will pay five talents, the Muslim Gypsy is forced to pay ten. The conclusion is that, as in the past the Gypsies were not obliged to have any religion nor comply with any law; nowadays we see our Gypsies everywhere in the same situation".

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15

Ottoman Gypsies & Taxation: A comment upon Cantemir's "...about the Gypsy people"

ADRIAN MARSH

It has been frequently suggested by Romani Studies scholars in relation to Ottoman Gypsies, that the poll-tax liability existed *both* for Christian and Muslim Gypsies, something regarded as illegal under the *şeriat*, or religious law, indicating a particular discrimination towards the Gypsies on the part of the Ottomans. The notion that the Muslim inhabitants of the Empire paid no taxes whilst the Christians paid the poll-tax, or the *cizye*, *haraç*, *ispence* and other terms used in these discussions, has given rise to much confusion. Here I briefly outline the aspects of the system, as they affected Gypsy communities, in the light of Cantemir's description, extracted in Oprişan's earlier discussion in this volume.

The taxation system of the Ottoman Empire was regulated by a number of factors, namely ethnic and religious identity, ability to pay, and the mode of living (whether nomadic or sedentary). Other factors, such as the Ottoman state's definition of communities as heterodox (as with the *Alevis* or *Kızılbaş* – meaning "red heads" from the head covering they wore)[1], also came into play. Information was collected in *defters* or tax registers, regularly during the 15th and 16th centuries, but almost entirely desisted during the "age of the *ayāns*" in the seventeenth century, when local "notables" were able to subvert central authority, frequently sheltering whole communities from the rapacious tax-farmers, in return for rights over the community. This information from the *defterdars*, was passed on to central government regarding the tax liabilities of the population, as the basis for calculating state revenues.[2] As Lindner[3] has shown taxation was used as a means of state control in the case of nomadic and semi-nomadic groups in attempting to enforce *sedentarisation*, and its likely that such a policy included Ottoman Gypsies, which possibly lies at the heart of Cantemir's rather surprising

suggestion that Muslim Gypsies were required to pay *double* the taxation rate of their Christian counterparts (Lidner, 1984). As the *defters* clearly show, the majority of Christian Gypsies in the Balkans or *Rumelia* were sedentary, whilst *nomadism* in Anatolia was, and remains a consistent mode of existence for Gypsies and others[4].

Ottoman fiscal organisation was a complicated and dynamic system that changed frequently in response to exigencies, over the existence of the Empire, but the fundamental revenues came from the *cizye* or "poll tax", and *mukataas*, a variety of different revenue sources detailed in the registers of the Ottoman treasury. These were almost entirely contracted out by the Porte (the Ottoman government) for collection by private tax-farmers, who themselves would often sub-contract the collection of the actual sums. The poll-tax generally amounted to some 48% of the state budget in total, with the majority of that revenue derived from the European provinces; in 1475 the *cizye* from the *Rumeli vilayet* totalled 850,000 gold ducats, whilst that of the *Anadolu vilayet* amounted to a mere 20,000. In the same year, the tax revenue from Ottoman Gypsies amounted to some 9,000 gold ducats, clearly demonstrating that the Ottomans were taxing Gypsies as a separate category long before the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent, *Kanuni* or Law Giver (1520-66 CE). Despite Cantemir's ingenuous explanation, the reason for this differentiation in taxation levels for Muslim Gypsies, as compared to other Muslims, has not been found, and it is my suggestion that the Byzantine practice of exacting the *kephthalion*, or "head-tax" from Muslims, Jews, heterodox Christians and Gypsies was continued[5]. The Byzantines regarded the *Aiguptissa*, or "Egyptians" as unreliable Christians at best, if not outright sorcerers, practitioners of magic and soothsayers. In this sense, the tax as it was applied to Gypsies was adopted by the Ottomans, with an additional impost being levied upon Christian Gypsies as *zimmi*, or "people of the book". A great deal of the Ottoman taxation system stemmed from Byzantine practice.

However, it must be noted that *all* Muslims did pay taxes on a variety of goods and services and as *avariz* (exceptional taxes)[6]. Most importantly, the Muslim male population was liable for anything up to twenty-five years military service with the Sultan's armies. Those Christians performing military service as border guards and auxiliaries (for example the Gypsy militia that defended Kosovo against the Habsburg invasions of Prince Eugene, in 1677) received dispensations and exemptions. Muslim Gypsies generally were liable for taxes at roughly half the rate of the Christian Gypsies (which Cantemir reverses in his description, possibly for reasons stated above), though whether as suspect Muslims, unreliable tax-payers (like the heterodox *Alevi Tahtacılar*, or *Kızılbash* or the nomadic *Yörüks*), or as a form of ethnic discrimination is not clear.

Until the *firman* of 1878 that abolished the exemption of Muslim Gypsies from the Ottoman armed forces, except in exceptional circumstances, a *bedeli askeri* or military tax was levied from them on a household basis, similar to the *cizye* exacted from the Christian Gypsies[7]. This would suggest that there was a certain "custom and practice" regarding aspects of Gypsy taxation, that may have developed in addition to the formal legislative measures regarding the communities.

The tax liabilities of communities themselves also changed frequently, depending upon the need of central government to finance the various aspects of its functions, most notably war. Whilst Christians did pay the *cizye* as *hakuk*, or lawful taxes exacted under the *şeriat*, they also paid a variety of taxes in the Balkan lands dating from previous feudal regimes, often called *ispence* or *haraç* by the Ottomans. These replaced the feudal dues exacted by lords over the peasantry in the pre-Ottoman era, and were considered by the Ottomans to derive from the *kul* status (serfdom) of the peasantry under these regimes, and were therefore not recognised by the *şeriat*. They were always collected by the local cavalry officer (*sipahi*) in cash payments, as part of supporting this military class. With the demise of the effectiveness of the *sipahi* cavalry, the *ispence* and *haraç* were collected by the tax-farmers' agents in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Muslim communities paid a variety of taxes under the legalistic notion of *avariz*, or exceptional war-taxes during the earlier Empire, but these came to be regular rather than exceptional by the end of the sixteenth century, as the Ottoman state's need to finance the so-called 'Long War' (1591 – 1606 CE) with the Habsburgs became acute.[8] The frequent attempts at reorganisation and improvement of the collection during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially under the Köprülü dynasty of grand viziers meant adjustments to the levels but never saw the eradication of the tripartite division of the *cizye*, despite pressure on the sultans to do so. The division of *ala* (wealthy), *evsat* (middle) and *ednā* (poor) remained the basis for assessing the *cizye* throughout the Empire's history.[9]

We frequently find the taxes from Gypsy communities recorded under the designation *Kıpıı* or *Kıbti*, meaning "Copt" or Egyptian[10]. The seventeenth century record of the administration of the *sancak* of Nove Zamky (Uyvar) region, captured in 1663, demonstrates the economic vibrancy of Gypsy communities in parts of the empire, when the "Coptic community" provided 16,000 *akçe* of a total revenue of 101,000 *akçe*[11]. The community may be seen as unrepresentative in its engagement with a wide variety of different occupations and activities, including apiculture, but the description of them as "Copts" may give us clues to the discovery about the taxation and economy of Gypsies in the Ottoman Empire, in a more complete fashion than previously. New data may help to develop

our understanding of the complexity of Gypsy life and economy, and significantly redress some of the oddities and anomalies that appear in Cantemir. Such understanding may supply us with a different view about Gypsy identity in the past, and its impact upon the present Turkish communities.

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16

Nabil Sobhi Hanna: A Personal Reflection

BERNHARD STRECK

I would like, first, to thank the organisers of this first conference on Gypsies of the Orient that they have included a chance to commemorate our Egyptian colleague, who has been a pioneer in this area of study, and has unfortunately passed out of scientific life much too early in the programme. Nabil Hanna's first monograph on the *Ghajar* of the Nile valley, published initially in Arabic, and subsequently as a short version in English (and almost in its entirety in German), allowed the social sciences entry into the world of this group of Egyptian *Gypsies* (well-known since the Middle Ages). He enriched this little considered field of research decidedly, for the first time since Newbold and Kremer. In the following passages I would like to summarise the personal ties I have to Nabil.

I first became aware of the name Nabil Hanna when he was mentioned to me towards the beginning of the 1980s in Khartoum by El Haj Bilal Omer, who had studied with him in Hull, England. During a visit to Prof. Cunnison in Hull, Richard Rottenburg and I discovered that he had already returned to Egypt before the completion of his work. I acquired Nabil's address and a copy of his Arabic language book on the Ghajar in 1984, thanks to the mediation of Ahmed El Kayatis. In a letter I asked him to allow me to organise a German translation of his work, since I suspected to find significant parallels to the situation in the Sudan of the *Halab*, *Ghajar* and *Bahlawan* that I was studying at that time.

The translation dragged on, since I was continuing my research in the Sudan at the same time, until 1988. I initially worked together with Mohammed et Tayeb, a Sudanese student at the Technical University Berlin. Later, Ahmed El Kayati took his place. Neither this religious philosopher and mystic, nor his computer scientist predecessor, had any great interest in the topic, but their Arabic was much better than mine, so that after the fatiguing transcription of the often complicated academic Arabic, and endless debates about particular terms, a passable German text developed with time.

After initiating (with Fritz W. Kramer), our Sudanese ethnography series "Sudanesische Marginalien" in the Trickster-Verlag in Munich, I wanted to publish Nabil's translation and my monograph on the Halab as close together as possible since my description of the Sudanese group referred frequently to Nabil's work, and the two texts supplemented each other very well. What Nabil described from a sociological and integrationist point of view, I approached from an ethnological and historical perspective. The findings showed that the Gypsy groups on the lower and middle Nile had very much in common, which meant that a close relationship between them, had to be postulated. What they altogether did not have was a nameable Romani vocabulary, with which we could correct respective speculations in the pertinent literature. The Ghajar in Egypt and the Halab in the Sudan are marginal groups in an already very heterogeneous Arabic-speaking population, and take the position, where delimitation is necessary, of an Arabic "Rotwelsch", as Littman already described it in 1920.

When I finally met Nabil in person for the first time, with whose formulated Arabic thoughts I had been wrestling for many years, he had long since moved on from his *tsiganological* studies. He was in Ulm at the beginning of the 1990s taking part as a guest of the University at a symposium on the hospice movement. That was his new area of interest. I asked him, what an Arabic-Islamic society, in which family and seniority were still vital, needed such institutions for. In his ever careful manner he tried to correct my simplistic perception of the socially stable Orient, and I noticed that he, as a *Copt* with a minority perspective sharpened over centuries, saw Egyptian society from an entirely different position than my Muslim friends in Egypt and the Sudan.

My second encounter with Nabil took place at the Conference of Gypsy Lore Society in Leyden, Holland in 1995. His book had by that time been published in German, and he assumed I would now be able to pay him a generous honorarium as author. After I explained to him in detail the complicated calculations for the translation and the publishing of the book for which funding from the Free University of Berlin, the Stiftung Volkwagenwerk and the VG Wort had to be organised, he was content to accept the additional free copies that I had brought him. Nabil was a very modest and reserved person who nevertheless resolutely pursued his goals. He would never otherwise have made it to a sociology professorship at the Cairo University; he once described over an entire evening, the complex web of power relations that existed there. We had intended to discuss a possible University co-operation between Leipzig and Cairo, but since Gypsy studies were no longer his main area of focus, we found few concrete points in common.

When, in the years that followed, a Leipzig anthropology student decided to go to Egypt, I gave them Nabil's address. Thus, he knew that my oriental studies were continuing. We were unfortunately never to realise the planned co-operation of German anthropologists studying Egyptian Gypsies, and Egyptian anthropologists or sociologists, studying German Gypsies. Nabil never did get to hear about how *tsiganology* in Leipzig has been established as part of a research project on the interaction of nomadic and sedentary populations. The exiled Sudanese student Hayder Ibrahim Ali, my co-translator and friend, Ahmed El Kayati, and one of the staff members in the special research project, Katharin Lange, reported to me independently of the passing away of Nabil Sobhi Hanna in Cairo. He remains with us in spirit, and will be part of our future studies through his well observed and carefully written monograph, published in three languages, on the Egyptian Gypsies of *Sitt Jeranaha* or *Sett Guiranha*, the cryptonym for his study area south of Cairo (which translated, means "goddess of her neighbours"). The social scientific and anthropological study of the Gypsies of the Orient has hardly begun. Those who work in this area, so rich in surprises, will not be able to ignore the pioneering work of Nabil Sobhi Hanna.

Translated from German by Andreas Hemming

17

The Turkish Gypsies in the Balkans and the Countries of the Former Soviet Union

ELENA MARUSHIAKOVA & VESSELIN POPOV

In some countries on Balkans, especially in Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia, Yugoslavia and Romania live communities, who are identified by their surrounding populations as "*Turski tsigani*", "*Turko-Gifti*", and other similar names. In many cases the Gypsies themselves use the same appellations. These are most clearly translated as Turkish Gypsies, although the general English term is not the exact equivalent of "*Tsigani*" or "*Gifti*", as the latter is strictly limited to an ethnically identified group. These Gypsies are Muslims, in most of the cases they are wholly or partially Turkish-speaking. Quite often they also speak *Romani*, or have spoken this language in the past, and today it is preserved only by the older generation. Frequently, a mixture of Turkish and *Romani* is used. We do not refer to one unified and homogeneous community, as the so-called Turkish Gypsies are divided by the existing national borders, and differ between themselves according to various and differing parameters.

The existence of these Gypsy communities in the Balkans is something "natural", in the sense that it conforms with objective laws governing the development of societies, bearing in mind the history of the region. For nearly five centuries these lands were integral part of the Ottoman Empire, and a large number of the Gypsies living in the Empire, accepted the dominant confessional identity of *Muslim*. With this they also used, to a greater or lesser extent, the Turkish language. Many Gypsies additionally changed their identity by accepting a *Turkish* one. These processes have been documented during the period of the Ottoman Empire. Since that time, there has been established a correlation between notions of religious and ethnic identity, which is frequently observed with the Turkish Gypsies, in that the label "Turkish" suggests that they are Muslims, and conversely, as Muslims they are described as "Turks".

The creation of the new ethno-national states on the Balkans in the 19th century placed the so-called Turkish Gypsies into a new,

fundamentally altered situation. The state religion became Catholic or Orthodox Christianity of various forms (Bulgarian, Serbian, Rumanian or Greek), whilst the official language also changed, and with it the whole system of state government. This led to changes in the societal status and position of the Turkish Gypsies, an important factor that in turn influenced the processes of changes in the complex structuring of their identity.

Here we will give a brief description of the main tendencies in the development of identity amongst the Turkish Gypsies, in the differing Balkan countries. These processes are diverse and multidirectional, sometimes even contradictory, and are influenced by factors at different levels in the sphere of the *macro* society in which they live, as in their group's internal *heterogeneity*.

In Serbia, which was established as an independent country at the beginning of the 19th century, the Turkish Gypsies live mainly in the regions of south eastern Serbia; in the regions of Nish and Vranya, or what might be described as the former *Sandzhak* of Nish. After the creation of the Serbian state in 1817, the greater part of the Muslim Gypsy population left the country, whilst the remainder gradually converted to Serbian Orthodoxy and shed their characteristics as Turkish Gypsies. With the amalgamation of the *Sandzhak* of Nish with Serbia in 1878, the Serbian state attempted to force the Gypsies to accept the Orthodoxy, but without particular success, and today most of the Gypsies in this region are Muslims. The name Turkish Gypsies is however, nowadays used quite rarely, as the *Roma* identity has grown stronger and this group has come to self determine as "Roma". Within the Roma, they can be differentiated as *Arlia*.

The processes of strengthening Roma identity within the former Turkish Gypsies are typical not only in the region of the former *Sandzhak* (an Ottoman administrative area), of Nish, but as a whole for the countries of former Yugoslavia. The existing groups of Muslim Gypsies nowadays are differentiated according their group identity, for example the *Chergari* in Bosnia and Montenegro.

In Macedonia where the majority of Gypsies are Muslims, the situation is a little different. After the creation of Federative Republic of Macedonia, as a part of Yugoslavia after WWII, there began a process of change of identity with some of the Gypsies, although these processes have their origins in older trends and developments. Most Gypsies in this context preserved their *Roma* identity and inter-group divisions, but a number of them gradually chose to redefine their identity as Turkish. These processes appear as clearly visible in the census data, where one small group of Gypsies declares themselves to be Turks.

A significant number of them emigrated to Turkey at different times, where they (and their descendants) have almost entirely accepted Turkish identity. Those remaining in Macedonia mainly live in the cities of western Macedonia - *Shtip*, *Veles*, *Kochani*, *Strumitsa*, as well as in Skopje (not in Roma *mahallas*, but spread throughout the surrounding population). Other Roma call them mockingly "*Yarım ağaları*" (i.e. *half-lords*). They still preserve their Romani language to a degree, and also speak Turkish.

During the last few years the Roma issue has become especially topical for Macedonia (and as a whole in Eastern Europe). Many foundations and Roma NGO's (non-governmental organisations) have appeared; supporting Roma rights, and this appears to be a factor influencing some of the "*Yarım ağaları*" to revert to their Roma identity. Some have even founded their own Roma NGOs. In Pirin, in Macedonia part of the Turkish Gypsies preserve their Roma identity whilst another group prefers to declare themselves as Turks, although not very empathically, mixing ethnicity with their professed religion (Islam).

In Greece the situation is more complex. In Aegean Macedonia, incorporated into Greece after the Balkan wars (c. 1913) live differing groups of Gypsies, a significant number of them being former Muslims. One group, predominantly residing in Thessaloniki, (with a smaller community in Athens) are forced migrants from Asia Minor, part of the agreement on exchanged populations resulting from the Lausanne Peace Treaty of 1923. Nowadays they preserve their Roma identity, but a large number of them have converted to Greek Orthodoxy, often through their own choice or as a result of the pressure from the Greek state.

The *Turko-Gifti*, are predominantly Turkish speaking, and only some of them speak Romani in addition, living mainly in Aegean Thrace. This region was annexed to Greece also by the Lausanne treaty, which guarantied the recognition of the minority status of Muslims living there. At present, there are complex processes at work, in terms of identity. A group of the Gypsies continue to use the ethnically neutral (and officially recognised by the Greek state) designation of "Muslims". Another, quite small group demonstrate a Turkish identity whilst a third group has quite clearly expressed a strong Romani identity, exemplified by the statement: "Only we, the *Turko-Gifti* are the real, the true Roma".

Perhaps the most interesting tendency is the fourth, which can only be understood in the context of identity shifts amongst the *Pomaks* (also officially described as *Slavophone*, i.e. the Slavic-speaking Muslim population of Aegean Thrace). Significant numbers of them exhibit a new identity, a self-asserted *Pomak* identity, with their own, rather quasi-

autochthonous history being constructed, according to which they are the *true* Macedonians, descendants of the soldiers of Alexander the Great. Correspondingly, a group of the Macedonian Gypsies have created their own quasi history, according to which they are an integral part of the *Pomak* community, descendants of Indian warriors and mercenaries from the army of Alexander the Great. In other variants, they claim to be descended from slaves brought by this army to the Macedonian lands.

The situation with the Turkish Gypsies in Bulgaria is the most complicated. In Bulgaria the Turkish Gypsies are the most numerous and, at the same time heterogeneous, community, perhaps encompassing about 300 - 400 thousands persons. The processes of shifting identities flow quite differently in the different regions, as well as amongst differing Gypsy groups. In the past in north western Bulgaria, as well as in Sofia and Kyustendil, Muslim Gypsies predominated, but today these have largely converted to Bulgarian Orthodoxy. Nowadays they assert a Roma identity, preserving (at least partially) their internal group structures.

Some groups living in other places of Eastern Bulgaria, have preserved their Romani language (together with their use of Turkish), and a strong Roma identity Some of them maintain Islam as their professed religion, for instance the *Futadzhii* and *Fichiri* in southern Bulgaria, the *Erlii* in the western Rodopas region, *Feredzhelii* in north eastern Bulgaria, and the *Mexterii* in the Dobrudzha. Others have converted to Bulgarian Orthodoxy, for example the *Musikanti* (or *Chalgadzhii*) in north eastern Bulgaria, or *Gradeshki Tsigani* in south eastern Bulgaria. Both these last communities are very close in their spoken dialects, and in more recent times they have been resettled, from the regions of Sliven and Kotel. Other, quite big sections of the Gypsy community in these regions have lost their former group divisions and describe themselves only as *Xoraxane Roma* (i.e. *Turkish Roma*).

The larger communities live predominantly in eastern Bulgaria, who are entirely Turkish speaking, or speak Romani in a strongly *Turkicised* form, amongst the older generations. These communities firmly deny they are in fact Roma, although the surrounding population describes them as Turkish Gypsies. Usually when they are asked to determine their identity, they often prefer the ethnically neutral category *millet* (meaning "people" or "nation" in Turkish), rarely other categories like Muslims or other minorities. Large numbers of them demonstrate a Turkish identity, at least in front of strangers, and describe themselves as Turks to the census enumerators. Some of them have preserved their group identity, for instance *Usta-milliet* (meaning master black-smiths) and *Charale* or *Kyuldzhii* (which actually is one and the same in Turkish and Romani, reflecting also their former occupation as black-smiths) in north eastern Bulgaria.

When these processes of identity change, from a Roma identity to a Turkish one (often accompanied by a shift from Romani-speakers to becoming Turkish language-speakers) started, and how they developed raises important and interesting questions. We have already mentioned that the beginning of these processes can be identified as taking place during the times of the Ottoman Empire, which is logically explainable and well-known, as groups of Gypsies became assimilated to the governing community voluntarily. Paradoxically however, it would appear that these processes became rapidly intensified in the context of an independent Bulgarian state after 1878, i.e. at a time when these communities become oriented not toward the ruling majority, but towards another minority. The explanation here, we suggest, could be looked for in a common religion (Islam), and in the identification of a religious identity with ethnicity; but a more important factor is the much higher community status of the Turks in Bulgaria, than that of the Gypsies. Turks could not be very loved by Bulgarians, but it is widely-known that they are inheritors of a great empire, and that they have their own country of origin, while in the eyes of the macro-society, the Gypsies are simply regarded as *Gypsies*, and their status in Bulgarian society is much lower.

And the intensification of these processes is quite impressive. According to recently published data from a census at the beginning of the twentieth century it is clear that in some villages of the Veliko Tarnovo region this transition is especially rapid. In 1905, communities of Romani speaking Gypsies are registered as residents there, whilst after five years in the same villages there lived only Turks, or Turkish speaking Gypsies. Bernard Gilliat-Smith, at this time a vice-consul in Varna, recorded various dialects of Romani from groups or individuals from local Gypsy communities. Today in Varna, only Gypsies who have moved there in more recent times speak Romani. The older communities are Turkish speaking and predominantly demonstrate a Turkish identity. Similar to this is the situation in other big cities such as Burgas, Ruse, Razgrad, Veliko Tarnovo, Lovetch, Plovdiv, Pazardzhik, and in smaller ways in Sliven, Yambol, Shumen and many other places (including many rural regions, mainly in north eastern Bulgaria).

Roma activism has itself demonstrated a sometimes hesitant notion of identity. The first organization of this kind, "Istikbal", was founded in 1919, and incorporated in 1931 by the "National Muslim Organization for Education and Culture", itself renamed in 1932 to the "Common Muslim National Cultural and Educational Union". In the program documents of these organizations the word "Gypsy" is never mentioned, and the main goal was described as the demand for inclusion in the trusteeship of the mosques and the boards governing of *vakıf* (Muslim charitable)

foundations. The driving figure of these organizations was a Gypsy from Sofia, Shakir Pashov. After WWII he founded and led the "All Gypsies' Organization Against Fascism and Racism, and for the Promotion of the Cultural Development of the Gypsy Minority in Bulgaria", which published several Gypsy newspapers and worked for many years for the active development of the Gypsy minority in Bulgaria.

After the changes in central, eastern and south eastern Europe 1989 new factors began to influence the processes of identity changes amongst Turkish Gypsies. Turkish satellite television broadcasting massively enters into the homes of the Gypsies, and so the usage of Turkish language was strengthened. The political party of Bulgarian Turks, the "Movement for Rights and Freedoms", has also attracted large numbers of Gypsies, who accept without question their declared Turkish identity, though on everyday level the Bulgarian Turks have continued to regard them as *Gypsies*. It should be mentioned however, that in some places the voluntary assimilation of Turkish Gypsies has already been completed and local Turks have largely accepted them as an integral part of the community. On the other hand, the "Roma issue" has become increasingly topical, and many foundations and NGOs have launched programmes and supported projects that are oriented towards Roma communities.

In this situation several leaders of the *milliet* started to play what might be described as a public "game" with their identity and identity of their communities – in some cases they demonstrated their firm Turkish identity, whilst in other contexts, although not very manifestly, they have hinted at their Roma origins. This "game" with Roma identity is not very frank; it is exercised mainly in front of some Roma leaders or with of donor organizations. Together with this, other formulas of compromise are searched for, combining both identities (or eliminating their appearance in the foreground); for example, one such leader proposed the theory of the "minorities of the ghetto". Some political parties were created in the midst of *Milliet* and they have also been searching for neutral or euphemistic names - e.g. *New Democracy 21* or *Democratic Congress*, and very typically, the most recently founded party of this kind in the town of Burgas is called *The Party of the City Turks*. The political parties of *Milliet* also play the identity "game" - during one round of elections they are partners with the "Movement of Rights and Freedoms", during others with Roma parties.

Particularly interesting are the cases associated with searching for a third way to identity development, which has led to the creation of a new identity. This third way liberates the Turkish Gypsies from the necessity of making the difficult choice how to identify themselves

- as Turks or as Roma. Examples of this can be observed at all stages of development, sometimes in an increasingly obvious way such as, for example, *Usta Milliet* in the region of the town of Dobritch. This group are now beginning to create their own "history" according to which they are descendants of an unknown tribe of blacksmiths from Afghanistan, who were the most famous gunsmiths at the time of the Ottoman Empire.

Another variation of this type of identity quest can be seen among some *Xoraxane Roma* (Turkish Gypsies) from the Ludogorie region who claim they are descendants of peoples of Arab origins, from the *Koreysha* clan who lived in Bulgaria in 1200 – 1300 CE. Proof of this early Muslim presence, it is argued, can be seen in the tombstones from all over the region (in Russe, Razgrad, Silistra, Dulovo, Isperih and Kubrat), allegedly dating from the reign of King Kaloyan c.1205 CE. This is a repetition of a persistent historical myth of Arab origin, which is also common amongst Bulgarian Muslims (the so-called *Pomaks*), and is based on a mistaken, or deliberate misreading of the dates, inscribed upon Muslim tombstones, which, of course, are dated according to the Islamic calendar (A.H. or *al-Hijra*, i.e. beginning in 622 CE/1 AH), but are interpreted according to the Christian one.

The Muslim Turkish Gypsies also combine their claim for Arab origin with the "Indian thesis" about the origin of Roma, on occasion, in a kind of conflated account. According to one legend, recorded in the region of the town of Sliven, Roma are "*hasil* Arabs" (i.e. true Arabs), that came to this region *via* India. This story is "confirmed" by a frequent and familiar formula – according to the informant this account is recorded in a secret book kept in the attic of his school, and after reading this he was discovered, and that is why he was punished by the school principal.

As a whole, the processes of identity change among the so-called Turkish Gypsies in Balkan states are quite similar, though they appear in various forms. From a schematic point of view, it could be said that these processes are developing in two main directions – both towards preserving and developing a Roma identity, *and* towards accepting of Turkish identity, with differing borderline cases, trying to neutralize (or at least to hide) the *contra-versions* in these two main directions. Searching for a third path of development is still in its infancy, it exists mainly as potential, but this does not mean that under certain circumstances it could not develop rapidly (for a comparison it is enough to follow the case of the "Balkan Egyptians" in Macedonia, Kosovo, Yugoslavia and Albania).

Multidirectional processes of identity development among the Gypsies, living in the Balkan lands of the former Ottoman Empire, can be observed in another cultural and historical region in the case

of the Gypsies of the Crimea. The Crimean Tatar *Khanate* (patrimony) was integrated into the Ottoman Empire until the end of eighteenth century and during this time there settled two groups of Gypsies, whose descendants live nowadays in the countries of the former USSR.

The first group are the *Krimurya, Krimtsi* or *Kirimitka/Kirimlitika Roma*. They are former nomads, who have migrated into Crimea from the Balkans. Nowadays part of this group continues to live in Crimea, but most of them have migrated to the Ukraine and Russia – many of them are now living in Odessa, Kiev, Nikolaev, Moscow, Nizhni Novgorod and elsewhere. They continue to profess Islam (at least formally), and they preserve their Romani language and a clear and strong Roma identity.

Quite different, and much more severe, is the historical destiny of the second group of Gypsies. They refer to themselves as *Taifa/Daifa* (according to the different Tatar dialects), meaning "clan", or "family". They migrated to the Crimea from Asia Minor (Anatolia), have a settled way of life, and are Muslims. *Daifa* communities lost their Romani language sometime between the end of nineteenth and the beginning of twentieth centuries, and their main language has become that of the Tatars. Together with this language change their internal divisions have ceased to exist. As Gypsies, they were victims of the Nazi terror, during their occupation of the Crimea in WWII, and because they were defined as "Tatars" they were deported by the Soviet authorities together with the Tatars, to Central Asia, returning to the Crimea only in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The *Dajfa* people recall that in the past, they were inclined to identify themselves as *Türkmen*, or "Turks", a fact confirmed by the memories of some Tatars too. Among some of older people it is still possible to hear stories about their "Turkish" origins, most often identified with the town of Mersin, in Turkey.

Nowadays, however, they are accepted by the Crimean Tatars as an integral part of their society. The elaborated and commonly accepted "national theory" of the Crimean Tatars states that their nation was created from differing components – the steppe Tatars or *Nogais*, the mountain Tatars or *Tats*, the coastline Tatars, and the *Daifa*. The word Gypsies (*Çingene*) almost disappeared from public usage and is considered as old fashioned. Most of the *Daifa* themselves accept the complex, dual identity (in the first place as Tatars, and after that as being from Gypsy origins), and the tendency is towards full assimilation of them in the Crimean Tatar community. This assimilation into Crimean Tatar community is facilitated by the accepted political and national ideology among the Tatars - it is nearly impossible to find a person

from Tatar community who will express in public an oppositional point of view on question of their *ethno-genesis*. However, it should be noted that in everyday life, and through popular stereotypes, the nuances of discriminatory perceptions of the *Dajfa* still exist. In spite of this, the process of assimilation of *Dajfa* into the wider Tatar community looks irreversible.

In summary, we could say that in the field until now we have observed several paths of development of identities among Muslim Gypsies, and one transitional stage. This transitional stage is marked by the use of a neutral category. The development of identity could be on the one hand towards the preserving of, or reverting to a Roma identity, and on the other hand it might be seen in a change of identity in common with the surrounding population, or another, more prestigious minority, or even a newly created identity. It is possible to see this process as part of the merging with another recent, or "newly born" nation, in the case of the *Daifa*of the Crimea.

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18

Where Exactly is *Çınçın Bağları?* The Boundaries of a "Gypsy" Neighbourhood in Ankara[1]

EMİNE ONARAN İNCİRLİOĞLU

Çınçın Bağları is a residential neighbourhood to the northeast of Ankara where, probably, the poorest people in the capital city of Turkey live. It is located near the old city centre, *Ulus*, and is a part of the Altındağ Municipality. It is not possible to locate the area in the most recent Ankara maps under *Çınçın Bağları* and the technicians at the Altındağ Municipality cannot help demarcate even its official boundaries, as it is not recognized as an official neighbourhood name. Those officials who have worked in the field or have been in the area for various reasons state that several neighbourhoods "used to pass" as *Çınçın Bağları*, yet "there is no such place called *Çınçın*," although there are some municipal maps and plans on which the label *Çınçın* is printed. Official census figures in Turkey do not include the ethnic composition of the population, yet according to people who are familiar with the area, the inhabitants are migrants from Central and Eastern Anatolia, some of whom are Turks and Kurds, and some Gypsies.[2] *Although the ethnic composition of the population overlap with the physical space they inhabit, drawing the boundaries of this neighbourhood is a major challenge. Depending on where you are and whom you talk to, the boundaries of the neighbourhood shift and are redefined.*

THE PLACE AND THE PEOPLE: ROMA AND *GADJÉ* INHABITANTS OF *ÇINÇIN BAĞLARI*

Typical of poor, slum areas in Ankara, including parts of Ulus and the old Citadel,[3] a turnover of the local population has been experienced in the *Çınçın Bağları* neighbourhood. While the majority of the old residents, predominantly migrants from Erzincan, Eskişehir and the Kalecik district of Ankara have moved out to other neighbourhoods and subdivisions of Ankara in the late 1980s, new migrants have moved in, particularly from the Elmalı district of Kırıkkale. Old residents from

Erzurum, Bayburt and Gümüşhane still remain in the neighbourhood, and among other regions of origin, Tokat, Çankırı, Kars, Doğu Beyazıt (Ağrı) and Çubuk (Ankara) are mentioned. Those from Eskişehir, Bolu, Elmalı and Kalecik are known to be Roma who predominantly inhabit the *Gültepe* subdivision, although there are individual Gypsy families dispersed in other parts of *Çınçın*.

For many outsiders, several subdivisions in the area are included in the *Çınçın Bağları* neighbourhood. According to the officials at the Altındağ Municipality, these include Server Somuncuoğlu, Çalışkanlar, Aktaş, Kemal Zeytinoğlu, parts of Gültepe, parts of Sultan Murat, parts of Atilla and parts of Örnek Mahallesi. Lay people who are somewhat familiar with the area include other subdivisions of Altındağ in their "cognitive maps" of *Çınçın Bağları*. For those living in any one of these subdivisions, however, *Çınçın* is a distinct, much smaller area "up there." *Çınçın* is always the other's neighbourhood. According to some Turks who live in the vicinity, Kurds and Gypsies live there, and according to its Kurdish inhabitants, only the Gypsies. In fact most people assume that the name is derived from *Çingene*, the word for Gypsy in Turkish. Thus, it is *hetaerotopia* – others' place – although not exactly in the way Foucault has used the concept. This politicised concept is applicable to *Çınçın Bağları*, as both the neighbourhood and its inhabitants, the *Roma*, are identified as the 'other' – both formally and socially.[4]

The *Çınçın* inhabitants, whether or not they are Gypsies, are known to mingle only with their *hemşehri*, from their own region of origin. *Hemşehri*s live in close by houses on the same street, men frequenting their own coffee houses, and they usually avoid other *Çınçın* residents who have different origins. During the research, one of my Kurdish informants who lived in a small squatter house at the border of the *Çınçın Bağları* neighbourhood and who befriended us soon after we started this research refused to take me to the "depths" of *Çınçın*, on the grounds that "Bolulu *Çingenler*" (Gypsies from *Bolu*) lived there and it was dangerous, and made sure that her son did not go "there" with me either, although some of their relatives and neighbours had eloped with Gypsies and her own daughter had moved into that area. Where exactly the "depths," that dangerous zone of *Çınçın* begins is not clear. Yet, in the 1980s, Yaşar Seyman, who has written, by far, the best ethnographic stories on *Çınçın*, had described the place as "the Texas of Ankara" and "the registry document of Altındağ" to draw attention to the high number of criminals and ex-convicts residing in the neighbourhood.[5]

ÇINÇIN BAĞLARI: "DO YOU HAVE TO GO THERE?"

Although I was born and lived most of my life in Ankara, my first encounter with *Çınçın Bağları* was through my students. In an

undergraduate elective course I teach, "Space Culture and Identity", I ask my students to conduct a mini ethnographic study in Ankara. Their assignment is to produce a research paper describing a particular place, the identities of its various users, the ways within which this place is used and the meanings attributed to this place. In 2001 and 2002, four students selected to study the *Çınçın Bağları* neighbourhood for their projects and three of them came up with horror stories. Two students who produced a team project were afraid to walk around in the area and to take photographs, so the bulk of their research consisted of an interview with a former resident that had left *Çınçın* after he was educated and employed in waged work. Another student, again afraid of going into the "depths" of the *Çınçın* neighbourhood, restricted his research to one of the primary schools in the area, and interviewed some teachers and the principal. According to these students' second-hand findings, a considerable number of *Çınçın* residents were "lawless people", undocumented Gypsies who were not registered – and thus not officially recognized citizens in the Turkish Republic, drug dealers and pushers, prostitutes, pick pockets and all kinds of petty criminals. The students reported that the outsiders would "feel like a foreigner" and were afraid to be within *Çınçın* boundaries. The residents, including children, were not hospitable to roaming strangers in the neighbourhood. They carried and displayed razors, knives, pocket-knives, and even handguns, closely followed the passers by and verbally threatened them. "They stare you in the eye as if they challenge you," the students said, "and throw stones at cars." Only one of my students could mange to establish reasonable, although limited, relations with a few Gypsy inhabitants through a "key informant" in the neighbourhood – a *gadjé* immigrant from Erzurum, whom she happened to know personally. "There is no way of entering *Çınçın*," she said, "unless you know someone there personally."

These findings indicated to me a strong sense of boundary around *Çınçın Bağları*, on the part of both residents and outsiders. When I decided to study the neighbourhood in terms of its boundaries that separate it from (and join it with) the rest of Ankara, several people among my friends and family were alarmed. "Those people are dangerous," they said, "even the police do not patrol there in pairs but go in as a crew." "They jump in front of the car and get hurt so that they can get money from you" someone warned me. Several volunteered to accompany me when I visited the area but first they insisted: "Do you have to go there?"

GYPSIES BOUND AND UNBOUND

There is a special, maybe unique, universal relationship between the concept of boundaries and Gypsies. First of all, it is common knowledge, in Turkey as elsewhere in the world, that Gypsies are a

wandering, *unbound* people. And then, there are always rigid *boundaries* between Gypsies and the non-Gypsies, as they typically do not mix with other people in societies they live, and through the discrimination they are subjected to, they are rigidly bound — to certain restrictions, certain places, certain occupations.

Although Gypsies have been the subject matter of many films and songs in Turkey, academic research, even journalistic writing, on them is very recent and inadequate. The literature on Gypsies elsewhere, however, and the organizations of both Gypsies and the researchers who study them have been expanding since the turn of the Century, at least since the establishment of the Gypsy Lore Society in 1888. Based on the information we have about Gypsies in general and about local Gypsy/Roma populations in particular, we can safely generalize that they are socially excluded from the rest of the population in all societies they live in. They have survived the Nazi genocide in Europe and are still subjected to racist treatment in many countries.[6] Thus, although this paper is restricted to the boundaries experienced in Ankara's *Çınçın Bağları* neighbourhood, their experiences of exclusion are by no means restricted to Ankara or Turkey. There is also widespread evidence that Gypsies themselves have chosen to maintain their separate identity and rejected assimilation into the larger society.[7]

LINGUISTIC, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC BOUNDARIES

"*Roma* tend to be wary of outsiders," reasoned north American anthropologist Carol Silverman, "due to centuries of persecution and discrimination."[8] The social exclusion and self-exclusion of Gypsies include linguistic exclusion at different levels. Most of the academic research on Gypsies in the world has been conducted in the linguistic field. A common theme in sociolinguistic, ethnographic and journalistic texts, especially about Gypsies who are socially and politically organized, is that deliberately maintaining the language is an effective tool of political organization and self-exclusion. Unfortunately we lack research in this area, yet there is evidence that this "Gypsy language" varies from region to region and that the Gypsies who do speak *Romani* in Turkey are among the poorest.[9] Although their language tends to be lost when nomadic Gypsies are settled, according to Arayıcı, "secret languages" emerge as a result of syncretism, with the combination of words and linguistic principles in Turkish, Kurdish and Persian (Arayıcı, 1999). The eight-year mandatory schooling in Turkish seems to be the most powerful instrument of assimilation. However, partly as a function of poverty, school attendance among *Çınçın* children is very irregular, inconsistent and unpredictable. At this stage in my research, it is not clear whether

this particular population in Ankara has a distinct language - Romani or other. As language and culture are intimately related, however, I cautiously speculate that Gypsies in *Çınçın Bağları* do share a "secret language"—at least at the level of vocabulary and discourse.[10]

Speaking a different language is a part and parcel of the social, cultural and economic boundaries between the *Çınçın* Gypsies and outsiders—both in the adjacent neighbourhoods and other parts of Ankara. In fact, belonging to a different world, a frequently used phrase about Gypsies around the world, is nothing but maintaining firm boundaries.[11] My student who was successful in establishing rapport with some Gypsies in *Çınçın Bağları* reported that "helping each other, listening to one another's complaints and sharing pain" were important values for them, that "although all were in need of food and money, they were generous to share with each other," and that they were "hospitable people if they knew you." Most writers have tenaciously brought up the subject of cultural boundaries that are produced and reproduced between Gypsies and non-Gypsies. It makes sense that cultural differences create boundaries between peoples, and that they may even act as barriers. Yet, I find it dangerously misleading to talk about "cultural boundaries" alone, as there is an unfortunate tendency to read cultural "lightly" as ideological, voluntary or elective on the part of the Gypsies, somehow detached from economic, political and legal conditions, and outside historical context. I find it dangerous, because if it is Gypsies' culture that causes their troubles, then they are to be blamed for their conditions.[12] Nevertheless, those familiar with the neighbourhood frequently refer to what I call a "culture of violence" practiced within the quarter, that reinforces the cultural identity of the residents. These violent "traditions" include cockfights, dogfights, and pigeon competitions, self-mutilations and creative use of various "weapons" such as carrying razor blades under the tongue. From cockfights to use of weapons, this "culture of violence" is essentially intertwined with the economic conditions in the *Çınçın Bağları* neighbourhood.

In *Çınçın Bağları*, social relations and the residents' "territorial behaviour" define the neighbourhood boundaries in the absence of walls or fences. One of my students reported that her informant's son was in prison for murder - he had knifed a man because the man was drinking beer in front of their house. At the time of the research she was spending most of her time visiting either his son in jail or the public attorney, trying to find a way to set him free. The Kurdish family I mentioned above, that befriended us in the neighbourhood had recently moved out of central *Çınçın* to its outskirts because unknown people, possibly Gypsies as they implicated, who would be violent for no reason at all burned down their house. An attorney - an outsider, *gadjé* - with whom I incidentally had a conversation once, told

me that when the police went into the neighbourhood to pursue an incest allegation, the family members drew their knives and guns, on the grounds that it was a "family matter." The police could hardly escape. From the perspective of the *Roma*, however, law enforcement was never interested in their problems and has never worked for their benefit. At best, it neglected them. "Whenever we call the police to interfere with a fight, they ask if anyone has died. If not, they do not bother to come," told one informant, as reported in one student paper. According to another Gypsy informant, when the police arrest one of them, they ask for bribes in return for releasing the offender. Whether these narratives have truth or not, they at least indicate that the *Roma* in *Çınçın* do not trust and are not particularly in good terms with law enforcement officers. And they have their reasons. To begin with, they experience tensions that are created by the occasional demolition of squatter houses through which they confront with the police.

Economic hardship is a frequently mentioned characteristic during our observations in the neighbourhood and interviews with former residents of Çınçın as well as in the student projects. In fact, soon after I have started this research, I have realized that a study of *Çınçın Bağları* was a study of poverty. "People still make a living by riding horse carriages. Because the youth are unemployed, they steal, or try to extort money from the passers-by in broad daylight," one young man, a former *Çınçın* resident noted. Every time he reported an illegal, unlawful activity, though, he made sure to add that it was the result of poverty, and that there were also "honest and virtuous" people among the Gypsies who would look forward to earning enough money to buy a house outside *Çınçın* and move out. "Moving out" was the key in "making it." After all, there were successful Gypsies who had moved out of *Çınçın Bağları*, leaving behind not only their poverty but also their Gypsy-ness; famous music celebrities Hakan Taşıyan, Beyazıt Öztürk and Ankaralı Turgut were among them.

Most men are either unemployed or they work in irregular jobs, like washing cars in a nearby garage or collecting paper and metal in downtown. Usually they hang out in the neighbourhood streets or coffeehouses. Women, if they are not forced to generate incomeobliged to earn money, spend their time in the neighbourhood looking after children and doing housework. Depending on their circumstances, though, some go collecting scrap metal and paper as some men and children do, while some, especially those too old to work, go downtown, to middleclass neighbourhoods of Ankara or simply to the Cebeci Cemetery nearby, to beg for money and/or food. A seventy five year old woman known as *Mini teyze* ("Aunt Mini") in Seyman's (1986) account of the neighbourhood, for example, who identifies herself as a *Teber* (a branch of the *Alevi*)[13] from the *Marbiş* tribe in Eskişehir, "works" as a mendicant in Kızılay, Bahçelievler and Emek, in order to generate enough money to feed her family of

fifteen because her children and their spouses who live with her, all in their thirties, cannot find any work. Although a number of women from *Çınçın* work in middleclass houses as maids and cleaners, they all seem to be *gadjé* women—for example, immigrants from Erzurum—and the Roma women of *Çınçın Bağları* do not work as house cleaners.

THE "PHYSICAL" BOUNDARIES AROUND *ÇINÇIN BAĞLARI*

The larger *Çınçın Bağları* area is divided into a number of smaller subdivisions. The old section to the north is completely demolished now and a new subdivision, ironically called Örnek Mahallesi (literally "Model Neighbourhood"), that consists of apartment blocks is developed. There are other apartment buildings in the area and the residents of these apartments make a point of specifying that they live "in a flat" when asked where they live. Flats here are prestigious housing alternatives, usually "legally" obtained, but much more expensive, in contrast to some of the illegal squatter housing.

Local residents also distinguish other squatter subdivisions including Gülveren, Çalışkanlar and Yeni Doğan from the general *Çınçın* label, although it is not easy for an outsider like me to draw the boundary between these quarters. The roads constructed by the Ankara Municipality further divide these quarters. Public buildings, including several schools and the post office, and apartment blocks, both commercial and residential, face the streets, behind which all kinds of squatter houses pile up. There are several hospitals and clinics, a theatre house, and other public and commercial functions along the two wide streets, Altındağ and Babür Streets, in the area. A busy and wide divided-street, Babür Caddesi, cuts through the *Çınçın Bağları* neighbourhood, and the considerably heavy traffic practically reduces *Çınçın* to a small pocket, especially from the perspective of those *gadjé* who live in adjacent quarters.

One rigid physical boundary of *Çınçın Bağları* that prevents the neighbourhood from growing further and meeting other residential areas is the Cebeci Cemetery. The Cemetery, a "heterotopia" proper, this time in the sense Foucault has used the term, is a rigid but permeable boundary. Both *Çınçın* residents and people from different walks of life from other parts of Ankara have access to the Cemetery, albeit for different purposes. In her account of the Altındağ area, Yaşar Seyman writes how the Cebeci Cemetery has functioned as the most striking source of income for the neighbourhood:

> Those whose houses are by the edge of the Cemetery or those who live a little further away look for work at the Cemetery. The cemetery is

> their source of livelihood! With water bottles, plastic containers and buckets in their hands, they chase the dead. Death is where they earn their bread. They are pleased for the funeral. All children who wait in ambush follow the funeral procession as soon as they see one. Scores of youth instantaneously appear by the grave with water and broom in their hands...[14] (Seyman, 1986: 108-109)

ZONES OF ENCOUNTER

Both physical and social boundaries between *Çınçın Bağları* and outsiders, on the one hand act as barriers that prevent the interaction of Gypsies and non-Gypsies, and on the other, work as bridges that enable encounter. The Cebeci Cemetery is a typical "zone of encounter" that brings together Jews, Christians and Muslims—dead and alive—with Gypsies who come to sell flowers or pour water on the graves in return for some money. Sometimes Gypsy children between ages 5 and 15, sometimes women with or without children would try to make some money in the cemetery. They would approach the visitors, and not exactly beg, but ask something like, "Have you been here before? I have seen you by that grave, that way, haven't I?" Then they say, "I have been taking care of, cleaning and maintaining that grave, you know," and of course expect money. Those who come to visit the graves of their loved ones, probably in an impressionable mood, don't mind giving away a few million Liras.

Another function of the Cemetery as a border zone is to act as a meeting ground for drug dealers and their customers. According to my students' findings through their interviews with former inhabitants of the neighbourhood, many Gypsies living in *Çınçın Bağları* earned their living through theft, smuggling, dealing drugs, killing for money, snatching and fortune telling. The drug dealers had a large volume of business and the customers included students of private schools and universities, and even some members of the parliament. They reported that the transactions took place in the *Cebeci* Cemetery after midnight. In other words, whether or not these reports have any validity, once again, the Cebeci Cemetery brought together Ankara residents of different social and economic classes and acted as a "zone of encounter."

Yet another zone of encounter is the prison. Criminal record and imprisonment, for crimes in a range from petty crime to serious cases of wounding and murder, are commonplace in the *Çınçın Bağları* neighbourhood. According to one *gadjé* informant, "they [Gypsies] know all the articles of the law" and manipulate them in their own interest. An opinion shared by others, they know exactly what crime costs how many months of imprisonment and commit their calculated crimes

accordingly to spend the cold winter months under a warm prison roof. Whether these opinions have validity or not, prisons do act as a social boundary zone, where the life spaces of the Roma and the *gadjé* intersect, as late film director Yılmaz Güney reported on his jail mates from *Çınçın Bağları* in a book he has written while he himself was in prison.[15] Seyman's monograph, too, includes numerous prison stories of *Çınçın* residents, as any description of the neighbourhood without prison accounts would be incomplete. During our interviews with former *Çınçın* residents, unlawful behaviour was associated with poverty, and as such, sometimes, poor Kurdish migrants in *Çınçın* were also included in the many narratives of crime: it was not their *Gypsy-ness* that drove them to crime, but poverty. In a similar vein, Güney had written of the *Çınçın Bağları* of the 70's as a neighbourhood where the Kurds had lost their *Kurdishness*, while Seyman, as an amalgam of various ethnic populations: "When the inhabitants are studied, there are Easterners without Eastern traditions and Central Anatolians without Central Anatolian traditions. The Easterner, the Westerner, the immigrant, the *Avşar*, the Turkoman, the Kurd have all created the *Çınçın* tradition with whatever essential traditions they have retained." (Seyman, 1986:82). [16]

TWO CONCLUDING REMARKS

Boundaries are always fuzzy. Where one thing ends and another begins is always negotiable and dependent on contingencies. As Barth showed in his seminal work in 1969, ethnic groups and identities are dynamic and are accentuated in different ways depending on the circumstances (Barth, 1969). Accordingly, the boundaries of the *Çınçın Bağları* neighbourhood are not only fuzzy but also slippery. The key to understanding the boundaries between these subdivisions is the ethnic composition and the regional background of the residents. This, again, is not easily available for the newcomer because even the local "politically correct" terms for ethnic populations are not always self-evident. Long-term ethnographic fieldwork is essential to understand the logic behind the fuzzy and slippery nature of these ethnically manipulated boundaries; short-term research, brief interviews, superficial observations and second-hand reports are by no means adequate. Nevertheless, I have two remarks concluding this exposition.

My first remark is on the irony of bringing together the concept of boundaries with the Roma people. Considering the "global" dispersion of Gypsies and the fact that they are "unbound" around the world beyond commitment to any one nation state, it is ironical -especially at a time when cosmopolitanism and "global citizenship" are widely discussed- that both themselves and the outsiders bind them to the *Çınçın Bağları* neighbourhood. Outsiders do so, by perceiving a congruency between

Gypsies and *Çınçın Bağları*, and they themselves, by displaying violent "territorial" behaviour with reference to their neighbourhood.

My second remark is about the "reality" of boundaries. So far, I could not come up with the "real" boundaries of the *Çınçın Bağları* neighbourhood. The boundaries changed every time I talked to a person who was somewhat familiar with the area, including those who were residents in or near *Çınçın*. At first, I honestly thought it was my misunderstanding the "address;" at this stage of the research, and being an "outsider" to both the inhabitants and the territory, I thought I was not *getting* it. And the fact that the name "*Çınçın Bağları*" was not written on maps was not helping me. Then, however, it occurred to me that perhaps the very reality of the boundaries was contested, that perhaps it was not a matter of right or wrong address but a matter of differences in different people's cognitive maps. It made sense to me that people way out and far from the neighbourhood described a larger area as *Çınçın Bağları* where both Gypsies and Kurds lived, while Kurds living in or very near *Çınçın Bağları* described a much narrower *Çınçın Bağları* where only Gypsies lived. *Çınçın Bağları* was *heterotopia* in both instances, but "the other" who occupied the place changed from one description to the other.

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1. I have presented an earlier version of this paper at the Eighth Conference of the IASTE in Hong Kong, 12-15 December 2002. (Incirlioglu, 2002: 69-82).
2. Throughout this paper, I use the terms "Roma" and "Gypsy" interchangeably, without attributing any political significance to any one of them.
3. See for example, Erendil and Ulusoy (2002: 29).
4. By *heterotopia*, Foucault meant "other spaces" (Fr. "des espaces autres"), like cemeteries, Oriental gardens, theatres, libraries, museums, and ships. See Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics* (Spring 1986), 22-27. Following Foucault, however, others have utilized the concept in broader contexts. See, for example, Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (1996); and Graham St. John, *Alternative Cultural Heterotopia: ConFest as Australia's Marginal Centre* (2000).
5. Yaşar Seyman, *Hüznün Coşkusu Altındağ* (1986:82). Seyman, who was a child when her family migrated to Ankara in 1960 from Erzincan, spent her childhood and teenage years in Altındağ squatter settlements. This autobiographic monograph—from the perspective of a Kurdish woman that is sensitive to injustice and discrimination—is, by far, the best account of life in *Çınçın*.
6. For a general history, see for example, Angus Fraser, *The Gypsies* (1992); for the Nazi genocide of *Gypsies in Germany and Eastern Europe*, see David Crowe and John Kolsti, [ed]. *The Gypsies of Eastern Europe* (1991); for communist policies and the post-communist situation in Eastern Europe, see Michael Stewart, *The Time of the Gypsies* (1997).
7. See for example, Michael Stewart, *The Time of the Gypsies* (1997); Isabel Fonseca, *Bury Me Standing: The Gypsies and Their Journey* (1995); and William M. Kephart, "The Gypsies," Elvio Angeloni, [ed]. *Annual Editions, Anthropology* 90/91 (1990), 114-129.
8. Carol Silverman, "Who's Gypsy here?" *in The world observed: reflections on the fieldwork process*. Edited by Bruce Jackson and Edward D. Ives (c1996), 193-205.
9. In my interviews with several Gypsies in Edirne, including several Roma organizers and the old *Çeribaşı*, it was reported that only the poorest, recently settled Romani groups spoke "the language," particularly the so-called "*kemikçi*" and "*torbacı*" and those living in the poorer *Menzil Ahır* quarter, while the relatively better off groups, those somewhat integrated into the larger society, in the *Küçük Pazar* quarter and in *Lalapaşa*, for example, had no command of the Romani language for generations. This

lack of common language between the economically segregated Gypsy populations further disabled their organization, as the ones who spoke Romani did not consider the ones who did not as "real" Roma.

10. In fact, Kaygılı mentions a "*keriz argosu*" ("musicians' and dancers' slang") spoken by Gypsies in Istanbul in the 1930s. See: Osman Cemal Kaygılı, *Çingeneler* (1972).

11. What Kephart, an anthropologist from the United States, has observed is not unique: "The Gypsies are most incredible. For several years now, I have studied them, interviewed them, and—on occasion—mingled with them, but I still find it difficult to grasp their cultural patterns. Other writers have experienced similar difficulties, for the Gypsies have a lifestyle that comes close to defying comprehension." (Kephart, "The Gypsies," 114.) Many researchers, observers and writers highlighted the deliberate insistence of Gypsies on maintaining their boundaries. Peter Maas, for example, did not use the phrase "boundary maintenance" but what is noted on the jacket of his best-seller *King of the Gypsies* (1975) is all about their preserving the boundaries between themselves and the *gadjé*: There are perhaps a million or more Gypsies in the United States—nobody knows exactly how many, not even the government. They no longer live in horse drawn caravans on dusty roads; they live in cities, drive cars, have telephones and credit cards. Yet they do not go to school, neither read nor write, don't pay taxes, and keep themselves going by means of time e-honoured ruses and arrangements. Gypsies themselves recognize the contrast they make, and they are proud of it.

12. In response to such cultural reductionism, Hancock contextualized some aspects of the stereotyped Gypsy culture: "The Roma [in Europe] were kept on the move by legislation; even in [the United States], current laws forbid Romani Americans to remain in some states, while in modern Britain Gypsies may only stop legally on government reservations, and in modern France they are obliged to carry passes that must be stamped by the police in each parish. Although Gypsies are required to keep moving by the law, the establishment reinterprets this as evidence of their romantic and free spirit. Forbidden to do business with shopkeepers, the Roma have had to rely upon subsistence theft to feed their families; and thus stealing has become a part of the stereotype. Forbidden to use town pumps or wells, denied water by fearful householders, uncleanliness becomes a part of the stereotype. Using fortune telling as a means of livelihood suitable to life on the move, and sometimes as a means of protective control, sorcery becomes a part of the stereotype as well." Hancock wrote this in 1991, possibly there are changes in the legislation by now; but the point I want to raise here is the problem of isolating 'cultural traits' from the context within which they are developed. "Introduction" in *The Gypsies of Eastern Europe* (Hancock, 1991: 5).

13. The *Teber*, known also as the *Abdal*, are arguably an Alevi-Gypsy population. This is not the place to discuss whether they are "really" a Roma group or not; it suffices to say here that the opinions about their identity differ and that there are "negotiable boundaries" between them and the Roma on the hand, and the *gadjé* on the other. In *Hüznün Coşkusu Altındağ*, Seyman does mention how the Teber/Abdal were offended when they were called "Gypsies" (1986: 87-88).

14. Translation mine.

15. Yılmaz Güney wrote a book in 1976, when he was prison in Ankara. This book, a novel, that was published in 1977, *Soba, Pencere Camı ve İki Ekmek İstiyoruz* (roughly

translated as "We Want Heat, Window Glasses, and Two Loaves of Bread"), is based on the "true story" of his jail-mates most of whom lived in *Çınçın Bağları*. In addition to providing excellent prison ethnography, Güney's book offers an excellent community study of the *Çınçın Bağları* neighbourhood, in the absence of an anthropological or sociological study, proper.

16. Translation mine.

19

The Current Situation of the *Dom* in Jordan

ALLEN WILLIAMS

One reason the Dom Research Center was established was to encourage Gypsy studies in the Middle East and north Africa. The region from eastern Iran to the Mediterranean Sea, as well as north Africa, receives attention in the theories about origins, but the contemporary history, language, cultural developments and current situation of the Dom have largely been neglected. A notable exception to this neglect is the work of Nabil Sobhi Hanna in Egypt (Hanna, 1982). However, prior to his death Nabil had turned his attention to other areas of research. Three other scholars have provided substantial contributions to Dom studies: Yaron Matras has contributed greatly to Domari linguistic studies in recent years, Bernhard Streck supplied an excellent resource for the study of the Dom in the Sudan and Frank Meyer has written about the Dom in Syria (Matras, 2000; Streck, 1996; Meyer, 1994)[1]. In spite of these significant contributions we have relatively little data about the Dom, few activists focusing on Dom issues and even fewer Dom voices being heard from the region.

The intent for this paper is to offer a brief description of the current situation of the Gypsies in one Middle Eastern country, Jordan. Readers will note that the Dom interact on every level in Jordanian society; however, they are given recognition only on the lowest level. This Jordanian social perspective reinforces the racial prejudice from which the Dom suffer and encourages them to conceal their ethnic identity.

POPULATION STATISTICS & LIVING CONDITIONS

Population statistics have been little more than speculation. A recent attempt to provide accurate statistics for the Dom of Jordan yielded a population count of 35,000 (thirty-five thousand) people. Fathey Abdu Musa, a Dom leader identified as a "Sheik," conducted this census as a part of his bid to enter the Jordanian parliament. His campaign for office is not based on a "Gypsy political platform," but he hopes to help

the Dom if he is elected as a district representative. Fathey reported that the Dom who were the subjects of his survey have Jordanian citizenship and serve in the military along with other Jordanians. They are not, however, registered specifically as Dom and the government does not maintain that specific type of demographic classification. The surveyor pointed out that his statistics do not include the numerous, smaller communities of Dom, most of whom are still nomadic and not registered with the government.

By means of interviews with Dom leaders throughout the country, the Dom Research Center is attempting to corroborate Fathey's statistics. At least five Dom *tribes* live in Jordan. The *Tamarzeh tribe* is the largest, and they classify themselves as Jordanian Dom since they were already living in the land prior to the founding of the country. The other four *tribes* are the *Ka'akov*, the *Ga'agreh*, the *Balahayeh* and the *Nawasfeh*. Two other segments of the Gypsy population are discernable in these four *tribes*: the Palestinian Dom (those from the West Bank and Gaza) and a conglomeration of numerous other smaller families (primarily from Iraq and Syria) most of whom are still nomadic. The most recent large influx of Gypsies into Jordan took place just prior to the 1967 Arab – Israeli War. Segments of the Dom population in Jordan continue to be mobile. Some move only short distances staying within the country; i.e. living in the Jordan Valley during the winter and scattering throughout the country during the spring and summer. Other groups range much further. A Dom leader in northern Jordan said that although his family was settled, other members of the community regularly travel to such countries as Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Most of the nomadic or semi-nomadic families continue to live in tents with very primitive living conditions, such as no access to water or electricity. Cooking is done on open campfires, or the more fortunate may have a small gas stove. Straw mats that serve as floor coverings are cleaned utilizing water that gathers in puddles along the sides of the roadways during the rainy season. Water for cooking and drinking must be carried in large plastic containers and is secured from nearby construction sights, homes, petrol stations, and elsewhere. In the Middle East water is usually in short supply which means that securing water is a demanding task. The women are often preyed upon by men who offer them water in exchange for sexual favors[2]. The Dom generally adhere to strict community moral codes that forbid such promiscuity. Unfortunately, the fact that Arab men make such offers tends to taint the reputation of the Dom women rather than that of the men. Based upon personal observations and conversations in Jordan, this writer contends that the general public has greatest access to this vulnerable segment of the Dom population. The point of view the public has developed about

the Dom is based primarily on this visible and vulnerable minority of the overall Gypsy population. Other segments of the Dom population realize the impact on their reputations as well, but feel helpless to correct these misconceptions. The negative images overshadow the numerous constructive contributions that Gypsies have made to Jordanian society. As a result, resentment and social barriers develop among the Dom themselves.

SOCIAL INTERACTION

The Dom people are perhaps the most despised people in the Arab world. They accommodate Arab racism by hiding their ethnic identity, arguing that they are Jordanian, *Bedouin*, *Türkman* or more generally, Arabs. Individuals who pursue this course of action to an extreme may reject their family and social interaction with other Dom in order to maintain the facade they have built. They suggest that only in this way will they have equal opportunities for advancement in the job market, and in social relationships. A number of people who have taken this approach are now in high positions in the military, and have attained jobs in educational institutions, medical professions, journalism and many other skilled roles. In an unpublished interview with a Dom teacher, Dominique Alderweireldt listened as the teacher described the anguish of listening to the demeaning remarks other teachers casually make about "*Nawar*" (the demeaning Arab name for the Dom). She feared that her professional relationships would quickly deteriorate and her employment be endangered if her Dom background were discovered. Additionally, the teacher believed that her students would not give her the respect needed in the classroom if they knew she was a Gypsy. While this teacher realized her community's need for role models, to be known as a Dom would result in the loss of her job, thereby destroying the very reputation that would encourage younger generations. In another interview a Gypsy nurse described the dilemma to this writer saying, "if we hide our identity, we prove that a Dom cannot make it in life as a Dom; if we identify ourselves as Dom, we lose our jobs and prove that bettering oneself through education is helpful to everyone except a Dom."

Social isolation is another dimension of the problem created for Dom who insist on hiding their ethnic identity. This problem can be illustrated by the story of a well known, Dom, television personality. He refused to marry a Dom woman because the union would damage his career, yet because he was a Dom no Arab woman would marry him. As a result, he was forced to find a wife from another country and culture. While he found companionship, his sense of isolation from both his Dom heritage and the Arab social structures were exacerbated. Reflecting upon his situation, he challenged other Dom saying,

> Don't care about others opinions. Instead, respect yourself as a human being and make your contribution. God called on all people to do good work. He didn't say 'be a Gypsy or be an American,' but 'be a good man.'

He continued,

> The difference in people is what they do with their lives, not who you are ethnically. We need to change people's mentality about the view of Gypsies by interacting with others and achieving through developing relationships.

This young man encouraged other Dom to recognize "the negative things that have defined us — let's recognize how we have shown ourselves and change these." His words of advice were not limited to his fellow Dom. He urged a realistic re-evaluation of attitudes toward Dom by non-Dom.

> Aren't their many things in all societies that are negative? Statistically there is no real difference between Gypsies and others. People have just focused on the negative with regard to Gypsies. Now that we all acknowledge our negatives, let's also recognize all of our positive contributions.

Some of the people who have turned away from their heritage are attempting to reclaim it. One Dom medical doctor decided to learn Domari as an exercise to reconnect with the Gypsy community out of which his parents had led the family. He has been successful in language acquisition, but the question remains regarding the degree to which the community will embrace him.

Dom children learn early in life to hide their identity. Gypsy children from tent villages will walk into nearby residential areas to catch the school bus in order to avoid being identified and ridiculed. Since psychological tests have not been done, we can only speculate about the impact on their emotional development.

DOM ORGANIZATION

The Dom feel that the Jordanian government has failed to adequately address the needs of their communities. For several years Fathey Abdu Musa has expressed interest in forming an organization that will serve as the voice of the Dom people. Additionally, it will initiate community development projects that will specifically address their needs. As with many Arab governments, Jordanian leaders are resistant to the demands of minority groups for recognition of their issues. However, in recent

years the government has shown a willingness to listen and respond to concerns arising from the general population (Nanes, 2003).

Even if the government is sympathetic to cause of the Dom minority, there are still other obstacles to the establishment of a Dom organization. The fragmented nature of the Dom population mandates that issues of authority be settled before there will be any hope of creating an inclusive organization that will have the strength of a collective voice. As previously stated, the three readily identifiable sectors of the population are fragmented. Ethnic commonality will not be sufficient to unite them, especially since their shared ethnicity is perceived to be dividing them.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Currently, the Dom leaders (*Mukhtar*) are selected from within the individual communities to fill a permanent role. The *Mukhtar* often completes official documents for his community members, presents specific needs of the community to the appropriate government offices, mediates disputes within the community, and may serve as a liaison between the police and members of the community, in those situations where his influence might bring a more peaceable resolution to any problem. Reportedly, more and more communities are neglecting to select a new leader when the role becomes vacant, unless the local police specifically ask them to elect someone. Whether or not this is an example of the breakdown of Dom traditions and cultural identity, or merely a step in the natural evolution of the society's authority structure, is difficult to say. However, it is apparent that the impetus for the election of leaders is hesitant. The role, as described in numerous interviews, is changing from a community's recognition of a person with skills to counsel the community with regard to cultural matters, to a government prompted role that will assist them with policing the Dom communities. The former is clearly being de-emphasized, while the latter is gaining prominence. Studies are needed to determine if the policing of the communities through these leaders results in the isolation of them from their people, or if it is a healthy approach by the government to maintain a sense of autonomy and self-direction for a minority group. Prevailing social and economic conditions in the *tribe* have a bearing on this transition. Within impoverished communities, this social role is breaking down quickly, while in the more economically stable *tribes* the traditional cultural role is being maintained.

LANGUAGE

Kamel Moawwad evaluated the vitality of *Domari* (the Dom language) as it correlates to the social and economic status of the Dom

in Jordan (Moawwad, 1999). In his 1999 thesis, "The Linguistic Situation of Gypsies and Türkman as Ethnic Minorities Living in Jordan: A Sociolinguistic Perspective," he summarized his findings.

> As for the Gypsies, the researcher found that they maintain very negative attitudes towards their language. They usually use Arabic in different domains as a means of communications. They are disloyal to their language. Even those who claimed to be competent in their language wished that they had not acquired it. Actually, their negative attitudes are derived from the fact that they are treated pejoratively by outsiders. They think that their language is the main reason that stands behind being called "Nawar," and this is why they try to get rid of it. Therefore, one can deduce that their language undergoes a state of language loss.

Moawwad noted an exception to this language loss saying,

> The researcher has discovered a new factor that may contribute to language maintenance, which is "the travelling way of life." Actually, according to the researcher's best knowledge, this factor has not been introduced yet. The researcher has found that the traveller Gypsies and all the Türkman who are, normally, travellers maintain their language easily. Moreover, those groups have shown positive attitudes and loyalty to their languages. In addition, one can notice that they are very competent in their languages. Still, the researcher assures the fact that the Türkman are more loyal to their language than the traveller Gypsies.

Although Moawwad's research was conducted with a relatively small group of informants, his conclusions appear to describe the norm for the general population. Through personal interviews the DRC has documented that numerous families are already two generations removed from the regular use of Domari in the home, and many of the second generation have never heard the language.

EDUCATION

A detailed survey is needed regarding the educational status for Dom youth. Interviews with leaders and various families indicate that the young people generally tend to dropout of school between the ages of 14-16 years. At that time many of the boys go to work as carpenters' apprentices, mechanics, and find employment in the textile industry. This is true for the boys in affluent families as well as those from impoverished backgrounds. However, the dropout age for boys in impoverished situations is even lower, i.e. 10 – 12 years of age. Girls marry young (approximately 15 years of age), seeing no hope of ever enjoying the more liberal Jordanian views regarding women.

The short-term solutions to economic needs hold sway in most Dom families. If a child or young teenager can earn money to meet their family's immediate needs, the tendency is for them to pursue that employment rather than seeking to further their education. Yet, this also appears to be the tendency among those who are not faced with the pressure of providing for their families. Although funds are available for their education, the social stigma of being a Gypsy causes them to see little hope for betterment through education. As a result, they drop-out and take whatever jobs are available to them.

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1. See also Matras' article "The State of Present-Day Domari in Jerusalem" in *Mediterranean Language Review*, 11 (1999).
2. Substantiated through DRC interviews with Dom and by an interview with Fathey Abdu Musa in *Sharkiat*, "Nawar (Nomads) of Jordan."

Afterword: "İlle de Roman olsun[1] (mu)" ? Some Questions and Remarks Concerning Research on Gypsies in Turkey

RÜDIGER BENNINGHAUS

Gypsies in Turkey (as they were the later Ottoman Empire), have traditionally not been regarded fully as an ethnic group, only being counted as a "half", expressed in the saying *"In Turkey, there are 72½ millets"*[2] (72½ peoples). This is about to change.

This development is also reflected in the frequently used expression "*Çingeneler zamanı*"[3] (*Time of the Gypsies*), which is of course, derived from the film of the same name by Emir Kusturica (*Dom sa vesanje*, 1988) but used with the meaning, their (the Gypsies'), time has come.

Between April 10th and 12th, 2003 the first international symposium in Turkey was held on subject of the Gypsies, the results of which are published in this volume. In the meantime three further international congresses have taken place – the first in Edirne between May 7th – 8th 2005, and organised by a Turkish Gypsy association and a non-Gypsy NGO; the second at Istanbul Bilgi University between May 13th – 15th 2005, organised by the iRSN. Most recently (October 1st – 2nd 2005), the Human Rights Society in Ereğli (Karadeniz, Zonguldak province) organized a symposium discussing the issues of Gypsies and human rights. Besides these, several other meetings and events (including continuing Romani Studies courses in Istanbul and Cairo, research projects funded by the British Council and the General Consulate of Sweden in Istanbul[4]), have been organized by the iRSN in Istanbul.

These "last words" in conclusion to this volume, should be understood as a personal reflection on what has transpired since the first conference in 2003, after my having participated in these four major events in Istanbul, Edirne and Ereğli, and as something of an overview of the current state of *tsiganology* (Romani Studies), in Turkey at present.

AFTERWORD/
CHANGING TURKEY

One of the reasons for the changing attitude towards Gypsies, is certainly an increasing awareness of differing ethnic groups in Turkey, and their activities in preserving their own cultural heritages and languages. This has, above all, been among the Circassians, Kurds, Zaza, Georgians, Laz, and the "trans-ethnic" religious group of the Alevis. It has become possible, despite those obstacles that still exist (by which the Kurds are especially affected), as the result of the wish of the ruling class and a more or less greater proportion of the population in Turkey, to become a member of the European community. Its also due, to some extent, to the persistence and bravery that different ethnic groups have shown during the past few decades, when pushing for recognition of being something different than "Turkish".

The activities of different institutions and people, and the growing awareness of the population of Turkey as being made up of a mosaic of many ethnic groups, have found expression in articles in the Turkish press and academic circles. One remarkable "event" was the dedication of two whole pages to Gypsies in the Sunday supplement of the daily newspaper Hürriyet on May 8, 2005. The heading itself was remarkable: "The Gypsies – another common point with the Europeans", recognising that Turkey too, has a considerable number of members of this ethnic group, and perhaps bearing in mind that the situation of Roma in eastern and southeastern Europe is considered to be one of the crucial points for accession to the European Union.

Unfortunately the social, educational and cultural situation of Gypsies in particular (not only minorities in general), is not high on the agenda of the negotiations of the European Union with Turkey, it seems. This is certainly also due to the lack of Gypsy self-help organizations in Turkey, other than in eastern or southeastern Europe. Therefore the Gypsies in Turkey have not yet gained access to financial support from European or other international institutions.

But first steps have been taken during the past few years. Some associations of Gypsies were founded in Turkey, for example in Edirne, Lüleburgaz, Muratlı, Kırklareli, Tekirdağ, İstanbul, İzmir, Söke, probably also in Samsun and Mersin, and in an increasing number of other places in the near future. Some Gypsies, among them the activist Mustafa Aksu,[5] wish to establish a national federation of Gypsy organisations.

This is certainly as a result of the changing political situation in Turkey, the activities of the iRSN and other initiatives, and a kind of "*proje*-mania", which has recently begun, meaning that many groups

and individuals have started to present social or educational projects to institutions and authorities in order to gain some kind of support for these initiatives. All these activities have led to a greater awareness of the cultural heritage of Roman-Gypsies in Turkey, maybe even to a revitalization of the Romani language, which many Gypsies in Turkey no longer speak.

It is a different case amongst those Gypsies in Turkey, who self-identify as "Lom" (the *Poşa*) or "Dom" (mainly *Karaçi* and *Mıtrıp*). The Poşa in particular, especially those among them who have intermingled with Christian Armenians (mainly in Kastamonu and Sinop provinces), are far from a "coming-out" as Gypsies[6], and from developing any feeling of solidarity with other Gypsy groups, or even common action with them. This makes research on them rather difficult. The Mıtrıp and those Karaçi[7] living mainly amongst Kurdish communities surrounding them, identify themselves more with Kurds (even as "*beyzade*",[8] decendants of noble families), than with other Gypsy groups. For this reason, amongst others, it is why it is important to recognise that Gypsies in Turkey cannot be encompassed by the term "Roma" as elsewhere in this region.

TSIGANOLOGIC RESEARCH AND PUBLISHING IN TURKEY

Up to the present time, primarily Romani Gypsies and *Abdal(lar)*[9] have been the focus of *tsiganologic* research in Turkey. This seems to be due to their being the largest group, although in some cases researchers have actually worked amongst the *Abdals*, thinking them to be, and presenting them in their research findings as Gypsies. It is also remarkable that, aside from some books written originally in Turkish[10] about Gypsies in the past few years, several translations of books from elsewhere in Europe have been published in Turkey quite recently.[11]

From time to time, *mezuniyet* or *yüksek lisans* and even doctoral[12] theses at anthropological, or sociological institutes at Turkish universities have been written about Roman-Gypsies, particularly about the Gypsy flower-sellers (*çiçekçiler*). These theses often remain largely unknown, and eke out a miserable existence on some dusty shelf in the institute. I would suggest that they should be collected systematically, and presented to the *tsiganologic* community, whatever scholarly value they may be, in order to improve our overall knowledge about the subject. Academic research on the Poşa[13] has also begun to be undertaken, but to a much lesser extent; this has sometimes even resulted in "proving" them to be different from Gypsies concealed their connection with Armenians.[14] Research on the Mıtrıp, the Karaçi, the largely unknown group descried as the Asıx (Asıh)[15] of the Dêrsîm region, or the Kırbot/

Kırbat[16] of Hatay area, remains to be done. The potentially interesting prospect of conducting research on the Conolar[17] ("tribe"), remains much more difficult than other, more general research about Gypsies in Turkey. Contemporary Turkish scholarship has however, hardly even begun to focus on Gypsies outside of Turkey.[18]

SOME QUESTIONS AND REFLECTIONS

Who are the Gypsies in Turkey? This is a question that has been raised consistently during the conferences mentioned above, and which remains one of central importance to those working in this region. When quite a lot of Gypsies in Turkey (as elsewhere, of course) deny that they are "Çingene" (the general Turkish word for Gypsies), asserting their membership of this or that ethnic community,[19] how do we count them? When describing a certain group of Gypsies – are we obliged to present them as they present themselves? When, to give an example, a person who originates in the Gönen area in Balıkesir province, who is perceived as "Gypsy" by his *gadje* environment, has an appearance we might describe as rather Gypsy-like, speaks *Romanës* more or less, is earning his livelihood as *davulcu* (drummer), but claims to be Caucasian (Ubykh), since there are some of them living in his native district, how should we present him?

This rather extreme example shows, that researchers cannot always subscribe to how a population defines itself. Certainly, such "fantastic" presentations have to be taken into account in the descriptions and interpretations of their research, but scholars have other sources too, and should not only restrict themselves to what might be described as an *emic* approach. Self-definitions are, after all, also a matter of fashion. Of course, identities are not fixed and can change; certain components may become stressed, whilst others may weaken. But should one exclude a group of Gypsies from *tsiganologic* research, just because they claim to be something other than Gypsy?

When Turkish historiography declares several Asian or Anatolian peoples (some of whom have already disappeared from the earth) to be "Turkish", certainly many non-Turkish researchers would see no obligation to follow these assumptions. When some of these peoples, especially Anatolian ethnic groups, internalize this claim, partly because of fears about being identified as "separatist" by the authorities or for other reasons, and follow what is the predominant state ideology, one must as a researcher, take this as a more or less temporary fact into account, but one must not take it for granted. An extremist emic approach cannot yield realistic results.

When Ottoman enumerators had placed marginal groups like *Tahtacı*, Abdasl and Gypsies (*Kıptī*) together for statistical or some other purpose, must we to consider Tahtacı and Abdal as being Gypsies likewise? How do we then deal with the fact that some Abdal "admit" to be Çingene, whilst some others strongly reject this, and when they are seen as Gypsies in some regions, but in others not ?

In areas where a local group of Gypsies (for example Poşa) exists, they are often not seen as Çingene, whereas this designation is used for nomadic Gypsies passing through that region. Should the Poşa not be counted as Gypsies, especially where they have become affiliated to a Christian-Armenian community?[20] How are we to understand Istanbul Armenians calling their brethren from Kastamonu and Sinop provinces "Poşa"? Are these people actually Armenian Gypsies ?

Another, rather general question is whether the term *Roma* should be used as a designation for all Gypsy groups worldwide, or even Gypsy-like groups such as the Abdals, Tinkers or Yenische, or *Roman* only when speaking about Turkey[21].

In the case of Turkey as an example, we can see that there are (predominantly in the western half of the country) Gypsies who have started to call themselves *Roman*, whereas others use the self-designations *Lom* (Poşa) or *Dom* (Karaçi, Mıtrıp/ Mıtırp). The latter may not have even heard the term "Roma", as an ethnic description. Therefore one cannot speak about Romani dialects when referring to the speech of the Poşa (Lomavren), Mıtrıp or Karaçi (Domari).

How are we to deal with the information that the Şıxbızın(lı)/ Şêxbizin tribe in the eastern part of Erzurum province, is called Çingene by the locals,[22] whereas they are generally seen as a kind of Sorani-speaking Kurdish group by other Kurds?[23] Some travelling Gypsies may try to avoid a clear ethnic label by asserting that they constitute the so and so tribe.[24]

All these questions and remarks show that it is not easy to "determine" who is Gypsy in Turkey. This is not specific to Turkey, but also true for other countries, where a strict line between Gypsies and groups socially close to them cannot be drawn or is, at least, not obvious for non-expert outsiders.

What about those "*esmer vatandaşlar*" (dark citizens) who don't speak Romanes anymore and declare that they have left "*Çingenelik*" (Gypsyness) behind them[25] or even deny having anything to do with such a marginal and marginalized group? Some of them have started to

call themselves "Roman" since fifteen or twenty years ago, and hold that the "Çingeneler" are a different group. Sometimes they explain this with the fact that the "Çingeneler" would still be, or have been until recently itinerants, living in tents and speaking "Romca". They themselves are "Romanlar" and would not know this language (except for a few words, which are seen as the "argot of musicians"). Some (probably the majority) of the Gypsies in western Turkey seem to conceive such a "label change" as "high society behaviour" and make a fun of it, while continuing to call themselves (also among themselves) Çingene.

Up to the present, I haven't heard a convincing explanation of how this new term "Roman" came about. Since it is used as a noun, one obviously has to understand it as a specific Turkish variant of "Roma". If so, "Romanlar" would be a double plural.[26]

The endeavour to apply or impose some kind of "political correctness" in public speech or writing, as can be seen in some western countries, has started in Turkey too, though not yet to the same extent. "Politically correct" persons either apply the new term "Roman", or try to avoid using any ethnic designation at all.

Sometimes concern is raised that the fact that the formerly widespread designation "Kıptī" for Gypsies is also the name for the Copts. One simply has to admit that Kıptī in general can mean both, but in a given context should only be understood as equivalent to Çingene. This corresponds with the European idea of a connection between Egypt and the Gypsies. Further disputes about that seem to be obsolete.

Quite often academic research about different communities or ethnic groups has no further effect on those groups, or upon public opinion. In the case of Gypsy studies in Turkey however, one can observe the effect of research upon both. On one side there is astonishment among Gypsies themselves, as expressed in the quotation from the Edirne'li Rom mentioned in the introduction of this book, and the encouragement this has given to start some self-help organizations./ On the other hand, we hear an echo of this in the Turkish media. It seems that many Gypsies in Turkey cannot imagine why outsiders would show an interest in their way of life, their culture and history, or even that they could do so. It is also new for Gypsies in Turkey to demand something from the authorities for themselves as a group. This has certainly been encouraged by the activities around, and with the Gypsies.

Some presentations at the recent conferences may certainly have raised the question amongst those Gypsies participating in the event, "What are they talking about ? Does this have anything to do

with us, with our problems ?" However, some may have had the effect of helping Gypsies realize that they have, or can have, a written history (not only oral), as other people have, too. This certainly strengthens self-consciousness, and may help to dispel their self-perception as being a "marginal" group in many societies. By this, the frequently observed "strategy" of disguising their Gypsy identity or origins may be countered.

Of course, to a considerable extent *gadje* are involved at the initial point. The coining of a term like "Roman(lar)" instead of "Çingene(ler)", and the attempt to establish a "guideline" for "political correctness" seem to stem, for instance, from the impact of mainly *gadje* activists; but *gadje* may have some positive influence as catalysts amongst what may be called disparate "akephal"[27] Gypsy communities. For the time being, Gypsies may have to live with it, but will surely "emancipate" themselves from this influence during the course of the time. And perhaps Turkish Gypsies can reasonably expect something from *tsiganologists* and their research: "Abe bi kimlik veresin."[28] "Older brother, you should give us an identity [card]."

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1. The first line of a well-known song by Turkish Gypsies; it could be translated as "it should be (a) Rom(an) by all means". By using this as the heading (but with question mark) of this contribution, I want to express my reluctance to use the new-coined term "Roman(lar)" whenever Gypsies in Turkey are meant, at the very outset.
2. Although I have not heard this, another version of this saying runs: ""*Türkiye'de altmışaltı büçük millet var...*"66 ½ *millet*" (Svnberg 1989, p.602.). Timuroğlu 2000 is discussing this saying in detail.
3. For example: Dorsay 2000; Anonymous 2001; Kirkeklo 2003; Türkan 2003; Yezdani 2003.
4. See Marsh, A. & Strand, E. (2005) *Reaching the Romanlar: A Report On The Feasibility Studies "Mapping" A Number of Roman (Gypsy) Communities in Istanbul,* Istanbul (forthcoming)
5. Already in 2002 Mustafa Aksu was cited as being the chairman of an initiative to found a "*Türkiye Çingene Kültürü Araştırma Geliştirme Dayanışma Federasyonu*" (Anonymous 2002).

6. Seropyan 2000, p.12.
7. For one of the few articles on the Karaçi/ Qereçi see: Caro 1992; also Tarcin 1993, p.32 (on "Kurdish Gypsies").
8. Benninghaus 1991, p.49.
9. Just a few, rather arbitrary selected publications on the Abdal(lar): Ülkütaşır 1968; Andrews 1989; Söylemez 1999; Durbilmez 2002; Gülçiçek 2003; Aksut (n.d.).
10. Arayıcı 1999; Özkan 2000; Aksu 2003; Soyyanmaz 2003; Alpman 2004. Arayıcı is said to publish a new book soon.
11. For example: Berger 2000; Fonseca 2002; Asséo 2004; Fraser 2005.
12. To search all the revelant instituts at universities in Turkey for theses on Gypsies is an enterprise, which, as it seems, has not been undertaken yet. Here only a few examples of theses: Gökçöl 1991; Önder 1998; Yılmaz 1998; N. Pour Efkari: *İran'da Çingenelerin Sosyal Yapısı üzerine bir Araştırma* (PhD thesis, Istanbul University,), Istanbul 1972 (although about Gypsies in Iran), quoted in Efkari 2000, p.97; Ceyhan 2003; Kolukırık 2004; Altınöz 2005. A certain Mustafa Malkoç asserts to have written a master thesis on "The Religious Beliefs of the Gypsies in the Bursa Region" (probably in Turkish and probably at Uludağ University in Bursa), but further details are not available.
13. Önder 1992, 1998, and 1999; Seropyan 2000 a and 2000 b; Voskanian 2002 (some more articles by Voskanian on the Poşa are in Armenian and Russian); a few observations in Benninghaus 1991.
14. Önder 1999.
15. Most of them seem to come regularly from Elâzığ province; only a few actually stay in Dêrsîm. They are probably Karaçi, but are said to speak the Zazaki language fluently (too).
16. Obviously Gypsies of the Domari group, which are elsewhere called Ghorbat. A less widespread name used for Gypsies by the Arabs in the Hatay/ Adana area is Nuwar (Nawar elsewhere in Arab dialects).
17. Baştürk 1988; Söylemez 2001; Eker/ Yılmaz 2002.
18. Arayıcı 1999; Ozkan/ Polat 2005.
19. Frequently ethnic origin and religious affiliation is also mixed up: "*Ne Çingenesi be, Çingene değiliz, elhamdülillah Müslümanız*" (What about Gypsy? We are not Gypsies, we are Muslims, thank God) (Dinç 1995).
20. In Cologne, for instance, with the largest Armenian community in Germany, some 20-30 families of Poşa from the Kastamonu-Sinop area are said to be members of that community. Another larger concentration of these Christian Poşa live in Kehl am Rhein. Inside the Armenian community they have a marginal position to some degree. They are generally reluctant to speak about their "Poşaness".
21. Some contributors in this book speak about "Romanlar" when dealing with different Gypsy groups in Turkey. For a discussion about the "proper" designation see: http://mitglied.lycos.de/ruediger_benninghaus/zigeuner-begriff.htm.
22. Özkan 2001, pp.31 and 41 f.
23. See for example Lewendî 1997 and 1998; Özkök 1998. Zeki 1992, p.185. Sometimes the dialect of the Şêxbizin is wrongly described a being Kurmanci-Kurdish (Anonymus 1998, p.136). In another case, the Mıtrıf-tribe (Mutruf) in the Kars area, which is said to have come from Caucasia, seems to be perceived as being Gypsy by some people and not Kurdish (oral information).

24. Özkan 2001, p.61, for example, mentiones one group of Gypsies, which calls itself Melikli tribe (for this see also Başturk 1988, p.36).

25. This attitude is well described by Alpman's heading (2000, p.11): "*Çingene bitti, Roman verelim*" (Gypsy has passed, let's give it as Roman). On the other side one may understand it as a some kind of regret (along with a political commitment) when a formerly leading Gypsy from Istanbul said: "*Romanlık öldü, biz artık Türküz.*" (Roma[n]-ness has died, we have actually become Turks) (Döntaş 2003).

26. Following this understanding, the remark in the introduction to this volume, which describes "Roman" as a singular, just because the plural is used as "Romanlar", is misleading.

27. Münzel 1981, pp.26-28.

28. "Brother, one should give us an identity". The meaning of the article of Söylemez/Özden 2005 was certainly meant literally: many Gypsies in Turkey don't have identity cards, but strengthening their identity (*kimlik* means both: identity and identity cards) as Gypsies may well be a task for or an expectation directed to researchers.

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