

VASILE BURTEA

**THE ROMANIES**

*in the Synchrony and Diachrony  
of the Contact Populations*

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# ***THE ROMANIES***

***in the Synchrony and Diachrony of the Contact Populations***

***To my parents, Dumitru and Gheorghîța,  
and to the entire Romanies' professional group of  
Ironsmiths, for all they did and meant***



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## **A word about the readers of this edition**

The present work represents the translation from Romanian into English of the tome wearing the same name.

My dear colleague, University professor Rebecca Davis, who works at Rutgers School of Social Work at the State University of New Jersey (U.S.A.) invited me in the spring of the year 2010 to visit her over there. Then I had the opportunity to speak twice in front of the students from the social assistance, to talk to the researchers of the Institute of the Family, within the same building and to meet the trainers for a master and doctor's degrees in Philadelphia.

Everybody was interested in the life of the Romany people from Romania, who they had contradictory information about which they had got exclusively from mass-media.

Here I was asked whether the pieces of information and the appreciations I was talking about could be found in a written tome, too.

Mrs. Rebecca Davis, wanted to welcome the young and fond of learning people's, request and committed the work, for a first translation, to Mr. Mihai-Bogdan Iovu, a Romanian man who was benefiting from a Fulbright research grant at Rutgers School of Social Work, the State University of New Jersey, during the period 2010-2011.

Once I got the acceptance of the National Cultural Centre of the Romanies "*Romano Kher*" in Bucharest in order to publish the English version, I contacted Mrs. Mihaela Madalina Manescu who works as an English teacher at School "I.G.DUCA" in Bucharest and I asked her to finish the translation.

I thank all of them and I feel indebted to them!

Mrs. Manescu considered that the translation has to be very fit to the original version written into Romanian, due to the original denominations that were registered as the first performance for the *Romany professional groups* and for the *forms of marginalization*, on the first side and as the image and situation of the Romanies haven't significantly changed since the moment of the book's publication until nowadays, although they profited by a series of concrete measures, first of all from the legislative point of view, on the other hand.

But the forms of marginalization of these people remained the same and they can't be changed, but just faded away or repaired, the Romany people living in Romania met the classical form, of reference, and here they are again both in their real life and in the collective outlook.

I decided that any update of the text, especially at the normative – legislative level (which significantly enriched, although has a shortage when it comes the time to turn it into practice with visible concrete results) would be a mystification.

Where we felt it necessary we kept only the denominations into Romanian or either they were communicated in brackets (close to English denominations that were extremely approximated) taking into account the fact that into Romanian they keep their reality and suggestive power.

For a better understanding the last table of contents is written into Romanian.

Although there were changes at the level of denominations of internal or international institutions (the Romanian Ministries, OSCE-CSCE, CE-UE ETC.) we decided to conserve those ones that were used at the time of its first publication.

Yet we hope that the work will satisfy not only the intellectual curiosity but also the domain's methodological exigencies which can be helpfully welcomed with some concepts of real operational and gnosiological value.

Mrs. Manescu tried and did a good work in my opinion, by trying to shape an exact mirror which can reflect the life of a minority whose existence was shadowed or sometimes misinterpreted. She considers that the Romanies must have equal rights like all the Romanians in their country.

This book was a challenge for her, as in this way she came to find out lots of things about the history of this people and she tried to stay very close to the original tome in order not to miss important details regarding the denominations, customs and traditions that are necessary to be known by everybody. Her opinion is that it's worth reading such an awesome work as it can be a special step in someone's knowledge, especially for those ones who know just a bit about them, but who likes their dances and customs nowadays. She invites you all to have the chance of meeting the Romanies in the way they really were and became. So enjoy the Romanies and their history!

Vasile BURTEA  
Mihaela– Mădălina MANESCU

## Foreword

The sociological theme of the Romany population has a specific feature. The problem of the Romany people is not only an interesting scientific one, but, first of all, a social, political and moral one, that's vital for the Romanian society. The interest of the sociologists is rather the result of a responsible engagement in the reconstruction of the Romanian society.

The best way to clarify the sources of interest of the Romanian sociology for the theme of the Romany people may be the description of my own experience.

I lived in an area with rather many Romany people. From this point of view, my experience, which is pretty similar to that of many others, was structured on two contradictory dimensions. I knew that some of my school and play mates were Gypsies and we were not very much interested in such an affiliation. They were, first of all, our schoolmates and school colleagues. I think I was not very sure whether some of them were Gypsy people or not. But there were also some other kinds of Gypsy people, who did not mix with us or vice versa, it's difficult to say, and who had with us either a relation of mutual ignorance or small conflicts. We sometimes got isolated, but some other times we had confrontations, we were afraid of contacting them. Maybe they were scared of us, too. It was an experience of a different way of living, a contact which was producing anxiety and fear, so it was not something regarding an ethnical affiliation. It was the experience of a latent conflict.

After a while the contacts with the Gypsy people diminished, they were somewhere very far. But I don't refer to individuals. Some of my colleagues, acquaintances were Romany people or we vaguely thought they were so. But, first of all, we considered them as mates, acquaintances, people, eventually pure Gypsies. But there were others, who I did not know and who rather lived on the outskirts of the society and who seemed to represent a kind of diffuse threat: poverty mingled with delinquency and maybe with violence.

During the Revolution, I think that many Romanian people had a surprise. The Romany teenagers became highly visible on the barricades proving a lot of courage and devotion. They were not people potentially hostile, who you would have avoided. It was a shocking experience meant to

suggest me that the new society must ensure another position to the Romany people, it is our duty to take other attitude towards them.

After a few days, they showed another side: Romany people who seized the opportunity of the social disorganization and who came again to be a danger for the others. I do not refer to all of them, just a few, no matter how many of them. The social disorganization created more increased and visible strains.

I was Minister of Labour and Social Protection in 1990 when, one morning I was announced about the burst of a violent conflict in a village (Kogalniceanu) between the local population and a group of Romany People. My spontaneous reaction maybe expressed an attitude that was going to crystallize somewhere deep inside myself. The first decision was to ask for the intervention of the authorities in order to stop the conflict, but it is not the conflict that solves the strains. I supported the Romany families who had lost their houses and goods. I did not think that conflict was, first of all, an expression of intolerance and discrimination, though some of those components could not be excluded, but moreover it was the product of the marginalization, poverty, desperation and inevitably, of conflictive life strategies. The problem was not only in Kogalniceanu, but also within the Romanian society. I was sure it was the responsibility of the Romanian society to develop a constructive attitude. As I had the necessary authority I decided to hire Romany people within the local labour and social protection directions, as a starting point of building a dialogue and bridge of communication and cooperation. I managed to do something, maybe more than I expected, although the programme did not continue after I left the Ministry.

What must we do as sociologists? A prime gesture we proudly remember was the decision of the Faculty of Sociology and Social Assistance of the University in Bucharest, and my wife had the decisive role here, as she offered posts for the young Romany people in the social assistance sections. She persuaded the Minister of Education of that period to grant in three universities, ten special posts in each for the Romany people at the sections of social assistance. As I remember that happened in 1992. Although I still think about some unpleasant, unexpected negative reactions of some of my colleagues, the system went on better and better and lots of Romany people graduated our faculty, but also other faculties in the country.

Secondly, after a talk to the UNICEF representative in Romania, a group of specialists coming from our faculty and the Life Quality Research Institute, managed to make a study about the social-economical life conditions of the Romany people. It was a study we did with much enthusiasm and few



resources. It finally ended with a book that came out in 1993: **"The Gypsy People: between ignorance and worry"**. I think the title expressed very well our attitude, the Romanians' towards the Romany people.

I met Vasile Burtea, the author of this book, in 1990, when Gheorghe Nicolae recommended him to come at the Labour and Social Protection Ministry in order to manage the problem of the Romany people. Afterwards, I realized that his enthusiasm and competence he worked with that had to overcome many difficulties. But I have always admired his dedication and common sense with which he managed to solve extremely difficult problems.

As I know Vasile Burtea is the first Romany doctor in sociology. This book is more than a sociological product. It is the fruit of passion and devotion.

I am sure that its publication will be an important event, with significant consequences in the development of the sociological knowledge, but also of a better communication within the community.

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Chapter 1

# **BRIEF HISTORY**



## 1.1. Introduction

The lack of “old” documents that would somehow mention the Romany population in Romania makes difficult the reconstruction of life, behaviour and the dynamics of mores for this people that have settled down in a considerable number on this land since the beginning of the second millennium AD.

A richer literature we found only around 1848, but prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century the writings with a theoretical, descriptive or documentation approach are very limited.

This fact has at least two explanations:

a. From the perspective of the majority aboriginal population. The majority population started asking questions and searched for answers on Romany population much too late. Part of this is because its interest for writings has started late, when the Romanies already became regular and continuous presences in the country’s demography. They appeared in the collective consciousness as a *datum* which does not need further study or explanations. Also, by their role and place in the society, the Romanies were an entity that did not disturb, that’s why they did not catch the attention or the interest of the general public.

b. From the perspective of the Romany population. In spite of the existence of the great Brahman scholars, of their contribution to the science and their deep respect for knowledge that was translated in building and protecting the great libraries in India, the vast majority of Indian population did not use the writing for communication with the others or for recording facts. This custom was also common for other migratory populations.

Traditional by excellence, this people had in them the mores of the Indian population from which they come from. This people had a landed disgust for people who, in order to retain or communicate something, was using other means than the natural, given instruments such as memory and words. The artificial means like writing and reading brought the public contemn. In India, people memorized thousands of verses and they were orally transmitted without using the writing. Moreover, the one who wrote what he had seen or heard was regarded at least with indulgence for his disability of not being able to retain what it should have been memorized.

This is why none of the first existing documents come from them and the few ones that exist today have exogenous origins. But because of the economical and geographical situation of this population, even if, at the beginning, there would have existed such documents, it would have been quite difficult for them to be preserved until present time. We will discuss this aspect later on.

The Romanians are mentioned for the first time in 1385 in the one internal document of the principalities: a donation document for Vodița Monastery. According to the historian George Potra the document is dated October 3<sup>rd</sup> 1385 (6894). By the document the ruler Dan Vodă (the older brother of Mircea cel Bătrân and the son of Radu-Vodă) certifies and acknowledges the donation previously made for the monastery by his uncle, Vladislav Voievod (the uncle of Mircea cel Bătrân and the father-in-law of Ștefan Dușan of Serbia, known as Vlaicu Vodă). Together with the land and annexes, were also given “forty dwellings of ARoma” [G. Potra, 19] which undoubtedly constituted an important part of the wealth and inventory offered.

The foreign travellers, says George Potra, “mesmerized by the less usual appearance of our Romanians” [G. Potra, 96], mention in their journals some short stories with them. They appear as a background and they enrich the landscape “by their artistic and picturesque, as part of their original character, imported from their own country – India” [G. Potra, 6].

The annotation of these documents is that they all refer to the Romanians who were already living in slavery.

Or, if we take into account the *historical process of slavery* for Romanian peasants, the process of becoming serfs is not a sudden one. On the contrary it is a slow process with lots of curls and social-administrative and judicial flusters, all of this requiring time.

By being lacked of the most important property and the principal surviving mean of the time – the land – (“the main source of wealth and power was the ownership over the agricultural land” [V. Miftode, 30]), the Romanians became slaves much faster than the Romanian peasants who owned land, but not fast enough to take form of a campaign.

Starting from this axiomatic assumption, without forcing too much we could say that the Romanians existed in the Balkans and on Romanian territory long before 1385.

In fact, B. P. Hașdeu, questioning the person and the date when the donation was made, places the existence of the document with more than 35 years before 1385, in 1348 [B. P. Hașdeu, 193]. At the core of his assumption is “the valuable letter of the Archangels Monastery” (Mihail and Gavril

A.N.) near Prizren from 1348”, which he analyses as follows: “we can not end our comments on the valuable document from the Prizren monastery before analysing the following paragraph which undoubtedly is *the oldest explicit and confident mention on Roma that exists today* (E.M):...here are the Gypsies: the handyman Raïco, Boïco of Zlatarŭ, Vasiliŭ of Presvetŭ, Socolŭ of Suchïasŭ, Costa the son in law of Gonŝa, Gïurco brother of Dimanŭ, Ianŭ, Radŭ, Dobroslavŭ; and Andreïa brother of Lază (sėu: Lalzinŭ fratele luï Andreïu) with his son in law Caloïanŭ; that gave monastery throughout the year 40 horse shoes... [B. P. Haŝdeu, 191]”.

Bogdan Petriceicu Haŝdeu continues his observations and conclusions on the document: “you can notice that those 40 Gypsy families mentioned in this document are not given by Mircea cel Mare, but only confirms an earlier present of one of his predecessors: his father Radu vodă or his brother Dan vodă or his uncle Valdislav to his father-in-law Stefanŭ Duŝanŭ; but anyway, based on this document the same gypsies were given to Tismana monastery nearly in the same period when other gypsies were given to Prizern monastery (so around 1348).

The documents of Stefanŭ Duŝanŭ and of Mircea the Great prove that by the middle of XIV<sup>th</sup> century gypsies were already living in Balkan Peninsula, so we can find them in Romania and Macedonia. Moreover, those from Prizern have Slavic names: “*Vasilŭ son of Presvietŭ*” [B. P. Haŝdeu, 193].

The obvious conclusion the persevering researcher Haŝdeu reaches is that “Until now it was thought that the first appearance of the Romanies in Europe was after 1400, first in Moldova and Walachia during the reign of Alessandru cellŭ Bunŭ and then spread throughout Europe – Grellmann (1), Pray (2), D. Kogălnicėnu (3), Heister (4), and many other new and old authors, whose list would be too long.

In Romania gypsies were not only known, but also enslaved long before 1417. The original document made up in 1387, which is kept within the State Archives, is the evidence” [B. P. Haŝdeu, 191].

If we credit the false statement that Romanies had entered Romanian provinces *only from and starting with* the tartar invasions and *only* from the north and east Moldavia (as M. Kogălniceanu [M. Kogălniceanu, 56], N. Iorga [22] and H. H. Stahl [52] state) as slaves of the tartars (so already serfs), their entrance and transition from one lord to another in order to make long distances until the south-west of the neighbouring country (Wallachia) and to be able to settle down near Vodița (see Annex 1) or Tismana Monasteries

where they have already built small dwellings (poor dwellings, improvised, unfit for living), meant, undoubtedly, a long time history.

If we take into account the technical and transport condition available at that time and the dimension of social space, we must credit the fact that they were here much earlier.

Even, George Potra, says that only *three years* after the already mentioned document, Mircea cel Bătrân (following his brother's example and according to the customs of the time) was giving in 1388, among other things, "300 Roma dwellings" to Cozia Monastery. Therefore, he concludes, "this means that Romanies were numerous enough and from at least a few years in the principalities" [G. Potra, 19].

As an age argument both in Romania and in Balkans, Hașdeu also points out that this population gave up the specific names of the zones they came and took names from the new spaces. This process also takes a long time: "Therefore, the document of Stefanu Dușanu and the document of Mircea cel Mare (Mircea the Great) both prove that, at the middle of XIVth century, gypsies were living in all provinces from Balkan Peninsula. We find them in Romania and Macedonia. Gypsies from Prizern and their parents have Slavic: "*Vasilu the son of Presvietu*". The rigorous and positive character of "Historic Archives of Romania" makes us stop here and not engage in other hypothesis on the exact time of their arrival and the causes. We accept the fact *they arrived before 1300* (s.n.), and not during the rule of Alessandru vodă cellu Bunu, as it was thought..." [B. P. Hașdeu, 193].

No matter how rich "the migratory flow" [D. Sandu, 1 and next] was after the tartar retreat, we do not believe that it could have been possible for such a big number of Romanies to be concentrated only in one space (either brought as slaves by the invaders, abandoned, re-slaved, sold and resold) in order to be then given away.

Such a big concentration of people requires a long historical time in which the demographic laws (especially of birth) leave traces through the expression of its effects.

No matter how prolific they were, the natural growth of the serfs of monasteries or other lords was not impressive enough. Moreover it was rather difficult. Alexandru I. Gonța also confirms this idea by writing about the constant growth and decrease of slaves from Moldavian monasteries. The author points out that "the first document written by the Moldavian chancellery about the Romany slaves is dated July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1428. On this date, Alexandru cel Bun (Alexander the Kind) gives to Bistrița monastery, its own construction, 31 Roma dwellings, 12 Tartar cottages and some Bulgarians (Tri deseati i



edno celead țigan i dvanadeseat hijî Tatarî). Together with the Tartars and Bulgarians (usi tatarove i țigane i usi bălgare), on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1462 the Roma will later be the only mentioned as 31 Roma dwellings on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1487. In the XVI<sup>th</sup> century, under the rule of Ioan Vodă, Iancu Voivode and Aron Voivode, their number will raise to 38 dwellings and will reach 46 dwellings under Ieremia Movilă and 62 on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1611 under Constantin Movilă. In this period the names Tartar and Bulgarian disappeared” [I. A. Gonța, 81].

We can clearly understand that, at least in this matter which could surely be an exception, it took almost two centuries for the number of dwellings to double and for the names of Tartar and Bulgarians to be assimilated. The assimilation meant identification with the Romanies. Romanies meant the slavery itself. So the shift from the ethnic definition to the socio-judicial definition had happened.

And this is not the only example. In spite of the fact that the natural growth was high for this population, the same author mentions similar situations at Neamț Monastery and in other places. But in those times, the high natural growth could not be associated only with ethnicity. It is a characteristic for all the ethnic sedentary groups for those ages and during the period that’s close to ours (for the population of our country we talk about the period between the two World Wars). Romanians were not an exception to that. 12-14-16 births per woman were something common not a long time ago. Even today, in some North-East countries, the orthodox families still have 5-6-7 children and that’s not an unconceivable matter. The phenomenon is also seen for some smaller religious cults.

Still, it would be a big mistake to judge the natural growth only by birth rate. The death rate, the health conditions, working and living conditions, judicial status and the degree of personal dependency, all were factors directly involved in the natural growth for Roma population and for the slave population in general.

On the other hand, the comparative philology sets “the date of their appearance in Europe around the year 1000. It might be some truth around this date because we can not otherwise explain how they spread so rapidly in all the countries” [G. Potra, 25].

Actually, in the south of Danube, in the Balkans, on the Byzantine Empire, the first Romanies were mentioned 1.050-1.100 AD.

Angus Freser shows that “the first reference of Roma in Constantinople comes from the Georgian hagiographic writing *The Life of Saint George Anachoritis*, written around 1068 at Iberon Monastery from the Mt. Athos”.

The writing tells how the emperor Constantin Monomachus, around 1050 (s.n.), being ill of pest “called for the help of the Samaritans, descendants of Simon the Magician, also known as *athingani* (s.n.), and very well known for their prophecies and witchcrafts”. The emperor asked them to destroy the wild animals from the Philopation Park, which he thought being responsible for his illness [A. M. Fraser, 46]. The statement does not set the exact date of the protoRomanies (early Romanies) descendants in Europe, but proves that they were already in a large number here, even before 1050. Their work (among which witchcraft and the art of healing) was well known since the first half of the second millennium, too. Anyhow, the cited paragraph shows without a doubt a very important thing: the protoRoma (early Roma) had already been given the *Balkan baptize*, meaning that they were called *athingani*. Over this aspect we will discuss later.

We do not think that it took a long time for the first significant waves of Romanies to come on to the current Romanian territory. Anyhow, it couldn't be more than after the first century of the second millennium AD. Using a deductive logic we can say, and be pretty sure about it, that the presence of this people on the Romanian land is contemporary with the process of defining Romanian people and the Romanian language.

## 1.2. Controversial origins

The hypotheses and the theories on the origins of the Romanies are excellent research subjects.

Historians, demographers, and more recently anthropologists, have all made a serious goal in trying to unlock the origin of this “enigmatic people” [A. Russo, 1], “bohemian” [Vaillan, 131]), ubiquitous in Europe and many times difficult to understand and explain.

For many times it was thought that the Romanies have their origins in Egypt. That is why the English and other following them called them *gypsy* [British Enciclopedie, 1076], meaning *Egyptians or people coming from Egypt*. There were also hypothesis, opinions, and speculations claiming that the Romanies are either Persians, Phoenicians, Tartars or Turks left behind by the wars.

“The folklore” of the problem reaches the point when they were called Pharaohs (ironic hint to their Egyptian origin), inhabitants or even builders of Ancient Rome and the Roman Empire (from *romaios* = citizen of Rome), and even old inhabitants of Dacia, who have managed to keep till nowadays their language, customs, traditions etc..

If most writings (descriptions in fact) about the Romanies belong to the ethnologists or have a strong ethnographic-ethnologic character without denying the role of historians and other researchers, we believe that the most

valid explanation on the origin and the beginning of the massive exodus of the Romanies belongs to linguists. They are a different research segment that still has an important contribution to clarifying this issue.

As the hypothesis of the Romanies' long time settlement in Europe (proposed by linguists), that's based on a comparative analysis of language, to the identifying and explanation of the origin and the starting date of their migration (called in the literature *protorromi*) [M. Courthiade, a, 1], and also to the identifying of the Indian region they started from, linguistic analyses were also used. Such analyses, made with stoicism and carefulness, went to the investigation and interpretation of groups or a linguistic units. This type of analysis that characterizes the people who seek for deep meaning, led to the discovery of a linguistic unit that opened future investigations that ultimately led to rethinking all the previous researches and conclusions about this old, troubled people.

The unit in cause is the ubiquitous and apparently the insignificant *gazo* [one *gazo* – singular, e (îl, ăl, le) *gaze* – plural], in standard Romani language. Read: *gagio*, *gage*, with a short and accentuated *gi* or *ge*.

The logic-analytical process started from the explanation of the word (*gazo*, *gaze*), which primarily means *enemy* and in a more recent understanding *foreign*, *foreign from the Roma ethnicity*, *person that is not Roma*. So the word has no connection with the meaning that the Romanian language has given to it: *gagiu* or *gagică* (a slang term for boyfriend, girlfriend). More recently the term is associated with the image of a young wise man, powerful, or a (young) woman in general.

The semantic units *gazo* – *gaze* are seen in every Romany dialect and have the same meaning.

Searching for the origin of the word, researchers have reached to conclusion that this is connected with the existence of another neighbouring people (Islamic) and of course, as many time in history, an enemy of the Romany ancestors. More specifically, the word *gaze* reminds us of the soldiers of Mahmud of Gazna (from Gazna, Gazny), also called by the Romanies as Mahmud Ghazni.

Of course, he was one of the descendants of the great dynasty of the Gazna Islam.

This is the head of the Islam who, between the first and second millennium, was constantly on an invasion and conquer campaign in north-west India (the Pañjâb state, present Pañjaby and neighbour region from present Afghanistan). On this territory the *jats* or *zott* lived – depending on

the pendulous Arabian names – the ancestors of the current Romanies, the *ProtoRoma* (*early Roma*).

W. R. Rishi says that “the richness and not the territory itself, the extermination of idols and not the conquest were the only objectives of his invasions” [W.R. Rishi, VI], but by the extermination of idols we first must understand the destruction of the traditional belief system of the jats or zott people and their conversion to Islam.

Actually, the conversion to Islam was a constant aim of all the Muslim rulers near the Hindi territories, but as a process we can notice an enhancement at the beginning of the second millennium.

In our opinion, the profane explanation and the real reason was the need of securing the borders that were more and more threatened by the migratory tribes.

That is why the conversion to Islam was only an excuse given to the people. The action itself had a clear military and political goal. The process and the pressure constantly continued and reached their great moment after the deceit victory of Mohammed Ghorī over the kind king Pritviraj Chauhan, almost 200 years later in the battle of Tarāin (Terāin) from 1192 AD.

Between 1001 – 1026, until his final strike, Mahmud Ghazni, who was said “to have come, burnt, plundered, captured and then left” [W. R. Rishi, VI], invaded the north-west India for 17 times. When they could not resist anymore the fighters (rajputs = kshatryas), were obliged to retreat and finally give up their native land.

The solution they found was to move toward new lands, if not friendlier at least less hostile.

This was the beginning and the first phase of forced migration of the protoRomanies (*early Romanies*).

For his submissive and contemporary people, Mahmud was a *gazi*, a warrior, a punisher of the traitors. For the early Romanies he was a killer. The word *gazni* became *gazho*, and in Romani *gazo* and primarily meant and still is “enemy”. Later it also meant “stranger”.

The explanation is meant to convince and that is why we assume it as it is, emphasizing one more time that at its origin *gazo* means “the one from Gazna”, our enemy, referring to the enemy that forced us to leave our native lands, so the beginning of the big migration.

So, the first migration started after the defeat from 1026 and the second one after the battle of Tarāin (1192).

If the first wave of migration is characterized by moving out of the people outside the Indian borders, the second one is characterized by pushing

early inhabitants of north-west India not only outside India, but also toward the Central and Eastern India, where they would need to start another civilization. They would have to start rebuilding the culture not only in a different geographic location, but also in a different historic time. This fact is more than a simple transplant. It is more like a reconstruction in which the new element can not be ignored as the new bases and the new principles can not be ignored in rethinking the old traditions and the time.

What we had revealed by now is the linguistic-deductive argument of the Indian origin of the current Romany population. To these we can add other that sustain the previous explanations. Among these we note:

a. the language of the Romanies which is taken as a whole, although “indigenous and with a lot of dialects” [J. Kochanowski, 23], completes the argument by being very similar to the current spoken language of some groups in central and eastern India. Mainly they are groups of people that still have a nomadic way of life, but mostly the Dravidian population whose language is so similar to Romani that gives you the feeling that both are dialects of the same language [L. Cherata, 81]. We believe that Romanies belong to the population of the Dravidians and they have continued to affirm their culture and civilization on the Indian Territory but on areas that were safer from Islamic attacks. The language differences can be explained by the fact that the Dravidian language developed as a vivid evolving language, constantly improving, while the Romani is a primarily oral language and by constant restrictions or forgetting maintain in its early stage as in the beginning of the second millennium AD.

The changes or the “improvements” of the language are represented by borrowing or the acquisition of words from the other people that lived on the same areas as the early Romanies did or by the contact with the majority population that they interacted with.

The contestants of this idea have as their main argument the current geographical location of the Dravidians, ignoring the possibility that they could have occupied the north-west India before they moved where they are now. Also, they ignore the fact that after the defeats from 1062 and 1192, not all the early Romanies left India. Many of them remained on their native lands, but most retreated from the Islamic attacks and settled down on different Indian territories as the meridional India, where the Dravidians are seen today.

The annex 2 presents the geopolitical map of India at the beginning of the big migration of the early Roma.

Linguists, specialized in Romany\*, agree that in spite of its dialects, the language is unitary allowing the Romanies living everywhere to communicate among them.

In 1844 A. F. Pott concluded that “all the Romany dialects constitute one Romany language, related to the noble Sanskrit language by blood connections” [G. Potra, 125].

Also, the great linguist and Romany specialist W. R. Rishi notes: “the vocabulary of the Romany language primarily consists of elements of Indian language (including Indo-Iranian elements). After their migration, the Romanies borrowed words from the language of the people from the territories they passed and, of course, the Romany language itself had suffered phonetic transformations under these influences. Therefore, the main Romany vocabulary remained Sanskrit in all its dialects, but has a few Greek words” [W. R. Rishi, IV].

Indeed in Romany there are over 900 Indian roots and approximately 200 Greek ones.

All the linguists claim that the main pool of words and the basic linguistic roots are of Indian origin. W. R. Rishi says: “more interesting is the fact that, except a few words, the vocabulary of other Indian languages is similar to Romani, Hindi and Rajsthani” [W. R. Rishi, VII], although “Romany is closer to Rajsthani (jadhपुरi)” [W. R. Rishi, VIII].

The same author, claiming that Jules Block discovered that Romany kept the intervowel *-l-*, specific to Sanskrit, appreciates that “this is the proof of the Romanies’ origin between Pañjâb and Afghanistan” [W. R. Rishi, VIII].

Actually, for this author (researcher at the Indian Institute of Romany Studies from Chandigarh) “the Romany can be seen as an Indian language spoken outside India” [W. R. Rishi, VIII].

b. The Romanies from the south Hungary and West Europe (Germany, Italy, France) call themselves *Manuși* (Manùša) or *Sinti*.

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\* Courthiade, Marcel – linguist from France appointed by the Romany International Congress (Rromani Unia) to coordinate the commission dealing with standardizing the Romani language, is also an author of a Romani manual and other papers in this area – is supporting this view.

Sarău, Gheorghe – Romanian linguist, professor of Romany at the College in Bucharest and University of Bucharest is the author of the *Small dictionary Romani-Romanian*, Edit. Kriterion Publishing Dwelling, Bucharest, 1992 and the *The Romani ABC*, published at the same Dwelling in 1994, he asserts the same view over the unity of the Romany language.

The last name, *Sinti*, by which they are known in Germany, Italy and in other western countries, as well as Slovenia, has its origin in the name of the old and famous river Indus (Sind), and indicates that they kept the spirit of their origin from the land watered by this river (the land of Sind).

Moreover, this valley (land) also belongs to Pañjâb, Pundjabpuru, and along it developed the ancient Harappa culture also called the *Indus (Sindus) civilization*. In north-east Pañjâb the city of Harappa developed and together with Mohenjo-Daro represented important cultural centres for the entire area.

The argument is meant to prove one more time the Indian origin of the Romany population but also to bring more precision to the specific area of reference from India when we talk about the Early Roma.

Now we know rather clearly that this area is approximately the Pañjâb province of this big country and inexhaustible demographic basin to which a small area of the present neighbour country Afghanistan is added.

We also know that Romanies and Sinti are not separate entities. They only differ by the fact that the last ones (*sinti*) come from a specific valley (SindiValley) from the same Pañjâb province and from the same native country, India.

We also know that here, together with other populations “Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro cultures were created” [F. Botey, 30], in the areas “where the religious primitive concept that later gave the Hindu religion” [F. Botey, 30] and the elements that will stay at the base of the later powerful Dravidian culture.

The distinction Sinte-Rrom accentuated mainly by its artificial and unjustified use of the Hitler’s racist and national-socialism propaganda. The Hitler’s followers justified that they did not imprison all the Romanies (that were recognized as Arians, but inferior) in extermination camps (as they did not imprison all the Jews) by the fact that the “free ones” were inferior “zigeun”, but another race defined *sinte*. Actually the Romanies that abandoned their old way of life, their traditional clothes and did not use Romany and borrowed customs and norms from the majority population were left in peace. They were more or less in an assimilation process.

This was noticed by the great majority of Romanies from the Nazis countries and therefore, as a way to save their life, they presented themselves as *sinti* as many times as they needed. They wanted to prove that they had nothing to do with the damned Roma.

This strategy, that for more was the only hope that they will survive to any unpleasant thing destined to an inferior race, continues even today.

If currently we see the name of *sinti* only in a few Central and Western European countries, this was not present a few years ago.

As Heinrich von Wlislöki, one of the best known Romany specialist from the end of XIX<sup>th</sup> century (born in Transylvania) informs us, even one part of the Romanies from the current Romania called themselves *sinti* before the First World War [Dr. H. Wlislöki, 3].

As members of the same people, it is certain that Roma and *sinti* lived on the same historical and geographic areas, came and lived together and were known as such.

We do not want to continue believing that the term *sinti* is a new term, resulted as a surviving strategy.

The term is old as the Romany people itself. It was known and used since old times. Only in Europe, in a moment of collective straying, under the pressure of an ideology that stroke life, the term used it as a way to preserve life itself. The Romanies used an own historic alternative term – *sinti* – in order to oppose the pejorative term – gypsy. In order to be clearer, the distinction Roma-Sinti is the same as the difference between Romanians and Wallachians, between Germans and Bavarians, Provencals and French, Barcelona people and Spanish, Milan people and Italians etc. both terms are old, both express a reality, but one of them contains the situational, positional and geographical component.

The old age of the second term also results from the verse 594 from Homer's Iliad where Lemnos, being severe injured in battle, tells how "from where I felt the Sinti men carried me" [Homer, 594].

c. In Romany, the term 'human' is designated by four semantic units: *a manuś*-singular, e (îl, äl, le) *manuśa* – plural (read: *omanuś, e manuśa*), *o rrom* – singular, e (îl, äl, le) *rroma* – plural (read phonetically), *o läjëco* – singular, e (îl, äl, le) *läjëcur* – plural (read: *läieţo, läieţuria*) or as we previously seen, *gazo, gaze*.

In Romany, *Manuś*, refers to the generic, philosophical 'human'. *Rrom* means human with the same blood line, with the same origin, one of ours, belonging to the same ethnicity, to the same people and with whom we should be friendly. Both words belong to the same vocabulary and have a common Indian origin.

Unlike these, and especially unlike *gazo* which means enemy, of a different blood, ethnicity, the hostile stranger, the bad man, and the stranger in general, *läjëco* means the human that is not known to us, the human that does not belong to our group, is not our friend, but it might have the same blood line. This might belong to the same ethnicity, but we do not know him/her, we do not know who he/she is so we better be careful before we find out his intentions, what he wants.



d. The colour of the skin, the general shape of head and face appear as similar features for Indian population. Also the gestures, the movements did not modify even after centuries of European influence.

e. The clothes of traditional Romanies (coppersmiths, bear-leaders, whitewashers etc.), their way of Roma women of swaddling and carrying the babies are very similar to Indian women (in spite of some influences from the majority population).

f. For demographic behaviour, (especially marriage and birth rate for Romanies that still keep the traditions, clothes, language and the traditional way of life), we are consternated by the resemblance with the same Indian behaviours.

Even now, although there is a law that does not allow young men to get marry before 17 and 18 (for girls), because of the rapid population growth of Indian population (India is the second country in the world as number of citizens) there still are 10.000.000 child marriages [V. Trebici, 222]. In the same manner, for traditional Romanian Romanies (Kalderash, căldărari, ursari, spoitori, and also rudari from few areas) child marriages are a normal way of life, having been “contracted” by the parents’ agreement, support and complicity even nowadays.

This is revealed in the “Table of the husband’s occupation status according to membership chaste”.

For now we do not deal with explaining the odd results for the kalderash. For now we won’t tackle the causes of the results recorded for ironsmiths (only 19.63% get married starting 18, and 21.5% below 18). We will discuss this aspect later.

Important is that our claim on the age of the marriage is sustained. More than 1:5 (21.19%) Romanies get married between ages 12-17.

How was it possible to preserve these similarities? The answer is not an aim of this book, but we hope that researchers are very close to offer a correct answer to this question.

Table of husband's occupation status, according to the chaste

No. cert.	Professional Groups	Practiced profession, occupation or line of work																Total				
		NR	industry	constructions	services	agriculture	transport	army	unspecific Romy jobs	Silversmith, coppersmith, jeweller	coppersmith, boilermaker	Whitewashers, Costorar,	Florists	spoon-maker	musician	Blacksmith	Other traditional occupations		brick-maker	No profession	Not the case	
1	Ironsmiths	0	10	2	2	0	2	0	1	1	47	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33	9	107
2	Boot-makers	1	3	3	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1	17
3	Musicians	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	13	2	20
4	Florists	0	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	4	22
5	Horse-Copers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	2
6	Sieve makers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
7	Silversmiths	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	14	0	15
8	Whitewashers	2	4	3	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	44	9	72
9	Artisans working in bones	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	0	26
10	Bear-leaders	0	8	5	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	29	2	49
11	Coppersmiths	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	20	3	29
12	Gold-diggers	0	10	7	1	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	76	8	109
13	Silk-traders	0	13	6	0	1	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	9	59
14	Settled	8	177	87	27	22	49	5	6	11	22	2	1	1	4	2	2	0	479	142	1047	
15	Gabors	0	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	4	25	
16	Crab-sellers	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	3
17	Turks, tartars	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	2	18	
18	Hungarianised	0	15	6	1	1	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	79	10	120	
19	Total	12	252	127	37	27	71	6	11	12	73	6	2	1	8	2	6	2	881	205	1741	
20	%	0.7	14.5	7.3	2.1	1.6	4.1	0.3	0.6	0.7	4.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.1	50.6	11.8	100.0	

### 1.3. Migration reasons and the access paths

As we saw, the migration of the ancestors of nowadays Romanies started in India, more exactly in the north-western part of India, where currently there is the province of Pañjâb and crossed by the river Indus (Sind) with its known civilization, and from a small region from current Afghanistan.

This was the place where the ancient cultures Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro rose and developed (see appendix 3 and 4) and built excellent qualitative moments for the entire human culture from those times [F. Botey, 28]. Relics of this culture can be seen even today (appendix 3 and 4), proving one more time, as Francesc Botey wrote, as being a society “superior to the areas that later it had invaded” [idem].

Also, Mircea Eliade says that “the urban and rural society (Indus n.n.) had no comparison to the <<Indo-European wildness>>” [apud. Botey, 28].

When talking about the reasons and the means of migration, the opinions are usually divided.

We believe that the migrations of the early Romanies occur in two ways: willing and imperative.

By willing migration we understand those migrations that occurred without any military, political or any other external pressure that aims either to the buying-up of wealth, territories, population transfers and/or conversion to other religions.

Those migrations were motivated by the individual or small group’s will and started long before the imperative migrations that we will later call *the big migrations*.

The willing migrations are sustained by the search for the individual welfare by the individuals determined to leave for new lands and fulfil their hopes and dreams

Those populations similar to present Romanies belong to this category. Even from the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD they were found in Persia. Also the 12000 Musicians that the legend says they were brought from the kingdom of Behram Gour to entertain the people seems to have a certain degree of reality, beyond its sense of myth and fiction [J. P. Liegeois, 1987, 26].

We can add here the great craftsmen who brought in Europe the art of crafting the bronze, the iron, noble metals, any metal or they develop the art of pottery (because of the religious belief that forbade to eat twice from the same pot [J. Auboyer, 159], this art was very developed in India), who also belong to this category. All these people mingled with the contact majority population and therefore lost their identity or ethnic conscience. Any trial

to determine them to identify themselves with the ancient people of India is worthless. They just lost their identity and unintentional forgot their origin and ethnic membership.

The imperative migrations were carried on big migratory waves and displaced a large number of people as a result of military campaigns, religious or political pressures or wars and made impossible the agreement between native land and individual and collective conscience.

One of the most tragic invasions was the one of Mahmud Ghazny that irrecoverable entered the collective conscious of the Romanies. This also was the starting point of the big migrations.

It is possible that initially, the ancestors of the Romanies to have retreated in order to gather reinforcements, military and political help as to regain the land that they were forced to leave, to regain their freedom, so very important for their life.

Obviously the Gods were against them and the dream of coming back remained only a dream.

Defeated and physically, material and morally drained they had to find a solution, a way out for their survival.

The Europe, the Byzantine Empire, the Byzantium itself represented not only economic, cultural and political chances, but also the only chance they had to survive and to reborn themselves in a moment when they were up a tree. And they played this chance all the way!

Coming here to exist, to coexist and with no conquer or destruction will (they were coming from one of the oldest and profound cultural spaces, where they already gained the world knowledge in the well-known libraries, in a time when in Europe there was a pilgrimage without any precise direction and with no return point), they were welcomed and used as needed in their adoptive lands. The adoption was according to their knowledge and skill to answer and adapt to the people's needs and requests, in the time and the space they were then.

The way to Byzantium was not cleared by the Romanies' ancestors. Because of the trading between India and Byzantium they knew it since antiquity. The trade was an essential part of Indian economy. That is why since antiquity all the rulers were giving it their full attention and consideration.

Since ancient times, there was an entire set of laws on trade, protection and control. "A meticulous written code ruled the entire maritime activity in India...it was controlled by a minister (*nâvdyaksha*)" [Auboyer, 97].

Undoubtedly that among the trade partners of Indians, they were the Byzantines that they were well known for their flourishing business. Even today it is said that the Romanies were drawn to Europe by the trade business.

We say, ‘the majority’ because not all the Romanies used the same path to reach Europe and later, the Romanian provinces.

Ignoring the multiple access ways for early Romanies in Europe and in Romanian provinces is the beginning of some unrealistic given interpretations or explanations based on aspects that weren’t essential or significant, with no mass nature, which can scientifically explain the history of Romanies in Romanian Principalities.

We surely refer to the claim that the Romanies from Principalities (they will be the focus point of the following pages) would have had as an entry point the east and north-east Moldavia, and their social status would have been of ‘serf’ (rob=Slavic word) or ‘slave’ (sclav= Latin word) of the Tartars.

This claim, which we do not totally dismiss, was sustained by Mihail Kogălniceanu [Kogălniceanu, 1837, 88] (the first great scholar of the Romany language and problems and the man to whom the Romanies own their freedom act form slavery) and then by Nicolae Iorga [N. Iorga, 1937, 23] (in his last lecture at the summer university from Vălenii de Munte announced the auditorium that he recently had discovered “his southern origin” [N. Iorga, 1938, 72-73] somehow wanting to give a greater support to the Romanies’ belief that the great man was theirs), and in his historical sociologic writings by the sociologist Henri H. Sthal [52].

Our beliefs converge to a “more sociological” explanation, with a stronger logical and a socio-economical support.

In other words we fully credit the hypothesis that the great majority of ancestors of the current Romanies reached the space between the Danube, Tisza and Black Sea using the southern path of the current Romania. This claim gains more and more recognition not only among historians, sociologists, ethnologists, linguists or Romany activists\*, but also among other researchers on Roma issues [V. Achim, 28].

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\* Gheorghe, Nicolae – sociologist with a strong research and serious anthropological studies on Roma – is one of the Romania’s experts on their theoretical and practical issues. Part of the ideas of this chapter, among which the one on “the first and the oldest entry gate of Romanies on Romanian territories”, was structured upon the exchange of information and opinions of this exceptional man. For this I thank him for his great support in building a professional point of view on Roma origins. He, as a Romany (as I) and as a leader of Romany ethnicity has the merit of being involved and involving others in solving some of the serious problems that the Roma population faces. I was no exception to this. Having great research skills he also is characterized by an original and deep thinking.

At the same time, we support the idea that said they found their *necessary* place and role in the social and economic context they have entered. They answered some *major needs* of the contact population and filled some technical gaps needed for the socio-historical development of the time.

This gave them, both in the south-eastern Europe and in the Romanian provinces, a special status meant to complete the socio-economical needs of the time. We will call this special status that only the Romany population had as *economical complementarity*. We will call *contact majority populations* the majority population, among which the Romanies (and other minorities) lived, found their shelter, use and coexistence.

The economic complementarity is the position from which the *cultural symbiosis* started – characteristic for the *Romany culture* – and it was possible by structures and levels, although different still being able to create a certain relation that allowed the reciprocity and not passive, unintentional or indifferent acceptance.

The fact that we do not fully support the claim of entering from east and north-east Moldavia (we think it's unrealistic with the historical process) does not mean the total rejection of the claim.

We only support that *the main migratory wave*, the big one, primarily was through the south path of the Danube and not through the east and north-east of Moldavia.

The eastern and north-eastern entries were real, but had a secondary, insignificant and not a defining role. More, by analysing the events in their diachronic logic, the north-eastern entrance is more than a century after the first wave entrance through the south. We do not reject that the new comers, the former slaves of Tartars to have come through north-east and belong to the second migration wave, after the defeat from Tarăin, in 1192.

We claim that part of them could have entered in the job of previous ethnics that have reached a certain level of social success and welfare, as well as the majority population. This allowed them to quickly reject the big mass of people they have come with. This fact is also sustained by numbers. If before 1385 Vladislav Vodă was able to give Vodița Monastery 40 dwellings of Romanies, in 1388 Mircea cel Bătrân was giving Cozia Monastery 300 dwellings, and Ștefan cel Mare, after his 1471 expedition in Wallachia returned in Moldavia with 17.000 dwellings of Romanies [A. Gonța, 86], not the same situation was found in the claimed Moldavian entry point. Because of the small number of slave Romanies, here the rulers could not afford such gifts. 50 years later, in 1434, the Moldovița Monastery receives from Ștefan Vodă (the son of Alexandru cel Bun) the first 2 Roma dwellings (dve celeadi

țigancsîi), “and later *one Rrom* was added by Basarab, the ruler of Wallachia and *one* by Ștefăniță Vodă” [Gonța, 82]. “The entire 21 religious institutions which were given Romany slaves during the XV<sup>th</sup> and XVI<sup>th</sup> centuries and the beginning of the XVII<sup>th</sup>” [Gonța, 83] were totalizing 336 Romany dwellings, just a little more than what Mircea cel Bătrân was giving to Cozia Monastery two centuries ago.

It’s also worth mentioning that the first documentary certification of the Romanies was not registered in Moldavia, the so-called entrance gate, but in Wallachia (1385).

The first document about the Romanies in Moldavia belongs to the chancellery of Alexandru cel Bun (1428), so almost 50 years later. We think that this is significant enough.

If the immigrant Romanies from the south were moving at first as free people (their dependency being the result of a certain socio-historical process that carried on at the “destination place”), the others who came from East and North-east, had lost their independence before coming in contact with Romanian provinces.

Analysing the psychology of the defeated and the lack of a political and action agreement that is a general characteristic of the Romanies (both from the past and from today) [I. Budai Deleanu, 166], nothing can stop us thinking that there was not an agreement regarding the future right after the military and political disaster.

It is very possible that the dissensions started very early and, right after they left their native land, each group took its own road, according to the person in charge. Most likely they blamed each other and the traditional leaders for their defeating and coercion to leave their lands.

In our opinion, the great wave started from North-west India, passed through the South of Afghanistan and present Pakistan and headed toward Persia where they hoped to gather reinforcement and fight back.

It is worth recalling that in these regions since the VII<sup>th</sup> century AD there already were other Romanies living (there are texts about them). It is possible that they hoped that they would get help from them in rebuilding an army and punishing Mahmud Gaznavitul and his soldiers.

It is very unlikely that the people from this *big migratory wave* [D. Sandu, 1984, 1 and next] to have settled for a longer time on the Arabian lands they’ve reached. More likely, this wave also gathered other Romanies who were speaking Persian. That is how we can explain the large amount of Persian words that linguist identified in Romany. Without some written

evidence on this matter they also explained it by the time the Romanies spent on Persian lands [Burtea, 1999, 231].

Actually, the phenomenon repeated itself for the Armenian Empire, too. The ancestors of the present Romanies who had a long history in Armenia were speaking Armenian and joining the big wave they've also influenced the language of the new comers. The short staying of the migratory wave on the Armenian land as well on Persian land couldn't have such a big impact on the Romany language. We consider that the people who were speaking Armenian and Persian and joined the wave had a bigger influence than the staying itself. This joining and influence were possible and easy because the fellow countrymen who joined them from the Armenian territory were leading them toward a Christian world, even an orthodox way (Byzantium, Russia) that were familiar with, as they knew it from indoors.

One might certainly ask why did the other early Romanies who were already living on different lands, decide to join the migratory wave in their way toward Balkan and Byzantium?

The answer could not be outside the socio-political status of these migrants on these countries.

The Persian Empire, which was hit all over, was constantly attacked from all sides and it was on the way to collapse or divide at any moment. The Armenian Empire collapsed in 1061.

Life in such empires was incomparable to what life could offer in the stable and flourishing Byzantium.

Actually, in order to learn Armenian or for Armenian to influence another language the contact with Armenian language on the Armenian land was not necessary, because in its best times, the Armenian as a cult language, was spread all over Asia Minor.

We consider that on the land of the Armenian Empire the cleavage of the second big migratory wave happened. This is the migration wave that started after the early Roma Tarāin defeat in 1192 under the king Prithviraj Chauhan. Some of them (large enough though), who separated from the ones heading toward Byzantium went to North toward Niprus and Don. They hoped they could meet other Romanies they heard to have come earlier and brought the art of moulding bronze, opening so the Bronze Age in the East and South of Europe [P. Bataillard, 1875, 126].

Unfortunately they come across Tartars (they were in their full expansion around 1200) and became their slaves.

In their military raids (including those in Romanian provinces), tartars carried around the slaves they had.



When they were forced to retreat, they often left their slaves behind.

On the other hand, the slaves took advantage of the situation (panic, lack of attention, attacks etc.) and did everything they could “to lose” their lords, hoping to find better lord or better places where they could live together with other Romanies. So they did everything they could to improve their living conditions.

As it was previously shown, even Mahmud Gaznavitul, following the model of those times and the winner’s rights, took as a war catch, beside goods and values, a lot of slaves (500,000 prisoners). This also had different paths and histories, according to their living condition they had to pass.

We do not find at random the fact that large groups of people, similar to the Romanies or to early Romanies (clothes, language, and customs) are especially met in the Muslim world. These ones also had different paths, roles and histories.

As for the history, the behaviour, the customs and the life of Romanies in current Romania, it is important to know that the main migratory wave passed through Asia Minor and headed to Byzantium. As an important economic and trading centre, and as an empire, this offered them better living conditions than the lands they left.

In our opinion, *the great wave* started from the north-west of India because of military, religious and political pressures after the defeat in 1026. In its way for Byzantium it crossed Persia and Armenia where they also lived for a short period. In Persia there was an important cleavage: some headed south toward Damascus and Egypt where they settled for a long period and then some headed to Spain through Libya, Algeria and Morocco; the other continued their north-west way heading Byzantium and through Bulgaria they reached Romania, Hungary, Poland, Austria and (Prussia) Germany. From Germany they went easily to France, Netherlands or the Scandinavian.

*The second big wave* started after the defeat at Tarāin and also had a cleavage on the Armenian Empire. Some of them headed toward Russian territories where they met the Tartars and became their slaves. That is how, most of them, reached the Romanian land through Moldavia at the same time with the invasions of the Tartar hordes and later they reached Romanian provinces.

In other words, in order to reach the Central, Northern and Western Europe, in less than two centuries the early Romanies surrounded both the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea.

In France they reached through Germany and Spain.

## 1.4. Denominations and their implications

As for the names the Romanies received in different times and places, there is such a vast literature that itself it can be the subject of a different writing. From the simple opinions to some scientific theories, the authors have tried to give different explanations. The name of ‘gypsy’ (*țigan*) is one of the most spread, known and disputed among authors. Therefore, we will start with this one. We want to show why this is a name that is foreign for this ethnicity and in fact that there is a name that came from outside this group. The Romanies accepted it as they also accepted a long list of other names, facts, opinions or myths about them, without any arguing, opposing or correcting them. Moreover, they sometimes fed all those beliefs and false convictions thinking that if they have nothing to gain they will have nothing else to lose.

Regarding this matter we believe that the name of *gypsy* has Byzantine roots (Asia Minor) and it was given to the Romanies of the central and south-eastern Europe.

Because the ancestors of the Romanies did not salute according to the roman customs, by holding out and shaking hands, but by Hindu custom, by joining hands under the chin and leaning the head forward, they were called *athinganoi*, *athinganos*, meaning *untouchable*.

Many elders remember this name of *ațigan* or *ațigani* and not the *țigan* or *țigani*. Also, many of the documents also refer to them as that.

This name was not long ago used for the Romanies in different parts of south Romania, but especially in Oltenia [P. Alimănașteanu, 116].

The document itself (see appendix 5), that represents and notes the first testify of the Romanies in the Romanian provinces (the document sealed by Vladislav Voievod to Vodița Monastery and later, in 1385 by Dan Vodă) calls this population ‘ațigani’ (“gift of 40 dwellings of *ațigani* (s.n.)” to the monastery).

By having a direct trace with *athinganoi* – the initial name that they received when they first entered Byzantium and Balkan area – this ‘ațigan’ brings no diachronic phonological problem. On the other hand, this fact is also noted by B. P. Hașdeu in his *Historical Archive of Romania*: “the main difference is that the Wallachian document calls them *Ațiganî*: ΛЦИΓΑΝΙ, while the Serb one calls them *Țangari*: ЦЗНГАРИЕ; these are two forms of the same word that later were used for *Zingaro* sêu *Cingaro* in Italian, *Cenghené* in Turk and *Zinkali* in Spanish and for ЦЫГОИИ in Russian, *Cygan* in Polish, *Zigonas* in Latvian etc.”

Jean-Pierre Liégeois points out that according to Romany, the gypsies do not exist [J. P. Liegeois, 1976, 13]. The word ‘*țigan*’ is not in their language and they always named themselves using *rrom*: *tu san rrom? me sem/som/sim rrom!* This word means man, one of us, with the same blood line and has its roots in the ancient Sanskrit word *rromba*, out of which the Romany language evolved (we have demonstrated this earlier).

Both ‘*athinganoi*’ and ‘*țigani*’ (‘*ațigani*’) are exogenous names, coming from outside the group. They were developed by observation of their behaviour (salute), their customs (witchcraft, black magic similar to Egyptians – gypsies), their belief in different beings, things (present or not – idolatry), their always poor social status, but none of these names is characteristic to the conscious and the norms of the group.

Other names shared by different authors are due to imagination or the need to explain. By desperately wanting an explanation for the names of Roma in English countries, Werner Cohn inverts the historic-temporal relation and claims that the name comes from a so-called English verb: *to gyp* translated by ‘to cheat, to swindle someone of something inappropriately’ (rom: ‘*a țigăni*’) [W. Cohn, 3].

Later, the exogenous names (including ‘*athinganoi*’) lost their initial meaning. They gained a pejorative sense by being associated with poverty, dirt, different, unknown or misunderstood customs – why?-, clothes or different customary laws which lack of quality, people from the edge of society, social inferiority.

During the Middle Ages, in the Romanian provinces the name ‘*țigan*’ defined the socio-judicial status of a dependent person: a slave.

Alexandru I. Gonța writes: “the simple name of Tartar or gypsy/*țigan* used in legacy, reinforcement, exchange or inheritance documents leads you not only to the ethnical meaning of a captured foreigner, but also to the social meaning of *slave* (s.n). To give a tartar or a gypsy is similar to the meaning of *offering or selling a slave from abroad* (s.n)” [Gonța, 81]. Once with time, the idea of slave did not mean anymore or even suggest the identity of tartar, of foreigner or prisoner, but it identified only the gypsies. In this matter the author also says: “the phenomenon is too obvious not to notice and realize that the ethnic name of tartar was replaced by the slave gypsy” [Gonța, 82].

After the circular order of Moruzi Vodă, at the Subprefecture of Vaslui (1781), that was given to stop the marriages among the Moldavians and the Romanies, another writing explicitly noted “the Moldavian man who shall take a Romany woman shall become a Romany, as well as the Moldavian

woman who shall take a Romany man shall also become a Romany” [G. Potra, 79]. These ”normative prescriptions” weren’t given in order to establish new ethnic identities, but to establish new social-judicial statuses, new dependency relations. The measure had become necessary because the order from Vaslui was not followed anymore and the lords of slaves did not want to lose them without any financial compensation due to mixed marriages that occurred. By this order not only they lost nothing but they also gained new slaves without any payment.

All the later names as ‘*țâgan*’, ‘*țâganschi*’, ‘*Zigeuner*’, ‘*țingari*’, ‘*cigány*’, ‘*tzigan*’, ‘*cingari*’, ‘*cingani*’, ‘*cengani*’, ‘*zingari*’ etc., are just adaptations, translations, imitations, variances of the old *athinganoi*, *athinganos*. This fact proves one more time (if necessary) the influence of Greek language and culture in Europe and in the world, even when Greece was not an economic, military or politic power. Connotations and elements of the local people and areas were added to these names.

At a more careful analysis, the entire set of exogenous names of the Romanians started from the initial two ones: *athinganoi*, *athinganos*. These were given to the Romanians because of the way they greeted. The other genesis of names started from *gypsy*, *gypsies*, given to them because of the misconception they were originated from Egypt. To these, the Nordic names were added.

That is why we consider rather late the claim of the Romanians to be called as they were calling themselves and not by exogenous names.

This is not a singular phenomenon. Throughout history there is sufficient resembling or identical cases. The Iranian people refused to be called as Persians (the Greek reference) and chose the name coming from inside the people and language – Iranians.

After the collapse of the colonial system, more African countries, colonies of different European powers also chose their native names. This is a powerful claim to separate from their past and the humiliations they endured following the “African authenticity” statement of Zair ruler Mobutu. So Congo becomes Zair; Katanga is Shabab, the name of the city Léopoldville becomes Kinshasa, the city Elisabethville is called Lumumbashi etc. Mobutu is not Joseph Désiré anymore, name given by French missionary nuns, but Sese Seko N’Gwendu Wa Za Banga” [J-J. Schreiber-Servan, 164-165]. Following this trend, Superior Volta becomes Burkina Fasso, Dahomeiul becomes the state of Benin, Superior Rodhesia is named Zimbawe, and the former Ceylon is now Sri Lanka etc.

Our country and our people had also to fight for keeping its own names and identity and refused the external names (valah, olah, vlah etc.) or even the old names and chose for the modern ones. Even today in many foreign languages, 'Romania' is written and read with a 'u' instead of a 'o' (Rumania). During socialism and in Ceaușescu's times, in 1968, our diplomacy succeeded in making English diplomacy and English people to use the name of Romania and not Rumania.



Chapter 2

## **THE ROMANY GROUPS**





## 2.1. Necessary premises

The sociological approach of the aspects regarding the Roma people, considering *the group* the different members of this ethnicity (that eventually became subjects of a sociological investigation) would be an unprecedented scientific research.

Such extended approach hasn't been seen neither in the foreign literature, nor in the Romanian one.

In the Romanian interwar writings we can see many attempts to classify this population, but because of the oscillations in using the criteria, despite the fact that some researchers came close to establishing typologies that could have become what we define today as Romanies' professional groups, did not result in a clear definition of the notion and could neither identify its ontological and epistemological functions. Good as they were, these attempts did not succeed in highlighting the definition itself or its valences and they were not able to lead to an investigation starting from the results of such classifications [I. Chelcea, 1944 and G. Stoiciu, O. Brosseau].

Recently (1991), professor Mihai Merfea [M. Merfea, 24], feeling the need for a classification, resumes previous attempts conducted by George Potra and Ion Chelcea, and, considering them a datum without any attempt to define or use a criterion, Tudor Amza [8], talks about certain groups (although they are not named as such).

We consider that by studying the Roma people, starting from their classifications in groups correlated with modern elements of analysis of every community (e.g. the area of geographic location, the type of community – rural, urban, big/small cities etc.) we go beyond ethnographic, ethnologic or anthropological study and conduct a sociological analysis.

This way *volens nolens* leads to causal explanations, to introspections that highlight an entire nonlinear social history. Also it allows and stimulates ordering, descriptions, searching for trends and classifications.

Since the Second World War, the need of studying the Romanies according to groups was noted in the Romanian literature.

Trying to explain the discrepancies on the number of Romanies among data from 1930's census and reality (it seems that there's always been a discrepancy in this matter), Ion Chelcea concluded: "from a theoretical and practical point of view it is recommended to study Romanies using *categories* (s.n). That is why Mr. Făcăoaru estimates that in 1935 there were 400.000

gypsies and shows that the number of 262.501 gypsies reported by the Central Institute of Statistics refers to “the nomad” gypsies. Such attempt was not conducted yet in Romania” [I. Chelcea, 1944, 73].

We wanted to follow this methodological urge in the research coordinated by professors Elena and Cătălin Zamfir, conducted in the last eight months of 1992 and whose results were published in 1993 [Zamfir]. The lack of a theoretical approach adapted to the needs of the research, the lack of a literature centred on this field, but mainly the time crisis that’s determined by the “pressure” of the social command did not allow us to develop a rigorous methodology emphasizing on the group (Romany professional group).

Although the aforementioned research did not manage to reveal how the issues concerning Romanies vary according to professional groups, it still somehow “tested” that such approach is possible, useful. And it can give interesting [E&C Zamfir, 1993, chapters 7 (family), 8 (birth rate), 11 (living conditions), 13 (housing)].

Also, during the field work, when one of the subjects wanted to emphasize something or to make a comment on different behaviours or traditions of his family or other fellows, he used the expression “you must know that there are many types (professional groups) of Romanies (gypsies)”.

Actually, the Romanies are one people and they belong to the same race, but what they wanted to emphasize is that their fellow have that *something* that distinguish them from other Romanies. Using different words they were referring to *professional group – a social category* (and not biological) that we defined as having a certain historic loading and that defines the members who belong to it.

For the Romanies the group is more than kinship relations. It does not exclude it. It is supported by it.

Kinship relationships maintain all their importance and function, but Romany groups (categories of people) formed on other basis. It had strong social roots that built complex psychological, behavioural and acting profiles.

Therefore, we believe that, as an essential onto-genetic element, the category of ‘group’ stood at the base of differentiating large groups of the same ethnicity and is very important. The Romanies evolved around it.

By Romanies’ professional groups we understand a large group of Romany families, connected by the fact that their main members have the same job that was learnt (at least up to a certain time in their history)

in a traditional way (children from their parents) and they use identical or similar materials and tools in order to practice it. Although the majority of the members of the same group have the same job, almost each family has a specific way of doing it (depending on the transmission way and on ‘the family secrets’). The way of transmitting the craft from father to child is an Indian legacy, later borrowed by others on European soil.

The groups of Romanies represent an European form of the informal old Indian organization by moving the corporations of the Indian craftsmen (*sereni*) to the foreground, by replacing the old canons and precepts of chaste who had become anachronic and socially worthless.

## 2.2. The difficult issue regarding Roma categorization

Nowadays, studying the Romanies according to Romany professional groups or groups belonging to different categories of people, is not an easy task anymore.

The trouble comes both from the researcher’s and the Romany population’s view. This is primarily seen when the Romany population becomes, first of all, the subject of a sociological research.

The contemporary researcher has to deal with a total lack of previous approaches. He has to cultivate on a forested land and his work resembles with *a reconstruction*. This reconstruction lacks any “initial plan” as vague or general it might be, so the original is very hard to spot.

Not even the subjects of the study can manage to draw a clear general image. And that’s how we reach the second obstacle – from the subject’s perspective– the studied population’s view.

As we mentioned in the cited research, currently *for a great number of Romanies, the traditional Romanies’ professional group does not anymore seem to constitute a lively conscious fact.*

Most of them have real problems in naming, even approximating, the group they belong to or the Romany professional groups their parents and ancestors belonged to.

If the researcher or the operator of the investigation do not have sufficient information about groups to give to the collocutor or to the subject of the investigation a few defining items, that are specific to the Romanies’

professional group he *suspects* the respective subject might be (in order to help him to define himself), it is very unlikely that he could be later able to correlate the information he receives in order to properly find out the nature of the group.

That is why during the aforementioned, 577 subjects (31.42%) couldn't or didn't know to correctly indicate their Romany professional group.

In other words, almost one third of the subjects who they had a dialogue with, did not have anymore the conscience of belonging of a group and declare themselves as Romanies.

If we add to these the subjects who voluntarily or in their ignorance indicated the subgroup instead of the group, we can then say that more than one third of Romanies do not know or do not want to know the Romany professional group they belong to. This huge "forgetting" generated by the unevenness policy process of knowledge, identities, social status promoted by the sole party (Albu [121, 510]), is alarming and has its effects in present Roma's ethnicity.

And this happens when not a long time ago the Romany groups were easily distinguished and characterized, fact that's mentioned by all the Romany scholars consulted during the research [Zamfir, 1993, 2].

The process of social division and differentiation reached its "classic" form on Romanian land. It started around 1900 and lasted in clear shapes till the Second World War.

This reality does nothing but enhancing even more our regret in the lack of a Romanian original contribution to the phenomenon that could have realized a systematic description (if not a big sociological analysis) when the socio-historical context would have allowed it and the theoretical and scientific possibilities were enough to detect a phenomenon that's "legible at first sight".

This is even more when the studies of Romanies already started in our country and were at the same level with similar studies around the world.

Currently, "the classic" Roma groups may appear as products of memory for some Romanies that want to collaborate with the researcher (even if such a desire is not always present), but we also must mention that some Romanies avoid making public or assume the Romany professional groups they belong to, even if they know it, growing up within its conscience and knowledge.

The motivation of this behaviour is very different and hard to circumstantially or *de facto* specify, but we think it will become more accessible to the reader after we will briefly describe each group from our country.

Coming back to the difficulty in naming the group they belong, we consider that this is not surprising if we consider that for 40 years the goal was to create “only one people”, doubled by heavy industrialization that terribly shook an original way of living defined by ancestral forms, and killing some distinct jobs for every Romanies’ professional group. And that’s not all!

As for the researcher, the groups of Romanies appear as mental structures, obtained through theoretical approach and having lots of vagueness, but still having an unexpected and important instrumental – cognitive role.

### **2.3. Constitution, structure and dynamics of the Romanies’ professional groups**

Coming from a space where the division of members was primarily in aprioric caste [J. Auboyer, 35], it is hard to accept the early Romanies could have used a different model for social differentiation than the one they inherited from their native country.

If we consider that the majority of members did not belong to the brahmen’s or military caste (*kshatriya*), we have no reason to believe that this model was very popular. We strongly believe that for the ones that were the base of society but considered inferiors (*chândâla*) because they were hunters, tanners, liquor trading, hangmen or grave diggers, so any day by day job this division was not very popular. Even the agriculturists or the people who originated from the class of agriculturists (*vaisya*), and the servile class (*sûdra*) were not appreciated at all.

By all these we explain how easy, in spite of the insuperable hardships from the new spaces, in the first decades of their staying in Europe the ancestors of current Romanies “accepted” to have the so-called “proteguitori”. Their job was “to guard” them in order to travel, to sell their products as they were used to do it, in order to help them “live together”.

The motivation is even more striking if we consider that, among others, these “allowances” were obtained with a serious limitation of their freedom, which basically was essential for them.

Paradoxically, they accepted or asked for the guardianship in order to gain the freedom to do, to get or to allow them something, including a certain way of life, different or incompatible to the majority’. But this was for sure the reason or the exercise of losing their later freedom.

Although the caste division in India society is quite rigid, Jeannine Auboyer lets us know that the access to a lower caste, even difficult was still possible. Therefore we encounter a certain social mobility, characterized by its asymmetry [Auboyer, 45].

The caste of fighters (*kshatriya*) was surely the base and assured the leading of “refugees”, but it did not mean that they were *the only refugee category* fighting in avoiding the massacre or slavery from Muslims.

As we see the migratory wave was big enough to encompass people from all the castes. The Brahman caste itself whose beliefs were threatened by Islam was an important component of migration. From itself teachers, scribes, chancellors, fortune-tellers, healers etc. were recruited.

The fighters desperately needed other castes whose contribution was necessary and irreplaceable.

On their capacities to manage themselves according to the rules, attributions and mental barriers imposed by their caste, we will discuss later.

No matter how the situation was, it is certain that the social division from their own country was not seen on European lands in terms of function or availability.

The (social) divisions existed in reality, in the collective imagination, in collective or individual conscience (all these could not be erased once they reached other lands), but these differentiations had another nature and structure.

The shift of values and their bowing over occurred right before their eyes!

In these new conditions, the differentiations were due to the concrete manner in which individuals or groups managed to fructify the advantages and disadvantages of migration and of new destinations, but also due to the shift of values or social contexts imposed by new social, religious, cultural

norms or by the conditions and rules of the population they were in touch with.

The need to express those differences appeared, as well. This need, that's combined with the diverse and specific manners in finding the place and the ways of relation and integration into European culture (or any adoptive society), this need generated the social division by which the *groups of Roma* were created. This process meant not only separation from a spiritual and apriori principle, but also placing life on new and modern social principles.

In the conscience and descriptions of elderly people, of the "knowledgeable" Romany persons, the groups were created around the different occupations, jobs, professions of its members.

For example, let's analyse the group "cocalar" (eng. slang: chav) from the *kòkalo* which in Romany means *bone*). All the people who manufacture different products by crafting bones are included here. These products were necessary in the secular and religious culture of that time.

The manufactured objects were having the use, the extent and the value that the regional, group, individual social need was claiming.

Among products we mention bone needles, crochets, combs, hairgrips, buttons, small pottery, ornaments for different objects, brooches, frontlets, bags for knives, swords, choppers, handgrips, high boys, different lighting objects etc.

Our belief is that this crafting is nothing else than an adaptation to European materials, conditions and needs of the society for the well-known ivory and amber crafts-men from old India.

Jeannine Auboyer says that "ivory sculptors were well-known. They knew how to carve in big stone blocks and in bas-reliefs, managing to make precise incisions and gravures with a delicate but steady hand. They preferred to work on ivory from alive elephants rather than from dead animals" [Auboyer, 118], which in the new conditions was not possible anymore. They also knew to shape the shells and bones" [Auboyer, 126].

It is important to notice that by practicing an old tradition, Romanies who currently have a hand-job also work according to ancient Indians. The profession is transmitted with all its secrets from one generation to another. The aforementioned author also says that "jobs were almost always hereditary and they were practiced within the family" 11, 125-126]. This is at least noticed for jobs that are practiced even today on Romanian land.

This was a direct result of the structure of that society “*a characteristic* (s.n.) of the artisan and trading structure of ancient India organized in *corporate groups* or *sereni*. This is another aspect of the social structure. It reclassifies the divisions in castes and seems to have a bigger impact” [idem]. If for daily aspects of Indian society this assertion can be argued, on European land it is true and has its meaning.

The need to adapt themselves to the materials, conditions and the demands of the places they went to was a definite factor for the way they practiced their crafting, for the “level of improvisation” or expertise they showed in their work. For our research it is important to analyse the way they changed, adapted or developed different professions. In other words, in this area we must find the key of evolution, changing and the dynamics of professions and creation of groups (professional groups).

The claim of “transforming” old Indian craftsmen in carved stone and ivory may be an example. But more illustrating is the example of a “debated” group in the literature [I. Chelcea, 1939 and I. Mihăilescu, 1993](where the Romanian literature has its own valuable contribution): *rudarii* (gold diggers).

This professional group, appreciated by all the researchers in this area gave a lot of discussions and hypothesis till the point that it was considered an “ethnographic enigma” [I. Chelcea, 1939, 11] or a population that did not belong to Romanies, but a distinct ethnicity descending from ancient Dacs that adapted through the history. Some researchers and theoreticians even claim that *gold diggers* are a distinct *Romanian group* that succeeded in keeping an old language, clothes and old customs and with an ancient collective conscience of their ancestral descending (from Dacia) [I.Chelcea, 1944, 57-59].

In our opinion, in the social diachronic, *gold diggers* (*rudar*) is the same group as *spoon maker* (*lingurar*), with *miner* (*băieș*), with *dish shelf* (*blidar*) with *Kutso-Vlachs* or *Kara-Vlachs* etc. They are the direct descendants of old goldsmiths and fruit pickers from Indian forests, with the following notes.

At the beginning of their arrival on these lands the early gold diggers (gold washers) as in old India worked on searching for gold in the rivers, channels or in gold sands. They also sold different wood products in ancient India.

They brought this crafting from the far India where “gold was taken from rivers or from the sands of the rivers. All day long while using small



hammers, the craftsmen were making small gold bullions for them (buyers – s.n.)” [Auboyer, 118].

By the decrease in the extracted quantity and by hardening the extraction manner, this resource became less accessible and profitable.

Because of the lack of the primary resource and forced by the competition with other local diggers, they went upstream where the water was quicker and the land less friendly. But also this added an extra difficulty so only the best people could still practice it.

In this way they also contributed to isolation from their own groups and increased the contacts with shepherds and local wood artisans. These started to satisfy their need of small pots and wood objects. It is very likely that these products were initially self-made, but once with the newcomers they were done by them.

With less and less contacts with their own people like the silver-smiths, to whom they were selling the gold and other Romany groups, naturally that they lost their language and some specific customs. They were replaced by what they took from the contact populations. They also borrowed from them the language they needed for trading, negotiation, or conflict solving. This language gradually replaced the mother tongue and became the language of the woodworker (ex-gold diggers) population.

This early loss of language, associated to the massive process of borrowing norms, customs, and values of the local majority population, was an element that according to some researchers, who had started to study this professional group much too later, when its situation was totally changed, (the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) led to doubt their membership to Romany ethnicity (or in making a clear statement about it).

When the analysis concentrated on a small region or area, the conclusions were as such.

The fact that Ion Chelcea had as a target group the woodworkers from Olt Valley, from Făgăraș and Muscel area, where they didn't speak Romany, led to the false assumption that no woodmaker knows or speaks Romany. Obviously this is wrong because there is a small number of woodmakers that speak Romany and no local dialect. This is in areas like Călărași, Brăila, Vrancea, Dolj etc. Here there are families or even communities of Woodworkers (ex-gold diggers) that speak Romany.

One question still arises. Why the Woodworkers (ex-gold diggers) did only take the Romanian language and not other languages of the majority populations they came in contact with like it happened with the other Roma groups (as Hungarian, Turkish, Tartars, or German) and they used this language in a manner that it became a second mother tongue for most of them?

The answer is relatively simple and it is based on the historical realities of the people and places they set in.

We do not claim that the other populations were not set on these lands because this could lead to passionate debates. This paper does not want that.

We will start from the spatial distribution of populations from mountainous and flat regions from north-west Romania, where gold diggers are met.

In these areas, the other ethnicities did not live in forestry land from mountainous regions as Romanian population of shepherds and woodcraftsmen used to. They preferred to sit on open lands that were they could practice their artisan. For this reason woodworkers were never suspected of being Hungarians, Germans, Turks etc. but only Roma, Romanians or a separate people descending from Dacs.

But among the bio-physical or anthropomorphological features of woodworkers that betray their Romany origin, the judicial relation with the local ruler also proves that most of them were slaves. In other words they had the same dependent social-judicial status as most of the Romanies from Romanian principalities.

As other Romanies, they were obliged to pay annual taxes in order to practice their crafting, as well as the other Romanies from the royal slaves' Romany professional group.

The gold from the rivers channels was the property of the ruler. The need for gold increased annually so the quantity that had to be given was also bigger and bigger every year.

If the Romanies were initially running after the gold as it was "a natural product", later "the annual contribution in gold for every gold digger raised to 4 florins (powder gold)" [I. Chelcea, 1944, 149].

Actually, when discussing about the search for gold in the sands of the rivers, the author of "the ethnographic enigma" theory claims that *Romanies* (E.M) [and not woodmakers, dacs, or the distinct ethnic group etc.] were looking for this natural product". In other words, this author strongly believed

that the subjects of his analysis are the Romanies. The only doubt he had was the language and their “gentle way” [I. Chelcea, 1944, 41]. The explanation of their calm nature could be explained due to the calmer place, to the more natural environment they developed within, due to their crafting job that wasn’t demanding and due to the fact that they did not have confrontations with other ethnics, due to the simpler way of life. The central key undoubtedly was the chance and the right they had of living freely in nature, away from rulers and from daily obligations. They got this right by paying a big tax and by accepting some social abridgements.

The increase of the number of gold diggers both in Romany and in local population raised the competition and hardened it.

To this aspect the desire of waving the gold contribution, which was bigger every year can be added and all these things together pushed them to find other solutions. They wanted to be forgotten and away from the eyes of Romanian princely rulers.

The solution they found was migrating toward the stream, in mountainous areas, where they had more freedom despite the fact that the gold digging was more difficult and less accessible for the novices.

That is why the ones that headed west and north-west ended, as local people, working in gold mines being known as *miners* (*băieși* or *băiași*)—other names by which from Transylvania and Banat are known (from Rom. *baie* = *hole, mine*). That’s how some of them “got lost” within the majority population and “lost” their Romany identity, as well as those who came here before *the big migration*.

This isolation and group division led to a rapid loss of Romany language and in some cases to the loss of their identity or ethnic conscience. By less contacts with their ethnic fellows they used less their own language and were obliged to speak the language of the contact majority population.

This phenomenon was seen, in the same or different forms, for most of the Ironsmiths and other “professionals” who were obliged to isolate themselves from other Romanies and serve some specific social needs. In the case of settled Romanies the phenomenon was similar, but much slower.

As we mentioned above, by losing their language, Romanian slowly became the mother tongue for most of gold diggers. The ones called ‘băiași’ (miners), left Romanian lands 100-150 years ago heading for Hungary or Ex-Yugoslavia kept the old Romanian as mother-tongue and the language of

current population they live among has become their second language. Things even went further and their descendants consider today the old Romanian language as the language of woodworkers (old dialect), and a smaller number consider they still speak Romany. While talking about this issue to a Croatian supporter for Romany rights, engineer and member of local woodmaker community, we were surprised when we were congratulated for how well we speak Romany. He was also surprised when we told him that we speak Romanian and not Romany. What made the difference between us was that we spoke in a modern Romanian and he used an archaic, old version, but still perfectly understandable.

On the other hand, gold diggers were so much pressured by the daily costs of life that they couldn't manage to survive only by gold digging.

Especially during the winter this job was impossible. "Gold extraction by washing was in a discontinuous rhythm, not only because the output was according to the rainy season when big rivers carried the gold sands, but also because during the cold season gold exploitation was stopped" [I. Chelcea, 1944, 145].

In order to live they had to have other occupations. Most likely, as their Indian ancestors, they were dealing with wood-crafting, pottery, or forest-fruits harvesting, as they had the necessary materials. This last job was also carried on by other Romanies from other groups.

Far from being "a characteristic of undeveloped populations" [I. Chelcea, 1944, 117], the harvest of different forestry products (e.g. fruits, wood, medicinal plants) was an appreciated occupation in old India. The claim that this could only have been "a primitive extra-European feature" [I. Chelcea, 1944, 116] is ridiculous and proves a lack of information on occupation of central and Western Europe.

The early writings by which young Marx became known in German journalism dealt with branches and woods collected by German peasants from their forests.

Jeannine Auboyer says that "there were other *indexed* (E.M) professions as previous ones (E.M), but which were hardly seen by us as trade or crafting. For instance, those who picked up branches and made up bouquets they sold to house-wives, those who picked up leaves, which were used for various purposes, the grass-choppers, honey collectors" [Auboyer, 119].

Simultaneously with the gold digging they also practiced these jobs. As gold digging became less profitable these ones were becoming predominant.

If in the European society picking up the forest products was not seen as an occupation (as in India) and was not even indexed as a “job”, woodcrafting was seen as an acceptable occupation. Even more, as their products were necessary and largely used they were welcomed. Woodworkers were seen as a friendly people both by researchers and the majority population. They transformed the linden, poplar, the willow or osier wood in spoons, pots, hooks, buckets, spindles, pitchforks, distaffs, and in many other objects described by Ion Chelcea [1944, 119– 136].

According to the products they made, the woodworkers were differently named. For example, in Moldovia, where the production of platter and spoons was important they were called “*blidari=platters* (Rom. *blid* = platter) or *lingurari= spoon makers* (Rom. *lingură* = spoon)” [M. Merfea, 24].

Later, when people moved out from cottages into houses they needed bricks. Therefore the clay was transformed into bricks or adobes and gold diggers were called *brickmakers* or *cărămidari* (Rom. *cărămidă* = brick) in Vrancea, Buzău, Brăila or *cărămizari* in Oltenia.

We must know that according to the job they had, the Romanies found their place and their usefulness in the community’s economy. This is how they gained their social status related to their ethnic fellows or rulers, as well.

The scribes, the scholars, teachers, cooks, artists, musicians all became house *Romanies*, or house people living in big palaces or manors. They had a special treatment than those ferrous or non-ferrous processor. They had certain obligations that often translated into less freedom or even loss of freedom.

We must recall that job represents “the most important indicator of socializing” [G. Marica, 357]. The job or occupation highlights the manner by which people live. Because of this it becomes a decisive component of collective thinking, acting, or behaving for fellows with the same job. If it is practiced in groups or in similar social, political, technological or institutional conditions, the previous claim is even more trustful. Differences are noticed according to individual temperamental or personality characteristics and in function of the conditions they worked in.

From the perspective of specific differences, we must consider that the new division among Romanies starts when some of them “settle down” near

a manor and some of them continue to migrate in order to get the necessary living resources.

Among the characteristics of the stable environment and those of the new land and experiences, there are differences that are expressed in the psychology and behaviour of those groups.

For this people the differences are between the manner of gathering food, the living conditions, their status in front of the lords, the effort in becoming useful, and goes to their beliefs on the world, the relation with God, the normative and value system.

If at first the differences between groups had a strong Romany feature, gradually those become saturated by traditions, cultures, and norms taken through enculturation from the contact majority populations.

The process was possible and asymmetric because in the cohabitation areas contact populations were always majoritary, no matter the ethnicities they were members of (Romanians, Hungarians, Germans, Turks, and Tartars etc.). When we claim this we do not refer to ethnicity as a whole. We refer to the ratio between the members of a different ethnicity living in a certain administrative area and the small group of Roma families sharing the same area and answering the social demands. This ratio was always in favour of other ethnicities, even if as a whole group they might have been majoritary compared to them.

Analysing the internal mechanisms and the social contexts in which this occurred in order to reconstruct their existence in different historical spaces requires a deeper and a more documented process.

Discerning, description and explaining those mechanisms absolutely requires special searching, theoretical thoroughgoing study and nuances, and a better methodological design.

We believe that the category of ‘professional group’ itself will open new doors and areas in studying the social history of Roma and will lead to a better knowledge on what we call today as “the issues on Romany populations” [E&C Zamfir, 1993, 156].

On what we have discussed by now it is worth to keep in mind that the membership to a professional group in *identifying* one member as a Rrom was for a long time and in many cases will still be the key element of the self-identification and mutual identification of Romanies, no matter the places they were living in a certain point of their social-historical existence.

But as *citizens*, the key element of their identification was their membership to the majority group they lived together with and from which they took and shared norms, behaviours, cultural and social patterns etc.

Following on this idea, their membership to the majority linguistic group was very important.

Because of this membership previous researchers and the ones involved in the 1992's study had the opportunity to discover that, in different geographical areas, the persons that were externally identified as Romanies were self-identifying as Romanians, Hungarians, Germans, Turks, Tartars. In other words they were identifying themselves with the majority ethnicity they were living in. 19.13% respondents of the 1992's study were in this category.

The precise, documented motivation of this identification has not been established yet. What the ratio of prestige reaction is, how much the fear of repercussions is, where it starts the identification with the norms and values of the majority group as when they act to be perceived as foreign by the non-Roma population are still problems to be discussed. And the answer can not be linear.

For now the arguments of language (in some cases transformed into mother-tongue) and (in many cases) religion are the easiest ones.

The division from this perspective was according to *the criterion of nationality*. Together with the *historical-judicial criterion* division (princely, monastery, lordly) of their belonging to different slave categories or their stability (sedentary and nomads), they all are criteria that can offer a certain operationality to the study of Romanies.

These criteria managed "to keep" certain aspects that described the particular way of being of these individuals. But the division according to professional groups allows a deeper understanding of the intrinsic mechanisms of their development and "sets" the psycho-social profile of the groups.

If between the 1848 and the end of 1950 it was easier to use the division on classic professional groups (because after their release from slavery the differentiating process was matured enough), nowadays it is only a reflex of the past, an indicator hard to obtain and therefore used only as a last resort.

The fact is due to the rapid and cruel vanishing of traditional jobs and occupations of Roma under the pressure of heavy industrialization during socialism. Their jobs were replaced by modern jobs and occupations that answered to new demands and social context, including the need to survive on short-term.

The marriages between partners belonging to different professional groups became more and more possible due to the social changes, the heavy commuting during heavy industrialization, which actually represented the generalization and modernization of the social life.

If in the classic period the mixed marriages were impossible or if they somehow occurred they caused some small social “crisis” within Romany community, in the years following 1950 they were a shock only for the traditionalists.

We must mention that under the pressures of industrialization, modernization and the change of the demand balance, within traditional professional groups (ironsmiths, boot-makers, barbers, musicians, coppersmiths, gold diggers, bone-preparing men, coppers, sieve makers etc.) some specializations appear either globally, within the professions, or on areas or on different criteria. The results are *secondary professional groups* with new names and roles.

For instance the smaller Ironsmiths are specialized in manufacturing only horse shoes (by using less materials, less work, tools and with an open market) and they constitute the *secondary professional group of horse-shoe maker (Blaksmith)*.

The part of home-preparing men, who was concentrated on making combs were called comb-makers or *pieptănari* (rom. pieptene = comb, brush), and the part that's specialized in trading fluff, flakes and feathers were called flake-makers or *fulgari* (rom. fulg = feather, flake).

Some masons were specialized only in building stoves, so they were then called stove-fitters or *sobari* (rom. sobă = stove), and those who were building, repairing or cleaning the chimneys were called chimney-sweeps or *hornari/coșari* (rom. horn = chimney).

The settled Romanies in Transylvania who were trading carpets and silk were called *silk weavers*. Their better manners also contributed to this new name, they were developed by the long ways in different countries where they contacted more classy, stylish people (not everybody buys carpets and silk). They were also wearing different clothes than Romanies who were working the fields.

The names derived from the name of the locations where some Romany communities lived or still live; they do not reflect their occupation and do not define a certain professional group. They firstly indicate the place or area they come from and they rarely show a behavioural, cultural or social



feature compared to other members of their professional group or to certain Roma. But this feature has nothing to do with their job or occupation. This distinctive feature, which offers a specific mark to the group or irrespective community, can be related either to the material status of the community (e.g. the bear-owners Roma belonging to Toflea or Buzescu were very rich), to the group solidarity (Roma from Brăița, Sibiu, Fântânele), or to certain customs (woodworkers from Muscel and Olt – the festival of gurban), but not to their occupation.

In a slightly different sense we mention that there is a Romany category that is called *tismănari* – name derived from Tismana Monastery where they lived and lost the language quite early. All the Romanies from Oltenia that do not speak Romany and use Romanian are called *tismănari*. They are not different from the people living in Tismana area from the point of view of their language.

Even if others Romanies lost their language early too (e.g. some settled one) they did not receive other names. This happened only in some areas of Oltenia or the surroundings of that historical province, where what happened at Tismana was well known in the area and all the Romanies living over there knew it very well.

Outside that area, Romanies did not even know about the existence of Tismana Monastery or about the big concentration of Romanies around it and even less about the loss of language of their former slave fellows.

According to the area, Romanies are also called of Banat, Oltenia, Dobrogea etc.

One exception is the *Boldeni Romanies* whose name comes from the Bold locality, near Bucharest. But today among *boldeni* we refer to *Florists* – so an occupational name (rom. floare = flower), so Romanies that sell flowers in Bucharest, especially in Tei and Colentina boroughs.

In the dynamics of their development an interesting category is represented by Musicians. By the mid '60 of the XX<sup>th</sup> century, we could only see the Settled here (that means not having an own place, having no fixed and known space). That is why if they were looked for when needed for different ceremonials people did not have to wait until they passed again through that place. .

As in other Romany jobs, for this one was also transmitted from father to son. The cases when members of a different Romanies' professional groups became singers were rare.

As the prestige of this job rose compared to other jobs (in part because the social demand was greater and the sedentary process grew), people from other nomad or half-nomad professional groups entered in this Romany professional group.

Much more, some old Musicians from rural areas that were included into the agricultural collectivization moved the singing in the second place, some completely abandoned it and were dedicated to agriculture that gave them more certainty and safety.

The new wave of Musicians from other professional groups was meant to revitalize the Romany music by adding new better specific kept elements. These meant a return to the old music that some traditional Musicians had forgotten or had modified it with elements asked by the social demand.

That is why at the current Romany ceremonies appreciated and acknowledged Musicians are those belonging to their own professional group and not the traditional ones coming from families living before and after the Second World War.

While old Musicians had their clients among contact majority populations, the new ones had as clients almost exclusively Romany communities. The gain is higher here because the payment was individual. This payment is a form of social prestige or of relation. Higher the prestige and relation, higher the payment was.

In other words, the traditional Musicians received social demands from Romany and non-Romany (but mostly non-Romany) and they were performing a less specialized singing. The new Musicians after 1968 are more specialized in Romany music, so the social demand is primarily from Romany community.

These issues lead to the conclusion that the socio-judicial, administrative status and the way of life interferes with the occupational status of Romanians.

Wanting or being able is not sufficient to perform a job. You also need the favourable conditions. For Romany populations, the dynamic of their residency and the external conditions influenced their living conditions during their historical life more than for other populations.

## 2.4. Roma professional groups within the research

On a first analysis of data gathered from field-work more or less than 28 Romany professional groups were identified.

This is the result of *de facto* analysis of the filed notes from questionnaires where they were asked to say the professional group they belong or the group they knew they belonged and descended.

The statistical grouping of these notes is in “The table of Romany professional groups according to the declarations of subjects”.

At first sight we can notice that the table contains in its grouping categories some decoding errors.

On one hand, in the same class (pos. 15) there are grouped persons with different way of life that are members of distinct Romanies’ professional groups; on the other hand there are separated people that are members of the same professional groups (pos. 8 and 23).

On position 15, ironsmiths and farriers are from the same group. Both of them treat the iron “at hot temperature” (including the iron used for manufacturing horse-shoes). We mention that mainly the Ironsmiths used any kind of iron, but some even manufactured some wooden parts (e.g. wagons, carriages, shays, carts) from the complex mean of transportation to the commonly nail; farriers only “specialized” in manufacturing horse-shoes, nails for fixing the horse shoe to the horse’s hoof and horse-shoes they fix on the animals’ hoofs (horses, oxen, mules).

Among them there is only a difference of level, dictated either by the desire of performing an easier and a more rewarding job, by the conditions of performing the job, or by the high-skills and abilities of each one to perform the job.

Both “professions” belong to the same Romanies’ professional groups (Ironsmiths), which then belongs to the big family of settlers.

**Table of Roma professional groups according to the subjects**

<b>No. crt.</b>	<b>The self declared Romanies' professional groups</b>	<b>Absolute frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
1	Romanies	577	32.0
2	Artisans working in bones	8	0.4
3	Settled	251	13.9
4	Musicians	20	1.1
5	Teişani, Florists, Boldeni	22	1.2
6	Brush-makers	3	0.2
7	Sieve makers	1	0.1
8	Whitewashers	68	3.8
9	Silversmiths	15	0.8
10	Gold diggers, Woodworkers, Spoon-makers	81	4.5
11	Bear-leaders	49	2.7
12	Long-haired	9	0.5
13	Brick-makers	28	1.5
14	Gabors	25	1.4
15	Coppersmiths, Ironsmiths, Blacksmiths	108	6.0
16	Turks, Tartars	18	1.0
17	Boot-makers	17	1.0
18	Nomadic camper gypsies	11	0.6
19	Gold diggers	5	0.3
20	Silk dealers	59	3.3
21	Combers	13	0.7
22	Featherers	5	0.3
23	Whitewashers	4	0.2
24	Tismănari	6	0.3
25	Răcari	3	0.2
26	Horse dealers (copers)	2	0.1
27	Romanised	213	11.8
28	Hungarised	120	6.6
29	No answer	63	3.5
30	TOTAL	1804	100.0

They can not be grouped in the same class (professional group) as coppersmiths that continued to live nomad until late in the second half of the XX<sup>th</sup> century. They used different materials (non-iron) and even today they have different life norms.

Today, both groups cross certain re-birth because their products are needed again, especially in rural areas.

Things are different when we consider positions 8 and 23. Both tinmen and Whitewashers used the same material: tin or zinc (as they do today) for covering with a rustproof, shiny material the pots from household (manufactured by Coppersmiths or Ironsmiths). The women foretold the future, practiced medicine and healed different illnesses.

Some use of the material was given by tin-women because they had direct contacts with the clients either on “contracting” the work or on delivering “the final product”. On these occasions they used their “medicine skills” to heal the sick people of the peasants’ families and they were rewarded with food for her family or with provender for animals.

We say one more time that both professional groups belong to the group of tinmen (typical semi-nomad), but in some parts of the country they are called differently.

Coming back to the data and confronting them with descriptions and notes of the experts, we obtain 13 professional groups, to which we add settled Romanies (this category is more complex and we will further debate).

The following four categories (Gabors, Turko-tatars, Răcari and the Magyarized) have different meanings that will be later discussed.

We continue with the “normalization” of the table mentioned above in a table that we’ll call “The table of Roma professional groups we got after analysing the field information”.

The following table reveals the professional groups after the reordering data from the previous table.

**Table of Romanies' professional groups after reordering data from the field**

No. crt.	Romanies' professional groups	Absolute frequency	Percentage
0	1	2	3
1	Silver-smiths	15	0.8
2	Coppersmiths	29	1.6
3	Boot-makers	17	1.0
4	Sieve makers	1	0.1
5	Artisans working in bones	26	1.4
6	Silk- dealers	59	3.3
7	Ironsmiths	107	5,9
8	Florists	22	1.2
9	Gabors	25	1.4
10	Horse – dealers	2	0.1
11	Musicians	20	1.1
12	Hungarised	120	6.6
13	NR	63	3.5
14	Răcari	3	0.2
15	Gold diggers	109	6.1
16	Whitewashers	72	4.0
17	Turko-tatars	18	1.0
18	Bear-leaders	49	2.7
19	Settleds	1047	58.0
20	TOTAL	1804	1804

The table is the result of the following changes:

### ***1. The Roma professional group of Ironsmiths***

Moving the only coppersmith from position 15 and adding to gold-washers, wanderings and nomadic camper gypsies we obtained *the group of Ironsmiths*. It is told that they “very easily manufactured weapons and rings, scissors, surgical instruments. For agriculturists they made plough, chains, shovels; carpenters needed hatchets, hammers, saws, drills. Hunters and tailors were among their customers as they needed knives or needles” [Auboyer, 113]. What there is important to notice is that they “managed to transform the iron in steel” [Auboyer, 112].

For all these, Ironsmiths had a special status and a special place within Romany community. They also had an important role in the feudal, post-feudal economy of Romanian principalities, and later for the Romanian state. They were the wealthiest Romanies.

Their job and crafting allowed them to perform in a stable place. They were the first sedentary craftsmen, but also among the first that, appreciably, lost their language. Only gold diggers outplaced them in this issue. Out of this group there were the most mixed marriages, too. Descendants of Ironsmiths frequently married members of the majority contact population. The newlyweds (the first generation of mixed family) usually lived in the house of the Blacksmith for two reasons: first, accepting a mixed marriage among Romany community traditionally required for the girl or boy to stay with her/his parents. The non-Romany husbands were usually ex-apprentices of Ironsmiths who came to learn the crafting. Coming everyday for 2-3 years in the house and the workshop of the Ironsmiths he met his daughters and slowly a relationship was developing and later a marriage was decided. That is how he demonstrated he was worth staying in her house even after the marriage. There were very rare the cases when Ironsmiths, or the Romanies, in general, accepted their descendants to leave the house.

Secondly, the material status of Ironsmiths was highly attractive and they could better support more persons.

If these families did not agree for their daughters to leave the main family because they were afraid that at the new place they will never find mercy and the same parental love, the boys couldn't leave the house because they had to perform the job. This was the place where they had the workshop, the instruments, the tools, but mostly the guidance he needed (at that time the marriages were very early for the entire population, not only for Roma).

But the following generations, left the parental house or the Romany community in a great number. They got lost in the "majority" ultimately being assimilated and losing any Romany origin. If they motivated their leaving by moving into the city or to another place for a better income, then there was no drama.

What we can see in the second table of professional groups is that there is a higher number of Ironsmiths compared to other groups. This group was never big. If in a rural area there were 8-10 Ironsmiths' families, out of which 5-6 were performing the job, it was considered as having a high

number of Ironsmiths. In many cases there was only one or two Ironsmiths (Blacksmiths) and some villages did not even have one. People had to walk to other places when they needed one. Therefore they needed to attract some handy Ironsmiths.

After the collectivization of agriculture and the heavy industrialization in Romania took place, the number of Ironsmiths and Blacksmiths dropped even more. So it is hard to accept that in a research from the mid '50 in a random sample the highest number is for a professional group that was small even when it was developing.

It wouldn't have been so strange and it wouldn't have been abnormal if this high percentage had been for the groups of Coppersmiths, Bear-leaders or Gold diggers. They've always been more numerous. But it is not like that, so it needs to be explained!

In our opinion, the best and truthful explanation resides in following the phenomenon in its socio-historical development. From our theoretical and practical expertise this is how it went.

Because of their social status compared to other professional groups and because of the positive perceptions the non-Romanies had about them, most of the population that were non-members of Ironsmiths still declare themselves as members in their contacts to the majority population of other communities (others than those where they were already known) or in front of the unknown people they entered a dialogue with. As a reaction to prestige, this temptation still exists today. The fact is revealed by the research conducted on a representative national sample in 1992 and in 1998's by the Institute for Quality of Life Research (Bucharest).

In those researches the unit of investigation was the mature family couple that has the main role in the household and is the main source of the income, having, as well the coordinating function. Therefore they talked, when possible with both adults and where it was not possible, the adult who was present was also asked to answer the questions for the absent partner.

By analysing the questions about husband's occupation, correlated to the professional group, they were members of, we then obtain the table No. 1, from the previous chapter (page 32).

Carefully analysing the data from the table one aspect is that 47 respondents declared as being Ironsmiths (43.93% of the total sample) also worked as coppersmiths, boiler makers.



It is true that when they could not perform their job as private persons (as it was traditionally), some Ironsmiths' descendants went to professional schools or qualified themselves at the workplace in light industry, heavy industry or automotive industry. Many of them worked until the brutal and sometimes subjective reductions after 1989. If this is true then respondents were truly working as Ironsmiths in industry and the field operators did a good job. But as these jobs should have been noted as "industry job" (because Coppersmiths manufacture copper caldrons for brandy and not iron caldrons) we tend to think that the operators did not manage to see that the answers were for "prestige" so they noted them as such.

This is how we find such a great number of Ironsmiths in our sample. But when we analyse the marriage rates, education, school abandonment, the profession of descendants we must also take into account this bias.

This bias is not specific only to this research. Improper classification of Ironsmiths are met on different authors too and even for the 1998's research. We illustrated this by including Ironsmiths as wanderings. What is the explanation?

We have this explanation if we also analyse another professional group: *the Bear-leaders*. These are the descendants of the old circus and theatre artists that were delivering free performances on streets in ancient India. This kind of show was very much appreciated in Orient, had a certain audience in Balkans and a very low appreciation in Western and Northern Europe. Even if they brought exotic animals with them (e.g. monkeys, snakes, elephants), the show wasn't very popular in Romanian principalities and it did not assured a stable income.

Because of the new conditions, lack of supply, and the need to attract more audience, they concentrated on using local animals that are familiar to the public.

That is why most of them concentrated on raising, taming and training bears (their name evolved from this – rom. *urs* = *bear*). Others joined for shorter periods the different Romany workshops. The workshops of Ironsmiths were appreciated because the salary was high and they gained a high prestige. This was an option of Bear-leaders when they could not perform their shows or when they had to give up their old job as it was not profitable anymore.

In the workshops of Ironsmiths there was always the need of people.

There were even cases when these street performers had both jobs. They kept the pleasure of free movement (as in their own country), but also assured that they had enough money to live when the time was rough.

The ones who worked in workshops of Ironsmiths were also able to learn their crafting and become “permanent production objects” for Bear-leaders.

By being mainly interested in crafting tools and objects for agricultural purposes, Ironsmiths neglected the production of keys, bolts, rings, dustpans, needles, needles for stretching the tobacco on a string in order to be dried or even weapons. Those were now the job of Bear-leader.

All these objects were not that demanded by the rural population, but also required a great care, precision and time in manufacturing. On the other hand they had the advantage of being very cheap, they were light and they can be manufactured, carried in wagons or bags and sold later to the ones they needed. Also, the instruments required for their manufacturing were not heavy, they could be easily transported and you could produce them anywhere, not only in workshops.

So, these products could be made when people were at work and did not have time to attend the live shows and because of their constant movement they were then easily sold due to their wandering of large areas, wanderings that offered them the opportunity to a rapider identification of the interested customer. Much more, the fire weapons that had always been the subject of interdictions and severe control then become the job of Bear-leaders. Because of their constant movement they knew the places where they could sell them and the people whom to contact. The customers were not afraid to buy weapons from people who came, sold and then left, without knowing if they would ever meet them again.

Bear-leaders not only they performed an act with the bear, but also assured the entertainment by performing at drums, bells, violin (usually a small violin carried on his left foot).

If the show with the bear and the taming person (Bear-leaders) was not enough for the daily living, then the small crafting products offered a supplemental source of income.

Some of them managed so well in learning this new job that eventually the production of lockers and weapons was almost exclusively provided by people from the professional group of Bear-leaders. This is how

a new professional Romanies' professional group developed: *the secondary Romanies' professional group of locksmiths*. Despite common believes this was a secondary group of Bear-leaders, not of Ironsmiths. From Bear-leaders the locksmiths inherited the pleasure of travelling with their small bags and wagons, but not for performing shows, but to craft lockers and armours, and later in the machine age they provided the technical assistance, the maintenance or the repair of agricultural equipment of big lords.

That is how one of the armour men of the royal court Iorga Neculai, the son of Iorga Chiriac, who was also a jeweller of the royal court) was a member of this professional group of Bear-leaders (subcategory of locksmith) that even today is present in countries Bacău, Galați (especially Toflea), Constanța and Teleorman (Buzescu).

This cooperation in crafting and the share of the same workshop for certain periods of time among Ironsmiths and Bear-leaders, made some non-Romany researchers to consider Ironsmiths as wanderings (nomads living in tents), out of whom Bear-leaders were members.

In order to keep their clients, many times the Bear-leaders (who didn't have a great renown) presented themselves as locksmiths (which sometimes it was true) or as Ironsmiths (which was not true).

But Ironsmiths, having a rich and heavy set of instruments (hammers, sledge-hammers, anvils, different claws, chisel gabs etc.) could not travel on long distances. On the other hand their products were asked by agriculturists and non-agriculturists, so they did not have to travel, they were looked for when there was a need. They had to have a stable place where the customers could find them every time and also a place where to keep their tools.

By being directly connected to the agricultural production of villages, many Ironsmiths had their own land, either *bought* and added to the land they already had as property (given by lords in order to change their social status as a reward for their social contribution, for their involvement in wars) or received by the local community in order to stay there and work for them.

When the industrial production shadowed their role, they became agriculturists or agricultural mechanics, but at the same time they found their place in heavy industry (they were trained at the work place in different areas, the foundry workers, the forgers, the boiler makers became metallurgists). Another part settled for civil, industrial, hydro constructions where they worked as Ironsmiths-concreters.

The descendants of the Ironsmiths families “hit” by industrialization settled for professional schools (also focused in specializing iron crafting), schools for car-drivers or tractor-drivers, or even postsecondary or university schools. Among these last ones few identify themselves as Romanies.

We must retain a key-information: the job itself and the Ironsmiths never disappeared from the rural and urban economy. Their number decreased but they were present even in the socialist agriculture of that time.

Those who continued performing their crafting within the Socialist Agricultural Production Co-operatives or Agricultural and Craftsmen’s Cooperatives (collectivization), were the first ones that after 1989 received demands for wagons, agricultural tools for the villagers who got their properties back.

Returning to the table 1 called “The table of husband’s occupation in accordance to the group’s ownership” we can notice that another member of this professional group was included in the occupational group of “goldsmen, silvermen, armour-men and jewellers”. It is likely that they learnt crafting silver out of passion or social opportunity, but as performing a traditional job by an external member was inconceivable (except for Musicians) we believe that the person learnt the unspecific job of jeweller performed in a modern workshop, and not the specific job of crafting silver.

Out of the two subjects that were asked to indicate the group they belonged to, they indicated the group of hearthmen, then they were later asked about their occupation and they showed them as Ironsmiths. Responses are not contradictory or untrue. This is due to the fact that in practice the notion of “settled” always had at least a double meaning (actually it has three). On this we will focus more when we will analyse those declaring themselves as settled. For now we will only show why settled were so often confused with sedentaries. As sedentary was a state and an appreciated phenomenon by authorities and majority contact populations contrary to nomadic life challenged through different behaviours and actions [see A. Antonio Gomez], all Romanies living in a community, living daily in the administrative area, for a significant period of time and performing a certain craft were considered settled, no matter if they had an occupation or not.

Actually the cases in which all the craftsmen lived only of their craft are very rare, especially those living in the countryside (one exception is the Romanies’ professional group of Musicians who were renowned and

dedicated for this and avoided physical jobs in order to keep their hand and fingers integrity and skills). As usual, they or other family members also went to field work either on their small properties or on other big properties. That is why when asked about their membership they answered settled, which is not totally untrue.

More accurate would have been to indicate the group of Ironsmiths (no matter if they were Ironsmiths *per se* or Blacksmith (farriers), or just descendants of these) because their families are not only Settled, but also perform (or performed) a distinct craft: Ironsmiths.

Considering all these we can now establish more accurate the number of Ironsmiths in our investigation. We need to subtract the number of coppersmiths incorrectly considered as Ironsmiths and to add those two defining themselves as *settled*. That is how we reach the number of 62 Ironsmiths, meaning 3, 56% of the total sample (more accurate to the historical conditions).

Today, with very few exceptions, Ironsmiths gave up their customs and traditions. Except for marriages that are still traditional – by an agreement between families and with no legal papers or registration to authorities – Ironsmiths Romanies have gone through an intense enculturation (assimilation) process. Men and women don't wear anymore their traditional clothes, they do not use the Romany laws, they don't buy the bride anymore, the social relations between genders are not present (e.g. the men walking ahead of women, women carrying bags, covering the head of the woman after the marriage, the interdiction of passing in front of a man or two men that talk etc.).

The majority of descendants headed to professional schools (specialization in iron, metallurgy), or learnt by apprenticeship professions closed to the ones of their families (industrial coppersmiths, welders, mechanics etc.). A small percentage (but big compared to other Romanies' professional groups) headed to postsecondary or university theoretical studies.

Those who lost their specific skin colour had been isolated from their own people and for many times they even denied their membership to this ethnicity. Therefore they had to bear the weight of an unknown, double identity

Mixed marriages of descendants are pretty often, no matter the gender.

## 2. *Boot-makers*

They are members of the Settled, and at the same time settled. They performed their job either in small (sometimes humble) personal workshops (it was a room in their own house) or in big workshops that weren't theirs.

Industrialization and mass production had a big and brutal effect on the footwear production. The families of shoemakers who had serious skills in making or repairing shoes and boots were seriously affected by it. In many parts of the country shoes were called *ciubote* and that is how they got their name – *ciubotari*. Members of these families who helped the shoemakers in repairing and decorating the boots, later “specialized” only in polishing boots by waxing, so they formed the subcategory *lustragiilor* = *polishers* (Rom. *a lustrui* = *to polish*).

Being an easy job that did not require an apprenticeship to learn and during the urban capitalism the social demand being really big, many “unqualified” people took this job that offered them certain income stability.

Another part of the bootmakers exclusively oriented toward production of belts (for animals and humans), trappings or saddles, therefore making the subcategory of: *beltmakers* (*curelari*, Rom. *curea* = belt) *și saddlers* (*șelari*, Rom. *șa* = saddle).

These two last professional groups were stereotypical perceived by themselves and by other people as being more elevated compared to their basic Romanies' professional group. The relations between them and the shoemakers, whose work required superior knowledge and abilities was similar to the relation that the shoemakers had with *polishers* or shoeblacks who practically were unqualified.

To this stereotype the customers also contributed. *The belt-makers* and *the saddlers* mainly had rich clients. Not anyone could afford having horses and then to put leather belts or saddles. Unlike them, the shoemakers had their basic customers among the poor people who had to repair their shoes all the time because they could not afford to buy new ones.

Secondly, the stereotype lived because of the residential environment of these two categories. While *the belt-makers* and *the saddlers* were living in urban areas where their customers were, the shoemakers were mainly living in rural areas.

The urban shoemakers and those who left for the cities became *luxury shoemakers*. Their name was built by the names of the people who afforded to contract them.

One third argument is that these jobs were also performed by some members of the majority population.

Currently, as table 1 shows, the number of shoemakers has seriously dropped. The descendants headed to agriculture or modern jobs specific for light industry or services, but also to construction, transports etc.

A big portion of the descendants (22.41%) are unable to compete for a job that requires a qualification because they do not have such a modern qualification and their traditional job is no longer required. Therefore they tend to be “forgotten”.

This professional group’s relationships with the Romany ethnicity’s norms or with the norms of the majority population are similar to complete identification with the group of Ironsmiths.

### ***3. Musicians***

Until the end of the ‘50 and mid ‘60 in the 20<sup>th</sup> century they belonged to the big family of traditional Settled.

The best of them who also had the chance of living in the cities had a better life. Some artistic and social elites were born among them.

Upon the settlement of all Romanies, the professional group of Musicians was enlarged with members of other groups. This argument is used for debating the fact that Romanies, as Jews and Negroes are above all a musical people.

Especially in rural areas, a big portion of these members had a double status: during working days were agriculturists and during holidays were Musicians.

One big quality of this professional group (traditionally) is that they kept the traditional, Romanian sound of music and therefore they promoted our folklore. “Willing or not, gypsies contributed in keeping and promoting our traditional songs. The ballads: they disappeared and we barely hear from old people. Musicians still keep them.” [I. Chelcea, 1944, 115].

The quality of *keepers* is a quality of the entire ethnicity, not only for Romany Musicians. As their ancestors from India, the Romanies appear to us,

above all, as traditionalists. That is why, along with some objective factors, we tend to believe that their ‘access’ to present modernism is rigid (because they are true to their traditions). Their willing in keeping their traditional jobs even if they are overrated by current socio-economical demands and unable to provide their families a stable income, a comfortable living anymore, proves one more time this population attachment to traditions and professional-cultural legacy.

The aforementioned author continues: “gypsies are a social class that keeps certain cultural assets...in many regions the wearing of old clothes disappeared and it’s barely seen in some *gypsy-women* (E.M)...Let’s move forward. Let’s analyse the traditions. Because they tend to be forgotten and appear ridiculous, in our days only the gypsies dare to confront the ridicule in performing them as they used to be. Their names are: țurca (capra), vasilca, paparuda etc.”[I. Chelcea, 1944,72].

The Romanies were also those who, during the winter celebrations, performed the *Siva* (custom they brought from India as a symbol for worship their supreme God Shiva, and in some communities it is still performed).

In the foreword to the paper “Viața cotidiană în India antică” [Daily Life in Ancient India] the author says that “we must consider *the traditional character* (E.M) of the Indian civilization. That’s why the division between real and conventional is subtle” [Auboyer, 10].

“Incursions” that give the impression that “it’s in vain” or “they are away from the road”; the outsiders joke or get outraged when some Romanies speak and all they do is “fabulate with no concrete statements” [I. Chelcea, 1944, 10].

A Romany who lived in a traditional community will never say directly what he thinks, but he will use a fable, a metaphor or he will tell a story where he isn’t usually involved, “to suggest” what he wants to say.

“Real” Musicians, meaning those coming from families of Musicians, are no exception to this keeping legacy, even if their legacy is only music. We said *family* because the newcomers are mainly keepers of clothing, traditional law etc. Musicians are those who, sometimes even better than the majority populations did, understood the spiritual features of the countries and areas they lived in. Only by such a deep understanding they were then able to accurately reveal these characteristics. The famous national songs as Flamingo for Spanish, Ciardașul for Hungarians or Romanian Ciocârlia, are



not creations of native people but of Romany Musicians that understood and expressed the spirituality and the temper of the people, the country, and the areas better than anyone could have done it.

The pure and authentic *Romanian ballads* that between wars were recorded on a vinyl disc are performed by no one other but Niculae Dobrică, a Rom and the father of the famous Dona Dumitru Siminică. He sang along with famous instrumentalists, fathers of the famous Romica Puceanu and Victor Gore from post-war period. The father of Dumitru Siminică, together with the fathers of Romicăi Puceanu and Victor Gore formed the band which for many years represented the attraction and the pleasure of going to the well-known Hanul lui Manuc. The music performed here was not only fiddler but authentic old Romanian folklore.

In spite of the process of cultural assimilation by learning the norms and values of the majority population, you can still recognize Musicians by the great care for their hands, by their well dressing code (usually it means black dress suit and a white shirt, black tie or bow and very well polished shoes).

#### **4. Florists**

As a traditional professional group, Florists, is currently the most homogenous group of Romanies. Their administrative and judicial legal occupation which has always been seen by others as nice, allowed them to develop quickly, both socially and economically.

The group of Florists (in a modern sense they can be called by *merchandisers of flowers*) is relatively new in Romania. Although flower cultures were a constant job among Romanies, they earned the judicial status as free men around 1900 and then they were better represented and remarked between the wars. For many persons and even for Romanies this job identifies regarding Florists identified with Romanies leaving in Bucharest's neighbours as: Tei, Colentina and their surroundings. Those from Colentina and Tei appear under the denomination of Boldeni (from the village's name, Bold). But Florists are met in all areas. That is why the professional group is not called Boldeni, but Florists.

This activity also has its beginnings in ancient Indian times.

“Performing a *specific Indian job* (E.M) the merchandisers of garlands

(*mâlâkâr*) were numerous and appreciated...they were crafting garlands (*mâlâ*) using a variety of patterns and using as a rack munja grass, canes, cotton stem; on this rack they were blending in an artistic manner – as it *is an art along the other 64 arts* (E.M) – flowers, peacock feathers, bone ornaments, shells, leaves, fruits and seeds. As *mâlâ* (garlands) were very important in Indian life, this was a profitable trade” [Auboyer, 118-119].

The crafting itself did not exist in its original form of the garlands (*mâlâ*) merchandisers, but *house Roma* (a.k.a. *curteni*), from the boyars’ houses and from the lord’s palaces were in charge with gardening and their women were tricking up the tables and the rooms with flowers and different bouquets for parties and ceremonies.

When flowers expanded their social “role” and in Bucharest society post First World War (society in an accentuated process of Europeanization and capitalist development), this job started to be performed by the wives of the Romany masons (*zavragii*) from Bold (near Bucharest).

Literally becoming profitable, this trade was also performed by men, too. It was much easier for them compared to the hard, extenuating, dangerously and dirty jobs they had.

They were making sure that flowers were sold in the markets.

By quitting their old job (brick-makers) the next step was changing their residency. They came closer to the markets so they moved to Bucharest in those two boroughs or near them.

The rest of Florists Romanies in Romania are not called Boldean. This makes us accept that by ‘boldean’ we only refer to Romanies from Tei and Colentina boroughs and not to the professional group of Florists in general. This group is represented in all the areas (not as big as in Bucharest, but still) and its traditional members are from settled, ex-slaves of courts, (courtiers or household people) who were in charge with flower-gardening.

The flower-women wear big, curly skirts, but not as many curls as whitewashers or metal-women workers or coppersmith-women, have an apron and wear slippers (but not shiny slippers as the bear-women).

Girls are going to school (8-10 grades) and they enjoy learning their parents’ (mothers’) job.

Boys do not know the privation that other boys from other professional groups have and after an adventurous adolescence they get married to girls

who mainly are members of the same group. We can also find mixed marriages, but not as many as in the Romanies' professional group of Ironsmiths.

For this professional group, the weddings are luxurious and Florists are willing to sing with no money because the earning is big enough anyhow, and the payment (symbol of the prestige and wealth or of the relations or influence) is big because it comes from people with money. The newlyweds are young (15-20 years old) and for the first years they live with the boy's parents.

Once with the development of industrial production and the raise of its prestige in postwar Romanian economy, most men members of this professional groups headed to this industrial sector.

As it can be seen from the occupational table, the subjects members coming from the Romanies' professional group of Florists carry on activities in industry (17.65%), in construction or in transport (the same percentage). What it's surprising it's that none of the men from the basic Florists family couple is "working" with flowers, taking care of their growing up and trade.

This means that before 1989 (interviewed subjects were hired in those areas before 1992) selling flowers as the sole occupation was not enough in providing sufficient income. Therefore it was necessary that they would also work in the public sector. That's how they supplemented their income but also by being formally hired in the public sector, they also avoided the big taxation applied for private entrepreneurs and they were committing to the communist ideology that only public jobs were the only honest work and prevented from capitalism development. Then working in public sector was a protection measure from the communist regime or the members of Florists. They could have been easily charged with infecting the social environment with bad practices. They had to be involved in something "legal" in order to save their occupation.

### ***5. Horse dealers (copers)***

They were Settled that had as their main occupation horse trading. Besides selling they were also dealing with raising horses (small numbers of horses) and also with "rejuvenating", "fixing" or "healing" horses. "A lazy, apathetic, and skinny horse is miraculously transformed into a restless, joyful, fast, younger, and lively one in his hands" [I. Chelcea, 1944, 42].

Actually they have always been good with horses because Romanies are associated with them. Their life is hard to conceive without horses. The nomads living in tents were deeply connected to horses.

It is said that when this people became sedentary and families were forced to live in houses, until they got used with this new way of life they've also sheltered horses inside while continued to live in tents or wagons.

We do not know how much myths and stereotypes are in such stories (when asked they say that another person who saw or was directly involved told them. Personally I was in three such places, the last in Piatra Neamț, but nothing confirmed), but we think that they were inspired by their love for horses. This emphasizes that they were caring for the safety of horses more than for their own. From this love also comes the deep knowledge about these animals and their mastery in healing them. "There is an illness that only horses have and it's called 'sob'. Horses cough and if you put him for hard work he will eventually die. It is said that only the camp gypsies have the secret of healing" [I. Chelcea, 1944, 42].

It's obviously that other Romany professional groups as the traveller Romanies (Coppersmiths, Bear-leaders etc.) were also very good with horses, but for them *copper* was not an occupation *per se* and it was not the main job by which they were providing the family income. Their basic jobs are included in their group's occupation, but for sedentary copers made from their occupation a way of life.

Unfortunately, once with the collectivization and the decrease of number of horses, they disappeared in the economic picture.

It seems that the most intense trading activity with horses was performed by the copers from north-west Transylvania and from some areas in current Hungary. That is why Romany copers are also known as *lovari*, Hungarian word (*lo* in Hungarian means "horse"; horse sold in fairs, cities, *city = var.*).

We can't skip the description of this professional group without mentioning a very important and significant fact. Out of the group of copers, a Rom originally from Spain, Zefirino Himenez Mala, aka "Pele" [see appendices 6], on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1997 the Spanish Catholic Church with accept of Pope John Paul II<sup>nd</sup> was proposed to belong to eternity through beatification. He became a saint of this church. He is celebrated on May 4<sup>th</sup> since 1997 (St. Zefirino). He is the first Rom that is honoured by the church for his holiness.

Besides honouring his life, his morality and the faith of the Spanish Romany copers who died with the rosary in his hands praying, the gesture made by leaders of catholic church in a period of hostility and intolerance in Central and South-east Europe towards Roma, is a great gesture in the beginning of dialogue, collaboration, cooperation among different people and ethnic groups.

### **6. Sieve makers**

People of nomads living in tents as the copers, also disappeared from the big economic picture once with the industrialization and collectivization.

Their main job was to manufacture sieves for various use: selection of grain or vegetable seeds (wheat, sun-flower, bean), sifting corn or white flour, in mill activity, in obtaining different sands, quality control of grains etc.

They used different leather materials that only they knew how to prepare it. They used any kind of leather but they preferred “pork and veil” [I. Chelcea, 1944, 139]. If we analyse their products, it is very tempting to include this professional group in the big settled family, whose main activity was agriculture. But if we analyse the residency and the way of life, the Sieve makers are members of nomads.

They preferred the areas where the raise of pork and cows was well developed. Therefore they were mainly seen in Transylvania. But they did not have houses in certain places; they were not recognized as an integrative part of the community. They were traveling all the time especially in the southern part, where due to richer land, agriculture was more developed.

After they became sedentary they settled in Transylvania where they knew people and places and where they used to find the needed resources.

Their descendants headed for agriculture, but also for modern professions specialized in professional schools or in short educational programs.

The Romany Whitewashers from Transylvania that put the iron plates on roofs and manufacture flues or tubes for water draining are descendants of this professional group.

## 7. *Silversmiths*

They are a still existing professional group but their number decreases. Currently we see Silversmiths [or *ring-makers (ring = Rom. inel)*] – another name they are known as in Teleorman County, in Alexandria, in Bucharest area and Ilfov (not as many), in Ialomița area, with a high number in Țândărei (Strachina district), and very few in Tulcea County.

As some of their members inform us, the number of families currently varies between 1.000-1.500.

Their specific feature is crafting precious metals (gold, silver, platinum) or their replacements from which they made jewels (rings, ear-rings, crosses, bracelets, tie-needles, brooches, hair-needles, tiaras, buttons, boxes etc.), worship objects (candlesticks, icons, frames for icons, butter lamps, bells, crosses etc.), and decorative art objects, tableware, or objects for books.

The professional group of Silversmiths belongs to the ex-travelling groups. In India and at the beginning of their European settlement they got resources from their gold diggers fellows. They collected gold from the water sand and sold it to these craftsmen who on the Romanian land were called Silversmiths. They were called Silversmiths in order to distinguish them from goldsmiths (providers = producers of gold and silver), but mainly because the basic material they crafted in Romanian principalities and in the Balkan peninsula (except Turkey) was silver. This precious metal was abundant and cheaper and it was also preferred by the church and people because of its magic and spiritual significance. To George Coșbuc's Zamfira, as a bride "a silver belt around her waist she wore" and not golden one, even if she was the daughter of a wealthy man "as today we can not find" [G. Coșbuc, 18].

High class craftsmen, with a few and old instruments, they were the elite of the travelling professional groups as Ironsmiths were the elite of the sedentary groups.

They were travelling in small carriages (they had few and small instruments that did not require big stocking spaces) pulled by one horse.

Even today they practice "the gypsy law", and as for coppersmiths, Bear-leaders and other traditional Romanians, the marriages are early with no legal papers, but as a mutual understanding among families and/or partners.

Families of Silversmiths are big (6-12 members) and kept their traditional way of life.

Men switch to modern clothing and as rich Bear-leaders and platers they prefer two-colour shoes and they do not attend school regularly (8 classes at most).

There are very few women who attend school, they get married very early and they do not have a job in public sector.

After the generalization of the socialist production manner a part of them (not too numerous) did not wait anymore to be required, but they went to places to offer their skills, they were hired in the socialist system and became jewellers.

### **8. Whitewashers**

It began by merging two “so-called” different professional groups: Tinsmiths and Whitewashers (costorarii). Both constitute the professional group of Whitewashers and the both names are just a reflex in naming the same population in different regions.

The self – introduction of Tinsmiths as Whitewashers (because their basic resource was tin)\* and the fact that most of the Tinmen, with very few exceptions from Giurgiu –București – Călărași area among the poorest Romanies, also contributed to this division.

They lived their life in carriages with hood wagons, pulled by buffalos and beside the buffalo milk they had no other food. They lived with aliments received by women (called tinwomen, whitewashers, tinworkers, tin-traders) from people around the houses they lived near and as a payment for their helping household and sometimes in field work. Begging for food or for forages was an important part of the life of these people who never owned a piece of land. In order to survive they went from one place to another.

Most of them did not have any religion and among them *the baptize of the sun* could be met. This phenomenon was also met for Coppersmiths, Gold diggers and Silversmiths, and in general in nomad people.

It may seem that Whitewashers are the descendants of the Romanies coming from Turkey as slaves, as war prisoners or fugitives and finally settled

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\* The Whitewashers were practicing tinning activities of the art objects, which were cold-worked. This operation was executed with tin, but the process of tinning was actually covering a metal object with a shiny layer of other stainless metal and it had stanium as a raw material, that was sometimes taken for tin.

here. Men have long, twisted moustaches and smoke pipe since childhood. They get married very early (8-11 years old) and the cost of bride used to be paid in buffalos and sometimes in money. They are poorly dressed. In the warm season they walk barefoot and during the cold season they have poor shoes (usually received from someone else). They go to school very rarely (1-3 grades) and they rarely join the army.

The women get married at an early age, too. They have their hair in a tress; they guess or heal by pouring tin and wear curly dresses and blouses (dominant colours are yellow and red). As men, they walk barefoot in the summer carrying forages for cattle and food for family and in the cold season they have poor, black, low heel shoes. They do not go to school. After 1968 a significant percentage of them became good agriculturists, working in collectivization mainly in zootechny.

Romanians from urban areas, the collectors (Country Enterprises of Reception and Recovery of the Recycled Materials, nowadays they are called Private Collecting Centres ) of empty bottles from the city streets, using old vehicles or their own carriages are also members of the professional group of Whitewashers.

Currently, in the richer areas (Bucharest, Giurgiu, Călărași) we can see intellectuals belonging to this group, great traders qualified in the public system, working in food industry or even public administrators.

As seen from the table of occupations, we can see members of this professional group in almost every category.

Most of them appear in service (7%), but they are also met in industry, construction, agriculture etc.. A nearly equal number of service workers (7%) kept their traditional job as Whitewashers.

### ***9. Artisans working in bones***

As we already said in the subchapter “The constitution and dynamics of professional groups“, this group was made by those who identified as Artisans working in bones and combers or featherers, who actually are members of the same professional groups.

It's worth mentioning that combs were also manufactured and sold by Bear-leaders (who borrowed almost every other job), but the real combers were the bone-preparing men, (the real bone craftsmen – Hun. Kòkalo=bone).



When the bone products were replaced by industrial mass production which was much cheaper and diverse, some Artisans working in bones headed for unqualified jobs from the especially plastic industry, headed for cleaning the city or for collecting fluff and feathers for different factories focused on reusable products.

In order to get these products from households, the descendants of Artisans working in bones offered money and kitchen products (pots, kettles), glass or porcelain produced by the socialist factories.

Currently nearly 80% of the head of Artisans working in bones' families have no occupation. Because of their unqualified skills, they have real problems in getting a job.

Men have modern clothes, but women still wear curly skirts of flowered material but less coloured, and when they stop wear it they choose black or other dark colours.

Marriage is traditional, the bride is bought and the justice is made by their own courts.

### ***10. Bear-leaders***

As we already said they are descendants of the old tamers and circus artists. Members entertained the others with their magic, taming, dancing on wire etc. Their name comes from the bears (Rom. Urs = bear) they tamed and walked with them from place to place. The tamer (accompanied by family member) performed with the voice or with an instrument (usually a drum) and the bear danced or performed different acrobatic acts. At the end he received from the audience money, food or cereals.

For a payment or lodging, the bear was also used for walking on the back of the people with back-pains.

Because for our people the audience in the public squares is not as high as in Asian cultures, the appearance of Bear-leaders was the high point mainly for elderly and children (who were gathering "to see the bears"). Youth wanted to fight bears, to measure their strength with the mighty animal that was taught by the tamer to let himself defeated.

Members of this professional group (who always had a high birth rate) managed "to steal" some of the jobs of other groups, but they were never forced to give up their travelling, nomad life which, beside the

hardship also had a lot of advantages and a certain charm. For Romanies it offered unique and instructive experiences and it was associated with the traditional way of life.

If in its traditional form in Romania and in south-east communist Europe the nomad living was not a practice anymore, some distant practices are still seen in the long time “commuting” practice. This form is performed today by coppersmiths, platers and Silversmiths Roma and by another secondary group, *cast-iron workers* (they were specialized in manufacturing caldron and other kitchen instruments by pouring aluminium in self-made sand shapes).

From the Ironsmiths, they “borrowed” the most. They formed the subcategory of locksmiths and very likely the one of cast-iron workers. They also took a lot of things from bone preparing men, comb-makers and less from coppersmiths, Silversmiths etc. That is why some researchers consider them as members of the same big family.

After that they become sedentary, even if bears disappeared from their property, most of them live in relatively compact communities, their households are made from big families of 2-3-4 generations, and the descendants and relatives speak Romany and keep old customs and traditions.

The entire professional group has a real trading sense (as all nomad groups) and they are skilled traders.

“The gypsy law” is called *stabor*, and judges, if they are good and fair, are known not only in their own communities but other communities also ask them to come and solve the cases.

This professional group also performed the sun baptize, and have marriages at an early (11– 14 years old girls, 13– 17 years old boys), with no legal papers, and the boy buys the bride through the agreement between families.

Bear-leaders men wear modern clothes and prefer shoes in two colours. At weddings and baptizes, no matter how poor they are and even if they have nothing else to eat, they throw, as Silversmiths, Florists and bone preparing men do, with money for singers for the special dedicated songs. They are the head masters of their families.

The women usually do not attend schools as coppersmith women. After they get married they wear head kerchief, white blouses, long black

dresses made of a shiny or coloured material. On their feet they have slippers with a low or high heel, but with a shiny metal patterns.

In spite of the low percentage of assimilation by majority populations we can find great intellectuals. They are comparable with the settled in this matter.

For this professional group too, the head of the family is oriented to industry (16.33%), but most of the men (59.18%) are also unqualified.

### ***11. Coppersmiths***

We included this professional group all of those who declared themselves as coppersmiths and we added those named *zlătari* (from *zolat* = gold, gold money in the hair), wandering, nomadic-camper or brush-makers.

All had a nomad life, sheltered in tents (they are still nostalgic about that and they raise tents on the fields or on their yards when they want to work or talk) and had as main working material copper plate or copper in manufacturing caldrons, pans, pots, and pots for house made brandy (Rom. *țuică*), ornamental or cult objects, candlesticks, trays, cups etc.. In recent times these materials were replaced by stainless plates.

They travelled in coloured carriages with big back-basket and pulled by horses or mules. From the hair cut of the tail or mane of horses they made hairbrushes, paintbrushes, brushes that they sold when they went from city to city and stopped.

Selling and manufacturing brushes was the responsibility of women, about whom Ion Chelcea ironically and critically said: “brush and cowries is all they know”, and continues: “they manufacture brushes using blended pork and horse hair. Incantations among people living in tents have its usage and meaning. Incantation mixes fortune telling” [I. Chelcea, 1944, 137-140].

Men are the absolute heads of many families; have a long beard, long hair, dark hats and velour, velvet or silk wide pants. They marry young (12-15 years old) and very quickly they manage to support the family.

After they become sedentary, they cut the hair and shaved, gave up the traditional outfit and started attended schools (4-5 grades).

Women wear their long hair in tail in which they thread gold or silver coins. When they get married they cover the head with a head kerchief, wear many skirts at once and the outer one is always curly. All the skirts are lively

coloured. The preferred colours are red, yellow and blue. They wear dark shoes with high heels.

Old women smoke pipe and sometimes practice black magic. Most of young women see the future in rings or in pocket mirrors. They get married at an early age and do not attend school because they think it poisons the soul, it's a place for temptations and aggression from *gajii*. All of these can lead to the loss of virginity and therefore losing the prestige in the community. These fears and motivations are even used today by women as a strong argument for not going to school. They keep the traditional outfit customs. When family decides, they get married as virgins, between 11-14 years old and they are bought by the husband's family according to the looks, qualities and their desire to enter that family.

This professional group also used the omnipresent sun baptize and the name 'bulibaşa' (ruler, leader), as the institution of ruling/leader is present even today with the changes and adaptations that took place.

The practice of "gypsy law" is performed here but it's called *kriss*. The judges are older and experienced members.

Some groups from areas like Vâlcea – Târgu-Jiu – Sibiu – Târgu Mureş have 'the cult of the glass' (an old gold or silver glass) that can offer guarantee, respect, credibility, power or even the status of 'bulibaşa', if the person also has the necessary social qualities in dealing with people and authorities.

The high value of this professional group, as for every nomad group is the gold they keep. They consider it gives them safety and prestige in the community.

Unlike other populations for which the gold represents only expression of wealth and an aesthetic choice, for Romanies gold has a community value. It represents the marital basis, mean of crediting, measure of prestige and reliability, cult and magic object. Therefore, giving back the gold that was stolen from them in the past is a gesture of restorative justice as is giving back other goods to other ethnic communities. Romanies did not have churches, schools, museums, hospitals etc., but they had gold primarily from India. Because once with time it was transformed in coins, ducăți, cocoșei, Napoleons or Frantz Iosifs, does not matter. Its origin is the country that even today is the biggest gold trading market in the world – India.

If for other populations it makes no difference how they keep the gold (as long as they have gold), for Romanies it is very important. If the coins

that a virgin receives as a wedding gift do not have the property of being drilled, it has no importance how many there are. It is still dishonouring. The gold represents chastity, innocence, virginity and the right of a life without reproaches or suspicions.

Coppersmiths the professional group that kept in its best form the language, clothes, customs, traditions and the Romany way of life as a whole.

Among them there are many wealthy families. Not all of them are rich, but we can see the richest families among all the nomad groups. A general view over Roma shows us that they are not only the traditionalist, but the wealthiest.

In appendix 7, we show two photographs showing houses of Romany coppersmiths from the village of Sintești, Vidra township, Ilfov County, but similar buildings we can also see within the Romany coppersmiths from Sibiu, Târgu Jiu, village Ciurea, township Zanea (Iași County), Timișoara and Timiș County, Caransebeș, Craiova and Dolj County, Strehăia (Mehedinți County), in Galați County (townships of Liești and Ivești etc.).

## ***12. Gold diggers***

We talked in details about them when we discussed the bone preparing men. This professional group “was achieved” by summing those who declared as being Gold diggers and brick-makers or spoon-makers (the local names they were given).

The sun baptize was a fact for them too.

The clothes are borrowed from the contact majority population; more exactly the outfit is from the peasants from mountains and hills. They probably are the only Romany group that wore laced moccasins. The rest of them walked barefoot and avoided laced moccasins as much as possible.

But not all of them wore laced moccasin. The great majority of them, as woodworker-woman graphically depicted by Ferdinand Koçi (see appendix 8), walked barefoot. As Romanian majority population, those living in hilly and mountainous areas could wear them. This aspect made it difficult for researchers to study the origin of this professional group. Also it led to irony from the other groups who isolated them even more.

Currently the men work as depicted in the table of occupation. Most of them work in industry (over 9%) and construction (almost 7%), but they can also be found in services, agriculture, transportation or in the army.

### ***13. Silk traders***

Primarily they are the Romany from Transylvania, whose main occupation was trading with carpets and silk. They started from the area of Braşov, Rupea, Sighişoara etc. and reached till the shore of France, Italy, Spain, Portugal or even further.

In the southern part of Old Kingdom of Romania they were known as Silk traders (*Rom. mătăse = silk*). Because the trade of carpets was much lower in the Romanian Old Kingdom compared to Transylvania, they preferred to sell the traditional silk that their ancestors also traded in India.

This professional group also disappeared from the socio-economic picture after the early industrial development that started with the development of textile industry.

Being a respected, appreciated and with no negative connotation group, many of their descendants freely admit today they are *silk gypsy*, and not just gypsy (word that, as we saw, was externally used for them and had a negative, hurtful meaning).

### ***14. Settled***

Encompass all the subjects that declared themselves as *settled (the home ones)*, *tismănari*, *romanised* or just *Romanies*, without being able (or not wanting) to indicate their membership to a certain professional group.

There is the possibility that some of the subjects are not members of the big family of settled. Either they did not know which group they belong to, or they did not want to admit their membership to any of them. This means that they can be members of any professional group. But as it was no clue of them not wanting to name their membership we assumed that it is more to ignorance.

And as settled (the ones of the village, connected with the centre of the agricultural community), were the first that gave up the traditional way of life, left the compact Romany houses, lost most of their language and customs,

we tend to believe that this is the origin of the ignorance of the questioned subjects. That is why we included them in the category of settled.

Romanies that are called *românizați*, are those who suffered an acute process of Romanian assimilation. As a result they borrowed most of the Romanian customs, norms, behaviours, and their language. Romanian became the new mother tongue, and Romany was forgotten.

They totally lost the language and the way of dressing, they do not have an “accent” anymore, they adopted the religious beliefs of the communities they lived with in the same village or town. Even if they do not show it all the time, they have the conscience of their ethnicity, of their origin. They can not forget it because, as a child, they are negatively called: *țigane (gypsy)*.

As we discussed earlier, they are the Romanies that are tied to a certain place. They are so connected that after the Bug experience (that marshal Ion Antonescu, the chief of Romanian State Army at that time, following “the conclusions and recommendations” of some Romanian “scientific research”, offered them in 1942), at the end of Second World War they walked the entire distance between Bug and the birth places in Romania for 6 months, in some cases. The very few that survived the Siberian experiment returned after more than 20 years. They returned by hiding in fields and forests and stayed anonymous as being afraid that they will upset the powerful eastern neighbour.

These people were so connected with the land, both by spirit and by interests. They worked or lived on these lands, either independently, on the other’s properties or in their own workshops.

The group of settled Romanies is broadly identified with the entire class of sedentaries, Romany people settled on a certain place. In a more specific and authentic sense it includes Romanies that were not sedentary and whose families were not tied to a specific job assuring their living and whose life was tied by village, agriculture, field work for themselves or for others, but it was a field work they were performing mostly using their arms and less by the help of their animals. This work was for a lord (the master, the slave owner etc.), on daily basis (they were paid for that day or worked for paying previous debts) or for their own purpose. “Rummaging” most of the time the land, as rats, some fellow ethnics called them pejorative as *chițorani* or *modorani*. They were cursed to work on the field as rats because they did not learn any job; they lost their specific traditions and customs.

Settled, but not *chițorani*, are stable Romany craftsmen that were stable, settled on a land and served the agriculture and the farmers both before and after being freed (the Ironsmiths, shoemakers, barbers, bricklayers, Florists, Silk traders etc). We should mention that beside their traditional occupation, together with their families they also worked on the field (either theirs or others).

Ultimately anyone who received a residency in an agricultural area, an agricultural occupation, a house for a definite or indefinite period, became a settled.

Any person that received and maintain the right over a piece of land or opened a workshop of his own became a settled. As a result he earned his own income and he did not have to wonder around anymore as his fellow traveller ethnics did.

It is wrongfully believed that any Romany that has a home and abandoned his old way of life becomes a settled. He becomes stable, *sedentary* (another group that Roma are divided according to the criterion of stability in an area compared to *nomad*), but not necessarily a settled. A settled always is always sedentary, but sedentary is not always settled.

Beside traditional craftsmen from villages and cities, those without an occupation or property were considered settled. The highest number of them had to work in agriculture, as labourers.

After they have been liberated from slavery they gave up the nomad way of living their ancestors had. They settled down in certain areas where they laboured in agriculture, in households, in the field or they just lived from what nature offered them or from unharvest crops. This was due to the fact that their liberation from slavery did not mean their right to own land or capital goods which could assure a minimum of economic independence therefore means to assure a decent living standard. The manner the liberation occurred transformed the entire social evolution and current status of this ethnicity until nowadays. The huge gap between them and majority contact populations kept them as marginalized even from the beginning of their judicial free evolution. They never had the material support to participate equal in the competition for social rising.

This population always has been a cheap workforce and easily accessible by those in need. They were a population depending on the demand of work in agriculture.



Settled is the category that most Romanies were assimilated by majority populations.

From the humble beggar or delinquent to the manager or respected scientist we can find this category on every level, domain or social class. How was this possible when the inequality of chances was so obvious? It is hard to answer only in a few words, but their native legacy, their effort, passion and strength to overcome their social condition played an important part in this process.

Summarizing, we notice that in the class of settled we first include all the Romanies that laboured in agriculture, even if they were owners of their land or not (so those living in rural areas) and secondly all the craftsmen who were labouring for agriculture and farmers living either in villages or in the rural areas of the cities.

That is why we mentioned that the concept of settled is complex. It is a *category* rather than a simple professional group.

*Gabors* are not a Romany group. This name is not related to a specific occupation, but it represents the last name of a part of Hungarian Romanies. Almost all the Romanies called this way have as a family name Gabor or are related to these families. They live primarily in Transylvania in Mureş County and took the name while their fellow ethnics from the Old Kingdom were still slaves. They are certainly the descendants of the former slaves from the property of the Gabor.

Most of them are currently involved in trading, but we can also find them in construction or practicing modern jobs. Except of the coppersmiths they are the descendants of the lost professional group of sieve makers.

Men are easy to recognize by their look and outfit. Almost with no exception they have a moustache, they wear black trousers and vests, black shoes and they have Transylvanian hats on their head. The shirts are always white.

Women either wear large, flowerily and curly skirts, or the traditional Transylvanian costume.

Neither *crab-sellers* are a professional group, but rather a way two of the sample of Romanies “presented” themselves to the interviewer. They took their name from the area Răcari from Bucharest, sector 3. We do not know any specific feature of these Romanies but neither the research aimed for that.

*Turks and tartar Romanies and the Hungarised Romanies* are Romanies from Dobrogea and Transylvania that learnt Turkish, Tartar, Hungarian that later became their mother tongue. They used Romanian only when they interact with persons that do not know those languages. We have to mention that a part of Hungarian Roma (Harghita County) do not know Romanian and use Romany in their family when interacting with members of the community they live in they use Hungarian.

These three groups of Romanies shared the land with majority populations (Turks, Tartars, Hungarian) and they borrowed customs, norms or religion. The Turks or Tartar Roma do not speak Romany but either Turkish/Tartar or Romanian, while the Hungarian Roma still use Romany, but few of them know Romanian.

Even if they consider themselves as a group, *Teișanii* are not a professional group. They are Romanies that between the wars came from the township of Teiș (Dâmbovița County) to work in Bucharest as masons. They worked to build the current Government building from Victoria square. In their birth place, at Teiș, during the week they worked in the fields or as masons, and during the week-ends they were Musicians. The aforementioned parents of Dona Dumitru Siminică, Romica Puceanu and brothers (Aurel and Victor) Gore migrated from that area as masons and not as Musicians. They settled in the current Floreasca borough (in Groapă) and near the Tei borough (in the Keppler area where the State Circus is today). Even in the working documents of Dona Dumitru Siminică, till the '60 it is noted *chiefmason* and not the certificated music in or the freelance artist, though this one was not known as a mason.

In other words, *teișanii* are not a professional group but a merge of groups among which brick-makers, Musicians and settled are well known.

The other groups are considered professional groups and the current paper deals with them accordingly.

It is worth knowing that beside the judicial criterion of membership to which the enslaved Romanies were divided in boyar's, monastery's and landlord's, there are several other Roma division criteria [I. Chelcea, 1944, 73] (the social class and the sedentary – Roma were divided into sedentary and nomads (travellers); the membership to contact population by which they were divided into Romanian, Hungarian, Turkish, Taratar).

All these classifications have a certain degree of operationalisation, but none is substitute by the notion of professional group. In each group of Roma we can find different groups.

For instance, in the categories of landlord's Romanies or the Hungarian Romanies we find sedentary and nomad Romanies, but in both there are several professional groups. Both in Romanian and Hungarian Romanies we find coppersmiths, Bear-leaders etc., that had a certain nomad period and ironsmiths, brick-makers, barbers etc. that belong to the sedentary Roma.

Also the lord had under his service silversmiths, sieve makers, whitewashers etc. belonging to the category of travellers, but also ironsmiths, boot-makers, musicians, settled necessary for field work and gold-washers that are considered Settled.

## **2.5. Other Romany professional groups in Romania**

All the previous groups were "found" in our research, but the list is not exhaustive.

Strongly believing that we will bring an extra knowledge in the area we will be continuing by presenting other professional groups that lived or still living in Romania.

The fact that in the initial sample of the research these following groups were not represented does not stop us to describe them.

### ***15. The Romanies' professional group of Quarrelsome masons (bricklayers)***

We discussed earlier about *quarrelsome* – name given to a certain part of the Romanies' professional group of *brick-layers* in different areas from Bucharest and surroundings.

They received this "not that appealing" name from the fact that the work in constructions, even with mechanization and automation was introduced, was still tough and burdensome.

Centuries or decades ago, this work was made manually (or with low mechanization), being so one of the most physically hard job one could have. In these conditions you can imagine that higher the fatigue level was, higher nervousness level and the number of errors were (especially when women and children involved in this job, because of their lack of experience made

mistakes more often and got tired quickly). Even if they do not make mistakes they often are the escape-goats by which other mistakes are erased as not in vain there are “weaker” people in the world. Other thing led to the raise of nervousness and led to fights and uncomplaining [I. Ferencz, 63] that usually meant a lot of noise among men, women and children. This is the reason they were called *quarrelsome* (the ones who make *zarvă* (Rom) = quarrel, uproar). They are not a professional group per se, but a local name given to the group of *brick-makers*.

Later the name was given to those who fight all the time and make a lot of noise.

The professional group of Brick-makers is a Settled, well represented in the urban areas, where they still live in compact districts (e.g.: Brick-layers’ district, former Flămânda of the Starvellings) from the city of Râmnicu-Sărat, Roma Brick-layers from Bolintin Vale, Roma Brick-layers from Spring District of Buzău city, Brick-layers from Herculane city etc.). They can also be found in rural areas (the Brick-layers from Românești – Dâmbovița County, Broșteni – Ialomița County etc.).

## ***16. Barbers***

Also a sedentary professional group represented both in urban and rural areas were ***barbers***. This group was never too big, but currently it is so small that we can practically say that it no longer exists.

Because many members of the majority population were headed to this job, many of clients were lost to Roma. People were not going anymore to a “Romany” barber, but a fellow ethnic barber shop. The Roma barbers were avoided and the people were directed to the respective barbers who had the same ethnical category.

During the late and medium socialism when this occupation became completely public and could only be performed by people with special training and education, Romanies abandoned it. Because they learnt from father to son and not through formal education placed them on a disadvantaged position in the created competition. It is a well assimilated professional group, the only distinct features being the colour and the ethnic conscience.

### ***17. Nomad warriors (Ancient chiefs' descendants)***

There also was a Romany professional group of *nomad warriors* that “distinguished a lot for other Romany groups by their bravery and shifts. They acquired these features through the hard life they had to endure. Because Nomad warriors are cruel, they use knives and axes for any misunderstanding. Some historians that researched Romany life believe that they are the descendants of old leaders that came from India. Netoții (Nomad warriors – M. N) were not slaves and if caught they did anything to regain their freedom” [G. Potra, 34].

The obsession of the freedom, reinforced by the treatment and status of those who one way or another lost it, determined them *not to be as those* “who were enslaved as cattle” [M. Eminescu, 12]. They want it to be as their *ksahatriya* ancestors were (fighters, military leaders), free and disobedient. In one word they were *different* from all the rest, reason they were called *ne toți* (unlike everybody else, *Rom. Toți = all, everybody*).

As freedom itself does not keep for hunger they satisfied their needs by raids and theft. Their war was to fight for normality and reason to live.

It seems that from the ancient times the early Romanies (*ksahatriya*) knew to fight for others. In other words they were mercenary when someone needed them. Homer’s writing in the verse 594 of “*Iliada*” stays as an argument: “from where I felt the Sinti men carried me”– tells Lemnos after he was severe injured in combat [Homer, 594].

It is questioned if these people and their way of living can be considered a professional group as this paper also defines it.

As long as its members considered the war, the fighting, the stealing a way of live, an occupation that provided them and their families the necessary living resources, no matter what we think, we can still consider them as a distinct Romany professional group. But as we already think it’s understood, they belonged to nomad Romanies. Why they do not exist anymore it is easy to understand. Their disappearance was simultaneous and as a consequence of the disappearance of the conditions that make their existence and life possible.

When their way of life was not possible anymore or, in nowadays language, when their occupation was not needed anymore, they left for other places in search for new demands and resources.

That's how they travelled throughout Europe. They were in service of different rulers and different countries. They could reach places, knew people and secrets that not many soldiers did. Therefore they were very valuable for whom they had them.

It is said that every eight soldiers of Hungarian army was Rrom [W. R. Rishi, XII]. We believe that these soldiers were none others but the former netoți.

When the historical context was not favourable anymore, when their way of life and their organizational structure was not compatible anymore, the ones who survived found shelter and relief among the similar professional groups, among other traveller people, who they had lived with, and had fused and they sometimes guided them, as before, but in under different circumstances and in social contexts that were totally changed.

It seems that this group was very popular among historians and researchers, but also among poets which unfortunately mistook them with Bear-leaders. Actually it is not hard to make such a mistake. Their way of living, their features were very similar to distinguish them at once, without a thoroughly study.

The best of them, the professional ones, became professional military. They lost the language, the customs, the outfit, the ethnic conscience; others were assimilated in different ways.

### ***18. The group of "Thieves"***

By wanting to describe the level of organization which the Indian society had reached in division of work (there were 18 corporations according to tradition and 30 unofficially) and in performing the work, in the paper "Daily Life in Ancient India" the author states that "it is possible that burglars and *professional* (E.M) beggars to have been grouped in corporations".

Today, for the majority of people, when talking or thinking about Romanies, the first image is associated with a group of skilled burglars, a population that gets rich by stealing things.

If one well documented person tries to prove that before the 1989 Revolution, Romanies were those who replaced the majority of work force that have migrated from collectivized agriculture (which was low paid) to cities and industry (for better salaries and living conditions) or if he tries

to tell a personal experience of working himself with Romanies on big hydroelectric construction or in big agricultural exploitations, either state or co-operative, from Dobrogea, The Big Island of Brăilei, Banat etc. and that he had no problems with them, things are now somehow changed. This happens when there is not the suspicion that the irrespective collocutor wouldn't be a Romany himself (being accidentally a bit cleaner) or a person who could lack patriotism, who was working for the bad minorities, or even worse, for the Romanies, a person who's ready to sell himself or to do whatever comes in order to emerge from obscurity.

Somehow it is accepted that not all Romanies are bad, not all of them steal, but the majority of them still do it and not because they are rejected or not hired or they can't find a job, but "because Thank God, jobs were everywhere" but because "they do not like work and there is no will to work". And these statements are made even if it is obvious that the services dealing with work placing or professional training are inefficient not only in dealing with Roma, but with Romanian job seekers too.

The fact that Romanies live only through stealing is a quasi-belief for most of the citizens. Even those who never worked or talked with a Rrom still strongly believes in this.

If you ask such a person they tell you that they do not personally know Romanies, but they know honourable persons that had horrible experiences with Romanies and that it happened recently.

Far from us the thought to challenge these statements or even to suggest that all are just false stereotypes (where there's smoke there is also fire). Life shows us everyday Romanies who steal, cheat or do not let themselves fooled by individuals that, because they are of different ethnicity, they consider to be superior to every Romany, so they try to cheat them.

What we want to point is the risk of generalization such statements to the entire ethnicity. One might find a rational answer to questions like: why do Romanies steal (ones who do)? When do they steal? How much do they steal? How do they steal?

Is it stated through a rational argument, the statement that was coming out from the purist racism of Hitler's type or Ku-Klu's-Klan type, according to which *Romanies have in their genes* the custom to steal true?

We believe that for answering this question, the most rational "answer" lies in other set of questions:

If Romanies have the thieves in their blood, why is that in civilized countries with high living standard (Germany, Sweden, Netherlands, Finland etc.) they do not? In our opinion there is only one answer. Neither Romanies, nor other minority populations from those countries steal. Those societies are not characterized by stealing.

Can we say the same about Romanian society? Can we say the same about other south-eastern societies? Or that stealing is not a custom in Latin societies?

Are the Romanies the ones who introduced in our societies “mobilizing” sayings like: who does not steal does not live; who is active and works has nothing to eat, who steals has everything; we pretend to work, they pretend to pay; law is a barrier that the hawk is flying by, the dogs are passing under and the stupid people are just hitting etc.?

It can be said that because of the Romany burglars and continuous law crossing a specific anti-fraud institution was created (as necessary it might be, as inefficient it is)? Even if at one time it was managed by the president?

Is it because of the antisocial behaviours of Romanies that this institution transformed into an autonomous big, financial resources consumer?

Is it because of Romanies that inefficient laws and anti-fraud measure have been passed?

How many Romanies initiated or were involved in big corruption cases (are those not classified as big/huge stealing cases from everybody’s pocket), espionage, treason, money dilapidation etc. that steal torment our society? How many countries in the world include more prime-ministers, vice-prime-ministers, ministers, members of Parliament, judges, prosecutors, policemen, university professors etc. who are kept in prison than in Romania?

When will we be able and capable to look straight in the eyes and answer sincerely, no matter how painful it might be to all these questions, then we will rebirth as a nation, as individuals. Only then we will be able to judge free of all misconceptions, to judge objectively and not subjectively and we will also be able to make the so much needed “general cleaning” in order to have a contact or an equal dialogue with the society we want to live in.

By this we don’t want you to believe that we wish to league or justify theft and illegality, no matter who the perpetrator is.

What we want to point refers to the level of understanding of such facts.



If we could understand why an illiterate or with only elementary school graduated, without a job, pension, unemployment benefit, without the social income he should receive according to the law, with 5-6 children without shoes and clothes that needs to eat at least once day or once every two days (as future studies will show) Rom (or a majority representative) steals a piece of bread, a chicken or some wood we can't show the same understanding for the abusive general, for the minister that does not do his job, for the fraudulent manager, for the corrupted, unprofessional judges, for the employee with 2-3 incomes who steals every time he's got, or for the educated person who commits far more serious and antisocial deeds and his acts are more derogatory for the society.

Can someone tell that these acts are committed as a "reward" for the efforts that society has put in educating and helping these people develop?

This "understanding" is not at all the result of an asymmetric indulgence or of an assessment using different instruments. It results from a straight reality simply put by Ion Creangă "the emptiness surrounds us and the hunger gives the right" [I. Creangă, 220]. In other words it is another kind of relation between the need and freedom or between the need and aspirations [P. H. Ch. de Lowe, 9].

For our society, as in any society, the social behaviour of individuals is nothing else but a direct or mediated response to the forms of macrosocial management and to the promoted values by and in the administrative structures of the society. While society is not able to set and implement adequate forms to support its citizens in order to conquer the negative effects of social experiments or does not invest enough time for a serious, rational and responsible analysis, the social experiments (or social policies) are nothing else but a pathetic and weak search.

It is a fact that Romanies, in their great majority, were among the first reductions of forces in the former socialist factories. It is also a fact that that they were the last ones that were hired to work there. Most likely they also will be the last ones who will benefit from the long waited social and economic development. It is also a harsh reality that the period of the unemployment benefit set by the first unemployment law in 1991 was much lower than the period set by the modified law that also introduced the support allowance (not specified in the first version). The manner in which the law 18/1991 on the land register, then the law 169/1997 or the law 1/2000 (Lupu's law) were written

and the way they voluntarily omitted the Romany populations to be entitled to land (even if they have worked in other forms of collectivized agriculture during communism) is an institutional and legislative discrimination fact. All of these are examples of “promoting” equal chances in the society that further lead to different social tensions.

The law no. 67/1995 on the social allowance was functional two months before and two months after general elections. For the rest of 44 months, between the elections it was a dead instrument made public only for international representatives or international institutions. There was no other cash benefit support except for the child allowance.

Summarizing, we notice that a very young population (43.5% are below age 16), a very big and traditional family with an average of 6.6 persons/family, with no jobs and with no property rights that would support its existence was asked to live only from a child allowance of 1\$/person/month (at best). Instead we never ceased to ask from them to be trustworthy, to be moral, to have personal hygiene, to be civilized and of course to show a civic conscience and attachment for the country. No one asked himself if such demands are even possible or acceptable for them.

If by their nature Romanians are uncivilized in every possible way, how can we explain that in civilized (western) countries, even if they are more traditional than in south-east, with less education and with a much more nomad living (that was abandoned by the Romanians living in the south-east part or they were forced to abandon it), they are still extremely civilized? They are punctual, they can be trusted, clean and extremely solidary with their fellows (qualities they proved in all relations they had with Romanians or with the majority people living in the south Europe, after 1989). Our answer has to do with the general social context and with the possibilities that those societies offers to all its citizens.

If Romanians hadn't learnt or adapted these good or bad models (by keeping their way of life), they would have disappeared in time, they would have condemned themselves to disappearance.

Or, as it is well known, one of the best qualities of these people that, in spite of their specific traditionalism, assured its survival was the ability to adapt (even if in marginal forms) to the new contact societies they entered or they settled in. The adaptation was so fast and profound that nothing specific remained to them in the pure form: religion, culture, living conditions, outfit,

music etc. (see the chapter “The process of marginalization for Roma”). The family names had the same fate.

Related to this last aspect (beside those mentioned in the aforementioned chapter) we must notice something decisive and representative for Romanies everywhere: wherever they settled, in spite the custom of other minorities, they took names from the majority contact populations without any forced administrative measure taken (as it happened in Bulgaria with the Turkish minority or in Transylvania during the Hungarian administration).

Romanies did that without any external pressure. That is why Romanies from Romania are named Barangă, Deleanu, Ionescu, Maior, Alexandrescu etc., Romanies from Bulgaria are named rromii Ignatiev, Ghiorghiev, Stancov, those from Hungary are Cavacs, Demeter, Fekete, those from Sweden are Samuelson, Anderson, those from Spain are Himenez, Juan, Ramirez etc.

By this we want to point out (it will be better discussed in the chapter focusing on marginalization) that Romanies have borrowed norms, customs, good and bad behaviours of every majority contact populations they interacted with and gave a certain degree *romanes*.

But still it will be overstated and a big error to claim that the custom of stealing was borrowed by Romanies from the societies they settled in. No! It is a custom brought from their native country where, as the author says “they were probably organized in corporations”. If they never gave up this custom is because in their new places the majority population probably also showed it.

What we can say is that where the new conditions and norms allowed giving up stealing, they did.

Even in the societies where conditions and norms did not “impose” giving up this “legacy” when the conditions allowed the limitation or the abandonment, this also occurred.

Also in our Romanian society, in its moments of economic development and political stability, when the legislation was not only on paper, the stealing rate considerably dropped (both for Romanies and for the others).

Unfortunately, these moments didn’t last for long enough to completely eradicate this custom. On the contrary, these short periods of real material and moral progress were followed by periods of decay (including this current “transition” period) when stealing was even more perfected.

Confirming that the professional group of stealers also lived in Romania, the aforementioned “well known Romanies” told us about their real

mastery in performing this *job*. The ultimate task in reaching excellence in “profession” and reaching the “master” position in practicing this “job” was stealing the wallet (yes, the wallet and not the wagon, the villa, the exchange currency commission, or big fraud etc.) from the priest during the confession, without him noticing.

Moreover, there were burglars that *did not have* to steal all the time. They had periods when the “earning” was sufficient enough for a longer period in supporting the family. They continued stealing though in order to keep their mastery or stole to give those who did not have the means or “the skills” to do it, they stole because “this was their job”.

As today there are thieves among all people, there were thieves among all Romany professional groups. As a category they were nomads. This way of living made their job much easier because they were less exposed to the consequences of their actions, to the prescriptions of laws. It is said that they moved from place to place, but also they changed their looks so they were difficult to recognize even by fellow ethnics. They appeared dressed either as coppersmiths, tinmen or as other professional group; they were having either long hair or shaved, or have big moustaches. Probably this constant changing of landscape and identity nurtured the stereotype of “Romanies as stealers from the birth or as their inner nature”.

As a professional group, stealers (according to the definition from this paper) died once with the socialism. Unfortunately the custom still exists!

As we mentioned in the 1993 research report [Zamfir] and in other studies [see Burtea, 1993, Burtea, 1997a and Burtea, 1997b], the lack of serious official, governmental programs or measures destined to improve the continuous degrading status of Romanies created the conditions for poverty, misery and delinquency. The dexterity we discussed earlier might now be replaced by specific mafia actions or by participating to such existing or borrowed forms, attracting, under the economic and social contexts, a larger part of this population in stealing.

The direct consequence of this behaviour is none other but affecting the social interethnic relations or the political stability.

No matter the direction taken, it is certain that ignorance will generate much bigger costs than the rational, constructive, collaborative, partnered, unisolated, unsegregated, and non racist interventions.

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\* \*

Summarizing the professional groups of Romanies in a scheme, it is worth noticing that even if today we find them rarer and in a less "pure" state, it is still possible and recommended to discuss them from the following perspective:

**I.** A Sedentary professional group where we include:

- ◆ Boot-makers, with: saddlers, belt makers, polishers
- ◆ Ironsmiths, with: blacksmiths, ironsmith-concreters
- ◆ Florists
- ◆ Barbers
- ◆ Horse-dealers (copers)
- ◆ Musicians
- ◆ Silk-dealers
- ◆ Gold diggers: woodworkers, miners, spoon makers, brick makers
- ◆ Settled
- ◆ Quarrelsome masons, with: chimney makers, chimney sweepers.

**II.** A Seminomad professional group which didn't have a home or a stable residency, but still had a nomad living, on small areas and at least every trimester they returned to the same locality. We include here:

- ◆ Whitewashers.

**III.** A The former traveller professional group (nomad) as:

- ◆ Silversmiths
- ◆ Coppersmiths
- ◆ Sieve-makers
- ◆ Artisans working in bones with: sweepers, feather seekers
- ◆ Thieves
- ◆ Nomad warriors (Ancient chiefs' descendants)
- ◆ Bear-leaders, with: locksmiths, comb makes, cast-kettle makers.

Considering all from above, it is worth again noticing that some professional groups completely disappeared. On other hand, some groups that were thought to be disappeared, once the social condition allowed it again and the socio-economic need asked it they reappeared. We refer here to the professional groups of brick-layers and Florists that for a long time it was considered vanished. When the social need asked for them they appeared as if nothing happened before. Also, the professional groups of Ironsmiths and

coppersmiths were forgotten under communism are now again reborn. When after 1989 the rural areas know a small development, these people are seen again in the rural areas. Their number is much smaller than 5-6 decades ago, but what's important is that they still exist. There are cases when a horse owner has to travel for 20-30 km. in order to reach a horse-shoe smith. But the very fact that somewhere there is such a craftsman has its own social and economic significance.

We must mention that in spite of the requalification programs for young Romanies from these areas till now none was seriously financed and none benefited from a serious approach.

The professional group of Florists was able to perform their job only in their lords' gardens during slavery. Upon their liberation their job was forgotten until after the First World War when it started on private regime. Its rebirth lasts till present days.

It is very likely that someday we will speak again about the professional group of horse copers (they started to appear again in big markets) even if it is not going to be at the same scale.

But having fewer representatives it does not mean that the job is less complex. If at a first sight the reappearance of Horse dealers is only in trading area, a deeper analysis reveals Roma that breed animals (horses) later will trade. Their product is answering the market both quantitative (number of animals) and qualitative (race, colour, height). It seems that the leaders are Romanies from Transylvania (Harghita County), but they are not the only ones.

What it's worrying us is the decaying living conditions of this ethnicity. This lower standard of life has the potential to generate real monsters who come out because of despair and lack of perspectives.

## **2.6. Thoughts at the end of the chapter**

Our research has the quality to bring the Romanies' professional group in the foreground; essential concept, having a *gnosiological and methodological* value at the same time. As it appears, as *central axle of the social and cultural life* of the Romanies (who have been dramatically affected by the various forms of the marginalization process) the Romanies' professional group represents the *ethnogenetic foundation* of the Romany

people's growth, close to which other elements and processes became obvious with a complementary role.

In their continuous struggling generated by the clash among norms, traditional behaviours and the new of the scientific progress, the Romany professional groups appear and disappear, developed by merging each other and keeping ancestor connections.

In this didactic manner they were described here, for knowledge and understanding, in this pure form the Romany professional groups can not be seen anymore. Yet we strongly believe that the distinctive elements of each group can be helpful and easy to use by any interested researcher or by the professional working in or Romany communities. They can know them better and they will know how to act in order to attract them in partnerships in order to succeed in their common actions.

The situation is as such because the sudden and fast modernization associated with quick, wrong and unshared administrative measures led to brutal changes (including mixing groups) and disorganizing elements kept intact for centuries (crafting, occupations, living conditions, power structures, decisional organizations etc.). These events lacked this population from the necessary time to crystallize the new elements, to cope with the new environments, new organizational structures and to define their own path. This population had a major crisis in almost every domain.

On the other hand, the geographic space and the socio-historical realities experienced by every professional group were so deep that it is hard now for these people to regain their own identity. In order to identify with, for many time it is necessary to accept only one specific characteristic of that group. One such strong characteristic is the language, but they can rely on other characteristics, too.

For instance, Bear-leaders Romanies of Moldova became sedentary and adopted specific jobs to this way of living. Some practiced Blacksmith, some were singing and some worked in the fields. They can be easily mistaken for Ironsmiths, with Musicians or Settled, but the spoken dialect and sometimes the outfits and customs, entitles them to claim that they are from Bear-leaders.

In these conditions one might ask: why is it still necessary to know the professional groups as they were when the new ones are not as pure as they used to be?

Beside the cognitive and scientific interest, one might answer starting from the present reality. In other words, we must begin from acknowledging that the described professional groups were real and distinct groups that shaped the reality and the way the members behaved. The manner they worked, the jobs they had to support them and their families became defining for their way of living, thinking and acting. These aspects are still met today.

Knowing these elements we can better explain some behaviours of community members, the ways of living of some members or Romany communities. More than knowing, we can better relate with them relying on knowledge, strategies, methods and tools which are necessary to implement and design future strategies, models, social policy instruments significant for the community where the Romanies live in a certain number or for the social current labour that's experienced in such communities.

In spite of the rapid changes and disorganization affecting for better or worse, the life of these people, this fact is still possible because the influences are not completely gone. They still exist today and their knowing allows us to understand the way of living of different Roma communities and to think sociologically to solutions [W. Mills]. These sociological solutions will allow diffusing the tension generated by the conflict between traditional living and norms of modern life.

This understanding would allow a better knowledge and further explanation of the current status of Romany people. Establishing priorities and directions of actions in order to change the living conditions of their great majority of Roma communities must rely on that.

With all the changes and shifts in Romany structures they did not completely disappear from the social life or from the conscience of people (except for very few cases).

Through "the freedom of marriage" after the Second World War, what we encounter today is an accentuated fading of differences among traditional professional groups, a mixing among them.

This aspect makes it even harder to distinguish and clearly define groups and problems, their specific, but not impossible.

The paper edited by prof. Zamfir ends with the inducement to create "strategies for tackling Romany issues" [E&C Zamfir, 1993, 172], but these strategies, even of Romany origin and nature, can have satisfying results only if they are a part of a wider, well defined, clear strategy translated into



governmental programs that will also have the contribution and support of the formal and informal representatives of Roma people, doubled by the political will and support and by practical activity which was practiced in a perfect partnership.

A governmental strategy conceived and applied unconditionally and with *good intentions*, in which the internal needs will be followed and will respect the European norms should be the pile of developing all other strategies and programs, which, in order to reach their efficiency and goal they will have to harmonise themselves with the central strategy.

Actions and approaches that were taken only “for people” sake” in a paternal way, in order to gain visibility and electoral capital or actions showing Europe that we are really interested and willing to do it, are not useful. As any formal action, they will build an unsafe social environment.

A well-articulated program designed to induce a quality change for these people was already designed and made public both outside and inside the country. This program and its necessary structure were presented to any government after December 1989, but none found the time that’s necessary to organize a serious and necessary public debate which can indicate possible ways of putting it into practice.

After 1996 general elections, an Office for Romanies was created within a structure dealing with the protection of national minorities. In the end, this office proved to be nothing but a paternalistic and propagandistic structure. It could have been though the start of implementation of certain necessary, stimulating programs. Unfortunately, declarations and principles stated at the beginning of its creation remained for a long time only theoretical statements without any practical implementing. This structure did not understand an essential fact: a governmental structure is not substituted by academia or research institutes, but is a structure meant to *implement* a concept, a structure that people expect to show concrete results and not just theoretical facts. No matter how imperfect it might have been this something still would have been more than simple “governmental theory”. If the governments’ own theory (described in its program) had been wrong or insufficient, no one would have been blaming the appeal for academia, universities or research institutes, at least no more than blaming for the constant struggle for reframing new and illegitimate theories that have nothing to do with the initial strategy stated in the program.

If this office will surpass the dead angle the bad management has put it in order to become the practical expression of a political and administrative will or it will remain only a sterile propaganda, the socio-political practice will show us.

No matter the situation, the Romany professional groups not only appeared on a specific stage of their historical and social development, but they continued developing reaching “classic forms”, then they entered a forgetting phase and disappearance from the social picture for a period of time. Without being a secondary creation, the professional groups were *the basic ethnogenetic element*, the ontological source of their existence throughout all the challenges they faced in history.

The creation, developing and desegregation of professional groups is not a finished process and is not subject to fatality. On a historical scale, according to the social, economic, technical and political pressures, the Romany professional groups are continuously constructing and reconstructing. What we must remember is that this process is always depending on the technical and economic level of the society, on its productive base, on production lines which include the option and the political management though it is not going in accordance with this level and not in central position, as a casual expression of itself. The idea of synchronicity is rather the exception and not the rule. But for the “postponed phase” the process exists and it has many meanders, turns and coming-backs. It is omnipresent.

This plasticity, this adaptive propensity to changes and contexts but also keeping the basics of its existence is the key of the constant survival of Roma throughout ages. This process is not seen every day, in every historical corner.

Chapter 3

**THE MARGINALIZATION  
PROCESS OF THE ROMANIES**



### 3.1. Premises and elements of marginalization

Our thesis on Romanies' choice for the countries coming from the south-east part of Europe, and especially for the Wallachian countries in the north and south Danube, is based on *the economical niches and social needs* (accompanied and expressed by the social demand).

No matter which feelings or behaviours were raised by their religion, looks, colour, clothes, customs, because they managed to satisfy those social needs, even partially, they were accepted as the old saying "make brother with the devil until you cross the bridge". Unopposed collaboration or living together was accepted even for shorter periods, until a new better possibility arose.

The "technological" need of some shepherds, wood-carvers or agriculturists that for many times had to become soldiers ready to defend "their status, their needs and their people" [M. Eminescu, 176], and the need for cheap work-force were essential elements in the symbiosis between Romanies and contact majority populations. In this relation, the need for a technological plus was the key. This need was imperious for the sedentary population: as agriculturists, shepherds or as soldiers.

As certain groups or peoples from more or less near areas became more powerful, more developed or more aggressive toward their neighbouring groups, this need also became more acute. These attributes were stimulated either by their level of economic development or by their military force.

No matter which one, both relied on some technical innovation that raised the manufacturing level or the military capacity.

It did not matter if the "invention" was a knife, a sword or an agricultural tool if it gave a certain advantage compared to other groups.

The one who did not have the same or similar level of "technological progress" risked to be vulnerable or threatened. In fact, in more nuanced shapes, less direct and in more subtle and perverse forms, the phenomenon is still seen today.

The population from the north Danube needed technical support in all these essential areas: as soldiers, as agriculturists and as shepherds.

It looks like in those times the Romanies appeared as the only viable option and they maintain themselves as the only option, as bearers of technology and technical progress. "The engineers and the handymen "on the

big agricultural properties of the later feudalism and of the early capitalism, were in their great majority Romany. Only later, close to the Second World War the fashion or the good sense appear and, once the equipment that was imported arrived, “the German” or “the Englishman” provided the technical assistance. But as this was expensive only few could afford it. So, in fact as long as it was “on trial” this foreign specialist trained Roma that later were responsible for the car or the tool.

It might seem that the Romanies came with an aura of skilled craftsmen, with great knowledge about different materials, technologies and labour procedures that were unknown for the local people.

Although refugees on these lands, some of them (*kshatriya*) had the reputation of being good soldiers [W. R. Rishi, XII]. W. R. Rishi claims it is well-known that “in those two Hungarian regiments, 1:8 man was Rrom” and the fact that “during the 30 years war the Swedish army had a group of Roma” [idem].

Meanwhile they were very skilled in weapons and explosives. The same author says that the early Romanies knew the fire guns since oldest times. “after he circled the Bharatpur fortress, colonel Seaton, one British army officer saw on the walls of the fortress some steel guns (similar to those crafted by the British Armstrongs, but different because around the longitudinal bars that constitute the hole there were some steel rings, and not a bobbin). The diameter of these guns was enormous – almost three feet – and the core was small. There was not enough gun powder to make them explode. Using simple tools, these guns were the work of native Indian people. While Asia and India claim they knew and used fire-guns for a long time, the use of artillery is recent in Europe. Mentions on fire-guns are in the Hindu laws, which some scholars place them in the *XVI<sup>th</sup> century BC*. (E.M). It is thought this is accurate enough because the artillery was introduced in Europe by people coming from India. It is very likely that the Indians who brought this to be members of the Jats group, so the use of artillery in Europe was brought by the Romany people. We can find evidences on this since 1496 when a letter signed by Wladislav, the king of Hungary, states that Thomas Polgar, chief of 25 tents of traveller Romanies crafted with them at Funfkirchen bullets for muskets and other munitions for bishop Sigismund”[idem].

More than half a century later, in 1546, “when the English supported Bologna against the French, <<The English Council from Boulogne>> says

in one of its messages for the Crown Council from England: counselled by two experienced Hungarian gentlemen, the French king produced a big number of magnum guns ever made". The cited author says that these << very experienced >> Hungarian gun producers were the same race as those who provided guns and munitions for Sigismund in 1496 and for Turks in 1565: Roma" [idem].

He continues believing that "compared to other Western European people, Romanies from the XVI<sup>th</sup> century Hungary had the most complete knowledge on how to produce artillery guns" [idem].

As for the Romanies of Romania, M. Kogălniceanu says "they produced muskets, spears, swords, gun-bombs *and any weapon required in war*" (E.M) [M. Kogălniceanu, 1837, 101].

When at Sibiel (near Sibiu) it came to pull out the Romanies who weren't disciplined and organized as Germans were, the only reason they were still accepted was because they were the only ones who could make bullets, necessary for defending the community when need.

With such knowledge they could gain a higher social status than no one ever could. But their way of living, their excessive dispersion, their division according to the "adoptive" nations, the lack of owned-land that would motivate them, their run for social requests did not allow them to become self-employers, to satisfy a constant request for weapons and to have a central role in the production and sale of the weapons. All above associated with weak available options and the minor situations they tried to speculate finally created lots resentments and suspicions from their "partners". While they discovered other resources and better cooperation possibilities every one gave up to the services of the Romanies, *marginalizing* them or forcing them to *self-marginalization*.

Moreover, the persecutions they had to endure in the Western Europe, where the conflicts between groups and nations (religious, power, for throne) determined a constant war context, had as a motive the fear of multiple options, fear of espionage, aspects that would create vulnerability in changing sides. But all these reasons were not revealed to the people. What image a king who was frightened by some poor people could have?

When things were revealed in the sense of precaution for spreading vagrancy, resentment for nomad living, indignation for small theft, disapproval for not working, repulsion for bad behaviours, witchcraft that everyone, even

the kings were afraid of at that time, things were much more different. These aspects were real but far away from the true reasons which made the different sovereigns, leaders or administrations.

*The great persecution of Romanies* in Spain, country about which Alfaro Antonio Gomez writes, is not just an isolated example. Such “actions” were also frequent in England, France and Germany. The second issue of the journal *Aven amentza* (1993) reveals a summary of a material written by the German historian and political scientist Herbert Heuss. From his work, *History of the Gypsy-German relations [Istoria relațiilor țigano-germane]* we find that in 1416 the first law against the Romanies passed in Germany and 48 more similar laws were passed until 1774.

Thus, in 1449 the Romanies are chased away from Frankfurt-on-Main; in 1496 the Romanies are accused of foreign espionage, bearers of black-death and traitors of Christianity; in 1500 Maximilian orders that all the Romanies shall be chased away from Germany; in 1514 Switzerland supports the hunt of the Romanies; in 1531 Augsburg Reichstag forbids the travel documents for the Romanies; in 1566 Ferdinand I maintains the expulsion and extermination laws, two Romanies being executed by drowning; in 1659 the mass extinction of Romanies in Neudorf starts; in 1661 the people of Saxon impose the death penalty for the Romanies that are found under its territory; in 1710 Frederik I of Prussia condemns all the male Romany population to work, women can be beaten and bear a sign, children to be taken from their parents. In 1722, at Frankfurt-on-Main, Frederic Wilhelm declares that being born as a Rrom shall be punished by hanging. The penalty was applied to all those over the age of 18. In the same year in a fight for their freedom, an army of 1000 Romanies fights a big German army. 19 Romanies are arrested and brutally killed: 4 wheel-crushed, 3 beheaded, the rest of the rebels are shot. In 1725 an edict from the King of Prussia condemns all the Romanies that are older than 18 to hanging. In 1726 the *Extermination Campaign of Gypsies* starts: any man was killed, women and children were cut off the ears and deported.

A document from 1736 reveals the cruelty a group of Romanies was executed in Siebenburgen: their feet were burn in lye and they gave them to eat their own lips after they had been cut and fried; in 1782 in Esabrag and Frausmark 200 Romanies being charged for cannibalism were arrested and tortured.



Sometimes the sadism becomes entertaining, amusement, a way to spend free time. In 1835 the competition *Sport in Jutland* started and the record was set by the group who killed 260 Romanies; an owner from Rhein included in this competition “a Romany woman and her infant child”.

Moving forward with his results the German researcher, who currently is one of the most active militant for Roma rights in Germany and Europe, adds: at the conference *The Gypsy Foam* (1890) it's decided that the presence of Romanies shall be signalled by bells. Also, the soldiers (why the soldiers?) are empowered to arrest and chase away the Romanies. In 1899 Bavaria Police establishes *the central office for fight against Romanies*. In 1907 a great migration wave from Germany to other European countries, including England is noted. In 1909, as today, the police recommends confiscating their animals and papers and they should bear a sign (as a little later another people with a hard life was forced to do – the Jewish one) in order to be easily recognized.

In Louis the XII<sup>th</sup>, France, in 1504 it is forbidden for the Romanies to settle down. Therefore a big chase away campaign was initiated. In 1510, those caught and not obeying to the order of leaving the country were hanged. Later, in 1647, they are forbidden to be grouped in more than 3-4 persons.

The beginning of the XX<sup>th</sup> century finds Germany in a serious campaign of chasing and persecuting Romanies. Upon establishing *The Bureau of Information on Gipsy people* (1899) they were all the time monitored and registered by the police.

We can notice that the manners they were punished become crueller once we get closer to the era of big wars involving huge mass of people and big interests get over the ruling ambitions of previous times or the struggles for the throne among kings, princes, rival groups or families. The charges are becoming more evasive, the presumed defects being in a great number and involving the stereotypes on whose bases they were created and their role (the stereotypes') in the union and guiltiness of the people.

In 1933, in order to prevent spreading unworthy living, a law for sterilizing the Romanies is passed. Then, after 1938 they are forced to live in certain areas followed by massive deportation in concentration camps from Poland.

The children's access to education was forbidden starting 1938. Two years later, in 1940, 250 children from Brno were used to test substances that shall be later used in concentration camps.

The high point of the "superior race" is between 1941-1945 when Romanies and mixed race people are sent to mental health facilities, concentration camps or are just exterminated.

Even if statistics are incongruent, it is estimated that in the Nazis concentration camps between 500.000 and 600.000 Romanies from 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe died.

The human, administrative and financial efforts undertaken to end, to settle, "to integrate" or "to civilize" Romanies would have never been justified if the danger they represented had been reduced only to superficial aspect invoked by monarchs, kings, leaders, governments in order to get their support and cooperation.

Not the same attitude was displayed some time ago when their help was necessary to catch-up the delays the majority population had in economical production, in agriculture and shepherd.

The need to satisfy, to complete those needs and were so imperious that the "hosts" did not display any resentment, fear or any other negative feeling toward people coming from a totally different world, with different religion, clothes, looks, customs etc.. They accepted or looked for cooperation and finally approved living together with the Romanies, without certain hostility of opposition.

All these lasted until another opportunity emerged. The "opportunity" materialized in the possibility to self-supply or in the appearance of other more agreeable groups that could deliver the same services of better quality and financial costs.

For the first statement there are well-known the cases of majority population when the apprentices were working in Romany workshops, in order to learn their craft. (as well as the other minor or major population's workshops)

The process that Nicolae Iorga refers as transfer of "national vitality that allows strong influences and satisfactory conquests for the pride of the performer" [N. Iorga, 1938, 25] occurred.

The second statement is justified by the following minority waves [G. Tigran], coming from a Christian world, even orthodox, that in many aspects

were similar to the local people, had the same territorial roots, they were known for the people they contacted.

In the previous chapter we discussed about the Armenians, Germans or Greeks that “were crafting” the same products at least at the same quality but much cheaper.

Giving these conditions the social demand drops dramatically, the search for providers becomes acute and when there is a contradiction between demand and offer the solution is none other than selling and accepting a protector or a saviour lord to whom they become slaves. Thus, slavery became an extreme marginalization, alienation and social anomie form.

It is important to notice that satisfying the productive needs of the Romanian society of that time meant a revolution (as we would call it today) in the agricultural production and in the household activities.

The wheel with iron track, the new shape of the wheel hub, the knives of the plough, replacement of wooden tools with bronze or iron tools (hoe, shovel etc.), the iron chain, lockers for doors, the kitchen vessel made from non-ferrous materials (copper, bronze, aluminium), all is due to their presence.

### **3.2. Marginalization – definition**

The concept of marginalization entered the Romanian discourse after the Revolution of December 1989.

A series of people, institutions, groups or symbols were declared marginalized during the socialist regime.

Compared to other European countries, Romania itself was considered marginalized. Therefore, “accession to Europe” was defined as the end of transition period and Romania was seen as a European country which is able to dialogue, to have a partnership and collaboration.

Also, the Romany ethnicity affirmed the right and desire to overcome its marginal position they had for so many years. They chose and assumed a new plan for their social and political existence whose construction they assumed.

Considering the Romany population in Spain, the Royal Decree No. 250 (1979) published by the Ministry of Culture in Madrid by which a commission for the study of Roma was established, concludes “this community that exists in Spain from the XV<sup>th</sup> century was over the time a

*marginalized* and discriminated minority. This minority had lots of serious problems with housing, education, health, working, cultural and living with other citizens“[J. P. Liegeois, 1987, 162].

Without trying any value judgments out of which to result the adequacy of the concept to the mentioned situations, we are trying to describe its meaning according to the Romany ethnicity.

Therefore, by marginalization we will understand the social-historical process by which populations, communities, minorities, institutions, persons, symbols etc., due to ignorance, lack or limited access to other populations, institutions or authority forms or due to more or less conscious personal choice, are not actively involved in the social, political or economic life of the society.

The block of access does not primarily refer to physical, individual removal, keep-away or refusal, but it does not exclude them. It refers to keep-away the group and not giving them the possibility to be competently and consciously involved. We can exemplify by the proportion between the exigencies of social and school involvement of the Romanies in those times. At the same time we do not exclude the hidden forms or pretexts of which a group or person is removed or “obstructed” in being present and getting involved in the social life of the community he lives in.

On the other hand, as a protest manner or as a way to preserve its features, as a way to self-defence or because of the lack of interest, the fear of failure, the fear of becoming aware of the inabilities to satisfy the demands, the failures to produce the desired effect, a group can *choose* a marginal position. The same thing happens as a quitting form, the result of previous failed trials.

As for any social phenomenon, we use the classic, durkhemian definition [É. Durkheim]. Marginalization, beside its negative consequences transferred into the individual and collective personalities (depersonalization) or into the social behaviour (inhibitions, social low self-esteem), also has positive effects as conservation, not only protective but also values, customs, laws, and for Roma, mainly the conservation of the language.

### 3.3. Forms of marginalization

We believe that marginalization is a process that for the Romanies contains several elements corresponding to the domains of their social-economical life.

#### ***3.3.1. Margins – result of the physical-geographical marginalization***

Although sanctioned by some exceptions, the rule of placing the Romanies at the margins of the cities is a well-known fact and accepted as such.

We can usually find the Romanies in small communities, on the outskirts of the cities or villages which *volens nolens* is associated with the idea of poverty.

The phenomenon is also noticed in its “classic form” in urban and rural communities before the socialist heavy industrialization and the post-war demographic explosion.

The development and modernization of cities brought the Romanies toward the centre. This is primarily noticed with settled Romanies, who were already tied to the settlement and the life of the locality. But, according to the rule the outskirts are again “reserved” to the ex-nomad Romanies that settle down there. (It is known that this category became sedentary through administrative, coercive measures during ‘50-’60 in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The process ended during 1965-1968).

At the beginning of the ’40, referring to the way of “settling down” without making any correlations or references to the desires or “preferences” to the possibilities, Ion Chelcea develops some ideas that can be some form of theory of Romanies’ settling. He claims that “obvious is not just the type of house that Romanies have, by showing *preference* for different types of housing...but the manner they place themselves in relation to the others and to their ethnic fellows. The situation created is a way of being. Someone places himself in relation to the other in accordance to the reality. As in the genealogical table, according to their specific nature, in the social order they also create a decantation of elements” [I. Chelcea, 1944, 150].

Because “their specific nature” is not explicit, we tend to believe that this synthesizes the socio-economic status of the person; the settling happens and later is judged according to the context: conditions, possibilities and available resources.

Beyond the degree of explanation given by the “theory”, the author summarizes: ”in general, gypsies will place themselves as follows: those from villages (settled – E.M), to the margins of the village (city); wooden Romanies (those working with wood, woodworkers – E.M.), at the margins of forests, but not far away from villages; those living in tents between localities or in water meadows” [idem] – which in most cases corresponds to the reality even if the motive does not belong to a “general order”, but to the position these people have in the society, to the possibilities given to do their job, to their history and also to the moment they had to settle down , found an area to settle or created their condition” to settle down” . .

The real and much simpler explanation is that of each of them settles down as they could and need it.

Therefore, settled Romanies (those from villages as the author calls them) settle down in localities (even if they had land or possibilities to do it at the margins) because their activities were related to different crafting and field-works. They needed to be easy recognized and found to receive the social requests and to be near to those whose lands they were working, close to their own properties or to the customers who were ordering tools, equipment and means of transport driven by a pair of horses .They worked for one or several close localities.

Woodworkers (ex-gold diggers how working in wood) settled in river meadows where there was enough wood and they could craft it without carrying it on long distances. The crafted objects were sold in different places. They were carried as finite products and not as rough wood. Coppersmiths, Bear-leaders, Artisans working in bones etc. (those from tents) settle down between villages in order to be able to deliver their products (as the woodworkers did, but different products than the woodworkers, having other constructive specific feature and using other type of materials) to different places without walking long distances. By this they were also bewared from authorities, from whom they should have received (if they gave something) the settlement approval, they were far from people’s indignations and curiosities.

If we add to these their safety and trust need, the offered explanation covers a much real wider area.

Putting aside and considering the expression “the living within the ethnic majority element” we consider that “their preference for certain housing conditions” depends on their possibilities to fulfil this preference, on the dynamics of harmonization of preferences with the possibilities, and only in subsidiary it is correlated with the experiences and the traditions of living, representation of the house or the group psychology.

Unfortunately, the influences of psychological, geopolitical, racist and fascist theories, that by the end of '30 of the 20<sup>th</sup> century had also become predominant in Romania, seriously influence the generalizations of the aforementioned author. Therefore, the methodological objectivity of his empirical observations is altered. On one hand, such position is too much similar to the theories that treat underfoot the human being and justified the entire genocide during the Second World War and the war itself; on the other hand it clearly and directly contradicts the Marxist ideology and the socialist humanism (also of Marxist origin) that were promoted after the Second World War in our country. These are the so called “official” arguments for which the works of Ion Chelcea were removed from libraries and book-stores and became forbidden to the large audience. His writings were truthfully called racist and his work was available only to researchers and scholars through special library funds.

We tend to believe that in forbidding these papers, along these known arguments, there also was a desire of communist authorities to mask the fact that within the Romanian people, defined as welcoming, tolerant and hospitable also gave birth to scholars that promoted ideas, theories and policies with a strong xenophobic, racist, antihumanistic and antihuman component. This ideology contradicted the new and official social order and image of the communist party.

In order to continue his explanation, Ion Chelcea said ”there is a law of the marginal position of gypsy element coming from *the organic inferiority of their people*” (E.M)[I. Chelcea, 1944, 151].

At that time, without a systematic theory on Romanies [Burtea, 1994, 257] and without knowing their history and dialectics of their becoming, in his work he comes to develop false explanations of biological, spiritual and racist origin. So, the special situation of the Blacksmiths is explained only by

“fate’s” favouritism and not by an expression of the place this professional group has in the social-economical system in those times and of its position in the traditional economy of the Romanian village or society: “in certain places, only Ironsmiths *are more appreciated by the fate*” (E.M). “Those from Grid have bought land. Today they are owners. As others they used to live in cottages (gypsies from Grid– E.M); the exception was Ironsmiths that lived in the houses of the villages” [I. Chelcea, 1944, 151].

Why would a village give the houses to the Romany people, unless it needed them? Here’s a question that the author of *Gypsies from Romania* does not ask himself. It is obvious that common people, life itself does not work global, following the more or less inspired, good or bad intentions of the theorists.

But even when the Romanies live in modern houses (apartments) we can find them at the bottom or upper floors (so still at the margin); these places are in many cases obtained after the others refused (or allowed themselves) to wait until a better apartment was available.

Why did some allow themselves to refuse the apartments the factory where they worked offered them and others did not? Explanation comprises both subjective and objective elements:

First of all, the number of Romany families was big (the mean was 6.6 persons/family) and they could not refuse an apartment even if it was previously refused or it was not that good. Placing the children was more important than “the position” of the building or the quality of the housing.

Their fellow ethnics had smaller families and more often an assured home, even if it did not correspond to their needs, they could refuse it.

Refusal of a house had another risk that the Romanies already knew. It meant breaking a rule that in their case represented severe punishment. A person that refuses a house will never be given another chance of a house for at least a period that was different from an administrative or economic area to another, but nowhere until one year. Even if the Romanies had big families and difficult social status (mainly because they were not a priority) they knew that refusal meant a long waiting period. This was the subjective aspect of accepting whatever house they were offered.

This is why we consider that physically the position of the Romanies is connected with the notion of marginality that finally leads to marginalization.



But the setting itself can not stand alone for the physical marginalization of the Romanies. Rejection, social exclusion, laws against the Romanies accompanied by measures and practices of “enforcement” that were used during the history are also forms of physical marginalization of the Romanies as an ethnicity, as a people or as humans.

### ***3.3.2. Complementarity in economic activity***

Being in their great majority a people without any property or having less important property, the Romanies had never been in the centre of their own economic activity that would constitute the essential focus of the community, an element of “national vitality” [N. Iorga, 1938, 25].

The great majority of craftsmen and those without land were seen as an easy and cheap labour force and always economical depending on those who need them from time to time. And as for us for a long period of time “the main source of wealth and power was the ownership of agricultural properties” [V. Miftode, 30], properties that also gave the right to decide and act in your best interest, also created the premises of a marginal participation to the economic life.

The rare exceptions were far from being a mass phenomenon.

Even if the agricultural relations had been different in the sense that a majority of Romanies had owned agricultural lands, the lack of an own administrative – territorial space they could exclusively manage, as other greater or smaller ethnicities did, a territory where they could carry on their agricultural or economic activity, most of the time it exclusively did, it still wouldn't have last their own economic life.

Such organization would have permitted their own religious life, the preservation and better developing of language and would ultimately create a common psychology and unity. This requires common goals and common conscience of goals and interests as it can be noticed in the social-historic processes for Hungarian, German, Turks, Czech and Slovak people from our country. No matter how small the area where they lived was that territory was only theirs. We are thinking now of the countries of Harghita and Covasna, of the area of Nădlagului, of Bulgarians and ‘şvabii’ from Banat, of Dobrogea, of Armenians from Transylvanian Gherla etc.. The church played a big role in this.

From this perspective there is a paradox in saying: we see them everywhere and nowhere at the same time.

The economic activity that the Romanies carried on, although necessary as it may have been it came to complete the regular principal economic activities of the majority contact populations. The main cooperation form was constituted the sale-purchase process of work force (in the periods when this did not mean taking and confiscating the work force).

As until the beginning of the XX<sup>th</sup> century the main activity of the majority population was agriculture, the Romanies were associated with this.

Who did not work in agriculture was not appreciated as a worker. You could say it did anything else but work (sits on a chair, sells, buys, wonders, makes business, heals etc.).

Because of this conception, the Jews, who were dealing with trade, as they did not own their land, were administrators or intellectuals, being labelled as lazy who were living on the people's back or they were accused of disliking to work.

Later, when industry developed and the workers became "the leading force through its representatives", the notion of 'work' enlarged but still remained extremely limited. During the 9 decade of the XX<sup>th</sup> century, those who did not work directly in industry or agriculture were seen by the Party as functionaries, auxiliary personnel, t.e.s.a., c.a.f., people only sitting on chairs etc. They were illegitimate consumers, people that ate the food from others – therefore they lived serious psychological traumas at the cut of personnel and industrial restructuring.

This narrowed and deformed understanding of the work, this hostility and disgust for the intellectual, conceptional, delivery, supervising and observing professions that is constantly promoted in our society led permanent scars in our society and impoverished us not only spiritual, but also physical (economical), placing us, in a constant way, behind some other countries, which were more acceptable and understanding. Our lack of technical, technological and organizational creativity is due to this conception that hides the endless envy and hostility of those who are not able to show it. These feelings were used (speculated) without any scruples by every politician, and also the communist activists took the speculation to paroxysm.

And in very few cases the Romanies owned lands.

Even if the existence of most of them was tied to the agriculture, they were either working the others' land, as a deal (after their liberation from slavery), according to an agreement, or in a very past time the work of the field was slavery itself.

The "appreciation" for this work that they tried to avoid as much as possible when they could, but if they had no option they would have to do it as a statute labour.

Even if the work of the Romanies covered and gave quality to an important space of social life, it was not seen as such and was not considered an essential element of the economic life.

Analysing "the value of the slave Romanies" [G. Potra, 87], George Potra reveals the prices gypsies were sold in different areas (see appendix 9) and in different times, their exchange rate either in nature or on paper, but it does not make an economical assessment of their contribution to the economic life of the society.

The fact that you pay a lot for a slave or that you spend a lot of time, material and human resources that were important for capturing a fugitive slave shows their economic value. But this "value" did not belong to them. For them it meant exploitation, misery, humiliation and the lack of any perspective in an agriculture where they had no human identity, only the identity of tools or objects belonging to an agricultural inventory.

You could say that the iron plough, the wheels with iron track of the carriage, the iron tools for agriculture and not only are connected with the presence of the Romanies on these lands. Their work, even productive, referring mostly to the work of the land, came in fact, as necessary completion to that one, having a service, delivery character in those times. Therefore, the marginal character of the economic activity the Romany people were engaged in was characterized by *economic complementarity*.

### **3.3.3. Commerce**

Although in its modern sense, commerce represents an intrinsic economic domain, the component assuring the relation between producer and consumer, we will treat it as a distinct, separate component. By its importance for this ethnicity, for Romanies it has a special significance. More, for the

Romanies the commerce is an extension of the production because in many cases the producer is also the dealer who sells the product.

No matter the professional group they belong to, all Romanies see commerce as a second nature of theirs. Actually, within the ethnicity, the commerce is called by fellows Roma *negot* (eng. trade).

If in respect to the origin, the beliefs and explanations offered by many Romanies are very different from a group to another and when asked about how they arrived here they all answered: “the trade brought us”.

As inaccurate as this statement is, as strong in the Romany collective conscience is. But it may seem that in all times, Romanies were connected one way or another to commerce. Either they sold their own products or sold products they bought from their fellows or from a majority of contact population some Romanies made commerce a true way of living and not just an income bringing activity.

It is worth knowing that in few cases products were stolen and then sold. The stealing was either by the same person or by other fellows. In some cases a majority of the population stole the products because they were closer to “the source”, had an easy access to it and did not raise as many suspicions. These products were then bought with less money and then resold in other regions at higher prices (especially by travellers Romanies). Therefore, a form of cooperation developed, even if it had an antisocial determinacy!

If it was discovered that the product was stolen or it had an illegal origin, as today, in most cases no one had the time and availability to investigate and the seller was the one who was punished.

The Romanies traded the products either in preset establishments made by the authorities (in fairs, markets etc.) or in the form of strolling trade.

Romanies always developed a face-to-face trade by looking for the customer and determine him, tempt him to buy: cattle (coppers), household products (coppersmiths, artisans working in bones, brush-makers, woodworkers, bear-leaders), ornamental and spiritual objects (silversmiths, plastic workers, florists), carpets, silk, clothes (silk weavers, bear leaders).

It's hard to imagine that a person who voluntarily leaves home in order to “buy something from gypsies”. This one had to be met, had to appear from somewhere, to be seen and heard how it showed his products and if something was tempting or necessary had to be bought.

Beyond the basic production relationships among Ironsmiths, Boot-makers, shoeblacks, brick-makers, Musicians or barbers, the most important cooperation and exchange forms with the majority populations were due to trade.

Once more, this activity could not develop in a way that would define the entire ethnicity (as it happened with the Jews or the Armenians who are well known and recognized as excellent traders).

The trade conducted by the Romanies remained tributary to the forms and the merchandise and gained marginal characteristics, being mainly associated to the black market.

This stereotype is well preserved even nowadays, not only by a part of the media, but also by the Executive branch and other governmental institutions.

Both of them claim, with a persuasion and serenity which are worthy of greater aims, that the Romanies sell the products at speculating prices, they arbitrarily buy them from peasants and have no legal papers or adequate clothing.

If using such claims could be justified by the media by its run for sensational, by the chance of writing catchy titles that would tempt the readers to buy the newspaper or by a misunderstanding of the free market processes and of the psychology of traders (in the written media after December 1989 there was the highest number of unqualified personnel and of hiring of other unemployed persons from other domains)\*, we can not accept this when the Government uses.

It's hard to believe that the members of the Government, when on most of their diplomas or labour cards it's written "universitary professor", "economist", "financial worker" etc., do not know that within a democratic society, where they pretend to cultivate competence, competition and *free market*, as well as the game between request and offer, concepts like "speculative prices", "imposed prices" etc. are not present or possible.

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\* There are well known the opinions inside the media on the "level of professionalization" of the workers in that field. Claims of people like I. Cristoiu or C. Nistorescu point that real professionals within current media can be counted on one hand are groundless.

Both in the Romanian Social Democratic Party's, Government, whose prime-minister was an economist university professor, and in the Romanian Democratic Convention's Government, that was firstly ruled by a jurist university professor and then by an economist professor there were turbulent confrontations on this issue followed by loud statements regarding this theme.

In none of these "analysing" meetings the prestigious specialists from the governmental team raised the point of the ridiculous state and the waste of time with pointless discussions, which were valid for the centralized, unitary economy and controlled socialist market, when the own government programmes (that were probably easily forgotten) stipulated clear pledges of certain governments for building and stimulating the market economy and the price of the goods should be decided by true qualified parameters and by the ratio between the request and offer and not at all by exterior mechanisms, political or any other type of reasons.

If the Romanians use speculating prices (collocation from which we have to understand that the prices are higher than normal) who stops the buyers to buy from other sellers with lower prices?

The solution came from a "high quality collective intellectual effort" was to tell peasants to sell the products on their own (directly) and not to let themselves "deceived by gypsies" again.

If our government did not hear that the world economy is built on the principle of social division of work and that basic reasonings show that is more efficient for everyone that some people to produce, some to sell and other to consume and that the only meeting point is the market, then it means that they belong to somewhere else and that their policies are just propagandistic sayings that they will never implement because they simply do not understand them.

But this also shows something else. It is an evidence of the distorted gap between the rulers' theory and their practice that questions their ability to govern or to lead.

Fortunately, the peasants understand quickly and simple that the waste would have been huge if they had let their crops unharvested on the field, had let animals unattended and the households business to chance, in order to follow the government rulers' advice that meant wasting time in the markets, waiting for the buyers who come to ask, in order to be bought, a "kilo" or two

of their products. The story of stealing the products has no support, as it's false, with very few exceptions.

If the government and journalists don't see the Romanian peasant more than a being "that dogs are eating from his purse", the reality is much more different. If he happened to be tricked once, this did not happen twice. He knows and learns fast to defend himself or to protect himself, but our politicians do not know and do not want to learn a thing about the life and problems of those who they represent and govern.

Or if they know something it has nothing in common with the principles or the mechanisms of the market economy. They know that they must protect at any cost their political clients and their financing from any free competition, but mainly from *external competition*, no matter how ridiculous or undesirable the arguments or forms of discharging their duties should be.

The truth is that relationships between producers and sellers (including Romanies) exist for many years no matter what media, politic or economic "specialists" might think. And it will continue to exist as long as it is advantageous for both sides.

There is nothing more ridiculous for a government than the broadcast statement of a police and Obor Market leadership (from Bucharest) representative after such a meeting.

The meeting was accusing all the abnormalities and illegalities that the Romanies undertake in Obor Market. After the meeting the representatives declared that the things were not as they were depicted by the government, that the producers are not beaten or blackmailed by sellers and that these have legal papers, being registered as family associations or commercial enterprises.

The Bucharest markets Obor, Berceni Sud and Matache are those where the Romanies are significantly present. It is said they are dominated by the Romanies. In spite of "speculative prices" these are the cheapest markets in Bucharest and maybe in the country. How can this be? It's simple. Through the incorrect game between those who are "born sellers" and those for whom it is more important for their own profit if "the money turn around" than "to keep the price" until the products are not good and those who did not learn this principle. These last ones, in order to save their inefficiency, complain to the politicians who protect them or make up stories about tensions with the

Romanians and journalists, who hurry to “take notes” in five minutes, reveal emotional stories to the public.

And for them the news is like Providence, as they have the opportunity to invent embarrassing explanations for the public justifying why their good intentions are not seen in practice.

Actually their protective measures are signs of contempt for the general electorate. They offer false and cheating solutions and explanations in order to shift their attention from their weak stateliness in ethnic area.

If relationship producer-seller-consumer would function according to the politicians and journalists, the producers would spend more than they could gain the products would double their prices, the sellers would have nothing and no one to sell to their products that are too expensive and the consumers would have nothing to buy. Moreover, the interethnic domain will become an area of tensions with painful consequences.

Following the same direction, it's accurate if you noticed a pathetic discourse of the author. We believe this is pardonable and acceptable because it is only a small drop in a cup of millenary humiliations and discriminations.

### ***3.3.4. The scission of the religious component***

The Romany population came from a religious area known at least in theory by few scholars from European and Balkan space.

As for practice and acceptance, things were less good.

In a time when religious intolerance was ferocious and building own institutions that were specific to their religion was expensive, practicing own religion is even harder, because it also required the agreement of the local people. The architecture of those institutions was totally different, the buildings were gigantic and the materials used were rare and hard to get from the Balkan-European space. The necessary resources meant huge efforts difficult to mobilize from a dispersed population that was constantly moving from one place to another, without living on the same area.

The deviation from norms and conditions or at least adaptation of the traditional forms and principles was unacceptable for a population that preferred the lack of institutions and spiritual practices rather than deviation from tradition that was one with existence itself.



These are the main reasons for which the Romanies did not develop their own religious life.

A serious contribution to this matter was due to the essential fact that being in a continuous search for social demands they did not allow themselves to live in big communities and share the same area as it happened with the Hungarian, German, Czechs, Slovak or Turk populations. They did not have an area to exploit following their own beliefs. If they had had such a structure it would have been possible to develop their own spiritual life that would reflect their way of life, their own values, norms and traditions. In fact, this cause can also be an effect!

In many cases, the Romanies just “joined” the dominant religious from the areas they settled or preferred to ignore the existing spiritual norms.

The last aspect is objectified for the Romany populations whose existence was mainly nomad (traveller). *The sun baptize* is the ceremonial for the travellers, the burial ceremonial and the wedding process was conducted by the secular ruler, and everything was worshipping the sun. These were just a few evidences and motivations for their future choices upon they had to settle down and to belong to a certain area.

The others who lived among orthodox joined this cult (most of them), some joined the Catholic Church (few countries from Moldavia, a part from Transylvania and from Banat).

Those living in Dobrogea joined the Islam that characterized the Turks that were majoritary there at one point. Many Romanies who were tempted or not satisfied by “traditional religions” joined other confessions among which the Pentecostals are the many.

We can also find Adventist, Baptist, Apostolic, Mosaic Roma [The Population Census of 1992, 296] etc., but not as many as the aforementioned cults.

The lack of their own church “to gather” around and without the processes of reproduction and accumulation contributing to the development of language and religious practices led to the “religious scission” that in essence is synonym with marginal participation to the spiritual life of other populations.

The Romanies forgot, adapted or transformed beliefs and own Gods changing their initial significance in order to transfer them into ethnographic culture, customs etc.

So, the trident (trișula) of the Indian God Șiva became the Christian cross and the worships and the offerings to this God became the Christmas custom of Șiva carolling. In some areas this is known as Vasilca (an adorn pig head used for wishing and/or exorcism).

Therefore we can find an entire religious mosaic at the Romany populations.

The great linguist and Romany scholar W. R. Rishi said that “the elapse of time and the lost of contact with their native country combined with the influence of Christianity made the Romanies forget their Goddess (protective – E.M) Kalica (Kali), [the black goddess from, kaló = black – E.M] whom they gave a different (Christian) form – goddess Sarah (or Sara – E.M)” [W. R. Rishi, II].

Francesc Botey explains the option for feminine Gods: “one of the Meridional Indian religious forms seen especially at Dravidian culture concentrated on local feminine Gods... Mohenjo-Daro was the city where the creed of Goddess Kali was practised” [ F. Botey, 31].

Moreover, the text makes us think that after the great migrations of the Early Roma, the cultural and economic life of ancient Dravidians changed the focus from the North-West India into the Meridional area that was more sheltered from Muslim attacks.

Meanwhile, the text tries to build evidence that present Romany populations are related to Dravidian Indian population.

While the Goddess Kalika that comes from the Mohenjo-Daro culture is still worshiped today by western and catholic Romanies, we have a strong argument of the common origin: on one hand the goddess and her cult, and the Romanies on the other hand.

The religious marginalization objectified in *the religious mosaic* of the Romany populations is also justified in the language used for spiritual practices. ”Romany is not used in the religious activity, one of the key-facts in maintaining a minority language. When Romanies attend the religious practices they use the language of the majority populations” [E&C Zamfir, 1993, 22]: Romanian, Hungarian, German, Turkish or Tartar. We refer to the practices of traditional religions. Only later, close to our times we could see Romanies joining more liberal and tolerant religious like new protestant cults. The joining was also intensified by the fact that these cults allowed services in their own language. Things are clearer when preachers are speaking Romany (which does not rarely occur).

### **3.3.5. Cultural symbiosis**

The Romanies spread more and more, in small familial groups into larger areas. This allowed them “to meet” the social requests. The activities carried on mainly as services allowed them to assure the living standards for their overcrowded families.

Therefore they did not have the chance of preserving, self-development and perfecting a unique, quasi-independent and vast culture – features that require big groups of people sharing the same geographic space and performing practical activities for a longer period of time.

In these conditions it is obvious that neither the construction, creation or assurance of the infrastructural forms needed to express, transmit, nor to adapt different cultural forms and structures were possible.

In other words, the chance of building their own cultural institutions, as well as religious or educational institutions was denied. The only institution where the roles could function was the family or at most the oral community.

That is why we believe that also for culture the Romanies are atypical as well.

If other minorities always had and still do have their own cultural infrastructure (beside the educational and religious infrastructure that feed the culture) that allows them to establish and to express the cultural patterns and products, which assure them the conservation and the affirmation of their own cultural identity, that means institutions where cultural and educational activities develop, the Romanies do not benefit of such institutions.

Their cultural features are not sustained by the relations with the native country as other minorities have, nor their culture is seen in the diplomatic institutions and embassies.

If other minorities, no matter how big they have at least one local or regional cultural institution (cultural houses, club) and sometimes they have one branch in the capital city, the Romanies have no such things.

These elements would have a specific identity for the Romanies and Romany culture, where the own features have the determinant role and impact. Without the necessary condition being met, we have to say that *the specificity of Roma culture lays in the particular, personal way they learnt the culture of the contact populations*. They added their own specific elements that were preserved and transmitted from one generation to the other.

*The oral characteristic* of their culture is an element that requires further thinking before any statement be made.

The lack of a common shared living and working space influenced the life and cultural productions of the Romany communities. "If the status of a population in a social system has a significant historic timing, we can assume that the specific cultural patterns would have *the effects* of the status and the adaptive *reactions* to this" [Zamfir, 1993, 19].

Or the duration and the status are the key-elements that made the Romany population to gravitate around the verb *to be*. In other words it was important *to exist* and not *to have*, to accumulate as it characterized the life of other populations. This fact stamped their way of living, their way of thinking of the relations with others (gaze) etc., but also influenced the relation with the divinity and transcendental. The result is a *defensive-contemplative attitude of life and problems*.

This aspect is either the source or the reflex (effect) of a historical propensity *tobe* before *having*. This gives a certain detachment rather than despair and uncertainty.

On this foundation an own philosophy defined by the sentence "live today as the last day and tomorrow we'll see" was built. Paradoxically, this philosophy seemed to assure the perennity and continuity.

This philosophy is the explanation of the perennity of this old people that survived other well-known people with better and higher powers throughout the history.

In this context the statement of "moral duality of gypsy" as asymmetrical and unequal relationship is placed. Lucian Cherata considered this duality as "their answer to the humiliations and prejudices that the so called gadjo showed them for a long time" [L. Cherata, 58].

"A traditional culture is especially crystallized in rural communities, in conditions of accentuated and prolonged isolation. The Romany history for the last 8-900 years was the history of a community that has never lived isolated for a long time" [Zamfir, 1993, 23]. This explains why the cultural productions that Mihai Merfea [42-71] and Tudor Amza [55-65] mention in their papers appear either as adaptations of an Indian ancestral legacy to the local customs, norms and practices, or customs of the majority population that are contaminated with *rromanes features*.

The clear meaning of this assumption will be seen and understood later in the book when we will tackle the acculturation process that generated *the cultural symbiosis* characterizing the marginal culture of the Romany population.

The process occurred due to the cooperation necessary in the real life where the social needs are definitory.

These are the elements that favoured *the cultural symbiosis*. "Only a written and used language represents the instrument of dialogue among cultures...Romany was never a language of intellectual Romanies...The lack of a written language negatively influenced the development of traditional culture and the preservation through literary products. Therefore, the Romany community does not have a written modern culture or *a larger* traditional culture (E.M). The lack of a written language, of an intellectuality tied to the ethnic profile (linguists, authors, ethnographs, folklorists), the dispersed character of their life are essential factors that make the current cultural profile as fragmented and not coherent and structured enough" [141, 92].

Indeed, whatever different authors might say on theories on the vastness, deepness and importance of the Romany culture they would be wrong if they would talk about a modern culture and not an oral, eminently folk culture.

We also believe things can not be different. We think one culture can not develop and individualize but within *a civilization* strongly tied to *the temporal dimension* of human existence. At the same time a civilization can not succeed without the *sine qua non* support of the other dimension: *the spacial one*. When we talked on the economic and religious components of the process of marginalization of the Romanies, we emphasized this very thing. The lack of their own shared space where they could perform their own economic activities that would generate specific cultural, psychological, religious, social products, so in other words the lack of *their own civilization area*, couldn't have generated a solid and specific culture.

The statement is not surely to flatter but respects the advice of one of the two valuable Romany representing half of the quartet that was called the Ardelean School, urge that characterized their cultural creed. We refer to Ion Budai Deleanu, alias Leonáchi Dianèu, who in his letter to the other rrom dedicated to the early written Romanian culture, Mitru Perea, alias Petru Maior, said: "*being rrom as you* (E.M), I thought it is necessary to write for

our gypsies in order to understand what kind of ancestors they had/and to learn not to make the same craziness. It is true that I could have told a lot of lies and praise gypsies by making out things it never happened as current historians, writing on their people praise them. *But I love the truth* (E.M)” [I. Budai Deleanu, 5].

More than that we can say the lack of a common space, or what the professor called Cătălin Zamfir referred to as “the dispersed character of the Romanies” [Zamfir, 1993, 92], naturally and inevitably generated a sort of *historic shyness*. This is characteristic for the groups that I throughout the history, when they were threatened or in danger did not feel the protective help of their neighbours or of their fellows they shared the land with. This component refers not only to the psychological component of human condition, but also to the social component as a citizen with rights and obligations, that came out from common aims and interests. *Despair and uncertainty* that we mentioned before are overcome only by the self-marginalization ultimately leading to *the historic shyness*.

The most evident way it is materialized is seen in the boldnessless in *asking* for their rights and *exerting* for their role within the society.

*Shyness* when speaking about the Romanies?, the reader might ask himself. First, as we said before, the statement *firstly* contains no psychological dimension, but it undoubtedly is included in it. The pluck and naughtiness that burst in certain conditions, are nothing else but ways of extreme manifestations of historic shyness which generate despair and uncertainty. In other words they are nothing else but manifestations of despair and uncertainty that objectively can not be the source of asthenic behaviour, as a group or individual cultural dominant feature. These very elements stood at the basis of different attacks on the Romany communities throughout the first decade of the XXth century in the south-east and central Europe. Of course we mustn't ignore the role of models and context!

But the Romanies weren't only “accumulators” that just *took the culture of the contact populations* and gave it their own style and elements.

They were also “transmitters” of culture. In other words, the strong process of acculturation wasn't simple and linear only through enculturation, but it also had a complex dynamics. Depending on historical time and on the socio-economic reality, the reverse process of exculturation also occurred with different and oscillatory weights and contributions.

The dialogue among cultures occurred as it has for more than 99% of human existence, orally during daily activities and interactions. Much slower the deepness was diachronic and reached on stages and not synchronic and globally as it is the case of written dialogue, the sending symbols on a prop. The support of dialogues was not a material, but something much more powerful: coexistence, cohabitation, shared economic and social life, even if on asymmetrical positions and dispersed conditions.

Let's not forget that even if they weren't owners they still came from a cultural space with a long history and with strong and deep foundations. They were the carriers of a solid baggage of initiations, knowledge and perceptions and they had a lot to give and still receive. This did not require special efforts or hard obstacles to overcome.

Let's remember that the early Romanies were already present in Balkan area since the second half of XI<sup>th</sup> century. This is the time when the young Romanian people and language were still developing. A people that starts its own process of individualization has a lot to receive from a people with a millenary culture and history, even if that one is in a trek.

Entire generations of majority populations have learnt professions from the free or already enslaved newcomers. At some point, Ironsmith, brick making and boot-making were professions belonging only to the Romanies. Transforming the clay in bricks belonged to them. Gradually they were either transmitted or learnt by the members of majority population. If barber shops were until recently owned by Romanies, today it is the majority population who owns the most of them.

The enslaved home or yard Romanies (the courtiers, as they were called) living on the land of their masters (lords) were educators, confidant women, nannies, laundresses, Florists, cooks, theatre and circus artists, Musicians etc. Therefore it was a mutual transaction of norms, knowledge, values, own ideals among them.

We do not believe one can imagine that, before cooking for their masters, The Romany cooks (in order to take only one example) have taken cooking lessons. On the contrary they used recipes and knowledge that were so much appreciated by their masters that later they transmitted as it were their own. That is why currently Romanies do not have a special dish that would characterize them as we can find for most people and minorities living in Romania.

We could make an exception for the dish called *borândău*. But this is only for the cooking procedure because the name is not specific and the consumption area is limited today to only a small part of Romanies who live in Moldavia.

As for the so called traditional Romanian stuffed-cabbage (*sarmale*) they belong both to Romanians and Romanies. How true is the fact that cabbage with meat (famous *şax maseça* or the more used term, *şax thaj mas*) is specific to the Romany kitchen as they claim or belongs to Romanian dish?

The famous belly soup did not have the same popular dispute. Until the Second World War the majority population did not eat that. Belly soup was the dish cooked almost exclusively by the Romanies. In fact, when an animal was killed the head, the belly and intestines were given to the Romanies who helped or just passed by. Without these products, the majority population could not have used them for cooking.

What about traditional music? This expresses the Romanian temperament and the behaviour of coming from different regions, but it was mainly performed and even created by the Romany Musicians. They knew as no one else would to express in music the spirit, the ethos of the people and of the area they lived in. The fiddler's music – the Romany creation that includes and expresses the entire Romany feeling, but is always performed in the language of the majority contact population or including few Romanian words is a result of such *symbiotic process*.

We do not want to claim that we do not acknowledge the existence of a Romany culture and implicitly claim the imperious need to develop the conditions the preserve, improve, enrich and express it as a component of human culture and European diversity [*Recommendation 1201/1993 of C. E. on national and ethnic minorities in Europe*, Strasbourg]. What we want to stress is the conditions that made impossible or difficult to develop a big Romany culture, a powerful and specific written culture. We also want to point out the elements that determined its reduction only to the oral, minor component. In most cases this component is seen among the cultural patterns of contact majority populations with who they combined and mixed in a symbiotic way (the case of Romania is notorious).

This is the reason why we sustain the priority of the state to create as many cultural institutions as possible for the Romanies (cultural houses, clubs). This is not only to save what is left to save, but also to constitute



real possibilities to develop language and creation, opportunities to re-invent Romany culture and creations according to the identity of this people in the present times [Romanian Constitution, art. 6]. And these can certainly be establishments to spend the free time and to educate, in a modern way, the entire Romany population.

In an eventual and imperious strategy destined to the Romanies, a cultural centre with a methodological and avanguardistic role which can generate generalizing initiatives and experiences appears as absolutely necessary. In fact, this issue constituted a distinct chapter of the draft in the integrated program we talked about.

### ***3.3.6. Education or disappearance***

One of the first and most frequent stereotypes of the Romanies refers to the lack of education: “gypsies have no school”. And this statement is true if we consider that many of those who claim it think about the most modern institution of education – school.

One of the conclusions from the research conducted in 1992 on the Romanies was that 27% of subjects are illiterate (for women the percentage reached 35%).

A recent study done on the Romanies who live in Ploiești [M. Băcanu, E. Cobianu, P. Alexandrescu, 28] shows 22% of the subjects are illiterate. This means that data are close, so there are real, credible.

Jean-Pierre Liégeois says “we are safe to claim that more than half of the Romanies and school-aged nomads from Europe do not attend schools” [J. P. Liegeois, 1987, 14]. If the French Romany scholar refers to the Romanies of the Western Europe we agree with him. Here the concept of rrom is connected to the concept of nomad (traveller) that doesn't know how to read and to write. In respect with the lines above that is equivalent for someone who can't attend school or can do it in a much more difficult way than the sedentary travellers. But this is not the real problem.

In our opinion, the aspect that should be emphasized is the unacceptability in mixing the process with the instrument of delivering education. No doubt school is the most important **way** of delivering education *today*.

Looking through other glasses school can also be seen as *one* form of education. It is a particular and standardized form, majoritary in nowadays and extremely efficient. But the statement also implies the negation, in the sense that it is neither the only one or possible. The anti-school reactions are well known in developed societies and with tradition in this area. They manifested first as reactions against public schools, then as reactions against school in general, either by negating its norms, values and forms that are promoted by school or by simply ignoring them. The reactions of wealthy or intellectual families that refuse to let children attend traditional schools and choose for private education, home, within their family, where in some cases educators are parents themselves, often happen and they are simply sure that this form is better, more profound and less stressful and more efficient.

It is important to recall that school was not always accessible for every person and it did not always have the importance we give it today. As any social-historical phenomenon, it appeared on a certain stage of society's development; it then developed and reached different organizational forms and it gained different significance for people's lives in various places and times. Education will transform, adapt and become more complex (or, why not, simplify?) over and over again until people will invent efficient, more comfortable, suppler and more eloquent forms to replace it. But whatever its future will be, school remains an instrument of achieving the educational process even if, deliberately or not, or maybe being overwhelmed by its importance and responsibility, we can identify or mistake it with the process itself. School is an instrument while education is an entire complex process.

At the same time education is a process and a goal. It serves to fulfil an essential social and human need, to a large, more important aim and implicitly, more human – *the harmonization of individual* with the society and social environment, with life and conditions or requirements under which this one happens.

Education has a much wider action. First of all it means the process that leads to *socialization*, meaning the training for life, the training to cope to all the requirements and the hardships that life might pose. It helps us meet the harmonization we talked about.

There is no doubt that the job (profession) or a set of abilities capable of assuring the individual his daily living or the adequate response to stimulus and bio-psycho-social needs is the main indicator of socialization.

The way or the process by which this indicator is expressed is, surely, education and the main, modern instrument through which people access education is the *school*. This is *the main instrument of education, but not the only one*. Its role and place changed over time. School is not and mustn't be mixed up with education itself. For centuries people were educated and socialized (read prepared for life) without using the modern instrument of school. Most people became able to deal with life, which never was gentle and easy (constantly changing its nature and forms of manifestation), without any help from school norms and abilities.

Only with the development of society's complexity required by technological revolution and the exponential growth of production (leading then to more social demands), this fact was more and more difficult.

Still, in spite of these difficulties, a great part of the Romanies defy nowadays, too, this instrument that is so useful in learning a modern and competitive profession on the labour market and learning basic behavioural norms. They continue to use pre-modern or ancestral forms, belonging to their own origin, trustful and more in accordance with their way of life. Even if these proceedings and forms become anachronic to the modern ones, often coming in conflict with each other, they meant a lot in the life of this people that's why they can not just abandon them. They are still important for them today.

Why this option is still present today is hard to answer but a liner answer will just trivialize and complicate the reality.

In designing their multicultural educational system as an elite form, in their trial to place Hungarians in European educational avantgarde, Hungarian researchers proposed a similar form for the Romany population. They explain the rejection of school by an important part of Romany ethnicity as a reaction against the unknown institutions for their culture and traditions (the Romanies '). The Hungarian society acknowledges these differences and takes them into account in designing alternatives, which are meant to make them grow dim until cancelling them.

But it is very likely that the inner forms to be in a better agreement with the position in the society and with the asymmetrical opportunities society is giving to them.

So, the Romany people without their own land and country, without a government to represent and defend them, without army and properties,

realized one thing other peoples couldn't even if they had all the above mentioned. While such peoples even glorious and powerful at one time disappeared now, the Romanies resisted and survived and are now one of the oldest people in the world. This means they were prepared for life, this shows adaptability, malleability and resistance,-features that only a good socialization can create and offer, that means those solid, specific, adequate, adapted and efficient educational forms.

At this point, *volens nolens* a series of questions are raised: what kind of education do Romanies deliver? Are they educated or not? Are we dealing with an educational process in the modern meaning of the concept or with *a different practice*? Is this practice better than the forms used by majority contact populations, is it less good or can we talk about *a different concept* and *a different understanding* of the educational process?

Do the appreciations and judgments on these forms come from their lack of knowledge, from the repulsion against something harmful in general or from our practice to reject anything that is different?

We tend to believe that it is *a different concept and a different practice* of education in socializing members, a practice in the preparation activity for life that's not fully understood and researched.

Women of "home Romanies" (personal home slaves) weren't just confidants, housekeepers, cooking-ladies or healers, but also educators for children.

The process started with the breast-feeding (wet nurses) and ended when the child left for school, in other country or got married.

"Offsprings" of the lords who were later benefiting of a complex education, from a methodological and qualitative point of view disappeared like the peoples we had talked before (at least as a social class) even if the literature of other sources do not mention homicide cases. Revenge etc, while the children of Romany women that were raised only within this system continue to live and to spread this practice.

One explanation of their survival is the way education and socialization occurred.

Liégeois says "the observations that were carried on in Italy, Austria, Great Britain (whose conclusions can be further developed) concluded that the Romanies raise their children with an acute sense of reality, an understanding of the environment, vivacity, empathy towards others, an independent spirit,

initiative, ability to conceive *surviving* strategies (E.M), collective sense and a sense for rhythm and movement that society is barely appreciating” [Liegeois, 1987, 143-144].

What else could this “knowledge” be if not education according to own norms, rules and conceptions?

The previous statement generates new questions and issues: how anachronic this educational practice is or becomes in this modern times? What chances has it for the future and is it worth being kept, modified or banished? With what instruments and in what conditions would a change be possible and still be safe? Who, when and how can we do it?

If we keep at all costs to avoid the error, not to make a mistake, we can finish these lines with the questions we asked before, but because we do not want this, we risk to affirm that a very good and nuanced knowledge is needed and, most of all, that has to be of good will ( though it would be more correct to call it good faith), from one case to another one, from one situation to another one, we have to be always very well documented and animated by thoughts of understanding and building and not caricaturing, cultivating and not destroying, illusioning ourselves with the thought that” we still do something”, recreating and reconsidering and not growing it ugly.

Maybe a deeper and nuanced analysis of **political marginalization** of the Romanies would offer a wider perspective in understanding the other aspects of marginalization. But for now we do not have sufficient elements for such an analysis that can be itself a separate paper itself. Still, the interested reader can find a few words related to the above mentioned facts in second paragraph of the chapter 7.

### 3.4. Modern and contemporary marginalization

Marginalization, both in its external form (through pressure) and intrinsic form of the group (self-marginalization), is a continuous process. It does not stop unless society reaches the perfection in exercising and practice interculturality and multiculturalism, when the law abiding is a norm, a way of life, and a component of human personality. All these aspects are possible if society, in its state or supranational form, can generate such living conditions to fulfil human self-actualization, to fulfil aspirations as someone’s advantage

should not be the dissatisfaction or pain of the other. If we differently say it the access to resources must be relatively easy and under the equality of chances.

The intercultural and multicultural exercise, as well as the respect towards law is always under a stable equilibrium. As long as we live in a society and people are defined by desires, needs, aspirations that are constantly changing we can not imagine a state of absolute fulfilment. Such a state can only be temporary, lasting for a longer or shorter period and as people and opportunities, conditions are changing, it needs to be constantly constructed.

### ***3.4.1. Out with gypsies***

This was the claim that joined most of the collective aggressions against the Romany communities. Out of where? In most cases it was out of the cities and in other cases, as we'll see later, out of the country. Out of where? In the near localities, on the fields, in the forest etc., meaning as far as possible from us, the location they settle or were forced to settle. Why?

Firstly one might say because they are not civilized, they are trouble-makers, bodacious, dirty etc. Why are they like that? No one had the time or the obligation to search for answers. In the following chapter we will try to give an answer. We were motivated by knowledge and desire to have an answer and not by obligation. For the reference period people did not feel obliged to follow the law they had followed an entire life, so they did not want to search and to understand a fact, a situation. What about institutions? They were a total mess.

Secondly, because some needed to have greater access to some resources that were always scarce, to have access to the lands they were shared or were going to be delivered.

Media was constantly showing aggressions throughout the centuries that could not be stopped now and burst out. What kind of accumulations? Hate for the different one? Who lived long enough, for centuries in order to perpetuate this hate?

We believe that anger and hate came for our own inability to overcome our condition and misery, from our cowardice in not changing what it should have been changed long ago, from our shame in not attending and from staying aside when others took risks and acted. No one told us we are cowards and opportunists, but we knew it and therefore we were dominated by anxiety and torn by problems.

### ***3.4.2. They are all the same***

What do all these have to do with the Romanies? The tension had to be discharged. And on who could be done if not on the defenceless, on the one without a country, without government, without collective solidarity, without power? In other words we extend what we had probed, for many times during history, what actually shattered our peace and defined our behaviour: cowardice. Someone took advantage of the person who broke rules and the entire community was blamed. Why? Because “they are all the same”.

### ***3.4.3. Romany “little angels”***

We can conclude the conflicts and tensions had been a problem for centuries in order to justify the aggressions on the Romanies. Why have they started now? Because now those who felt and wanted to do something felt free to do it. Also some Romanies felt free. They appreciated it was the right time to make themselves visible, remarked, to show who they really are and what they can do and to claim their rights (by participating to the revolution some considered they had to), to demonstrate that the image that others (le gaze) have about them is wrong and, in contradiction with the right image they have about themselves.. How have they chosen to convince the world? It was their constant presence in bars, being drunk, verbal and physical aggressions, threatenings and anti-social acts.

It is worth knowing that in most cases, the Romany actors who asked for the majority’s anger were the youth below 23 years old. They also had similar complaints to members of other ethnicities. They did not find the right way to express and solve it, but they chose the form that could not make them angels, no way. Because there is no smoke without fire, they lit the fire. It was the pretext and the reason at the same time. The rest was just a ritual. In this fire some of them passed away, but we can not really complain that some angels died.

### ***3.4.4. Death to gypsies***

This slogan also mobilized and accompanied events in the conflict areas. The cases Mihail Kogălniceanu, Constanța County; Bolintin Vale and OGREZENI, Giurgiu County; Hădăreni, Mureș County; Lunga, Covasna County, Turu Lung, Satu Mare County etc. are among the most vivid ones.

The slogan was not used only in conflict areas. It could have been read on the inscription of football stadiums, on the walls of the blocks of flats, crossing ways and parks.

This time is more than just marginalization acts. They want extermination. It is instigation to genocide as if the experiences of the Second World War of Bug and Bărăgan weren't enough. Tendency is supported by false recovery acts, by acts of restoring image and by worship racist and xenophobic rulers and ideologies. Statues of criminal leaders are erected, certain foundations and prizes were named worshipping false scientists that supported deportation and ethnic segregation.

### ***3.4.5. Mercenary police***

When slogans and acts become more frequent among citizens who are more or less isolated, more or less aware of what and why they do, angry people or drunken individuals we can say things are justified by unconsciousness, group psychology, psychological contamination that determines unforeseeable and uncontrollable group manifestations. But when similar acts are carried on by public institutions things are much more different.

Police measures as *The Moon* (into Romanian – *Luna*) and *Home Again* (into Romanian -*Din nou acasă*,) as well as those confiscating the living means from some Romanies (carriages, tools) during 2001 and 2002 were with the Government approval. They did not aim only at Romanies but most of “the beneficiaries” were Romanies. The ethnic component of these actions is more than clear. Even if they were supported at higher level, there were illegal and inefficient. Instead of looking for and solving the causes that determine such a great number of people to abandon their relationships, friends and places where they had lived most part of their lives, in order to come in big cities to live in severe misery they spent a lot of public money from a poor budget and all they did was to move the location of the problems but not the problems themselves. No authority or institution was responsible for the present and future fate of those chased away. Did governments think that these vagrant people who had a shelter, food, clothes, work just left for the great cities because they were bored and adventurous and attracted by the garbage dumps and sewerage? We do not exclude the possibility that among them there were a few people like that, but how many belonged to that



category? Beside the money spent for some privileged what did those actions make for the social existence of them? More, if there were conducted what legal basis did they have, what legal or judicial foundation did they have?

In respect to the legal basis, city halls, police and prosecutors were asked. No one was able to answer though. And it wouldn't have been possible to give a decent answer because those actions were not only illegal, but immoral by their goal and way of implementation. They served only for obtaining considerable sums of money from the budget and for a cheap propaganda for politic and electoral capital from the poor.

If they did not have a legal basis what was the role of police that was present at every expulsion and chasing action? They were present only to help the social abusive marginalization process? Or were they bored and waited for someone to call? In this case, why doesn't it intervene for real cases and solicitations? If police became mercenary, why isn't it like that for all?

From a legal point of view, the action offered only a primitive and abusive answer to a less dangerous situation. The answer for the minor offence of taking some places it did not belong to them (for which they paid big commissions) was another offence in this case by the state. The principle was tooth for tooth and eye for an eye. But what has the rule of law and the civilized world we aspire to and close to which we'd like to settle, has to do with these kinds of reactions?

### ***3.4.6. The twicer but bargainee Government***

For many Romanians, after the instauration of communist regime, the Occident had become a mirage, an aspiration. Once with the fall of communism and the end of the Cold War, the boundaries of Occident opened for Romanian citizens. Those who had interests and possibilities could travel freely right after the 1989 revolution.

The Romanies weren't among the first travellers decided to leave the country for longer or shorter periods. But when the lacks, exclusions from the money received from abroad, economical restrictions and physical aggressions made their life difficult, they left in big waves.

Far from an analysis as we previous suggested on the causes they left their relatives and homes (some of them sold their houses to get the necessary money in order to leave), governments and other politicians started to accuse

the lack of scruples of the Romanies that stain the image of Romania abroad. No word on the gangs of Romanian drug dealers, on the gangs of car dealers that illegally bring stolen cars abroad and register them in Romania, on the cigarette smuggler, on the prostitution that spread all over Europe, on those who sold as old iron tools paid in foreign currency etc. was said. But mainly no word on the fact that Romanies were the first ones who were fired from the enterprises and units where they were working and nothing on the rejection and discrimination in finding a job, no word on auctioning for nothing the apartments of those who could not afford to pay for the utilities, no word on the lack of property and the discriminatory way the Law 18/1991 on land and the Law 67/1995 on social income were enforced, nothing on the impossibility of benefiting on medical assurance and the rejection of family doctors, nothing on the discrimination from schools and the impossibility of some Romanies to feed , at least once a day, their children, nothing on voluntary hungering this population, nothing on the development of extremist, racist and fascist moves. All the bad things are due to the Romanies. But in all times and in any place a misfortune was represented by a hungered and chased population.

The fact that none of the governments that ruled the country after 1989 received a passing grade on constitutional measures “of economic development and social protection in assuring its citizens a decent standard of living” [Romanian Constitution, art. 47], is not a praising fact. If fulfilling this constitutional obligation which is nothing more than assuring every citizen a shelter, clothes and food hadn't been a desiderate, would so many have people have been forced to leave their country and homes in order to give their families the necessary resources? Would still that many have dreamt about the western “social”?

But this is neither due to ignorance nor to incapacity. It is related to the will. It is created and maintained against all appeals and threatenings of those “staining our image” (which image? the image is given by inner state, the accomplishments and the internal affairs) and against all the assurances of securing our borders. The truth is the situation suits us. The Occident pumps money in order to keep the borders safe (if we could not cross the border, what could we secure?). On one hand it assures the infrastructural endowments and performance equipment and on the other hand it gives a lot of money in developing programs and projects in providing the minimal conditions of a better social integration of the Romanies and early immigrants

within the country, what consists neither more nor less than a heavenly providence. Different projects destined to the Romany communities surely need the guarantee of a public institution or state authority, in order to reach their goal. As Romanies do not need computers, copy machines and faxes what other better opportunity to freely endow those institutions with this technical equipment, solving in this way the local problems is there? What other problems might be?

So, by depriving them of any support and surviving measures, we push them toward the Occident. We failed the class but the business is still functioning!



Chapter 4

**CHANCE DETERMINATIVES FOR  
THE ROMANY POPULATION**



## 4.1. Contextual notes

Romanian census from 1992 revealed 401,086 Romanies [Romanian Population Census 1992, 5].

According to our estimations this number is a little higher than the Romany population in Bucharest which we appreciate as being around 350,000 people. But if this number is official, with all our limitations that were subjectively manifested, for our analysis we will use the official numbers as they were communicated by the National Statistical Commission.

No matter the reality might be, we consider that the phenomena that define and characterize Romanies differ only by volume and not by intensity.

In other words, in this case quantitative differences can not produce qualitative distortions. We do not claim that there makes no difference if a fact or a situation affects 400,000, 2,000,000 or 3,000,000 according to unofficial Police data. But without other reliable data we can appreciate that the issues concerning Romanies are the same, no matter the numbers we use (at least as existence, as reality).

The numbers have their significance when we appreciate the intensity of the phenomena, the area of spreading.

At this point our intention is *to stand* those problems *out* exactly, *to draw attention* on them and eventually *to suggest* feasible ways to overcome them by meanwhile signalling **the danger of ignoring** them.

For this reason we will use the census data and when possible we will use their theoretical (computed) form, in order to avoid as much as possible being too far from reality.

In order to easy computing percentages and indicators we used the round number of 400.000 Romany ethnics.

## 4.2. Angles of analysis

Our belief is that Romany issues in Romania should be tackled by taking into account two aspects.

First, internally, comes from *de facto* structural condition of this population. It reveals the aspects and facts *within* the Romany inlanders. By this we understand an analysis of the defining, major aspects and phenomena that reflect and report on the situation of this population quantifying it, at first, and of course taking into account the qualitative conclusions that can be drawn from here.

A second, external analysis angle, which assumes considering the subjective perception (expectations included) formed at the Romanies' and the leaders' of this ethnic group consciousness (for formal and informal leaders) regarding the direction of the solutions offered to their problems. More powerful it comprises the source of their saving as well as the ways and means this will happen.

### 4.2.1. A look inside

The life of the Romanies is internally structured in the determining context of some *severe* demographic, social, work, property, medical or identity *elements*. These are influenced and influence the specific life of the Romanies that is based on its own original and simple philosophy.

As we said before, unlike other philosophies that have as central categories the verbs *to have* and *can*, Romany philosophy has as core category the verb *to be (to exist)* [V. Burtea, 1993a, 115].

In other words, the way of living and all the issues related to or generated by it, no matter the partisanship of the group, this is structured on a philosophy of poverty and marginalization [Burtea, 1997a, 36] where the central part is *today*. Tomorrow is a challenge and anyway we can't afford thinking about it as long as it does not exist, it hasn't arrived yet and today is not over yet and we still have a lot to face.

Although a little more independent from the political factor (at least at first sight it seems like that), solving these severe problems mentioned above requires political will, decision and acting in order to:

a) Support the speedy improvement of *demographic indicators*, meaning adapting them to the global social conditions of the country and



relating them to the European standard, a level which is required by the time and stage the emancipated people gets through. We consider here:

1. Normalizing *the mean age of marriage*. Currently Romany women get married on average at 17 years old and boys at 18 years old, but the statistical theory says that average hides in many cases extreme situations and diverse situations. In our case we make no mistake if we remind that this average hides the fact that there are cases when at least one of the newly-married partners is barely over 10.

Unlike Romanies, the mean age of marriage at national level (including Roma) is 22.5 for girls and 25 for boys [UNICEF, Romanian Government, July, 1997, *The Situation of the Family and Child in Romania*, 147].

Changing this practice is necessary not only for biological or ethical reasons. 60 or 70 years ago these situations were also frequent within majority population. The marriage of a girl at 12-13-14 years old was no curiosity at all, as well as it wasn't odd for a woman to give birth to 12-14-16 kids along her childbearing period. And this happened not only in the poor or underbred families but even in highbrow ones, as well. Let's remember that Bogdan Petriceicu Hașdeu's mother got married when she was 13. That was the "fashion" at that time and this fashion (or custom) is frequently seen today on a greatest part of Asian or African areas.

But Europe outran the so-called demographic transition [V. Trebici] and the situation must be set according to the nowadays need ("fashion"), not for snobbism or moral reasons, but for economic reasons and social pressures. Having a job (including woman's participation on the labour market), commuting, work in shifts, living in rented buildings and everything that meant industrialization, along its different stages, imposed the break off or overflow of the tradition and limitation of the family to 1-2-3 children. In respect to this, Romanies remained traditional. This meant another factor that kept them away from the modern economic and social life's exigency.

2. A fifth of the Romany women gave birth before 16 years old, and over 50% of them by the age of 18 years old have at least one birth. Probably school dropout, the precarious possibilities in learning a profession and the severe lack of work places will lead to a more emphasized diminution of *birth age* for Romany mothers. This asks for special efforts and immediate and ingenious solutions in order to normalize as rapid as possible this phenomenon.

We claim this because through research [Zamfir, 1993] it was proved that the age of marriage and tacitly the birth one rises proportionally with the number of graduated classes and/or with the working status of the marital couple. If these elements miss, the marriage age dramatically drops.

As we said before, this model was also shared by the majority contact populations. But today, at least in Europe, the model is not in use anymore. It contradicts the modern socio-economical demands and rules, thus becoming anachronistic and a curb.

3. *Birth rate* in Romany communities is 5.1 children per woman, while the national average does not reach 1.8 (including Romany population). Policies in the area will have to propose as a final objective the possibility of deliberate planning (family planning) of the kids' number for every Romany family and the processing of an average birth rate of, let's say 3 children per family.

4. *Infant mortality* (children below 1 year old) is 40% [Zamfir, 1993, 79], and the life expectancy for this population is 10 years lower than majority population's. The last statement can be empirical tested. The very simple observation of Romany community, which is numerically more consistent, reveals that there are not too many old people. This may also be the explanation for the high respect elder people have in Romany communities their presence often being a rarity.

5. *Romany population below 16 years old* reaches the proportion of 43.31%. At national level, the same population is only 28.2% (number which includes the Romany youth). This extremely positive aspect, from the point of view of adopting the social and governmental policies regarding this population should be valued in the way of preparing a certain youth that is prepared and able to contribute to the transformation and building process of the society and not a waste of words which can produce a new marginalized or absorbed by the underworld contingent.

6. *The average number of persons per family* is 6.6 members, meaning more than the double of the national average [UNICEF, Romanian Government, July, 1997, *The Situation of the Family and Child in Romania*, 66]. This worries by the possible finalities or situations if the conditions do not change.

*Conclusion: Romany population from Romania is a young population, with a high demographic potential. These characteristics are supported by high fertility and high birth rate over the majoritary population's average.*

If we conduct a brief analysis of the ages' pyramid for different ethnic groups living in Romania, we will notice that Romanies' (as Turks') one is characterized by a large base which means that youth has a special proportion within the demographical structure.

This leads us to **the second conclusion**: *in the near future, the demand of jobs, housing, and living means from this population will become more stringent and harder to satisfy.*

Leaving this matter at chance, ignoring it, will mean using the own forms and methods of the moment which ensure the subsistence which will be useless neither for the society nor for the members of this ethnic group and even less for the quality the interethnic relations will be structured at micro or macro social level.

b) The exceeding of the alarming *social status* of the Romanies [Burtea, 1997b, 142] which looks like as stated below:

1. In its great majority the Romany population lives in traditional forms. *The enlarged family* shelters 3-4 or even 5 generations. Beside a series of certain advantages, among which the protection and safety are the most important, this cohabitation of several generations represents a serious hindrance poses in modernization and changing the way of thinking and in perceiving the things and current social life demands, as well as the future society's. It is true that such family "is a dynamic system that on one hand it tries to satisfy the internal needs and on the other hand tries to face the social desirability" [E. Meyer, 232], but *the dialogue* with "today's world" is difficult and will become impossible tomorrow's one.

One of the most evident advantages realized by setting the core of the modern family, compared to the enlarged structures, is a slight liberation from past old values and norms that are real obstacles in the modernization process of the family and its orientation towards present and future.

How can we look towards future (and modernization) when the past holds the present down even to its annulment?

If we consider the defining traditionalist character of most Romanies, their way of life through which the respect for elderly reaches the point when they are responsible for the entire family life, beliefs, then we can better understand the internal, real "hindrance" faced by this population in any attempt of relationing with the so necessary modernity of its life.

2. *Housing* takes place in poor conditions: in average there are 3.03 persons per room, compared to only 1.29 persons per room, as the average at

national level is. 10.7% of the families live as 5 or more persons in one room. In the field work we met cases with 12-14 and even 21 persons in one room. What could children coming from such a family learn? What to see and from whom to learn? Where and how to do his homework? How, where and when could people of different sexes wash (assuming there is running water)?

Robert F. Winch identifies five family basic functions: (1) reproductive, (2) economical, (3) political, (4) socializing, and (5) religious. Which of these functions can be truly exercised in these living conditions?

Is it the reproducing one? How? In which conditions and what to what consequences?

Is it the socialization one? Socialization is mainly carried through education, and the role of family in education is decisive. What kind of education can a family deliver in these conditions?

**Preliminary conclusion to b):** *overcome the current situation is possible only by a serious act of will. Its accomplishment requires at least two conditions:*

*I. Assuring the collective and individual safety of Romany population by concrete and convincing measures and*

*II. Ensurance regarding proper housing facilities to Romanies according to their customs, culture and living standard of this population.*

These conditions are impossible without a general conception at state and society level and without a clear political willpower that is clearly expressed and implemented and not just stated.

Even with if the material and strategic conditions would be met, after 46 intracommunity conflicts (during January 1990 – January 1998) when entire Romany communities were victims of violence and when justice did not function or badly functioned, it's extremely difficult to talk about security, mutual trust, cohabitation, collaboration without any material and acting support that would sustain and stimulate the dialogue.

*3. Relation on the job market* is really alarming. 32% men as *family leaders* have no job. In 1996 only 3% from the entire Romany population was entitled to unemployment cash benefits. Most of the Romany ex-workers did not have any unemployment compensation and even less the right to receive cash support allocation from the state.

Situation is explainable because Romanies were the first ones who were made redundant and fired from big factories in order to “capitalize” the

commercial enterprises where they had worked and the Law 1/1991, in its initial form, did not stipulate the right to support cash allocation. We don't mention that in many cases Romanies were fired not according to the law that entitles them to unemployment benefit, but by disciplinary end of contract, due to the interpretation with dishonesty of any organisational behavioural trait. This was due to the fact that it wasn't clear enough if the unemployment benefit comes from a global fund, from the budget or comes from the company's money, so it needed to be protected by any (even unorthodox) means.

4. Not even the *few Romanies* that are currently *employed* enjoy a better status. 74% of them are paid the minimum wage.

Conclusion b): *at least at first sight, problems of the Romanies don't have an ethnic determination. Their origin is mainly social (hostility and discrimination are tied to the form and quality of social education, to the social experiences and the role of models) written on an ethnic component. Therefore they require prompt action with social instruments, determined and led by political will, decision and intervention.*

c) Improvement of the **current educational and professional** level of the Romanies represents the explanatory base of its current and future development.

1. *School attendance* for Romanies is very low. According to the mentioned research, the number of illiterate is 27%. According to other research (carried on in Poiești) [M. Băcanu, E. Cobianu, P. Alexandrescu, 28] the number reaches to 22%. Both numbers show the same state: an alarming proportion (nearly one quarter) of Romanies lack the abilities to write, to read, to get information, to address to the administrative central and local authorities, and lack the ability to fall into and understand the constitutional and moral norms of cohabitation standards in the society .

More important, this population lacks the chance of falling into a modern profession.

Also in this case, the hope itself of equal participation and involvement on **the job market's** competition in order to get a decent job which can provide for minimal living conditions for their **crowded** families is drastically stopped, lost.

2. *Percentage of children* below 8 years old that *had never attended school/preschool* or left educational system sooner or later, after starting to contact it, is 40%.

3. *Lack of clothes, food* and possibilities of *purchasing school supplies* make school as something unreachable for most Romanies. The lack of possibilities for some Romany families to contribute financially to some certain **obligations** that are imposed within the educational process (school fund, class fund, presents, anniversaries, festivals, subscriptions etc.) put the Romany children in an embarrassing situation compared to their peers. Therefore they abandon school. **The lack of prospects after leaving school**, associated to those above and lack of interest, ignorance, disappointment, family despair worsens absenteeism and school dropout. Finally, from a social point of view it leads to resent, indifference and distrust in any future plans.

4. The cases of *total lack of interest* of some teachers for Romany children are also known. They show **hostility, disgust, offensive or discriminatory practices**. The other students also show similar attitudes. And that couldn't have been different while they don't have other models to follow that their teachers or parents'.

5. There are no material conditions for *learning* and practicing *traditional professions*, even when they are asked by some rural and urban citizens. Those 7% who still practice traditional jobs are old and don't have whom to pass the skill and knowledge.

6. Analysing *the degree of professionalization* of this population we find that 58% of men and 89% women have no profession (traditional or modern), which makes even harder their equal participation on the job market and in getting a decent living standard, compatible with modern life demands.

7. 80% of the Romany members have no qualification and 60% of the employees work on unqualified positions, being unskilled.

**Conclusion:** *The improvement of the education level and the facilitation of access to modern jobs for Romany youth is the key-factor that could trigger the main change and lead to modernization. Also there is a need for interethnic relations based on competition and equal chances.*

d) Cognition and changing *labour and property relations*.

1. If the *labour age group* of Romanies is 51.12% of the total population, because the percentage of youth is high, *the employed population* represents only 22.68%. Similarly, it makes an *employment rate* of only 44.24%.

2. *The active population* represents 48.19% of Romany population, and the persons *without any job* represent 25.74%.

3. Out of the total Romany population, 12.53% are *employed*, 0.43% became *managers*, and 9.58% “manage” with their own business [Zamfir, 1993, 101].

4. Numbers are useful if beside the unemployment, lack of pensions, larger families etc. we also add *the difficult and discriminatory enforcement* of Law No. 18/1991 on land and the following (Law No. 169/1997 and Law No. 1/2000) on the same matters. Even from the stage of debating in the Parliament they revealed **voluntary hostile and discriminatory attitudes**.

At a first analysis the situation is at least strange. A population that had in its great majority to exist as slaves in agriculture at the beginning of the XXI<sup>st</sup> century is lacked of any land.

If before December ‘89 nearly 48% of active Romanies worked in agriculture, after that they were cut off from this sector of economy. This affected their living conditions and life standards.

The process through which Romanies were lacked of land requires a deeper analysis.

I. First, **Romanies on the rural areas that never owned land**, so had no prior agricultural property not even before agricultural collectivization. Here we distinguish three cases:

– those **working in agriculture**, but in the last three years before the Romanian Revolution which occurred in December 1989 did not work in agricultural production co-operatives (into Romanian – C.A.P.-uri) of their cities (as the Law No.18/1991 stated) but in agricultural production co-operatives of other neighbouring localities, as peri-urban areas or generally said state agricultural hinterlands of the high industrialized cities or in the state agricultural enterprises (into Romanian– I.A.S.-uri). These ones did not receive land because they did not work in the agricultural production co-operatives where their domicile was (according to the law).

This happened in spite the fact that in 1990, when these issues were debated in the Parliament, they knew very well this is the case for most Romanies (48% of active labour force) who worked not only in the agricultural production co-operatives of their domicile but they covered labour niches created in the great agricultural state property that means in the great state agricultural enterprises in Dobrogea, Bărăgan, Banat, Great Island of Brăila etc. or in the agricultural production co-operatives of the agricultural hinterlands of big industrial cities whose members migrated then

to towns, because of the hard terms that were offered by these agricultural production co-operatives, in order to get better life industry could offer. Migrant Romanians from agriculture were replaced by the new comers from neighbouring countries or other historical provinces that couldn't absorb unskilled labour or the salary was low. This category also includes Romanians who worked in the research institutes or in the experimental agricultural stations.

– Romanians that **worked in agriculture, even working in the agricultural production co-operatives where they had their domicile applied** in legal terms but did not receive land because the application did not receive registration number or other reasons primarily subjective occurred, either the request was not respected or, if they got land, that one laid in unproductive areas, where it was impossible for them to work, where the production expenses that were needed were bigger than the benefits they could get. Therefore they refused those lands and remained landless.

II. Another category is represented by **Romanians from rural who were land owners** before the agricultural co-operativization. These did not receive the entitled land:

– either because **they worked in industry** and because they were scared of being fired they did not apply for refunds during the period prescribed by law . The state took advantage of their naivety and when they became unemployed and applied the request was not valid anymore.

– either they **did not know** that their authors had land so they did not apply for refunds.

– either **they knew they had land, applied** but they were scared they would receive unproductive, inaccessible areas. So they dropped.

– some others' request **was not properly registered**.

III. **Romanians on urban areas who did not have land:**

The cases of urban Romanians who did not own their land, worked in the agricultural production co-operatives of those cities (if those ones had agricultural production co-operatives) are very rare.

IV. **Romanians from urban areas that owned land** either in rural or urban did not receive the entire entitled area:

– either because they did not know and did not ask for it.

– either because they ignored or neglected the legal timeframe of applying



-either because their rights were not recognized for several reasons (improper registration, threatening, deny of right etc.).

Explanations:

– the above mentioned situations are the explanations of the fact that a great majority of Romanies did not receive land. Therefore we can't draw the conclusion that no rrom received land. There are some Romanies that benefited from this law but they constitute a distinct category.

– we also want to emphasize that the law, as it was issued, was even from the beginning an *ab initio* discrimination.

If initially they thought the intentional element in the way the law text was issued was not present, the events following its getting out proved that Romanies were excluded since the beginning. In respect to this, we remind that Roma organizations NGOs showed soon enough the inequality and initiated meetings, dialogues, protests etc. (marches, demonstrations, hunger strike) in order to modify the content of the law and they finally (1992) proposed a corrective own text (that was submitted to the government and parliament) meant to avoid the Romanies' deprivation of the basic agricultural means of living (see appendix 10).

On the other hand, there is a significant portion of majority population that did not receive their entitled land because of the same proceedings or abuses and that's why they are still in trials with certain abusive categories in order to gain their entitlement.

The legal deadlines for entitlement were prolonged by the Law No. 169/1997. But many Romanies either they did not know or the mayors or the committees for the implementation of the Law No.18/1991 did not recognize these deadlines or they refused to receive the applications. Either they did not make any approach because they were disappointed and abandoned any hope. In many cases Romanies were told there was no more land to shared, that they could receive unproductive lands, or lands that were destroyed by animals (the case of Tinca and the neighbouring villages form Bihor County, cases from Suceava County and other areas). These determined them to give up. Others that were unable to fight for their rights and remembering unjust past situations lost any trust and hope and gave up fighting being convinced that justice will never be theirs.

**Partial Conclusion:** *the acute lack of land for Romanies (as well as the lack or scarcity of legal jobs) severely limits the decent maintenance and existence possibilities for their big families.*

The direct social consequence of all above-mentioned, in social, is the delinquent life some of the Roma population is **pushed** to have and the creation of some poverty and misery poles that become larger and larger as time goes by and the situation perpetuates without anyone taking some serious, legitimate and cerebral measures to limit or stop this phenomenon. These endemic misery and poverty are signs of an ill society.

Also the interethnic relationships are deteriorating because of the transfer of problems and difficulties from socio-economic sphere to the ethnic sphere.

Therefore, it was created the possibility of escalating convulsions and social explosions serious social conflicts, of promotion and maintaining suspicions, tensions and distrust among them.

Until November 1995 there were 37 collective attacks\* on Romany communities from Romania.

Although in the following years the conflicts between majority population and Romany communities diminished, they still happened after that, but at a lower intensity and with less severe consequences. Until the second half of 1998 their number rose with 9 more.

The effects have come a scale which reaches to hitting people and destroying goods till setting fire on buildings and killing people.

5. As if this wasn't enough, lately there are more frequent and alarming events of institutional *hostility and institutional discrimination*, mainly in the area of work and social protection.

**Conclusion:** *working and property relationships are the core of Romany problems and influence all other aspects of their life.*

d. Solving the **medical-sanitary** aspects.

1. *The level of infant mortality and life expectancy* for Romany communities are more than just some demographic indicators. They also show the medical-sanitary conditions and the "attention" they have in hospitals, maternities and in public health system in general.

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\* Roiniță, Rora, governmental expert, The Council for National Minorities during the seminar *Roma, the strangers near us*, Liga Pro Europa, Târgu Mureș, nov. 1995.

2. It was noticed that some *Romany children are excluded from immunization* campaigns.

3. Although *poliomyelitis* was practically eradicated in Europe, its presence among Romanies in Romania determined Rotary Foundation to conduct in 1996 a campaign of polio immunization. Its goal was to include Romany populations that were excluded from public campaigns even if the illness was spread among them. Stories of parents who were maiming their children in order to send them begging were ignored by the foundation that knew only one true thing, which was kept as a secret for a long time: poliomyelitis is an infectious disease and infection was due to living conditions, hygiene and the large amount of necessary money in order to implement the vaccination is not a reason to quit.

4. Poor Romanies are *refused by family doctors* when they asked to be registered on their lists and therefore they do not benefit of medical services and insurances.

5. Some *hospitals don't receive Romanies anymore* because they don't have money to pay for the services and run without paying.

**Conclusion:** *medical – sanitary conditions reflect and represent the social and living standards that were offered to this population and forms of institutional discrimination, as well.*

e. Supporting maintenance of the **identity elements**.

1. Romanies are the only minority living in Romania that *does not have an own religion and a church*.

2. 76% of the Romanies *do not speak their mother tongue*, Romany.

3. Romanies are the only minority *without a cultural centre* where to develop, promote and expose its values, traditions, norms and specific cultural elements in order to maintain its own identity. Other minorities, beside their own cultural community centres or country, regional cultural houses also have cultural centers attached to the embassies of their countries and cultural exchanges with those countries.

4. Similarly, they *do not have schools, museums, historical, artistic or commemorative monuments* etc.

5. Romanies *never had a land* under their ruling where to conduct a specific economic activity that would create a common collective psychology and that would assure perpetuation and evolution of language and generating *national and group national interests*.

**Conclusion:** *no matter how much we will talk on equality and chances, no matter how many antidiscriminatory laws will pass, without any concrete positive measures and positive discrimination we can't really talk about equal chances and opportunities compared to other populations living in Romania. Positive discrimination is the key of equalizing chances and the compensation against negative actions of institutions and society as a whole.*

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\*      \*

By its importance and national and social implications, the picture revealed in sections a-e determined researchers and analysts to emphasize the acute and serious problems that Romanies face [Zamfir, 1993, 172]. They show that the phenomenon of acute deterioration of basic elements of their life, depreciation of life and daily behaviour are proportional with the degree in which the aspects are ignored or let beyond any control and official intervention that would offer a clear, tested and equalizing alternative.

If the emergency signal should or shouldn't be rung now, the value of the *dependency ratio* offers us an objective answer. Its values – either generated in function of working age population or in function of employed persons – are extremely high.

Because Romany population is very young (43% below the age of 16 years old), and supporting the families is dependent upon the available, constant and legal income sources, and upon the available jobs, we will generate the ratio of dependence as a function of employed population as we believe that this reflects more accurate the situation of Romanies. In this case, the value is 278.09%, which indicates a huge social pressure that is not seen anywhere in Europe.

#### ***4.2.2. External hope***

As we said before, when we talk about 'exterior' we refer to the elements outside Romany ethnicity and we mainly consider the way the others perceive Romanies and the way they look on others.

From this perspective there are at least two realities. On one hand there is the majority population, external to Romanies, but who belong to the same

nation and *volens nolens* tied together to *citizenship and national interest*; on the other hand there is the foreign, the external reality both to Romanies and Romania materialized in institutions, organizations, specialists, persons interested in Romanies and Romania.

The manner Romanies and their problems are perceived by different institutions and Romanian authorities can be noticed analysing the written media, different books and manuals, radio and TV shows, field discussions, from the opinions expressed during certain seminars and conferences, press conferences etc. Although they cover a big palette of opinions and attitudes we consider there are well known by people interested in this matter.

How Romanies perceive the majority population, how they react to different opinions and actions or how they get indulged in wishful thinking during certain election campaigns or during other interest events are also well known by the public.

How Romanies think about foreign countries is an interesting aspect that deserves at least a brief analysis. The interest on this matter is big because it is mainly related with the internal institutions and authorities dealing with majority population.

Looking for the exterior, the problems of Romanies are caught between illusion and hope. Some members believe that external institutions and organizations will pressure Romanian authorities to improve their status.

How good or bad is this conviction is hard to say! Important is that the opinion exists and is not entirely wrong. Some factors and events contributed to consolidate this:

a) *Great number of external "visitors"* (journalists, anthropologists, NGO's members) interested on the great number and various Roma communities after 1989.

b) *Mutual assistance promises* made to Romany communities or to their representatives by these "visitors". Confronting with the misery these people lived in they felt the need to promise something, to promise support, but in most cases they didn't materialize. Even if they really wanted to change something, they couldn't.

c) *Materials*, more or less documented that were *shown on foreign media*, either press articles, or independent papers (Helsinki Watch reports:

– *Destruction of ethnic identity: The Persecution of Gypsies in Romania*,

–*Lynch Law: Violence Against Roma in Romania*; US State Department reports on human and minority rights, UN reports etc.) on Romany condition in Romania. Some of these reached Romany population and influenced their conscience.

d) *Involvement of members* of different NGOs, international institutions and organizations that *officially* tackled with Romanian institutions, government, parliament and presidency certain aspects of Romany populations.

All these created the belief for some Romanies that their problems were mainly an “image” issue, a lens through which they are observed, interpreted, evaluated from exterior in relation to minority, democracy and state of law.

They consider Romania, as a European country at the end of its transition toward a market economy, once with the consolidation of democratic institutions it will have to deal with improvement of their social status. Even if they can't tell it like that they "feel" that without even partially solving their problems no one will appreciate equal chances in Romania (that can't exist without democracy and constitutional state), their intuition say that they can't be but a part of the desired democracy and of its corollary, the constitutional state. This was also the hope of those who took the power after the revolution.

And they are right! Long before Romanies were a distinct chapter and condition of EU accession (point 5 from the chapter *România, Agenda 2000*) which was established in order to start the negotiations in order to allow Romania to enter UE [European Union, 1997, *Agenda 2000 –The Commission's Opinion on Romania's Request for Accession to the European Union*– Strassbourg European Union, 1997, 14], right after the revolution from 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1989 there were few concerns on serious tackling the problems of Roma.

These intentions were happily received both by some Romanies and other ethnic organizations.

Foreign observers, special rapporteurs of EU institutions, NGOs active in minority issues and human rights also noticed and saluted this concern.

Unfortunately, the interest started to constantly grow dim in the second half of 1991 and dropped right after the Romany failure at parliamentary elections in 1992.

Elections from 1992 proved that Romanies are not the force and unity they thought to be (and that frighten some nationalists and extremists). They

clearly showed that compared to other Romanian ethnicities (comparing with the most minorities that live in Romania), they have serious organizational problems (appendices 11 and 12) that need to be solved by Romanies themselves with minimum help from the state and society, problems of homogeneity, of structure, of class consciousness etc. All these are internal problems. For many, at least at first sight these aspects are not to be worry about at political, state or administration level, but the superficiality of this reasoning abundantly clears. The lack of order and organization always meant in history not only the lack of control but also difficulty in intervention and slow progress. The lack of civic conscience and common goal always meant lack of conscience and motivated action.

In fact Romanies appeared with a political conscience, as they really are, as a people that (from the point of view of the political consciousness and of the collective interest) is at the beginning of their development as an ethnicity.

Those above associated with overcoming the moment of European Council's option that means after Romania became a member having all rights within the important European organism, constituted the elements which led to of abandonment of Romany problems.

Not only the initial actions weren't further developed or continued, but the existing ones were blocked, stopped or cancelled.

This change of attitude worried the weak Romany organizations and they concluded that initial attitude was mainly propagandistic.

You may say that issues raised by Hungarian minority (numerous, well organized, with clear goals, methods and instruments, heavily supported by the Hungary and by Hungarian diasporas all over the world, with an extraordinary lobby) concentrated all efforts toward them.

But you can also say that, using its structure and global status, the Hungarian minority can easily solve its problems.

In the periods when its representatives of this minority are in central governmental structures their power to influence the policies has considerably risen. And anyhow, sooner or later there will be a time when their problems won't need a special attention anymore.

Not the same can be said on Romany problems. This will persist and continue to negatively influence the general, external perception of Romanian

society in the world but if the attitude of the political and administrative factors permanently ignore them, it will influence the society as a whole.

By this we want to point that if the severe social and work problems aren't included in an official strategy, they will draw back the entire Romanian society.

Luckily or unfortunately, this issue was first noticed in the exterior and solutions started from here.

When we say that we first think that Romany's problems already turned into a condition whose fulfilment part of the efforts done in the pre-accession process of accepting Romania in the EU must head to. Turning the back to these problems will objectively slow down the socio-economic development rate of Romania.

Therefore we consider that Romany issues are and will still constitute a priority, no matter the political party that will rule the country. For this reason we militate that these problems to be solved and not let at chance and free will.

Returning to the change of attitude upon our accession in the European Council, we consider that many efforts we should take now would not be needed anymore (and maybe Agenda 2000 would not contain the specification about the Romanies) if the right measures that started to be taken at the end of the year 1989 and the beginning of the year 1990 would have been continued and developed. The same effect we also estimate if the recommendations from international organizations that were enabled to propose measures "wouldn't have been forgotten" and would still have been monitored.

One of the UN institutions that seized upon the serious problems Romany from Romania faced was the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Since 1991, through a special document it proposed to Romanian Government (first government after the Revolution from December 1989) a series of measures.

We refer to the "Conclusions and recommendations of the Fact-finding Board of ILO on work discrimination in Romania".

Recommendations from the document were meant to assure the equality of chances and treatment in all aspects concerning work among all citizens of the Romanian society.

On Romany population it stipulated:



1. Developing “measures that were meant to ensure equal chances, treatment and training in the job market for the members of this minority” [see: Bureau International du Travail, 1991, *Rapport de la Commission d’enquête instituée en vertu de l’article 26 de la Constitution de l’Organisation Internationale du Travail pour examiner la plainte relative à l’observation par la Roumanie de la convention (nr. 111) concernant la discrimination (emploi et profession), 1958* -în *Buletin Official*, Suplément 3, vol LXXIV, Genève , pgf. 601, p. 236]. The same objective was also formulated in the Convention No. 111/1958, that Romania has ratified.

2. Conducting “*large campaigns* (E.M) [pgf. 617, point 3, p. 243 from document] in order to erase *traditional negative perceptions* (E.M) towards Roma” people from the collective mental.

3. Paragraph 617, point 14, page 243, of the same document recommends “improving the social status of Romanies through an integrated program designed by consulting their representatives; the program should refer to education, work, housing and all other elements needed for their *progress*, taking all of them as a whole“.

4. More, the document recommends at point 17 of the same paragraph 617 [p. 244], a series of “*special measures* (E.M) similar to those from art.5 from the Convention 111/1958“.

Unfortunately, since the document was received by the Government of that period and until now no concrete “special measure” was taken in order to assure “their progress” and no “large campaign” was carried to improve the status of this ethnicity.

Moreover, there was no public debate on the program that the Romany representatives have written (see appendix 13), as the ILO document recommended at pct. 14, pgf. 617 [E. & C. Zamfir, 1997, 243].

Right after the document was received, Romany representatives started designing a program (appendix 13) that could be used as a dialogue and action with authorities. The document emphasized on building a partnership in implementing the ILO recommendations.

Hoping that things will start moving, Romany organizations return after 5 years since the initial report with a different one(see appendix 14), of analysis which come out as a result of monitoring the problems stipulated in the International Labour Organization report. The document was presented to the political and administrative structures. The document was ignored this

time, too. There was no reaction, no dialogue, no availability for action, no debates regarding the program's scheme that remained in the dusted drawers.

As mentioned before, the program submitted to the government, presidency and parliament was never discussed, corrected or modified. It was not even mocked at!

Instead all they fully actioned till the 1996 elections in order to suspend or boycott the weak actions that had been started. In other words:

1. Romany inspectors' hirings were stopped in the general country labour and social protection central boards (Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, today Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity). The initial declared goal was to solve some decentralized social and work problems of the Romanies.

2. Pressure on the Romany inspectors who were employed within the above mentioned central boards started to be practised in order to make them leave their positions (Constanța, Bacău, Baia Mare etc.).

3. Following the media's attacks of the extremists and/or national parties the places for Romanies in pedagogical colleges in order to be trained as educators or primary teachers were blocked for the 1992/1993, 1993/1994 and 1994/1995. There were serious protests against forcing children to learn a "Hungarian-Romany language" that will endanger our very national identity. Later, as a consequence, in 1995/1996 when the special places for Romanies were reintroduced the children did not enrol for these.

4. Except for the headquarters in Bucharest which was received after 6 years from one of the Romanies' organizations for other Romany organizations, no other Romany organization from Bucharest or other city received another one till the Romanian Governmental Strategy on improving the Romany status [*Romanian Government's Decision no. 430/2001 regarding the approval of the Romanian Government to improve the situation of Roma*].

### **4.3. Elements for preventing some antisocial effects**

We consider those above plead for a serious policy and urgent intervention program in stopping the rapid degradation of living conditions for Romanies. It also asks for serious measures to stop *pushing* this population toward the delinquency area or forcing them to leave the country.

Starting improvement of living condition of those living within national borders is imperative. We claim this with the belief that the benefit of such type of intervention which is meant to change and modernize structures, behaviours, mentalities, perceptions, needs, way of life and way of being wouldn't just help the Romanies, but the entire Romanian society.

One first step would have been debating and implementation at the right time of the program proposed by Romany organizations.

Following those debates it would have been possible to generate a proper, original, agreed and partnered strategy which the government in partnership with Romany organizations and institutions from Romania and abroad could have implemented. It would have helped solving the situation, even partially.

The strategy could have been completed and sustained by other programs aiming the improvement of Romanies' access to projects destined for them, aiming to improve the external financing because the external funds are not managed by Romanies and are not in the best interest of Romany communities. They are paternalistically and opportunistically spent by groups of interests and people who have nothing to do with Romanies and their problems. Lately, city halls and other state institutions play the part of guardians for the best interest of Roma but only to access the money and the infrastructure following such a financing. The access is certainly not possible without a Romany partner. Therefore, in every application there is such a local branch or union of Romanies that at the end notices that its only role was that of a paper-partner (covering).

One example is the relation with Germany. There was such a huge debate on the illegal immigration of Romanies to Germany that at a given moment they were the only emigrants from Romania.

In order to stop the immigration (of the Romanies') phenomenon, through a signed protocol the German state offers the Romanian state (through the Interior Federal Ministry) 42 million DM to develop proper living and instruction conditions for the former immigrants that have returned home so as they won't be tempted to leave for Germany again.

The so called "good and right" fund was so well managed (in relation to the purpose) that as far as we know no Rrom benefited, in a way or other, from this program that was created because of and for them. Far from us the thought out of Romany programs only Romanies could benefit. But if from such projects

the entire community where Romanians lives doesn't benefit, then the program could not have met its community goal and objectives. The variances where Romanians are totally excluded from these financing obtained in their behalf are not better either. Other example is the Sweden proposal to erase the Romanian financial due if it would invest that money in Romany programs.

Helping Romany communities to write, to present and sustain their own projects on their own problems they face, as well supporting them in these projects would be a first step toward normalization.

Democratic access to projects would mean overcome the monopole that only 2-3 Romany trained representatives have, as they had a remarkable exterior lobby, representatives who was the entire Romany population dependent on. Currently, the situation is somewhat changed. Other organizations and people that aim for the better for Romany community, but lack the lobby and expertise in the area, have managed to obtain some money. The percentage is still small and the issue of initiating and auctioning projects is a "god-send" manna for some trainers (mostly outside Roma community) that with a big salary explains the community in 1-2 days the procedure. Nothing concrete on project writing and management is taught so many of them leave home as they came. Moreover, there are some consistent opportunists outside Romany community that earn big money only of writing and presenting projects to financiers for Romany communities in their so-called, best interest.

But nothing can replace the serious, official and programmatic action of the state by the use of government doubled by political will, decision and political intervention.

The imperious need for rational and programmatic governmental actions for Romanians has also been pointed out by international forums. If they couldn't manage to convince Romanian authorities to sustain them, then it came to impose them. Therefore, the issue of social inclusion and improvement the situation of Romany minority became a condition for EU accession of Romania during the preliminary negotiations, as a consequence of certain reluctance or ignorance.

It's certain that the EU did not limit only to request or to impose, but it also financially contributed with a non-refundable aid to Romanian Government of 2,000,000 EUR. This money was destined to design a *strategy* that had *the potential* of being implemented.

The solution the government chose for 1996-2000 was to contract an external foundation to design the strategy. The result of this decision was a document that for 2,000,000 EUR revealed *the same general problems* of Romanies within the integrated program that the Romany organizations had previously submitted to the authorities **for free**. It's the same program that now is kept in a drawer.

There are some differences though! The document submitted by Romany organizations noticed the general and essential problems, but also selected the possible issues that can be achieved and implemented with minimal costs and with impact and maximum benefits for the entire community and for the communities they live with. It also proposed manners of achieving, unitary implementing strategies, in a unilateral conception and the only "costs" were a series of meetings and debating in order to agree a conceptual direction.

Far from being an emotional, chaotic or rough proposal as a brownian model, the program consciously started from the brownian models. As in other systems the elements they had in view were those ones whose achievement (whose clash in system) would essentially change and produce change, positively impact the entire system. In conditions of *material and financial precarity* we had to act, this aspect seems to be extremely important, even like the unique solution.

The general framework elaborated by the foreign foundation contains all the necessary elements for a qualitative change in Romany communities, but is totally inapplicable. In our opinion it has too much higher costs involved in its implementation. Moreover, the essential elements in preserving and modernizing the specificity of ethnic identity are either not mentioned at all or are weakly mentioned. For instance, there is the need to create a national cultural centre for Romanies and then at every country that would generate modernization, mutual knowledge, free expression and instruction for entire masses of people. It would absolutely require a good quality management and clear and responsible objectives. This important element is only mentioned and it doesn't even let open the chance of later implementation.

But in order for a strategy, that's required by the government to be implemented, it needs to benefit of a large public support and especially of the tax payers. To achieve this, the contributors need to be informed and convinced of the social success of their investment. These very elements of legitimizing the design and implementation process miss from the propagandistic document called *Romanian Government Strategy for*

*Improving the Life of Romanies.* On the other hand, in order to reach its goals all the elements need to be implemented. Any withdrawing or ignoring element could compromise the achievement and entire quality of the project. The design of the implementation process cost 2,000,000 EUR only for being up-made (even if this money were not from the Romanian budget but from the European one) then it meant a big financial effort for Romanian budget to implement it and lack of support from the general public. Any imposing would mean taking big risks in keeping normal and functional interethnic relationships. How much was the hostility? What would be the forms and share of hostility? The government realizes the danger. Therefore not only it ignored the request of a specific budgetary line only for Strategy, trying to impress with it the financiers and the European institutions, but it also lacked the courage to debate the document in the Parliament (although it had majority in both chambers) in order to have indeed the public necessary support. If that had happened then the creation of the separate budgetary line would have been only a technical issue. There would have been no risk in not voting budget or accusation of *no fair-play and propaganda actions*.

On the other hand the partial implementation, into pieces, or even the lack of its implementation would mean compromising the entire strategy. It would also create the image of improvisation, untrusting, opportunism etc. that would tempt any displeased person, critic or Romany organization to accuse the authorities again of propagandistic actions, therefore drawing a negative attention again on Romania from the EU, mostly regarding its funds.

Who will answer these accusations? Who and how will answer to financing, media and society?

The lack of answer to these questions, threatenings and insatisfactions motivated the A.U.Rr. (Alliance for the Unity of Roma) to withdraw from the consultative forum of W.G.R.A. (Working Groups of Roma Associations). The association acted for unifying the intellectual Romanies, to coagulate their efforts in social and political emancipation of Romanies. The W.G.R.A. was just a shadow in writing the so-called Strategy, even during early making up of it.

Summarizing all the above mentioned, we will reveal the comparative table "Main problems of Romany population from Romania as stated by the Governmental Strategy in order to improve the Romanies' situation". We will also point out the historical causes of the problems and manifestations in order to asses if those problems are mentioned in the strategy and if they are how the implementation was measured.

**Table of the main problems of Romanies in Romania according to Governmental Strategy for Improvement of the Life of Romanies**

No. crt.	Problems of the Romany population from Romania	Is the Strategy acknowledging the problem?	Degree of implementation (until present)
1.	<p><i>Demographic problems caused by:</i> tradition, the need of collective protection and security, marginalization and lack of scholar and social education.</p> <p><b>Direct cause:</b> early school abandonment, lack of a job.</p> <p>– <i>average girls' age for marriage. Romany girls marry in average at 17 years old and boys at 18 years old. But as we said the mean is not an accurate indicator. There are situations when at least one of the married couple is 10 or less.</i></p>	<p>I.</p> <p>1. Not mentioned.</p>	<p>I.</p> <p>1. Not the case.</p>
2.	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> the age of marriage and lack of sexual education.</p> <p>– 1:5 Romany women give birth before age 16 years old and over 50% have at least one birth by age 18 years old. It is possible that school abandonment, the lack of means in learning a profession, the lack of jobs will lead to even a higher drop of birth age.</p>	<p>2. Chap. VII. Directions of action, letter. D. Health, point 4. Stipulates health programs, medical counselling and familial planning.</p>	<p>2. Not realized.</p>
3	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> early marriage and discrimination on the job market.</p> <p>– birth rate in Romany communities is 5.1 children/woman. The policies in the area will have to have as a major objective family planning and achieving a mean birth rate around 3 children/family.</p>	<p>3. Idem 2.</p>	<p>3. Idem 2.</p>
4	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> discrimination and inequality of chances in the health system.</p> <p>– Infant mortality is 40‰ and life expectancy of this population is 10 years lower than majority population.</p>	<p>4. Not mentioned.</p>	<p>4. Not the case.</p>

5	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> high birth rate. – the Romany population younger than 16 represents 43.31 %.</p>	5. Chap. VII. Letter C, Social security, point 4 states supporting Romany youth (graduates) in finding a job and monitoring their future status.	5. Partially because only a small percentage of Romanies have higher education degrees.
6.	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> high birth rate. – the mean number of persons per family is 6.6 members, which is more than the double national average (this average also includes the Romany population). This worries the possible situations and outcomes if the situation does not change. <i>Conclusion: Romany population from Romania is a young population with a high demographic potential. These characteristics are maintained by high fertility and birth rate, over the national mean of the majority population.</i> This means that in the near future the demand for jobs, housing and living means from this population will be higher, but also harder to satisfy than it is today. Leaving this problem at chance (that means abandoning it) will mean usage of contextual ways of living which will not be positive for Romanies or for the rest of the society and it will alter the micro and macro interethnic relationships.</p>	6. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter D. Health, point 4 states programs for medical counselling, medical information and family planning. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter C, Social security, point 4 states supporting Romany youth in getting a job and monitoring their professional evolution. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter B, Housing, points 3 and 4 state programs for assuring the minimal housing conditions and social houses for big families with no income.	6. Not met.  Not met.  Not met.



<p><b>II.</b></p> <p><i>Social problems that have as main causes discrimination and marginalization in social adapting and including a population that was for several times forced to change its power and way of life</i></p> <p><b>Direct cause:</b> early school leaving, lack of a job.</p> <p>– Some Roma (ex-nomad) still leave in traditional forms. The enlarged families have 3-4-5 generations living together. Beside certain advantages this structure might have (protection, safety), this cohabitation puts a serious handicap in the modernization and the change of the thinking and living patterns, both for current and future generations.</p> <p>Overcoming the situation is not possible only by will. It requires at least two main conditions:</p> <p>– assuring the collective and individual safety of Romany population through concrete and convincing measures and</p> <p>– assuring a locative fund compatible with the customs, culture, way of life of these people.</p> <p>These conditions outside a general conception of the state and society, outside the concrete and expressed and implemented political will are in theory and in practice impossible.</p>	<p><b>II.</b></p> <p>1. Stipulates nothing</p> <p>a. Not mentioned.</p> <p>b. Partially – the ethnic specificity of housing is not mentioned.</p> <p>Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter B, Housing, points 2, 3 and 4 state programs for assuring minimal housing and social houses for large families with no income</p>	<p><b>II.</b></p> <p>1. It's not the case</p> <p>a. Not the case.</p> <p>b. Not realized.</p>
<p>2.</p> <p><b>Direct cause:</b> discrimination in the process of house repartition and in the distribution of the minimum income allocation (lack of interest for the living conditions of this population).</p> <p>Housing is in bad conditions: in average there are 3.03 persons/room compared to 1.29 people per room at national level (so including Romanies). 10.7% of the families have more than 5 persons per room. During the fieldwork there were situations with 12-14 or even 21 persons in one room.</p>	<p>2. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter B, Housing, points 2, 3 and 4 state programs for assuring minimal housing and social houses for families with no income.</p>	<p>2. Not realized.</p>

3.	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> <i>discrimination in the process of social adaptation and integration of a population that has its way of life changed for several times:</i></p> <p>After the forced settlement during '58-'65, most ex-nomad Romanies built their houses where indicated by party activists, mayors, agricultural production co-operatives' managers etc., but did not clarify their judicial status of the lands and houses. In other words they did not have property papers. This is not surprising for an illiterate, migratory population and with no experience in settling in one place. Plus, the settlement was in a time when communism seemed to be forever. After the '89 changes the former owners asked for their land and houses back and thus generating tensions and conflicts. This aspect requires for the regulating of the juridical situation and clarification of Romany housing.</p>	3. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter B, Housing, point 1 states solving the issues on the property rights over the lands and houses.	3. Not realized.
4.	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> inequality of chances in schooling and professional training.</p> <p>– analysing the degree of professionalization of Romanies we notice that 58% men and 89% women have no profession (traditional or modern). This makes even difficult their equal participation on the labour market. So they can't have a comparable living standard to modern conditions.</p>	4. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter H, 2 state stimulating school attendance and reducing school abandonment especially for poor Romany populations and designing elementary, secondary and professional schools for Roma (arts and professions, vocational education, training and retraining)	4. Not realised.
5.	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> item 4</p> <p>– 80% of the Romanies have no qualification and 60% of them work as unqualified.</p>	5. Idem 4.	5. Idem 4.

<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> discrimination and rejection on the job market.                  – Inclusion in the labour market is worrying. 32% Men as house heads have no job. In 1996 only 3% of the entire population received unemployment benefits and many Romany ex-unemployed received benefits or support allocation.</p>	<p>6. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter E. Economic, points 2, 4 and 8 state facilities for exercising and revalorization of traditional professions, reducing unemployment rate for Romanian Romanies, sustaining projects for Romany women's participation in the labour force.</p>	<p>6. Not realised.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> idem 6                  – Few employed Romanies who are still employed do not have a more comfortable status. 74% of them receive the minimal wage.</p>	<p>7. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter E. Economic, point 4 states combating any discrimination forms on the labour market for Romanies.</p>	<p>7. Not realised.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> placement below the poverty rate of the majority                  Romany families and discrimination in schools.                  – the situation of school's attendance, at an ethnic level, is very low. Approximately a quarter of them do not know to write, read, inform themselves or how to petition the local and state authorities. The Romany population is lacked of the basic means in understanding the norms of life together, moral and under the law of the society.                  More important: this population lacks the possibility of having a modern profession. The chance of equal participation on the labour market that would offer them a decent job and a reasonable income for their crowded families is practically stopped or lost.</p>	<p>8. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter H. Education, points 1, 3, 8, 9 and 11 state programs for stimulation school attendance and reducing abandonment, programs in training Roma mediators, facilities and subvention for special Romany places in universities and the obligation of country scholar institutions and inspectorates to hold elementary and secondary classes for Romanies left behind, stimulating the access to education by offering a free meal for all pupils (for primary and secondary levels).</p>	<p>8. Partially.                  Concrete: the part referring to facilities, subvention the places for young Romanies who want to enrol in higher education and the obligation of inspectorates and scholar institutions to permanently hold classes for Romanies. Some universities and schools acted accordingly.</p>

9.	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> parents' lack of interest and trust, the school abandonment of parents, influence of tradition.</p> <p>– Percentage of children below 8 that never had preschool or school education or abandoned is 40%.</p>	<p>9. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter H. Education, point 11 states stimulation access to education by assuring one free meal for all the children enrolled in elementary and secondary schools.</p>	9. Not realised.
10.	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> material status of families and rejection from the labour market.</p> <p>– lack of clothes, food, possibility to buy school supplies for most Romany children, lack of possibility to pay different school taxes (school fund, class fund, present, celebrations etc.) and mostly the lack of perspective after graduation associated with lack of interest, ignorance, despair of families makes the school abandonment in secondary and postsecondary education even a more stringent issue. Therefore from the social point of view it stimulates surfeit and distrust of any future project.</p>	<p>10. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter C, Social security, point 4 states supporting Romany youth in getting a job and monitoring their status.</p> <p>Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter H. Education, point 11 states stimulation access to education by assuring one free meal for all the children enrolled in elementary and secondary schools.</p>	10. Not realised. Not realised.
11.	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> discrimination in school.</p> <p>– some teachers' lack of interest for Romany children, hostile, hurtful and discriminatory practices. Similarly the same attitude is displayed by non Romany children. Their model is the discriminatory attitude of their teachers or their families.</p>	<p>11. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter F, Justice and public order, point 5 states conduction information programs for Romany leaders, for public institutions managers and for NGOs in identification and accurate solving of discriminatory practices.</p>	11. Not realised.

12.	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> discrimination and elimination from the labour market – there are no material facilities in learning and practising traditional jobs that are still required in urban and rural areas.  <b>Conclusion:</b> <i>at a first sight the problems that Romanies face do not have an ethnic cause. Their origin is social (hostility and discrimination are due to the quality and form of social education, the social experiences and the role of models) but encrypted on an ethnic component. Therefore urgent social intervention through means of the same nature, that means social, which are determined and led by political decisions, will and intervention is needed.</i></p>	12. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter E. Economic, point 8 states facilities in exercising and revalorization of traditional jobs.	12. Not realised.
<b>III.</b>	<p><i>Work relations caused by discrimination and hostility:</i>  <b>Direct causes:</b> age distribution of Romanies, social discrimination. – if the working population is 51.12% Romanies, because the young population has a high percentage, the actual employed population is 22.68%. Therefore, there is an employment rate of only 44.24%.</p>	<p><b>III.</b>  1. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter C. Social security, point 3 states training the personnel from employment offices on the Romany employment labour market.</p>	<p><b>III.</b>  1. Not realised.</p>
2.	<p><b>Direct cause :</b> idem 1  – active population has only 48.19% Romanies and the people with no job is 25.74%.</p>	2. Idem 1.	2. Idem 1.
3.	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> work and institutional discriminations.  – out of the total Romany population in Romania, only 12.53% are hired, 0.43% are managers, and 9.58% have their “own business”.</p>	3. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter E. Economic, points 3 and 6 state special financing programs generating profit for families or small business actions, advantaged credit system for small enterprises owned by Romanies.	3. Not realised.

4.	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> discrimination by bad faith elaboration and implementation of laws.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the discriminatory implementation of Law No. 18/1991 on the lands and the following laws (Law No. 169/1997 and Law No. 1/2000).</li> </ul> <p>Even from the debating phase in the Parliament chambers hostile and discriminatory attitudes were displayed.</p> <p>The severe lack of land for Romanies drastically limits their possibilities to have a decent living for their crowded families.</p> <p>If before December '89 nearly 48% of the Romanies' active labour force was involved in agriculture, after this date their existence was removed from sector. Therefore their living standards were negatively affected.</p> <p>The immediate social consequence was the delinquent behaviour they turned to, the creation of certain dirt bags and poverty which become larger and deeper as time goes by. As long as nothing serious is done, the situation will become worst and will affect the entire population, not only Roma.</p>	4. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter E. Economic, point 5 states designing programs for land reform and for stimulating agriculture in Romany communities.	4. Not realised.
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– situation is best revealed by the value of <i>dependency ratio</i>. As a function of employed population its value is 278.09% which indicates a high social pressure that was not mentioned until now for any population in Europe. This requires immediate improvement.</li> </ul>	5. Not mentioned.	5. Not the case.
6.	<p><b>Direct cause:</b> political manipulation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Through the transfer of socio-economic problems into the ethnic area, the interethnic relationships have been deteriorated.</li> </ul> <p>The conditions for conflicts, social tensions and explosions, suspicions, hate and mutual distrust were created. During December 1989 – November 1995 there were registered 37 collective attacks on Romany communities in Romania. Even if the number of the conflicts between the majority population and the Romany communities reduced in the following years there were still present, but at a lower intensity and having less consequences. Until the second half of 1998 there were 9 more.</p> <p>Effects were ranging from hitting persons and destruction of goods to setting fire on houses or even killing people.</p>	6. Not mentioned.	6. Not the case.

7.	<p>– extremely worrying are the frequent displays of <b>institutional hostility, abuse and institutional discrimination</b>.  <u>Conclusion:</u> <i>working relations and property represent the core of social problems that Romany people have to face and influence all the other issues. Even if the appearances and pretexis made us consider the causes of interethnic tensions as behavioural, psychological, educative etc. a deeper analysis leads us in most cases toward those indicators and elements of those reports.</i></p>	7. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter F, Justice and public order, point 5 states conduction programs for informing Romany leaders, managers of public institutions and NGOs in order to identify problems and accurate solutions to any discriminatory action.	7. Not realised.
IV 1.	<p>I. <i>Medical-sanitary aspects caused by racial discrimination in providing health services:</i>                  – the infant mortality rate and life expectancy are more than just demographic indicators for Romany communities. They also reflect the level of medical-sanitary conditions and “attention” they receive in hospitals, maternity hospitals, the public medical health system</p>	<p>IV.                  1. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter D, Health, point 7 states the performance of some epidemiological studies caring on researches on the health status</p>	IV. 1. Not realised.
2.	<p>– it is noticed that some Romany children are excluded from vaccinations during immunization campaigns.</p>	<p>2. Chap. VII. Directions of Actions, letter D, Health, points 3 and 5 state identifying solutions for including Romanies in public health system and in vaccination campaigns by the use of mixed commissions which are formed by local medical doctors within the Public Health Direction (Compartment of epidemiology contagious diseases) and representatives of Romany communities.</p>	2. Not realised.

3.	<p>– Poor Romanies are refused by family doctors when they ask for registration. Therefore they do not access medical services and insurances.</p>	<p>3. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter D. Health, point 3 states identifying solutions for including Romanies in the public health system and their registrations at a family doctor.</p>	<p>3. Achieved for Romanies in Botoşani County. Ministry of Health gave new rules.</p>
4.	<p>– some hospitals do not admit Romanies because they don't have the money to pay so they run from hospitals without paying the costs. <u>Conclusion: medical-sanitary aspects reflect and represent the current social standards this population has and the institutional discrimination they have to face.</u></p>	<p>4. Not mentioned.</p>	<p>4. Not the case.</p>
V	<p><u>Identity aspects caused by discrimination and marginalization:</u></p>	<p>V.</p>	<p>V.</p>
1.	<p>– Romanies are the only ethnic minority from Romania without an own religion and church.</p>	<p>1. Not mentioned.</p>	<p>1. Not the case.</p>
2.	<p>– 76% Romanies do not speak their mother tongue, Romany.</p>	<p>2. Not mentioned.</p>	<p>2. Not the case.</p>
3.	<p>– Romanies are the only minority without a cultural centre, a cultural institution that would form, promote and value the traditions, norms and own cultural patterns in order to preserve the identity. Other minorities have their own cultural institutions and cultural centers attached to diplomatic embassies of their native countries. Therefore there are cultural exchanges among these countries.</p>	<p>3. Chap. VII. Directions of Action, letter I. Culture and cults, points 6 and 7 state establishment of a musical ensemble and a theatre of Roma, a museum for Roma culture and civilization.</p>	<p>3. Not realised.</p>
4.	<p>– the same situation is in schools, museums, theatres, monuments etc.</p>	<p>4. Idem 3.</p>	<p>4. Idem 3.</p>
5.	<p>– Romanies have never had their own territory where to lead an own economic activity generating a common collective psychology and assuring preservation and evolution of language and national identity, generating and realizing their own group national interests. <u>Conclusion: no matter how much we talk about equality and equal chances, without positive serious activates, no matter how many antidiscrimination laws are enforced, there is the need for affirmative positive discrimination measures compared to the majority population. Positive discrimination represents the basis of any equalizing actions and of compensating the discrimination Romanies faced throughout the history.</u></p>	<p>5. Not mentioned.</p>	<p>5. Not the case.</p>

We did not consider the deadlines implied by these chapters that are anyhow exceeded. For this chapter we considered them less important than the actions and measures it should have been taken.



Chapter 5

**LAWS AND DOCUMENTS ON ROMANIES  
AND OTHER MINORITIES**



## 5.1. Minorities in the European socio-political context

No matter how specific or atypical Romanies' issue might be it can not be categorically separated from the general minority and this one, in our opinion, is nothing more but an important chapter on human rights.

National or ethnic minorities have always been in the centre of attention for people interested in their problems in a serious way and with an unsimulated interest.

After the Second World War that, as the First started from ethnic and national matters, in more or less masked forms, the minorities became more important in the public discourse.

The experiences of these two wars that marked the entire human civilization and culture pointed that the issues of national minorities is a key-aspect of the world peace and stability.

We only need to look a few years behind at the material and human losses caused by the several minor interethnic conflicts from Romania. Without thinking of the external image that those created for European structures we can then realize the global effects that such conflicts would have on the continent and in the world if the hostilities would develop among states or, even more seriously, among groups of states.

If in the area where communism was established the issue of national or ethnic minorities was simply "decreed" as being solved, the single focus was on creating the unique socialist people, the developed world that was staying out of the system was continuously looking for forms, ways and methods which can solve the problem in order to stop the volcano that could erupt. Although the issue of national or ethnic minorities was satisfactory well incorporated into the *UN Declaration on Human Rights* adopted in December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1948 by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, it still did not stop being the focus of distinct and separate, freestanding concern and of other legislation documents as such.

*Declaration on race and racial prejudices*, adopted and proclaimed by the UNESCO General Assembly in its second session, on November 27<sup>th</sup>, 1978, is just one of these UN documents.

The issues was on the UN agenda and in its General Assembly on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1992 adopted the resolution 47/135 which was called *Declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities*.

The document is very important as it is the basis of designing new international relations after the fall of communism in the Central and South-East Europe.

International institutions, the forms of cooperation and association including European Union, as well as the mutual treaties and agreements that were multilateral or bilateral, which were issued with their support are mainly the result of mutual understanding among different nations. Every nation including their constitutive documents has certain stipulations on protection and treatment of residing minorities.

## **5.2. Minorities in the context of enlargements of the Council of Europe (C.E.) and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (O.S.C.E.)**

### ***5.2.1. International documents on minorities***

The enlargement of the political European space and C.E. after the fall of communism brought the delicate problem of minorities into our attention, with an unsuspected significance.

In the context of cooperation, which was created in conditions of nearly perfect cooperation, conferences on Human dimensions held by O.S.C.E (former Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe) from Copenhagen (1990) and Moscow (1991); Helsinki conference from 1992; conferences at high level from Paris (1990), Vienna (1995) and Budapest (1999); the frequent debates of the Permanent Conference (currently Congress) of Local and Regional European Authorities have as a main topic, beside political general debates on European integrity and peace and security cooperation, the issues of national or ethnic minorities, the issues of migrants, asylum, foreigners, refugees, stateless people, and the minority, local and regional languages of no-territorial communities.

The resulted documents of these meetings and debates, especially those regarding the ethnic national minorities, have been included into international and mutual multilateral or bilateral state agreements, inclusively the basic treaties, being proofs of the importance of the field we refer to.

In this context it is worth noticing the activity in this matter of C.E. decision forums: Council of Ministers and Parliamentary Assembly.

For instance, the *Recommendation 1201/1993* on the Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights on national minorities, *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* adopted at Strasbourg on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1995 and the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* adopted at Strasbourg on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1995. This last document is the first European judicial document that clearly stipulates in the shape of the form of public international law obligations the obligations the principles each state commits to implement through its national legislation and appropriate government policies.

Acknowledging its significance, this document (and many others) was ratified by Romanian Parliament by Law No. 33/1995 for the ratification of the framework-Convention for the protection of the national minorities that was concluded in Strasbourg in 1995 1<sup>st</sup> February.

*Recommendation 1134* from October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1990, on minorities rights, *Recommendation 1177* from February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1992, on minority rights, *Recommendation 1255* from January 31<sup>st</sup>, 1995, on the protection of national minority rights, *Recommendation 1277* from February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1992, on migrants, national minorities and media, *Recommendation 1285* from January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1996, on the rights of national minorities, and the *Recommendation 1300* from June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1996, on the protection of minority rights, are just a few of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly. They are also evidences of the importance that this European forum is giving to this matter.

Respect of human and minority rights is also a constant concern outside the Europe. The U.S. State Department report (1999) analysing the implementation of minority rights in our country notes “women, Romanies and other minorities are subjected to different forms of illegal discrimination”.

Even if these documents are just analysis, recommendation, resolutions with no obligation in implementing, they can still influence the social practices in different countries that did not ratify them. They are acting as *minimal standards* of certain social facts which were appreciated and evaluated in

the general sociological acceptance (the Durkheim one) of the word. When different national interests can be fulfilled with international support, then the countries must be *receptive* to these recommendations for *standards*.

Art. 20 align. (1) in Romanian Constitution stipulates “constitutional dispositions on the rights and freedom of citizens will be interpreted and implemented in accordance with the Universal declaration of human rights and with other treaties and documents Romania is a state party”, and align. (2) of the same article stipulates that “international documents shall prevail if there are any discrepancies between the pacts and treaties upon the fundamental human rights, where Romania is part of and internal legislation”.

In order to understand better the significance, importance and the content of these documents we will further analyse some of them.

**Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM)** was adopted by the C.E. Council of Ministers and opened for signing on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1995 at Strasbourg.

On the same day it was signed by 21 states and the next day Estonia became the 22<sup>nd</sup> state, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

As we said, this document is the first European judicial instrument emphasizing on the entire problems related to national minorities. It stipulates basic *principles* that are *generally acceptable* and that every country acknowledges them and implements them on their national legislation. Among these we notice:

1. Controlling discrimination (art.2);
2. Promoting an effective and full equality (art.4);
3. Promoting necessary conditions of preserving and developing minority culture and identity (art. 5, 11, 13);
4. Assuring the right for freedom to peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion (art.7, 17);
5. Providing access to media;
6. Using their mother tongue in public and private sphere (art.10);
7. Providing education in their mother tongue;
8. Creating the necessary conditions for effective participation of people belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them (art.15);

9. Promoting the dialogue (art.17), peace, understanding and tolerance (art.6).

National minorities shall respect the national legislation and the rights of others, in particular those of persons belonging to the majority or to other national minorities.

Nothing in the framework Convention shall be interpreted as implying any right to engage in any *activity* or perform any *act* contrary to the fundamental principles of international law and in particular of the sovereign equality, territorial integrity and political independence of States (art. 20, 21, 22).

Based on periodic reports signed by every state party, the framework Convention implies a mechanism of verifying the way its disposals are respected.

Because the aim of the Council of Europe is to assure the unity of its members, safeguarding and promoting common ideas, as well as the safeguarding and promoting the human rights the Convention is *a normative standard* both in internal and external actions of the states.

Therefore, protection of national minorities becomes essential in assuring *stability, democratic security and peace in Europe*.

What we must firstly keep in mind is that, in order for the important document to function well and to reach its aims, refers to the provisions of the Convention which were stipulated at its beginning (art.2) that unequivocally requires the implementation *in good faith* of the Constitution's stipulations.

As for the similar, complementary and partnership activity of O.S.C.E. (former C.S.C.E.), we notice:

**At the conference** to disseminate the O.S.C.E. human dimension held at Copenhagen on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 1990, attended highly recognized experts in the field. Its objective was to analyse the fundamental changes throughout Europe after the communism fall.

It started by the common agreement of all participants upon the necessity to restate, to acknowledge and to learn and respect the fundamental human rights. It also stated that democracy was the basic element of the state. The conference analysed *the essential principles of human dignity, the status of national minorities and their subsequent rights*.

In respect to the first topic, they analysed the democratic practices that were missing from the communist countries for almost 50 years.

They agreed upon the need of confirmation and naturalization of establishment the practice of free elections in every state, through vote by ballot in every country, upon the representative governance resulting in an executive power subordinated to the parliament, upon the need to respect the constitution both by governments and public authorities and upon the limits of power between state and political parties.. The need to assure the ruling of Police and Army rule by civil authorities, the state guarantee to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms, motivations of administration decisions and the possibility to attack the decisions, the right to have a lawyer and acceptance of observers at elections were important topics at these meetings.

Other rights taken into account were freedom of speech, to communicate, to receive and send information, the right to meet, to associate, the right of every person to leave the country and to return when interests or wishes request it, freedom of thought, of conscience, of religion.

Other issues that were discussed during the conference were guarantee of the property, the use of the property, the right to address and receive the help of any person when his fundamental rights are broken and all these were inalienable and unanimously accepted.

As for the second issue on *national minorities*, it could not be treated outside these general principles that were debated during the conference.

Within the same framework it was stated that the problems of national minorities can be solved only under a democratic ruling of the state outside where NGOs can freely act in promoting tolerance, diversity and culture.

It was restated that the rights of minorities are human rights and are a key factors for peace, justice, stability and democracy, so to all values of utmost importance and perennial practice in which the democratic world believed and still believes and for which no sacrifice is too big.

Strongly believing that minority rights must be respected without discrimination there were no hesitations in stating within the meeting documents that the State parties shall take all the necessary *special measures* for guaranteeing the equal rights for persons belonging to national minorities in exerting and benefit of the human rights and fundamental liberties (art. 31).

As belonging to a minority is a problem of option that mustn't bring any disadvantage so is the right to *freely* keep his ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, the right to preserve and develop its culture by the use of



mother tongue in public and private relations and the right to create specific own institutions, organizations, and associations, the right to practice their own religion, which must be or become inalienable.

There is no doubt that the right to *freely* keep ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity and to preserve and develop culture requires the necessary conditions which can stimulate or to favour the exercise. When these conditions are missing, the state has the obligation to create them.

By adopting articles 33-36 of the conference's document, the State parties agreed, first through its experts and then through the presidents and prime-ministers who met after 5 months in Vienna in order to discuss and draw the political project of the New Europe, to protect the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of national minorities, to offer possibilities to learn in their own language, or to assure their *equal participation in public sphere* of all citizens, including the different national minorities.

Promoting a favourable climate of mutual understanding, respect, cooperation and solidarity among all citizens who are resident on a state's territory it's attainable only solving the problems through dialogue based on the law principles.

Copenhagen document is important for all Romanies throughout Europe as transnational minorities. It uses for the *first time* the term *Rrom/Gypsy* and also their problems are *for the first time* recognized as having their own specificity even compared to other minorities.

This acknowledgement and is stated in the article 40 of the document. This is mainly due to active involvement of an intellectual Rrom (from Romania) who understood and convinced the others that the paternalistic view on Romanies must be stopped and they must be involved in solving their problems.

Being the first time this is stated in an international document, here is the entire text, even if it does not contain shocking or outstanding elements: *the participating States clearly and unequivocally condemn totalitarianism, racial and ethnic hatred, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and discrimination against anyone as well as persecution on religious and ideological grounds. In this context, they also recognize the particular problems of Romanies (gypsies).*

The document continues stipulating the necessity that states shall take effective measures to provide protection against any act that constitute

*incitement* to violence against persons or groups based on national, racial, ethnic or religious discrimination, or to protect persons or groups who may be subjected to threats or acts of discrimination, hostility or violence.

This is important because even if Romania has ratified the document at that time it could not stop the attacks over national minorities from the media. The total reached 46 by 1998.

**Charter of Paris for a New Europe – an era of democracy, peace and unity**, is the resulting document from the O.S.C.E. meeting held at Vienna on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 1990. At the conference chiefs of states and governments attended and they agreed to fight for a democracy based on human rights and freedom.

Among 15 directions agreed the chapter of **human rights, democracy and rule of law** is of most importance. It reaffirms without discrimination that every individual has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief, freedom of expression, freedom of association and peaceful assembly, freedom of movement.

Stating that no one will be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention, or to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the right of every person to know and act upon his rights, to participate in free and fair elections, to fair and public trial if charged with an offence, to own property alone or in association and to exercise individual enterprise and to enjoy his economic, social and cultural rights are also essential elements of justice and rule of law. The other chapters of the charter refer to:

1. Economic liberty and responsibility,
2. Friendly relations among participating states,
3. Security,
4. Unity of all country members of the European Council,
5. O.S.C.E. and the world,
6. Guidelines for the future.

7. *Human dimension* is another chapter that we will talk more about because it's close to our general topic. First we must state that the document stipulates the states obligations to respect the fundamental human rights and freedoms and to engage *in the improvement of the minorities' status*. Therefore, the participants acknowledge and the document writes that friendly relations, peace, justice, stability and democracy requires for the protection of ethnic,

religious, cultural and linguistic identity and *for the creation of the conditions* to promote this identity, that means the security of all peoples and countries, economic cooperation among these and cultural collaboration in national and international.

Other chapters are:

8. Environment,

9. Migrant workers,

10. N.G.Os and their role within state and civil society, and finally dealing with future own problems of the organization

11. New structures and institutions of the O.S.C.E. process.

**Document of the Moscow meeting of the conference on the human dimension of the O.S.C.E.**, from October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1991, is also the result of an expert meeting.

This meeting continued on the issues highlighted at Copenhagen conference, but from another perspective. It was built on the chief of states and governments prior agreement on the Helsinki document completed with the Charter from Paris, documents which pledge the states at high level.

The general assembly pointed the need to assure equal rights for every people, including national *ethnic minorities*, and the right to self-determination. Also the attendees' regretted the acts *of hostility and violence on ethnic and religious grounds* from former communist countries. The conference was divided into three sections.

The third section is the important one for us. At its beginning it explains the human dimension mechanisms involved in promoting human rights and freedom and the rule of law. The second part focuses on judicial mechanisms of a democratic society as: forbidden the abusive influence on justice, protection of freedom and the right of associations for magistrates, forbidden to take advantage of an arrested person, informing the arrested on the rights, the right to defence, the free access of media to information and the need to clearly stipulate what at emergency state is and who declares it.

*The third part of the third section* is dedicated to the fundamental human rights and freedom of minorities. They are tackled as essential law principles, either if they are analysed in the necessity view, either studying the possibility of including them in legislation.

Removing all legal and other restrictions with respect to travel within their territories, journalist protection or examination the abolishment of death penalty were new topics for every participating state which were meant to answer or to solve urgent problems with whom the new states or the states now being formed faced.

Article 37 of the Moscow Reunion of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (O.S.C.E.) document emphasizes the need to protect and promote the rights of national minorities but it does not ignore the right of migrant workers to express their ethnic, religious, linguistic characteristics in their new residences and their right to non-discrimination.

The document recognizes the equality between men and women to participate in the society, the protection of rights for persons with disabilities, the need to teach and learn in schools human rights notions, education against intolerance, prejudices and racial hatred, *including against Romanies*, xenophobia and anti-Semitism (art. 42) are important themes that were to be tackled at Helsinki in the future at high level conference for security and co-operation in Europe from July 9-11, 1992.

### ***5.2.2. Internal normative continuity on minorities***

It is obvious that internal regulations on minorities were present in Romanian laws.

Following the tradition stated by the *National Assembly Resolution from Alba-Iulia* on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1918, the Constitutions from 1923, 1938, 1948, 1952 and 1965, as well as stipulations from *National Minority Status* (Law No. 86/1945), *Declaration of National Salvation Front on the rights of the national minorities from Romania* on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1990, *Declaration of Romanian Government on national minorities* on November 1991, *Romania Constitution from 1991*, *Law no. 68/1992 on elections of Deputy Chamber and Senate members*, *G.D. no. 17/1997* on the organization and functioning of the Department for the Protection of National Minorities and other normative documents prove the constant preoccupation of the Romanian state to solve the various problems of minorities living within its borders.

The adoption of the Law No. 33/1995 on the protection of minorities by a rapid ratifying of the Framework-convention on national minorities' protection adopted in Strasbourg on 1st February 1995 (that Romania signed

on the first day, being the one from the total of 21 countries that signed the document as soon as it was opened in order to be signed and being the first in ratifying it), proves the interest and the willingness of the state to engage into solving the specific problems of minorities at European standards.

In a country where in the past the majority population was under foreign rule, things could not be different, as they shared a destiny which cannot be envied.

Although there were a lot of things the Romanians living in Ardeal could have squared up with after 9 centuries of minority cohabitation, it seemed that their first thought on the occasion of 1918 Alba Iulia meeting's document of reunification was to set things right with them, so that no group living on Romanian land to try the feeling of being tolerated, that they had felt for so many centuries.

Therefore they found fit, from the first day of their return to their mother country to make their dearest, released of fears and frustrations dream come true even within the document of the Resolution of the National Assembly from Alba Iulia, which confirms the union with their brothers living over the Carpathians. This document stipulated "The National Assembly of all Romanians from Transylvania, Banat and Hungarian country" declared "entire freedom for all the co-inhabiting nations. Each people will educate, administrate and judge itself using his mother tongue and *through its own citizens*. According to its number each nation will receive *rights of representation* in the elective chambers and in *government in proportion to the number of persons who make it up*" [*Romania and Minorities (collection of texts)* – Liga Pro Publishing House Europa, 1997, 9].

The idea is also kept for the March 28<sup>th</sup> 1923 Constitution where in the Article 108, paragraph (3) they stipulate that "members of country and local councils are elected by Romanian citizens through universal, equal, direct, secrete and compulsory vote and with *minority's representation* (E.M), according to the law" [*National Minorities in Romania* – International Seminar held in 1992 at Târgu Mureș, Foundation Heinrich Böll Publishing House, 11].

The period following the Second World War, the consequences and the troubles it generated in our country and in the world determine a more sustained activity on minority. For Romania it means creating special institutions and special laws. Therefore, the *Ministry of National Minorities*

is created and with the Decree 309/06.02.1945, published in the Official Gazette 30/07.02.1945 [*Romania and Minorities*] passes the Law No. 86 on *the Status of National Minorities*. The article 7 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter (Special dispositions) notes that “in private relations as mailing, phone etc., in industry and commerce, in religious matters, media, publications of every kind or in public meetings, the Romanian citizens can freely use any language” [160, 13], and art. 18 in Section II from the “Statements on education” notes and promises that “Romanian state *assures* (E.M) education in mother tongue through public primary, secondary and higher schools for the minorities with a high number of students requiring this., with the exception of confessional private schools. *Teachers* (E.M) who teach other language and no Romanian in public schools will be preferably *recruited* (E.M) of the *members of that minority* (E.M)” [*Romania and Minorities*, 11].

It looks like the democratic statements of the Status of National Minorities which are designed to satisfy every minority living in Romania were not agreed by the new dictatorial rule enforced on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1945 and by Rule no. 12 on the enforcement of the law which passed through Decree 2760/10.09.1946 published in the Official Gazette 218/20.09.1946 [*Romania and Minorities*], serious limitations are imposed.

The Rules on enforcement the National Minorities Status becomes the first legal basis on which willingly the rights are seriously broken. This is the first sign that unfortunately was not forgotten until nowadays that within Romania the passed laws are adopted, but not respected. In other words, the Rule becomes the first suggestion (unfortunately not only assimilated, but also practiced) according to which what is written mustn't necessarily be translated into practice.

If article 13 from the Status of National Minorities states that “newspapers and periodic journals published in other languages than Romanian could indicate in that minority language both the name of the city where it's published and the name of other cities of Romania” [*Romania and Minorities*, 14], art. XXIV of the Rule maims the stipulation and states that: “the names of the cities from the newspapers articles or any other publications shall be written in the official language of the sate” [*Ibidem*, 21].

The article XXV of the Rule which completes the article 14 of the Status notes, as well: “the Christian (baptizing) name that *has no recognized equivalent in Romanian* (E.M) must be written in the national orthography” [idem].

The Constitution from April 13<sup>th</sup>, 1948 mentions in the art. 24 that “The Romanian People’s Republic *guarantees* (s.n.) the national minorities’ right to use their mother tongue and to organize their own education at *all levels* (s.n.) in their mother tongue. *Administration and justice* (s.n.) in circumscriptions where other nationalities live will use both orally and in written their mother tongue. Persons hired as *office workers within that nationality* or other one in these positions will be members of that minority (s.n.) and will know the local language” [ibidem, 24].

The same guarantees are also given by the Constitution on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1952 and by the Constitution on August 21<sup>st</sup>, 1965, but none was followed by specific laws or rules of enforcement.

The article 82 of the 1952 Constitution states ”The Romanian Popular People’s Republic *guarantees* (E.M) national minorities to use their mother tongue, *to have education of all levels in mother tongue* (s.n.), to have books, newspapers, theatres in mother tongue. In countries where other populations than Romanian live *all public authorities* shall use the language of that minority in oral and written communication and shall *name office workers belonging to that minority* on these positions or *other citizens who know the local language and culture* (E.M)” [ibidem, 25].

The hunger of power of the last Romanian communist dictator and the need to get support from all citizens is translated by willingness to involve in modernity, democracy and freedom. Signs of this openness are in the statement on minorities from the 1965 Constitution. Article 22 notes the following: ”The People Republic of Romania *guarantees* (E.M) all the national minorities the use of mother tongue in education, newspapers, books, theatres. In administrative-territorial regions where other nationalities live, public authorities shall use the language of that minority in oral and written communication and shall name persons belonging to that minority on these positions or other citizens who know the local language and culture” [ibidem, 26].

The thirst of rapid ascension of the last communist dictator and the need to gain the support of all categories of citizens is materialized through a remarkable, initial opening towards the problems of modernism, democracy and freedom. The signs of this position, no matter which their later destiny was, we met in the provisions of the Constitution on minorities from the fundamental law in 1965. The article 22 in the Constitution from 1965 states: “ in the Socialist Republic of Romania the co-inhabiting nationalities *are*

*assured* to receive (E.M) the free use of their native tongue, as well as books, newspapers, magazines, theatres, *education at all levels* (s.E.M) in their own language. *In the administrative-territorial units* (E.M) where people of other nationalities but Romanian one live *all institutions and authorities*(E.M) use orally and in written forms the language of the irrespective nationality *and hire office workers within it* (E.M) or take as employees other citizens who know the language and the living standard of the local population” [idem]

Although at first sight there is a topical and adaptative to another territorial-administrative reality difference between the Constitutions from 1948 and 1965, the second text is less imperative.

Its statements are later assumed by other important legal documents. The first is the Code of penal procedures passed on November 12<sup>th</sup>, 1968, later modified by Law No. 141/05.11.1996 stating in art. 7 (language of the penal trial) the possibility that “in the judicial institutions from the administrative-territorial regions lived by other nationality than Romanian the mother tongue can be used” [ibidem, 27]. The second document is the Education Law No. 28/1978, that in art. 106 paragraph (1) stipulates: ”in the administrative-territorial regions lived by other nationalities than Romanian schools, classes or groups for that minority can be organized, in accordance with the unitary norms of structure. The education in these shall be provided in their mother tongue” [ibidem, 26].

How much these statements were followed during communism is another problem. It’s worth noticing that not even during the hard dictatorship the issues of minorities couldn’t be totally abandoned or ignored. That this happened due to propagandist aims so that the image of the state could stay perfect is another issue. What’s important is that there was the preoccupation on this matter even during that period.

Between what “Romanians from Transylvania, Banat and Hungarian Country” required in their Resolution at Alba Iulia in 1918 and socialist reality was certainly a huge difference, but at least things were kept as important in appearance when state interests were at stake.

Revolution of December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1989 took place as it had as main aim which came from the deep resentments and dissatisfactions toward the communist regime, the fact of “curing” the split between words and deeds, between the act in the showcase and the everyday social practice, which was annoying most of the citizens. All these sources of worry and discomfort were



attributed to the regime, activists and the conductor Supreme – the general secretary of the unique Party.

Among most visible areas of this dissatisfaction, where that split was so obvious the Rule in 1946 on the politics of minorities appeared and there we could notice the evil spirit of this regulation.

The large awareness of the mentioned aspect made it more natural for the proclamation of the National Salvation Front to appear, even in the first article of its Declaration on national minorities' rights in Romania, on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1990.

**Therefore on the document issued by the National Salvation Front on January 6<sup>th</sup> 1990, the first article required for the “acknowledgement and guarantee of the *collective* and individual rights and freedom of national minorities in the new Constitution” [ibidem, 29].**

But again, the difference between what it is said in the key moments requiring unity and solidarity from all citizens and the facts that follow the statement, made that most minority of all ethnic fellows join historical political parties and to reject the Constitution on the national referendum on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1991.

The statement is also true for what followed the pass of the Constitution. We refer to the turbulences generated by the Law No. 69/28.11.1991 on public administration, the constitutional limitations that the subjective and restrictive interpretation of the article 4 from Law No.68 on the election of Deputy and Senate Chambers members on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1992 brought and to the limitations of the educational Law No.84/1995 had.

One important achievement for minorities in Romania and especially for Romanies was passing the Government Decision 17/17.02.1997 that created a special governmental structure for minorities – the Department for the Protection of National Minorities– in which (sometimes formally and paternalistic) a special structure for Romanies functioned – *The National Office for Roma* (initially called The National Office for the Social Inclusion of Roma, but the NGOs rejected the name).

The last statements lead to the conclusion that the democratic bursts of declarations of intention to guarantee minorities equal chances were recorded in all the crucial moments of the Romanian society and simultaneously with social and political turbulences or with the external pressures of institutions or organizations.

As a *reminder*, let's just mention that the union with Transylvania, the end of Second World War and beginning of communism, Ceausescu's ascent, fall of communism, rise of historical political parties. All these were historical key-points when masses' support, adhesion and involving lots of social and cultural categories etc., including national or ethnic minorities which had to be illusioned or given hope that a problem or a specific essential interest would be solved the public agreement was required.

When the situation was stabilized, when the aims were reached, the initial so-called 'good intentions' were forgotten and sometimes transformed in their opposite.

Right after 1990, a series of interethnic conflicts emerged right under our nose. The motive was attraction or dismissing some parts of the electorate. Being convinced that it's the right thing to do, the authorities did not react to these interethnic conflicts, that had extremely serious consequences in all aspects. They did not do their duty they were invested for, preferring disgrace and unhonourable judgments, being probably convinced that they were acting with patriotism, washing away the anxiety caused by their lack of participation to the events of December 1989 or even having vocation for sabotage them.

At the moment, in spite of the babbled and late measures, we appreciate as positive the signal of political parties in adopting a law on cults, a law on national minorities and a law against discrimination.

Therefore we consider that Government and Parliament should establish as a priority the adoption of these laws designed to set order in an area where arbitrary and subjectivity can't function anymore and made to offer specialists the necessary instruments in this matter.

### ***5.2.3. Romanian minority in Romania – an argument***

The act of Union on November 18<sup>th</sup>/December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1918 and the Resolution of National Assembly from Alba-Iulia did not mean losing the minority's status for all Romanians in Transylvania, in many cities and regions they continued to be a minority compared to other ethnicities, especially compared to Hungarians and Germans (Saxons).

Only after the Second World War, through an ideological and social party policy (and not economical) of spreading the labour force all over the country and implicitly the centralized distribution of labour force within clear

interferences in the mechanisms of the labour market, doubled by the exodus of German ethnics led to a considerable increase and to great changes in favour of the number of Romanians in Ardeal and especially in Transylvania compared to other ethnicities.

After the Union act in 1918, the status of the Romanians from Ardeal significantly changed a lot compared to the one before the Union. The change was only political, administrative, social, economic, but not demographic. Romanians from Transylvania did not experience the indulgence, weren't marginalized and had the possibility to organize and to promote their identity, but the demographic structure remained the same.

From the demographic point of view, even today there are some regions in Romania where the Romanians are a minority, compared to the population belonging to all other ethnicities. The best known cases are the countries of Covasna and Harghita where Hungarians are majority compared to the Romanians. But analysing on small cities, similarities can be found in other regions than Transylvania too. So, in Banat there are some localities where Serbs, Croatians Czech or Slovaks are majority; in Moldova there are localities that are mainly lived by Romanies, Ukrainians; in Dobrogea there are some places where Lippovan-Russians, Tartars or Romanies are majority.

We believe that these objective realities are arguments for the state interest in analysing, discussing and tackling the issues of minority not only with openly and responsively but also with interest.

No state is glorified knowing that its citizens are treated badly in regions where they represent minorities. When this happens within national borders the issue is more complex and requires modern and general delicate social policies.

That is how we can explain the celerity in which Romania signed and ratified all the mentioned international documents on this matter and the constant interest displayed in minorities.

Separating implementation from the temptation of randomness and emotional, in the favour of rational and good faith is not a simple easy thing, but the way towards credibility and to the better of everybody must first pass through this gate.

#### ***5.2.4. The evolution of interest on Romany minority***

A special place of the European concerns on Romanies is *the activities destined to them*. In only a few years an entire set of instruments, documents, materials, political recommendations, public attitudes in favour of Roma emerged. Organizations and authorities having activities in the field of human rights and minorities, the European structures mentions above issued a series of documents directly directed to the Romanies' minority.

*Recommendation 1203/1993* of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly on Romanies of Europe, *Resolution 249/1993* of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe on Romanies in Europe, *Resolution 16/30.05.1995* of the Council of Europe, followed by *Recommendation 11/31.05.1995*, of the same Local and Regional Congress on Romanies (gypsies) contribution in building a tolerant Europe are documents that complete, deepen or objectify previous documents as *Resolution (75) 13* of the Committee of Ministers on social situation of nomads in Europe, *Recommendation R (83) 1*, of the same structure on stateless nomads or of undetermined nationality or *Resolution 125(1981)* on choosing a European mediator for Roma.

To these documents of an unprecedented importance we add the new *Resolution 44/1997* of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities from Europe, which restates the measures and actions on Roma contribution in building a tolerant Europe and *General Political Recommendation no. 3 of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) on fight against racism and intolerance on Roma/Gypsies*.

Because of their high number and their associated problems, Romanies from Romania were the direct addressees of such documents in an implicit and dissembled manner that were issued by international and European authorities.. These came to complete an older document dealing with minorities in Romania: *Recommendation 1114/26.09.1989*.

One of the aforementioned documents (*Resolution 16/30.05.1995* of the CLRAE), encourages the local and regional authorities to play their part to the full and shoulder their responsibilities towards Rroma (Gypsy) communities (art. 7). Further, the letter i) of the same article requests "respect for Rroma's (Gypsies') right to their own cultural identity; this entails that any reference to them in public life use a name for them that meets their

desire and approval and does not have connotations which they, or people generally, regard as pejorative”.

Analysing the media reactions and the public debates from that period on this issue it was easy to see that the statement was a reaction to the *Memorandum H 03/169/1995* of the Romanian Ministry of External Affairs which imposed using the notion of *gypsy* instead of *Rrom* in all official state documents. The second document is *Agenda 2000*, which sets the conditions our country has to fulfil in order to start the preliminary discussions for EU accession. The last of the five conditions explicitly referred to the social and economic status of Romany minority and asked for improvements.

As a reaction of a petition signed by some Hungarian intellectuals from Romania in 1989 on labour discrimination in our country, International Labour Office (ILO) investigates the situation at the end of 1990 and the beginning of 1991. The results of the investigation are available in a report from 1991: *Conclusions and recommendations of the ILO commission of inquiry on labour discrimination in Romania*.

Although the inquiry started by analysing the labour discrimination of Hungarian minority it transformed into an analysis of discriminations that all ethnicities are subjected to (including some majority populations) and of the forms of labour discrimination.

The report that was submitted to the Romanian Government in 1991 can be seen as a pledge for adopting the required measures in assuring equality of Romanies on the labour market and for stopping any discrimination against them.

Unfortunately, neither that government nor the next ones have considered the conclusions if only by a discussion and analysis (eventually a public one) and therefore none designed a coherent strategy on this matter.

**Recommendation 1203** of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly starts by stating one of the aims of the Council of Europe is to build and promote the emergence of **a genuine European cultural identity** (art.1). This unprecedented effort undoubtedly and not demagogically includes the many minority cultures (*idem*).

Among these, the article 2 of the document mentions that *a special places reserved for Gypsies* (E.M) because of their existence's nature. As a non-territorial minority (art. 3), with no government to represent and protect them anywhere in the world, with no army to defend them and with no

diplomacy to negotiate their interests, they contributed, in the document's appreciation with "their music, language and crafting" for almost 1000 years to what means diversity, which assures the particular and offers the cultural identity of Europe.

The document notes that the number of Romanies living in the area of the Council of Europe has increased drastically after 1989 (art.4) and directly admits that intolerance of Gypsies by others has always existed throughout the ages (art.5).

As European Union did later, the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly noted "the deplorable situation in which the majority of Gypsies lives". These are mainly due to the "outbursts of racial or social hatred" that "occur more and more regularly" and due to "the strained relations between communities" (art.5).

Solving this situation is possible only by respecting one *condition*: "that's essential for their situation to be improved" and this one is about "respect for the rights of Gypsies, individual, fundamental and human rights and their rights as a minority" (art.6).

*The way* in which their language, which was forgotten like Jewish, until its revival and their culture can be given birth is "to guarantee for equal rights, equal chances and equal treatment" (art.7).

And in order to demonstrate once again (if needed) that the interest is not just a momentary burst, but a part of a continuum of actions we mentioned above, the document also reminds to the older or newer members of the European forum the necessity of implementing prior recommendations and resolutions: 563/69, 75/13, R/83/1, 125/1981.

The document does not stipulate only general recommendations but also deepens the analysis specifying the concrete domains requiring further action with priority as well as the directions that have to be followed (art.11). Thus:

a) *In the field of culture* measures must be taken for encouraging Romany children to attend schools, to learn Romanes, to study in schools their own music and music in general, field where they are really talented.

I. Development of a network of such music schools shall be encouraged.

II. The foundation of European Romany language departments, offices of translations from and into this as well as centres and museums of Gypsy culture, and support given to regular Gypsy festivals.

*b) In the field of education:*

- I. Programs for training teachers who teach Gypsies.
- II. Program for women and mothers.
- III. Encouraging talented young Gypsies to study and to act as intermediaries for Gypsies between the tradition and the community's norms they belong to and the values and aims of the modern society.

*c) In the field of information:*

- I. Information should be provided for Gypsies on their fundamental rights and how they can be secured and the ways they can be valued.
- II. Creating an European information centre on the Romany situation and culture

*d) In the field of equal rights:*

- I. Ratifying the documents on minorities.
- II. Abolishment of discrimination, which is the main cause of "the deplorable situation of most Romanies nowadays".
- III. The provisions of any additional protocol or convention relating to minorities should be applied to non-territorial minorities.
- IV. Member states should alter national legislation and regulations that discriminate directly or indirectly against Gypsies.
- V. Ratifying the 4<sup>th</sup> Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights which guarantees the liberty of movement.
- VI. Acknowledgement the right to asylum of those who were victims or are afraid of being victims of a pogrom.
- VII. Consulting Romanies on dispositions that apply to them.
- VIII. Improving the living, education and working conditions.
- IX. Direct participation of Romanies in designing and implementing programs.

*e) General measures:*

- I. Cooperation with and among European Communities on subjects relating to Gypsies, such as education, combating poverty, safeguarding the European cultural heritage, recognition of minorities and promotion of equal rights.
- II. Granting a place for Romanies with a consultative status to representatives in the European Council.
- III. Appointing a *mediator* position for Gypsies within the Council of Europe with the following tasks:

– drawing up the balance achieved in the implementation of measures that were set up

- to contact representatives of Romany communities in Europe
- to advise governments of member states in matters concerning Gypsies;
- to investigate government policy and the human rights situation related to stateless Gypsies or having an undetermined nationality in member states.

**Resolution 249/1993** of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe recommends all the states and communities concrete measures, actions and projects for Romanies that aim for:

1. Integration in community and housing;
2. Legal advice and partnership in designing and implementing projects;
3. To control prejudices that harden or block communication;
4. Participation to the development of local community networks;
5. To launch the initiative of forming a network of villages and municipalities concerned by the reception and acceptance of Gypsy people within them, by encouraging them to get involved in solving their problems of being received and accepted;
6. To exchange experience and circulating information;
7. To run small-scale projects on community development;
8. To analyse in order to issue instructions, tools for decision-making and assessment;
9. To publish, every 3 years, a series of idiographic case studies with reports of evaluation
10. To encourage member State governments to ratify as soon as possible the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages as well as its implementation;
11. To implement by the governments all documents that were endorsed by the Council of Europe regarding the Roma people;
12. To issue publications with the purpose of education and information in the field of schooling and training for Gypsy children and young people;
13. To cooperate in the setting-up and operation on the network of municipalities;
14. To organize training seminars for primary-level teachers;



15. To study thoroughly the Gypsies' problems, particularly within the framework of the new project: "Democracy, Human Rights, Minorities: educational and cultural aspects";

16. To launch an European Gypsy Route as part of the European Cultural Routes program;

17. To provide more information for people working with Romanies;

18. To develop a specific training program which will involve Gypsies;

19. To discuss the implications of migrations;

20. To develop ways in which Romanies can have free access to information and speeches;

21. To set up European representative associations which will serve as a political interface for governments and European bodies.

**Resolution 16/1995** in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe.

The document adopted in the second session of the above mentioned authority on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1995 begins with a description of the situation of Romanies throughout Europe stating that at present many of them are subjected to pogroms, violence, racial hatred, discrimination, poverty and economic and social uncertainty.

On the other hand it welcomes the plan of action and the European Youth Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Intolerance.

The particular attention given to Romanies and their problems at the Vienna summit (1995) could not be ignored by the members of the congress. Therefore they condescend to stipulate in the current text certain elements meant to encourage the local and regional collectivities of Europe to play their role and to assume responsibilities in organizing and carrying on activities the state the respect for Romanies' rights to their identity and the references about them have to publicly use a *denomination according to their wish* and to avoid the notions which have or suggest any pejorative or negative connotation.

The document also encourages local and regional authorities and communities to develop the Network of Cities for receiving Romanies and to *create the conditions* for Romanies for the main rights of accessing *quality* education at all levels.

Setting-up mediation and dialogue centres between the authorities and Rroma where's necessary that will led to the designing and implementation in partnership of an agreement between Romanies and the local and regional

authorities or to the setting-up of consultative committees of Romanies are also mentioned, appreciated and recommended by the mentioned document, as possible forms of co-operation, working and life together.

Encouraging associations of Romanies so that they will submit cooperation and coordination agreements in fighting against exclusion and poverty is also mentioned in the text.

Participating states are required that, at the same time with developing cities' network, they also have to get involve in conducting studies focusing on best practices in education, professional training, job market, promoting culture, human rights and on equal access to justice and police's services.

The appendix of the document makes clear notes on the manner in which the Network of Cities should be made up and developed for a good practice and relationship between the local or regional authorities and the groups of Romanies on the abyss of dialogue and experience exchange. It is a true practical guide signifying the importance this issue has at European level the s extremely serious way it is tackled and treated at the European impressive forum's level.

The writers of this project submitted to the local and regional authorities of Europe that is desired to be materialized in the creation of cities' network do not think of it only as a democratic exercise or as a social experiment, but state clear and functional objectives that will assure the equality of every person.

Most important of these are: social approach, incorporating housing, health and employment, cultural approach aiming at enhancing Romany culture, language and history, and approach of the human rights, citizenship and democracy.

**Recommendation 11/31.05.1995** was elaborated and adopted based on the report submitted by M. A. Slafkovskz.

Adopted during the second meeting of the Congress of Local and Regional European Powers, it restates the main issues of the Resolution 16: election of an European mediator for Romanies (R125/1981, R123/95); acceptance of a group of Romany experts with the possibility to contact the Council of Ministers; creating a consultancy group within the Council of Europe formed by Romany representatives, members of the local and regional authorities and members of NGOs; involvement of governments in creating the necessary conditions for Romanies to benefit of their fundamental human

rights as citizens, which can allow them to fully and equally participate to the political, social, cultural and economic life of the states.

Point VIII of article 6 asks the government to take measures for providing more information for the Romanies on the programmes about them and available budgets and measures for allocation of funds coming from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Union, and the Council of Europe in Romanies' favour.

Point IX considers the problems of nomads (for countries in Western Europe the notion of Rrom/gypsy was similar to "nomad", "traveller") asking for the setting up at European level of a new solidarity fund to cover expenses done by the municipalities and European regions which assumed responsibilities linked to the nomads' assistance. Actually the statement is an encouragement and stimulation for taking such responsibilities.

Trying to draw some conclusions, we may state that there are a lot of documents available on this matter. The need to solve the issues of minorities/Romanies is already acknowledged by states, pressure instruments were also invented, material means are summoned, financial reserves are available. The only missing aspect (that is not a detail) which is worrying us is that there are still no concrete actions, so the problem remains unsolved.



Chapter 6

**ROMANIES  
BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL WISH  
AND NEED**



## 6.1. Some notes on the traditional organization forms

As any human group, Romanies needed and adopted different organizational forms.

As civil fellows of Indian society – living in India– the actors-members of one of the most interesting migratory wave, knew the specific organizational forms of the space they lived in. In other words, as foreigners they used their own organizational forms based on religious principles. In respect to these, members were divided into big, aprioristic groups according to the number of reincarnations. These structures were called *chaste*.

Who and how established the rank of births, which reincarnation each person was experiencing, all these are questions that are a research topic themselves, but are beyond the current aims of this book.

But as we saw, most of the ancestors of early Romanies, the proto-rroms, as we called them before, were members of the warrior chaste, of the 'militaries' (professional ones, as we can say in modern terms). They also had specific organizational, hierarchical forms subsumed to the general principle and to the chaste they belong to (*kshatriya*).

We believe that their migration and the most part of their travel through the Balkan-European space was under the rigour of military organization.

Even if not the entire migratory wave had a military organization, even if members of other castes were present, even if the Brahmans (who were also present) were the spiritual leaders, we tend to believe that soldiers imposed their rules.

There is no doubt that this was a difficult thing to achieve. The motivations of migration, the environments they travelled, the hardship of such action, the dominant customs and values, the dangers they were exposed to every "getting out of line", determined them not only to accept the organizational military rules, but to want them. Their need of safety was stronger.

As we showed in the first part of this book, the traditional organizational form couldn't fully satisfy the desires, the thoughts and the status of some part of the members. Now, in the new conditions resulted from migration, the traditional organizational model could not fit on the norms and their

organizational structure of the societies which received them. The traditional model was contradicting the objectives of the wishes and aspirations of the people belonging to the inferior castes and especially of those ones who mostly contribute to reaching the goals of migration and also for the ones to whom the migration constituted an occasion of overthrow of values and social positions or of influence area.

Under these new circumstances the secondary principle of birth, of organization according to the civil activity they belong to, after occupation and crafting they practiced burst out and becomes, if not the dominant principle at least a principle to be taken in account compared to the religious principle which it surely wears away.

This secondary principle was more related to the norms and values of these new lands, but also more convenient for those whom migration made them more powerful and influential or help them up on social positions where the old organizational forms could not have allowed them to express themselves freely and according to their wishes and aspirations.

We've seen that for a long time a part of the Romanies continued to be military and offered their services to different army rulers, who were or weren't crowned. At the same time their number decreased and scattered so that the own military principles could not represent anymore but occasional forms of organization.

After their liberation from slavery but mostly after the First World War, the civil principle of membership to a certain activity became the only one that established the norms, hierarchies, competencies and authority within Romany groups. This principle began to function shortly after their arrival in Europe, continuously developed and still functions today. It represents the key-factor contributing to constitution of Romany castes.

\*

When we discuss about Romany own organizational forms we think about the long period of slavery most of them had to endure.

Objectively, during this period of almost 600 years, as much as they would have wanted to keep their traditional organizational structures, they couldn't. It would have been just another unfulfilled desire.



With or without their support, the slaves had to accept and to use the organizational structures offered or imposed by their lords. These also were firstly set by the economic and military needs of that time and by the living standard (we can say morals in the largest and most positive sense) and of that shared society they belonged to.

Even the heteronames, on which we will discuss later, are from this period and express the organizational and ruling structures either on peace (judges, noble titles), either on war (voivodes, princes, captains).

Only the travellers Romanies belonging to lords (slave of lords) and not all of them, but those belonging to the chaste of *copper-smiths*, whom always had a special status still kept the traditional organizational and leading forms, which were surely adapted, till today.

### ***6.1.1. The institution of Gypsy baron (bulibasha, head of Romany community)***

There has been so much written on this function and traditional organizational form of Romanies, everybody knows a lot from their daily life, but also from the descriptions and analyses of some acknowledged authors on Romanies' problems that we will only make just a few considerations and comments that will complete the general "picture" of today's Romanies and to get it closer in a way to our present times.

"The Gypsy baron" refers to the head of all Romanies or at least the head of Romanies keeping their traditional way of living or knowing something about the nomad living.

The name firstly expresses a lack of knowledge about Romany realities or a stereotypical, imaginative, and emotional knowledge of Romanies. This comes from myths and legends outside Romany community, but that Romanies never contradicted and sometimes supported them.

At the same time, the name reflects a desire, an urge from a part of majority population, of those that are out of the ethnic groups (those called *gaze*), to know and associate the unified Romanies with a set of values and norms similar to theirs. That's how they could become reliable in political or economic partnerships, partners in talks and even co-participants sometimes.

This stereotype was borrowed and speculated in time by different *gipsy barons* or just simply charismatic leaders of Romany communities or

groups. They believed it is useful and their importance and credibility will rise (even nowadays) if they introduce themselves as gypsy barons or simple voices of different communities or leaders of all Romanies. This strategy worked mainly because it answered to an external desire and interest, wish that actually became virtual (mental). More exactly, it allowed rapidly signing different partnerships without many questions being asked. Therefore, it became efficient and safe.

But unfortunately, the things did not quite work as simpler as that. Neither studies nor reality offered us such a big personality in European Romany history. It couldn't have and we will tackle this later.

Analysing the recent reality reveals that gypsy barons were the leaders of some bigger or smaller Romany groups that belonged to the same professional group (families having the same occupation), groups that were usually formed by families with strong family ties (either blood or alliance ties) and shared the same values, norms, but mainly the same living conditions. We could also state that they shared the same limited physical space, but we can not make a rule of that.

In respect to the historical context, the influence, the power and the functions of the gypsy barons differed.

There were times when the gypsy barons were the absolute leaders of the group. As soon they were named or designated according to the group's norms, values, traditions, these ones fulfilled all kind of tasks and they were rewarded with a percentage of the group income. The amount and the composition of this quote were negotiated before elections and were different from group to group.

The gypsy barons had the function of judging different conflicts emerging among the members. They set the directions and ways they travelled; they set the physical penalties or they had to respect exactly and in due time of the material sanctions to which different members were subjected to in others' favour after the decisions taken by the judges who sentences different problems. But the most important obligations were to establish and maintain relationships with the local administration, with police, with the citizens who had to trust them in their way (especially during the winter when they needed a place to stay), to provide food or fodder for animals or to solve some emergencies situations: medical, judicial, lawyers' ones.

The gypsy baron was the person who assured the integrity of the group and set any measure he thought it was beneficial.

In carrying his attributions on, the gypsy baron was helped by members of the group. They also took his place when he was missing. They were members of his family and they were named as substitutes by the gypsy baron himself.

Once with the modernization of societies to which some Romany communities belong to, some functions and attributions of the gypsy barons diminished or changed.

After the Second World War rewarding the gypsy baron by the members of the group he was leading mostly disappeared and the relationships with the authorities considerably diminished. The gypsy baron did not anymore set the physical penalties and his word is not law anymore. Those who today act as gypsy barons are just persons that can be assimilated to any group leader. The only specification is that they still act as mediators with the local community, especially with the police.

He usually is the wealthiest member of the community and has the most agile thinking. His best quality, for which he is envied by the group, is his ability to lobby, to make connections. Therefore, he appears as a protected person, having different connections especially with the police) and with whom you better not have any conflicts.

Before, when the powers of the gypsy baron were almost discretionary, it was almost impossible to think that someone would want to have conflict with him. Any trial would have been immediately and seriously repressed. Today, when this institution is declining and has only a symbolic function anyone can have bad thoughts about gypsy barons (thoughts that appear because of envy, later enrichment, accumulation of connections, experience, courage etc.). Their implementation has to be carefully planned, being aware of the fact that “behind” there’s nothing that can stir firstly the group reactions, whose habits and traditions can seem to be endangered, but neither the possible boss’s relations “the current world champion”.

Unfortunately the institution of the gypsy baron is declining. The entire social life, the entire organization of this ethnicity is going through difficulties. The reality confirms the conclusions of the document *Program for multicultural education in Hungary* (1995). The program has a distinct chapter for Romanies and notes that “there hardly is any aspect of Romany life

that would not be in a severe crisis. The majority of Romanies live in extreme poverty; because of the segregation in the job market the unemployment rate is much over the mean, their sanitary and housing conditions are inhuman, the percentage of expelled Roma from schools is raising, the cultural traditions are erased, their traditional internal structures are disintegrating as they start to have a modern model of < civil> self-government. Even outside these problems, they are more and more affected by the deeper prejudices that majority displays”.

### **6.1.2. Borrowed forms and names**

If the traditional organizational structures were modified, adapted, destroyed or forgotten, and they functioned only for small and certain groups, then new forms and especially new names, either borrowed or imitated were required.

From the literature we find about gypsy voivodes, judges, princes, captains, mayors or persons that had western or catholic noble titles.

Beyond the supposed fascination of names or the possible options of organization they used in exceptional moments, borrowing different names (that traditionally weren't Roma's) reflects the desire and the belief that this was the only way the equal partnership and dialogue were possible.

Jean Pierre Liégeois reveals as a great “discovery” in the field of organization of Roma the fact that the leader of a group (modern *gypsy baron*) says to him in an interview that families in his group are organized in a *cúmpania*.

Of course that for a French researcher this information that came from a group of nomads had to be revealed.

If the same information had been revealed to a Romanian researcher by a group of nomads, most likely it wouldn't have been even written down. This is because the Romanian researcher would have known that the name is not specific to that group, but borrowed from the military structures.

Maybe some members of the group lived for a longer time in a country that had within its military structures that of *compánie* (Eng. *company*). That name was preferred to the *horde*. Therefore they borrowed and used it in their own language and culture and further transmitted to its members. In other words they *internalize* it and use it as it were forever in their vocabulary.

It's not excluded that the members of the group (as well as parts of early Romanies in Europe and America) to have had direct connections with Romania or to have been active in a Romanian military structure.

Or just as that, the interviewed used the mentioned term (that was inherited, as we saw) because he wanted to make himself better understood by the researcher ga3o by using a more known and modern than principally a specific denomination and archaic word .

## 6.2. Modern Romany organizations

Lack of data and documents on this minority makes difficult to reconstruct not only their history, but also the possible tendencies in abandoning its organizational models and choose for new civic and political forms offered by the majority contact populations.

The professional literature [see V. Achim, T. Amza and G. Potra] describes some modern organization forms (European forms, including Balkan) only from recent times (before the Second World War). Also, around 1933-1938 [V. Achim, 128], we can notice a trial of political organization of Roma from Romania (the first in history) as an ethnicity. This initiative becomes reality by the work and support of some great personalities from those – dean CalinicI. Popp-Şerboianu – who was the first president of the organization named General Association of Gypsies from Romania. At Paris, where he studied theology, dean Popp-Şerboianu already published in 1930 at Payot publishing house a paper on Romanies and Romany: *Les Tsiganes, Histoire – Ethnographie – Linquistique – Grammaire – Dictionnaire [Gypsies, History, Ethnography – Linguistics– Grammar-Dictionary]*.

We doubt that this is their first trail to organize at national level.

It is known that in 1599 a group of Romany Musicians joined the entrance of Mihai Viteazul in Alba Iulia. But what quality did they have? Was that of Romanies? Of Musicians-soldiers that joined the attacks? In 1784, beside Horia, Cloşca and 40 captains, Iosif “the gypsy from Criş” was also killed by being broken on the wheel; in 1821, during the revolt led by Tudor Vladimirescu, a professional group of Musicians was also killed beside the “holly battalion”. It is hard to say what their role in the revolts was. It looks like they were never scared of dangers and death during extreme events. Even in 1989 in many places they were in the front lines. Some of them died and

some remained crippled. But they were quickly forgotten. Why was only this revolt stolen from them and not the others?

During 1834-1835, Romanies were present in the social structure of Falanster from de Scăieni-Prahova and they were also present at the 1848 events. Is it possible that being involved in these significant events they could also think about creating an independent organization? The lack of data makes us to consider that but to present only facts that have evidences.

The General Association of Gypsies in Romania was not a solitary creation. It continued the experiences of some small successful shots in the mentioned period when “there were some Romany intellectuals, artists, merchants that were not ashamed of their origin and got involved in the life of the community” [idem]. We mention that beside the aforementioned dean there were other intellectuals like: the economist, writer and journalist G. A. Lăzăreanu-Lăzurică, the Musician Grigoraș Dinicu, both from Bucharest; the journalist Aurel Manolescu-Dolj, the poet Marin I. Simion, the lawyer N. St. Ionescu, the professor C. Ș. Nicolăescu-Plopșor, all from Oltenia [V. Achim, 130]. Although they were not the only ones or the most valuable intellectuals, they have the great virtue of assuming what others, even from today deny: their Romany origin. Moreover, they assumed and expressed the desire of emancipation and promoting the people they were members of.

It looks like then, as today, even if there were only a few Romany intellectuals that assumed their origin and the destiny of their professional group, their actions, spirits and ways of thinking were not unitary which was so necessary in those experiments and each of them wanted to be to sole saviour of Romanies. Obviously this was impossible. On the other hand, the tensions among the great mass of Romanies and intellectual elites that were raised within the ethnicity's row made harder the efficient dialogue between those whose destiny is to mark out the way to salvation and the ones who are going to be saved. A lot of distrust, opposition, and even envy were created and they were speculated and capitalized by people who can simulate the identification with the crowd's condition and interests, eliminating the ones whose value they can't reach even if they are born for the second time. That is why the association failed in the favour of the General Union of Romanies

in Romania. The leader was the Florist Gh. Niculescu, whose intellectual position was far from the creators' of those two organizations.

The experience of these two organizations was not significant for Romanies (mainly because it wasn't a happy one) in the manner of determining them to anxiously wait for the appropriate moment in order to reorganize. And still, the members of Romany ethnicity were among the first ones that used organization structure right after the Romanian Revolution in December 1989.

The beginning belongs to Transylvanian Romanies from Covasna County, which shortly after communism fell, on December 28<sup>th</sup>, 1989, created the first post-communist Roma organization from Romania: *the free-democrat union of Romanies*.

It is likely that the models and initiatives used by other minorities from the region, respectively the Hungarians, having constituted an impulse.

Unfortunately, the founders of this association (union) had an organization and did not know what to do with it.

The conflicts between different groups and parties, as well as the general tension from Romania from the following days and months, lack Romanies from Covasna of the support of other Romanies that could have contributed to the drawing of line and identifying the ways of reaching the statutory objectives as well as to the development of this young organization. The lack of communication and advertising made the *Free-democrat union of Roma* only a little known local initiative.

On February 7<sup>th</sup> of the following year, the *Democrat Union of Romanies from Romania* was created. Its objective was to represent all Romanies. Lack of experience of its members, but mainly the fight for power within the organization led to the total failure of this union at the elections. Therefore, a great number of Romanies abandoned any future idea or initiatives of organization using the ethnic criterion.

The so-called simulation of multi-party organization made the Romanies to divide even more and to compete with the majority population at the creation of parties. Their only goal was to receive the money that the State was giving as subsidy for every political organization.

Therefore, to the 207 parties of majority population existing at one time, 47 Roma parties and associations were added. Any idea of unity was removed even from the most optimistic Roma.

The desire to accede and to have access to internal and external financial resources contributed even more to the division of Romanies. The process still continues. It looks like the number of associations, organizations, foundations and unions reached 150 and there is no unifying idea which can guide them to a common goal that can be reached through forms and methods just a little unitary.

### 6.3. Romany intellectual elite

At first sight it seems a bad joke to discuss about intellectual elites within Romany community. But analysing it deeper and from a diachronic perspective it makes a lot of sense.

We put aside the undocumented statement of Professor J. A. Vaillant from the paper “Roma, the real history of the real bohemians”. According to this Romanies gave the Gospels 10 centuries before Christian era, but we mustn’t forget that the Brahman pick and flower was above all intellectual origin.

There is a possibility for their descendants to have been degraded in the new places they settled. But also it is possible for a part of them to have been transformed in the teachers of some social categories belonging to the peoples they shared their living.

On the other hand Mihail Kogălniceanu says that after their liberation from slavery among Romanies emerged “workers, plastic artists, distinguished officers, great administrators, doctors and even great speakers in the Parliament” [M. Kogăliceanu, 1837, 8].

Moreover, there is the supposition that even the leader of the liberation movement – M. Kogălniceanu – was Rrom. Those who deny this offer, as an argument, the fact that the founder of *Literary Dacia* and the prime minister of Cuza was the member of a wealthy family of barons from Moldavia.

We said earlier that not all Romanies were slaves and not all the slaves remained slaves until their death. As the possibility of liberation existed for the slaves, so the occasion to have had an ascending social trait existed (see Ion Budai Deleanu, Petru Maior, the prince Ștefan Răzvan), but there also



was the possibility that some of them had never been slaves. Our hypothesis assumes not only there were some Romanies that had never been slaves, but that there were Romanies who had slaves (a small number indeed) for example Romany boyars and high officials. We believe that there are no arguments that can assert that a number of slaves (near insignificant maybe) were not true intellectuals (and we are not convinced that Ion Budai Deleanu and Petru Maior represented singular cases). We are sure that in the way a great majority of Romanies as slaves existed the same happened with some free, wealthy Romanies, owners of properties and slaves, Roamnies who lost their independence by becoming in different forms slaves, as well as Romanies that were redeemed from slavery and Romanies who were later freed.

The issue is the manner in which these free Romanies (boyars, intellectuals, artists, thinkers, speakers) were still identifying with the needs, values and ideals of their ethnic fellows or they even accepted their origin and condition in front of the society and world. Maybe in the period the slavery's abolition and around the 1848 events there was an opening of their appearance on the platform, but we do not think that things were much different than today when we can see Romanies at any organizational and intellectual levels of society. But how many of them publicly accepts and assumes his origin and becomes voices of their ethnic priorities, problems and interests?

By the beginning of the second millennium there were 2!

Before 1989, beside some traditional Romanies, there were only three Romany intellectuals that assumed the role of speaking for their ethnicity and for their rights: a teacher of Romanian and two sociologists. Were only these three the products of socialist higher education among Romanies? Analysing our group of friends, neighbours, colleagues, etc. each of us can provide an answer to this.

### ***6.3.1. The old-type of Romany intellectuals***

Our belief, transformed in conclusion, is that the main attribute of old intellectuals, incorrectly called 'Roma' and more accurate would be 'coming from Roma community', is that of concealing its ethnic origin. This was not the case for all Romanies and for all the times, but nearly 97% intellectuals hid their origin. Why? It could not been only external, objective causes. We can not explain this only by using stereotypes, fear of discrimination, hostility, segregation,

rejection of the job market etc. Subjective causes, as much as childish might be, also explained this hiding. There is the belief that no matter how smart a person might be, full of knowledge if he hides his origin or he does not assume it then he loses this origin, but most important we are sure of the fact that if somebody does not admit his origin the people around him cannot identify it.

There is the harsh and sad experience of a young student from the beginning of the '80, who's living in a Danubian country. When she was looked for by a Romany person on the students' platform to give her a message from her parents, he had to ask another Romany person about the hostel she was living in. Hearing the name, the other student reacted with no harm intention "oh, the gypsy girl!" and then communicated the hostel and the number of the room. After he gave her the message from her parents he asked about her relationships with other gypsy students. Hearing this, the girl student told him to speak quietly because "here no one knows I am a gypsy". There is no further need to analyse this.

### ***6.3.2. The new-type of Romany intellectuals***

In spite of all difficulties and resistances, the first successes of young Romany organizations after 1989 were represented by the approval they got for special places in post-secondary and higher education.

Even if they occupied those places with less own efforts, even the speciality studies, with few exceptions, are not at the level and depth of those who were characterizing the old Romany intellectuals, though the competition spirit of the young beneficiaries of the above mentioned facilities was not as high as for old intellectuals the distinctive characteristic of these young future Romanies was that they **enrolled and graduated** as *Romanies* in highschoools and universities .In other words, even if professionally they are more superficial and were less motivated to be ahead their generation ("in order to be recognized we had to surpass our generation", a respected doctor stated in a metaphoric way), they have the great merit of having a deeper ethnic conscience. They do not need to be discovered. They've assumed *the ethnic identity*. Moreover, the new Romany intellectuals trained in last decade of the XX<sup>th</sup> century are actively involved and remarked because of their civic and ethnic activism and less for their special professional competence, on behalf and for the use of their ethnicity they belong to.

The process is luckily evolving from the quality point of view. If in the first 2-3 years from the moment of gaining the facilities in education only 2.5-3 places were reserved for Romanies and the examination was repeated for 2-3 times, in the last years there are 2.5-4 candidates/1 place. If in the early years the reserved places were asked by persons with medium education (7 at the highschool graduation exam) or that failed at other universities, now their level of education is higher (they graduated highschool with 8-9 or even more).

### ***6.3.3. Romany intellectuals and their role in the Union act***

Although the unification of Romanies in only one association or party is only an utopic and impossible idea, the hope for this organization is present at Romany formal leaders.

After they realized, as well as the majority population, that the unity and solidarity of Romanies was only an illusion that fed the stereotypes before the Revolution from December 1989, many of them tried to get the merit of unifying all Romanies in one structure.

This desire is seen in the names they've given to different organizations. The first national organization was the *Democrat Union of Romanies in Romania*. Many other organizations with similar message followed: *General Union of Romanies*, *The Great Union of Romanies*, *Union of Romanies* etc. We can notice that all of these use the idea of unity, unification of all.

By noticing the lack of success of such action, they tried to implement the idea of associating different independent and free entities having the same goals and interests. So the federations appeared: *Ethnic Federation of Romanies* and *Framework Convention of Romanies' Federation*.

All these structures made the mistake of not targeting a specific segment of Romany population and aimed to a wider unity of all Romanies on the Romanian territory. Or we've seen that the stratification, the level of integration and even the grade of segregation within the Romany ethnicity are high enough.

Aiming to overcome these limits and keeping the idea of unity, but using more liberal positions, that means through a freely consented alliance of sovereign and equal entities, on November 13<sup>th</sup>, 1996, the civil sentence 184 from the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector of Bucharest court from the file 194/PJ/1996, acknowledges the organization *Alliance for the Unity of Roma* (A.U.Rr.).

Although the aims and the objectives of this organization were to emancipate and promote social Romany ethnicity [appendix 17, art. 7 and 11], for the first time it is focused to realize the stipulations of the status through a special category of Romanies: the intellectuals. Art. 6 from the status quo of the party states: “A.U.Rr. aims to unite the great majority of Romanies in order to set the necessary priorities regarding the necessary measures in order to promote the social-economic of Roma ethnicity, as well as the legal means and methods as of enhancing the socio-economic conditions of Romanies” [appendix 17]. It is also stipulated that “A.U.Rr. is going to action in order to support *training political and public administration personnel within Romanies* (E.M),able of dialogue with the state structures and to act in those structures to promote Romany ethnicity and its greater participation as loyal, qualifies and credible partner”.

And it looks like this organization succeeds, unfortunately with small steps, to gather valuable intellectuals. Among those 114 members with university degrees only 6 are graduates of 3-years higher education system, and the rest are engineers, diplomats, jurists, doctors, professors etc.. In Buzău County there are 6 medical doctors and in Brăila the same organization opened a clinic for Romanies managed by a Romany doctor who managed to lead the County Health Directorate for many years.. But if these people let themselves convinced to act in favour of their ethnic fellows and communities (thus A.U.Rr. became the organization with the highest number of projects), only few of them (only 3%) the Romany intellectuals who don't declare as being Romanies in the paragraph 6.3.1., is a generalization based on this organization and may not be methodologically accurate. 80% of intellectuals of this organization are members of old-type of Romany intellectuals. If the rate of attracting members of new-type intellectuals is maintained, then the aim might be achievable and their number could be doubled by attracting new intellectuals who must necessarily find here the most appropriate climate for dialogue and difficult communication among generations. This is hard, with a lot of effort and with a lot of patience and diplomacy. The new intellectuals must fight to have their identity within the organization and to have initiative and leading positions upon taking control from the older generations that were offering experience and competence.

Around this new active intellectuals and with the ethnic conscience present it is most likely that the great unity of Romanies to happen. But it

requires time and constant efforts. After the new intellectuals would have found their place and would have won some projects that were issued in the small associations they created or will make up they will realize that the collective interest is a team work and they will act upon it, leading their steps where they'll have conditions to express themselves and the possibility of being understood. Such a process is long and it has ups and downs. This is only the beginning. The rest is effort, intelligence, convincing and attracting the great majority. Intellectuals will be, like other peoples, the ones who will find the means and the methods of actions. But the decision will be made by the many other people who will have to be aware and correctly informed.

#### **6.4. Why is it impossible to have a quick Union of Romanies?**

As we showed before, first there is great variety of Romanies' classes and the considerable differences that characterizes them. The different degrees of inclusion or assimilation within the communities they live, different religion they practice, different degree of knowing and using Romany or its dialects, all are elements that characterize different norms, values, perceptions and requests. The degree of spatial dispersion of Romanies also led to different interests and psychologies for this people. They are not individualized as an only people and they do not act in common for it social promotion. They do not know each other enough to have and offer the necessary confidence to those who try to realize their social promotion. Suspicion, distrust, the different ways of thinking (according to the social history of every group), experiences like Holocaust, the Bug, the deportation in Bărăgan that have different meanings, discrimination and marginalization, the lack of a unitary religious social and school education etc., all create serious barriers within the ethnicity and postpone any unifying action. There is impossible to accept only one leader (either as a physical or judicial person) who would be recognized and followed by all Romanies. They were kept far away from a common ideal, that could guide them to a common platform, to the same major goal that's followed by using a large accepted strategy and by mass support, implemented with methods, instruments and own, deliberate efforts, in partnerships

In fact, as beneficial the unification might be, as difficult is to act for. Let's remember what the creation of Great Britain meant, the way its components joined and stayed together within the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, what sacrifices the creation of USA asked for, keeping France under the same political headquarters and the centrifugal tendencies of the Corsicans and of those coming from Hawaii against Washington, etc.. What about the Slavs from the South Yugoslavia and those from the central Europe (Czech and Slovaks)? What about the Chinese and Taiwanese, the Russian Empire etc.?

What about the union of Romanians? It started under Mihai Viteazu 400 years ago. It survived the 848 events and then was restated by the lobby of young intellectuals in 1859.

The First World War and the international concourse of events that was created after that, which was turned to account by the diplomacy led by Titulescu made complete the act started under Cuza.

Can we say the process ended? Are Romanians united in their spirit, ideals, in their thoughts, as once said? Are they literary under the same roof?

The Second World War gave birth to monsters and its legacy still remains. We read nothing on great popular demonstrations in Bessarabia after 1990 where *the unification with the mother country* to be stated. Moreover it seems again that the Romanian masonry militated for keeping Ardeal within Romanian national borders. And there were a common territory, a government, a diplomacy, a unitary educational system, a dominant church, an army, activist etc.

We don't want to conclude that unifying al Romanies is an illusion. It will happen even if forces outside and inside the ethnicity will act against it. But it's not the right time now.

We will have to understand very well why such an act is not yet possible nowadays, to evaluate how important and real are the matters which separate the Roma people and to identify and make it aware the elements that divide Romanies, to identify the interests and aims of entire Romany population and then to design the strategy and the implementing methods. The aim is no other than economic and social-political emancipation, their unity, reaching their essential objectives for all groups and orientations. Its main objectives should be overcoming the marginalization, fighting against stereotypes, discrimination, assuring equal participation based on competency to all aspects of the social-political life of the country.

Chapter 7

**ROMANIES – ISA NEW NATIONAL  
MINORITY OR A (TRANSNATIONAL)  
EUROPEAN HUMANRACE?**





We are trying to answer in our own way to this issue because the insignificant Romany activists before 1989 were confronting a question or appreciation which often appeared from the communist authorities. No matter how it was rephrased it hinted at the same issue (in order not to use the word *fear* whose source is unclear). Either with statements as "...maybe you all want to become a national minority", or with direct questions as "don't you think we have enough national minorities or would you like to be one?", "do you think you would be different as a national minority?", "why do you want to be a national minority?" The answer to all these questions was almost always "we don't want this, we are not interested in this". And it was sincere. So sincere that even today I am answering the same. Romanies don't want to be a new national minority. First, because this is not objectively possible and second, being a national minority is not an advantage, it becomes damaging. All people are heading to something else.

Minorities will continue to exist in numerous and remultiplied forms. But they will exist for sure.

## 7.1. Stating the problem

After the grimness and the wounds of the Second World War, including the overloading of national spirit it was hard to imagine a force capable enough to oppose the universalist insurgence generated by people's need to restore and forget.

And still the first breakthrough of universalism is due to Arab fundamentalism developed under soviet ideology.

After 1989, the dramatic processes from Central and Eastern Europe can be very well covered under the expression of nationalism and the creation of new national states.

Right before our eyes some states regained their independency, the flag and their own borders and the world map enriched with new states, which were unknown before.

Many think and truly state with worry and fear that "a new phantom haunts Europe: the phantom of nationalism" [Ingmar, Karlsson, 7].

In this context, *volens nolens*, we are asking some legitimate questions: how many of the world troubles have ended and how many new pains have started through this dynamic and emulating process? Did the issue of “ethnic purification” or the spiny issue of national minority solve through these sometimes bloody movements? What chances do the former minorities offer and what possibilities do they create for the minorities they include today, when they became of a majority in the new created states? In other words, what are the chances to loosen up interethnic relationships and what is the price of social peace? No matter how difficult it might be, an answer to these questions has to be given. There’s also the question: what is the Romany position against these changes and what way does this people that has been settled on European lands since the first century of the second millennium, present here for many centuries, before being mentioned along the times’ papers, follow to choose?

## 7.2. Constitutive elements

Before answering the last two questions, we think it’s worth reviewing one more time the main dimensions of the main raw material any national state – the people – with all its complex relationships, in order to make it clear about the objective possibilities of a certain option.

In order for members of a big group of people to interact in a type of relation that can be the basis of the feeling meaning “we” (one basic attachment requirements – Edward Shils) that will later lead to a nation with all its people or peoples it includes, they have to develop a common and long term transformation *praxis* at least in an elementary, basic form and to share it on a certain land that they will own, defend, protect and administrate in common.

Romanies, in their continuous search, (as we showed) of the social demand, in order to face their basic needs, that were expressed in necessities of which they were always dissatisfied with [P.H. Ch. de Lauwe] in their big families, were obliged to transmigrate in smaller and *smaller groups* (one or few families) and more and more “specialized” in specific domains covering larger areas that they never owned or administrated. They did not even think to make this an ideal, an aim they had to reach. Their aspirations were to find or create the opportunities to offer their skills. No matter how important or

“productive” these could have been they were still complementary to the main productive activities of the contact populations. They remained marginal – *economic complementary* [V. Burtea, 1996, 113].

This aspect created the feeling of a limited “we”, but having a rich content that could never reached the general or universal level.

Even settled Romanies [Burtea, 1994, 257], when they chose or were pushed for another way of life, that means for sedentary life, they did it following the traditional model of spreading around in small groups (steady ones, sedentary). That is how they assured their utility and the minimum access to needed resources, compatible with their living standard.

In fact, their option for another way of life of the settled, beside the various social determinants, which consists in taking over models and the impunity of the life’s social dependence they lived more than for six centuries it comes as an unconscious sacrifice from the “shift of rationality” (Hegel) of creating a “vital space” which is absolutely necessary for expressing their *ethnic identity* that previously was expressed in their nomad living that now was threatened by own demographic indicators, lack of access to resources under the expansion of heavy industrialization and modernization.

These ways of living, influenced by the degree of spreading on the territory, are also evidences for the language development (see gold diggers [ibidem, 268] and some settled) and religion of this *nonterritorial and transnational people*.

Constantly depending on the majority contact majority populations, Romanies were lacking the possibility to create *a unitary and strong psychological life* that will assure its solidarity as well as the possibility of building or cultivating of a strong *feeling of membership*.

If for other people these are the key-elements for *national identity*, then objectively for Romanies these features were not strong enough to justify conquering or claiming lands, creating a state with all its benefits.

If for other peoples these features represent the “fabric” on which “national identity fairly fixed for the Romanies the intensity of the manifestation of the irrespective features was not so sharpness in order to lead them towards conquests or territorial claims to enlighten a state, with all its convoy generated by the possession and sovereignty’s spirit.

If for the other peoples “the national identity was a necessity for surviving and success in the postcolonial world of the states that had recently

gained their independence” [J. R. Gusfield, 14], for the Romanies this phenomenon is upside-down. Survival means renunciation, lose or giving up their identity. “Taming the shrew” or “complicity of the executioner” was like a surviving strategy that hall-marked an entire psychology generating cultural profiles and personality traits.

The presence and synthesis of these elements can not create the feeling of membership and group solidarity.

In order to speak about a nation, we have to mention that another *sine qua non* condition is obeying, aware or not, to the same political powers.

This requires a political conscience that is as important as the feeling of *we*.

From this perspective, Romanies in Romania have never had *a direct political participation on their behalf* until 1990.

Although from the Romanies’ rows “appeared some industry people, artists, distinguished officers, great administrators, doctors or even good speakers in the Parliament” [M. Kogălniceanu, 1837, 8], but also some political figures, these never participated in the political life as Romanies, but as exponents of the current political ideas or parties they were members (as today). They had nothing in common with the masses of Romanies, with their problems, feelings, aspirations, needs and even less with their group interests and specific options. As an ethnic entity or social group, Romanies were always politically “on the edge of the scene”, and they were just contemplating *in a marginal and contemplative way* the political scene of their adoptive country.

Even when they participated in wars they were identified as (temporary?) citizens on a territory whose permanent inhabitants were in armed conflict with the citizens of another state, but this participation was never lived as a fulfilment of a duty that has its origin in our conscience, but more a need to defend and possession.

After a few weak tries of Romanies of Transylvania to attend the 1848’s events and an attempt of ethnic and cultural organization in 1938 that was brutally broken by the Second World War and following events, the weak Romany movement after 1989 is **the beginning** of *a direct and participation of Romanies on their behalves* to the political life of the society.

We say ‘weak’ because in spite of their participation on separate lists at local and general elections from 1990, 1992, 1996 and 2000, according to the article 62 of the Romanian Constitution and article 4 of the Electoral Law

No. 68/1992, their act was never characterized by the unity that awareness of common objectives and common interests requires.

Moreover, the clash between Romany rival organizations led to the embarrassing failure recorded every time – consequence of a subjectivity that was well exploited, well-kept and led from peoples outside the ethnicity to the detriment of the general interest that can't happen but only under the conditions of the groups solidarity, that was always troubled and sacrificed, the more unaware the more destructive.

These aspects of the level of general, political conscience of Romanies in Romania prove that from a political view (but not only), they are at the beginning of their ethnogenesis.

The process was much more behind compared to other people (with all that's good and bad in it) and did not benefit of favourable or precipitating conditions. Much more, it is slower because of internal and external factors that still act against it.

### **7.3. The same parameters from a different perspective**

Among internal factors we will reanalyse those discussed in two previous chapters. This will answer to another analysis' necessity which clarifies in a more convincing way our previous approaches. We will consider the following factors:

a) *Demographic factors* among which [Zamfir, 1993, 65-92]:

1. The average number of persons per Romany family is around 6.6 members. That is more than the double of national mean (3.1) – this included the Romany families that accordingly balances this average.

2. The composition of Romany population from the point of view of the age: 43.3% are below 16, so Romany population is very young, having a large basis of the age pyramid, which demonstrates that Romanies haven't passed yet the entire route of the general European demographic transition [V. Trebici, 130, 43] which in civilized world started at the end of 1950 in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, not even at the level that was registered until the end of 1989 in our country. How was this possible? In a judicial system where using contraceptive methods was practically impossible and abortion or its attempt

was a penalty, it was not too difficult. But the answer still needs a wider and more complete area. We could explain by tradition, love for children, lack of responsibility for the offspring etc., but if we do not consider the role of socio-economical and cultural factors in law enforcement or political commandment then the answer is not complete.

3. The mean age of marriage of only 17 years for girls and 18 years for boys compared to the national mean of 22.5 for girls and 25 for boys [UNICEF, Romanian Government, July, 1997, *The Situation of the Family and Child in Romania*, 147] is an explanation, but also one source that crucially influences the demographic structure of this population.

4. The fact that only 1:5 women give birth before 16 years and more than 50% until the age of 18 years old, fully justifies the current age structure.

5. The high birth rate (5.1 children/women) continues even after 1989, being more than the double of the national mean (1.79 children/women).

6. The conclusions of our research showing that 62% Romany women do not use any contraceptive and 27% use abortion in order to give up pregnancy prove an acute lack of sexual, sanitary and contraceptive education, but also a cultural level that is hard to understand. Any political measure is difficult to build on this.

We agree to what politics say about awareness of interests or sets of interests, of groups as fundament and binder of the crystallization of the political conscience, but also separating group interests are possible to be fulfilled only after reaching a minimum threshold of political and cultural culture, of school education, of public exercise and of involvement in the cultural and social life.

All these above mentioned aspects lead us to the conclusion that this young population with a high demographic potential, sustained by high fertility and birth rate that exceed the country's average that will soon need housing, jobs and a sustained income will become a social bomb. If the socio-economic situation of the country will not improve, the situation of Roma will become worsen.

For this reason, this population will objectively be at the margin of the political influence. Its marginalization and exclusion will become more acute and the process of political ethnogenesis and social emancipation will stop. They will be just a group concentrating only on surviving and will be easy to manipulate for electoral purposes.

b) *Social factors* (resuming some aspects that were discussed in the previous chapter) represent a key-factor of the political conscience of Romany ethnics [Zamfir, 1993, chap. 9, 10, 13, 14].

1. Living in traditional forms and the extended family that includes under the same roof 3, 4 or even 5 generations is acting against modernization.

2. Poor housing conditions (see appendices 15 and 16), lead to promiscuity and primitive living do not seem to have a special impact compared with the families' structures on political ethnogenesis.

When in 1992 we recorded a mean of 3.03 persons/room and the preliminary data from 1998 research show a mean of 3.87 people/room, almost 11% families live 5-6 persons in one room, it is hard to accept that someone could have other concerns than identifying palliatives.

3. Limiting the possibilities to carry a modern profession as well as the hope of participating on equal basis to the competition for getting a working place that will assure a decent living is the harshest discriminating process today. This is proven by the fact that 58% men and 89% women have no profession (traditional or modern), 80% Roma have no qualification and 60% work on unqualified positions.

4. The consequence is that 32% men as "head of the family" have no job and only 3% Romanies that were hired receive unemployment benefit.

5. Educational status is weak and the number of illiterates (25%) show a serious, severe and sad problem compared to the present historical context. One quarter of the population lack any ability to read, to write, to address the local and central administration, to understand the social and moral norms of living together without whom life in modern society becomes tensed though social dialogue's rarefaction, the lack of participation to the citadel's life (much more to the political one) and the increasing until generalization of the centrifugal tendencies or "retirement" in the marginal area of the society. Therefore they are excluded from social life and they are pushed toward the margin of the society.

Showing that the percentage of children below 8 years old which never attended school or abandoned school is 40%, proves that the lack of clothes, food, the financial means to buy school supplies, but mainly *the lack of perspectives* after graduation, family's disinterest and despair acute even harder the group anomy.

c) *Working and property relationships*, represent, as we saw, the core of their problems the Romanies have to face and also play a significant part in delaying the construction of a group ethnic conscience that will synthesize their major common interests in a structured way of the group.

After consolidating, their major interests must be expressed and represented at the level of political will.

Adequate political act and using appropriate means and instruments in accordance with a partnered negotiated and implemented strategy (assuring the logistic and the expertise of clearly stated projects) means a new and serious agreement among reality, option and social practice.

It is easy to see the key-role of the Romany intellectuals without whom the creating of a strong and mobilizing national conscience can be postponed until wasting any historical opportunity. If there is no elaborated model of organizing and acting, Romanies have no temptation of any nationalism feeling that haunts Europe today.

This means that Romanies having no territory, army, administration to relate, a mother country to which it can report to, a government to defend and represent their interests when relating to other countries or governments, will not take the model of collective rights generating separation and hostilities from majority populations (hostilities that could generate national parties and segregation processes) and will not be suspected of disloyalty.

In other words it will remain under the umbrella of 'ethnicity' that makes us think to cultural, religious psychological characteristics [see Dionisie Petcu], which ties ethnology and anthropology with the idea of multiculturalism and identity – key-concepts in defining and constructing a new and united Europe [M. Versparget-report at 180, followed by 181], compared to nationality – political concept tied with the ideas of sovereignty and possession.

Summarizing all above, Romanies will remain to the more or less direct traditional representation, without appealing to "representatives [T. & H. Toffler, 1995, 105] or, in other words, they will remain an ethnic minority and not a national minority.

But as in the Europe we will live and collaborate only as ethnic groups and not as nationalities with strict limitations and a high possession spirit (a united Europe will be a Europe of ethnicities and not of nationalities) we consider that on this aspects Romanies have one step ahead. This allows them the right to know and deeply understand their cultural undoubtedly specific features and the concurrent sense of their cultural dyke.



There are several other aspects that make Romanies a European and transnational people.

We would exemplify by the constant movement of Romanies according to the social demand. Identifying and receiving this is independent from residency and distance.

The future European citizen will freely move when referring to time and space, according to job determinants (what he does, grade of complexity, satisfaction, earnings etc.) and to the compatibility level with the personality and aspirations. How much it will take for the European citizen to adapt to the life demands A. Toffler reveals it in "Future shock" is hard to say, but we are certain that Romanies will have no problem at this.

The rapid adjustment of Romanies depending on the market demands (social demands) is also another quality we must take into account when talking about Romanies, because this quality will become if it hasn't done it yet, an indispensable one for every citizen of the future Europe.

Most of the representatives of different western societies whom I contacted in the last years, no matter if they were men or women, when asked about family and marriage or about their life partner, (man, woman) many of them answered he/she was or has never been married but has a partner with whom shares a better life. If the context allowed for additional questions about the reasons of not getting married the answers were always the same: marriage means obligations, partnership expresses true love unaltered by papers and conventions, if there were some misunderstandings between married couple leading to divorce, consequences are dramatic, the true option of partners is expressed in partnership and not in legal marriage, the concubinage allows the couple freedom, including the freedom to say at one point *no, I do not want it anymore* etc.

We admit that we accepted as rational the arguments of our partners and we agreed with them, but meanwhile we think about our Romanies who like our western collocutors cohabit with their life partners for 30-40 years, have children and accumulate goods and wealth, but are condemned by the society because "they are not as the others", because they are not married, because they do not have (legal) papers etc.

Is there such a big difference among them and our partners from western democracies? We would say that the Westerns practice a way of life that Romanies have for centuries and that is very likely that they could borrow this living from them or from other similar groups.

But these examples are not everything!

Maybe because of this European “feature” of Romanies, the politicians will gain a plus of creative fantasy in order to solve the current and future major problems of this century (including Roma’s one without any doubt) and for the future, too. Among these we mentions the indigenous ethnic minorities caused by immigration. They “can not be solved within the traditional national state. They must be tackled in a wider European context through a continuous supranational perspective by extending regional and minority’s rights. This will make possible the step by step appearance of an European identity and supplemented by different national and regional identities” [J. R. Gusfield, 14]. “We will witness a sort of reediting of the Roman Empire, but this time with post industrialized emphasis and having European nationality. In other words, there will be a coherent ideological and economic European Community that will include a considerable number of below-national regions that will frequently extend across political traditional borders. If this happens, the nationalism which made Europe sick so many times in the past will finally become irrelevant” [ibidem, 12-13].

## 7.4. Final thoughts

We believe that it’s economically cheaper and politically more efficient to start now contributing to the construction of a huge European identity that will not choke but will express, enhance and represent all the national, local and regional identities, being meanwhile something else than any of them. At the same time this identity, being based on dialogue, support, and partnership will prevent the waste of resources to artificially preserve some segregated national identities, tensions or split fully stimulated by territorial and social mobility. Such a process will *volens nolens* lead us toward a multiracial, multi-ethnic and plurireligious, identical and reconciled itself Europe that will express what it is at its full potential.

This is the sole necessary and sufficient condition for building a free and safe Europe, a collective welfare European society with no tensions and not a Europe of subsistence [C. Zamfir, coordinator] or a Europe of despair which comes from hostility, distrust, tensions and conflicts which can generate violence, destruction and instability.

## AFTERWORD

by diplomat Zainea Ștefan

### **Roma People in the Synchrony and Diachrony of the Contact Populations**

The book belongs to a sociologist. If we admit that Dimitrie Gusti was the founder of sociology belonging to the Romanian peasant in all that represents the material and spiritual civilization of the country element, which was increased up to the Village Museum, therefore we agree that the author of the book, doctor Vasile Burtea is the contemporary sociologist of Roma people, who hopes that one day he could take part to the opening process of a cultural Centre of the Roma People.

The book, an excursus of an intellectual, a long distance runner, who beside all has the will to pass over an imaginary finish line as far away from himself as from others, includes history elements, referring to the labour division of the Roma people, the past and current occupations of this ethnic group, then the process of marginalization and integration of this population, characterized by sedentary people who they contacted as a second-class population.

Yet the book ends somehow surprisingly: „Roma people – the new national minority or European (transnational) ethnicity?” The question mark, in the reviewer’s opinion, has no sense as the Roma ethnicity is old, of about 1000 years ,and it’s one which is really European and transEuropean, borderless and without prejudices.

The tome includes a valuable inventory of ideas and events of the Roma people, both from the Danubian and Carpathian area and from everywhere; it has a prevalent sociological character, that means, as the Frenchman Auguste Comte called sociology – as the science alone, beyond nature and imagination.

As it appears the need of „intellectually” ingurgitate various aspects, from history to politics, from intrinsic and passing denominations of Roma

people to moral norms, the book becomes hard to understand even for the competent ones, because it requests the reader a lot of practical and theoretical knowledge about these populations and therefore it can't be addressed only to this ethnicity, that at least nowadays has an intellectual level if not precarious, mostly modest.

The division of the chapters is scholastic, hand and thoughts behind the desk of the University professor, include moreover the sociology of the virtual than of the practical daily life of this population and we think that this brought him far away from the title. That's because the synchrony and diachrony, if defined as parts of the same medal, does not get moral, religious, cultural connotations within a boundary civilization. Synchrony is a rare word, therefore a philosophical category which states that the culture and institutions of a population develop through imitation and adoption, interrelated with other cultures of the contact populations. But from synchrony to the imitation imposed by Gabriel Tarde in sociology is only a single step and that's why we do not want to offer the classic example of the flock or group or moreover the traditional alienation of Gipsy camp.

Diachrony, another rare but noble word, is used to pre-eminently name evolution in time, the historical development of a process, a set of phenomena which are specific for a population, or races" which, we can add, induces the quality of the affected population in universe and turns it into an ethnicity and implicitly into a nation. Whether synchrony is passionately painted, this leads to a supreme integration phenomenon and the material, physical aim ( the need to be alive) turned into a metaphysical ideal ( to be recognized by the whole world); meanwhile diachrony is sporadically shown, moreover as a decoration, a raciness than a crystallization process of an ethnic group, a nation. Maybe because of the same passionate desire of integration, even coercive, the author asks himself: "Why is a fast union of the Roma people impossible?". The reader, being mainly diachronic, singular in his thoughts wonders: "When will the union of Roma people be possible?", which means when will the small goal of daily life become the ideal of life belonging to a population? And this is because, as the poetess Luminita Cioaba was writing „ when we, the Gipsy people ,will have our own country, then we can say we come back home from somewhere!" in fact transposition across the centuries of Mitru Perea's desire, best-known as Budai- Deleanu, exposed is Tiganiada.

Finally I wish to highlight one element that should be thought-provoking for all bearers of this stigma that is right there in the title of the book, “Roma...” that is important in the terrestrial, ephemeral life is not the way a population defines itself as an ethnicity, but how this population is defined by others.

That’s why the great Indian politician, prime-minister during a troubled era, Jawaharlal Nehru, was saying: “it’s impossible to see yourself as others can do it”. I’d like to add with all common reader’ modesty: “it’s more important for you how others can see you rather than the way you look at yourself in the mirror”. Even if it’s diachronic it’s more adequate to accept the denomination of Roma ethnicity as the name “Gipsy”, that means untouchable in his inner universe, as the lack of contact means, first of all, respecting the astral aura which every individual appears on land, the potential and primary energy which gives him the opportunity to understand by himself the moral, religious, cultural and civilization phenomena and processes.

When we can understand that Gipsy people are untouchable in their sacred desire of owing a territory, even if it’s imaginary, then the synchrony and diachrony will become words in a dictionary.

\* Tome belonging to Dr. Vasile Burtea, Lumina Lex Publishing House, 2002

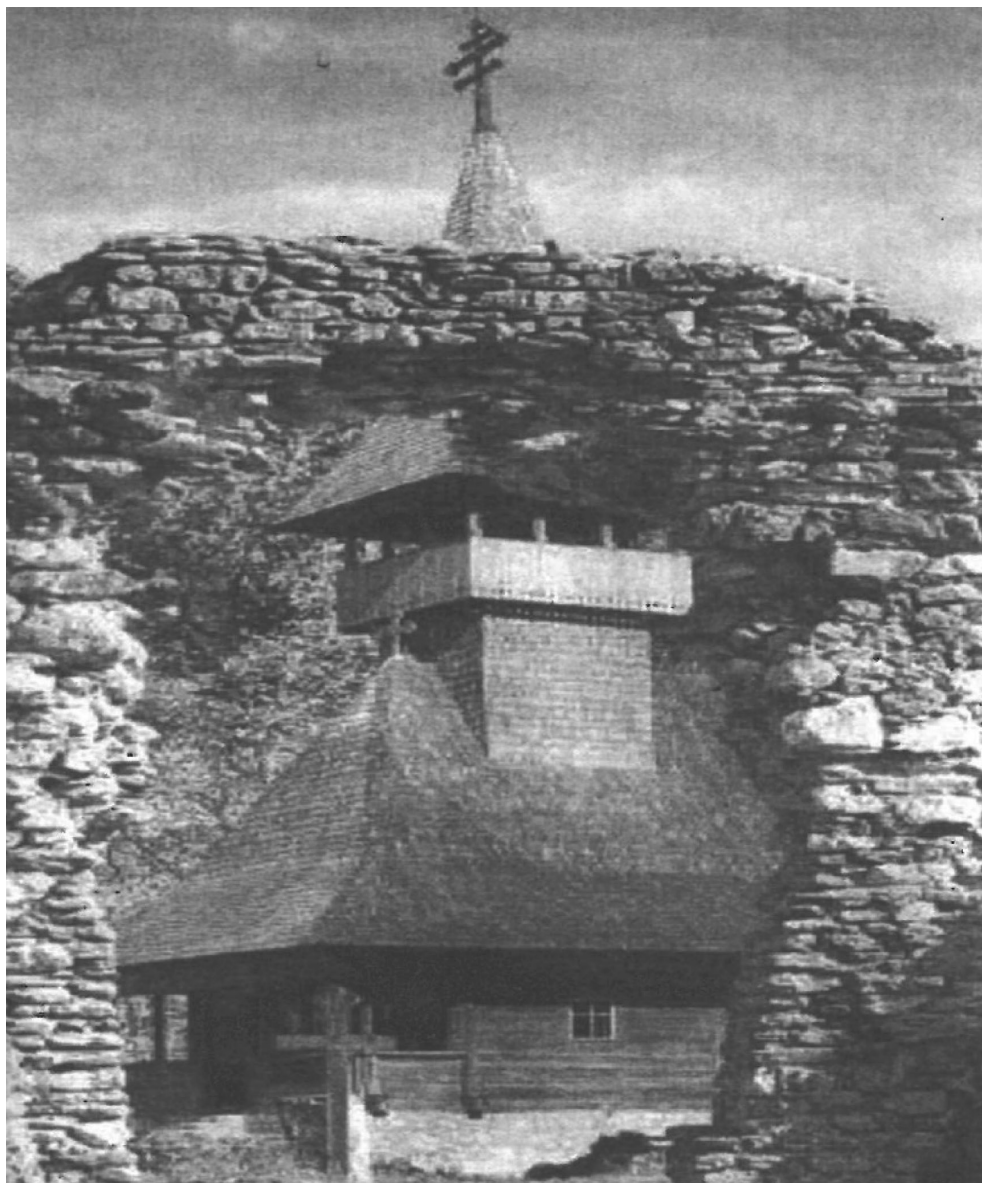
**Author: Diplomat Zainea Stefan**



# **ANNEX**





*Annex 1***Vodița Monastery**



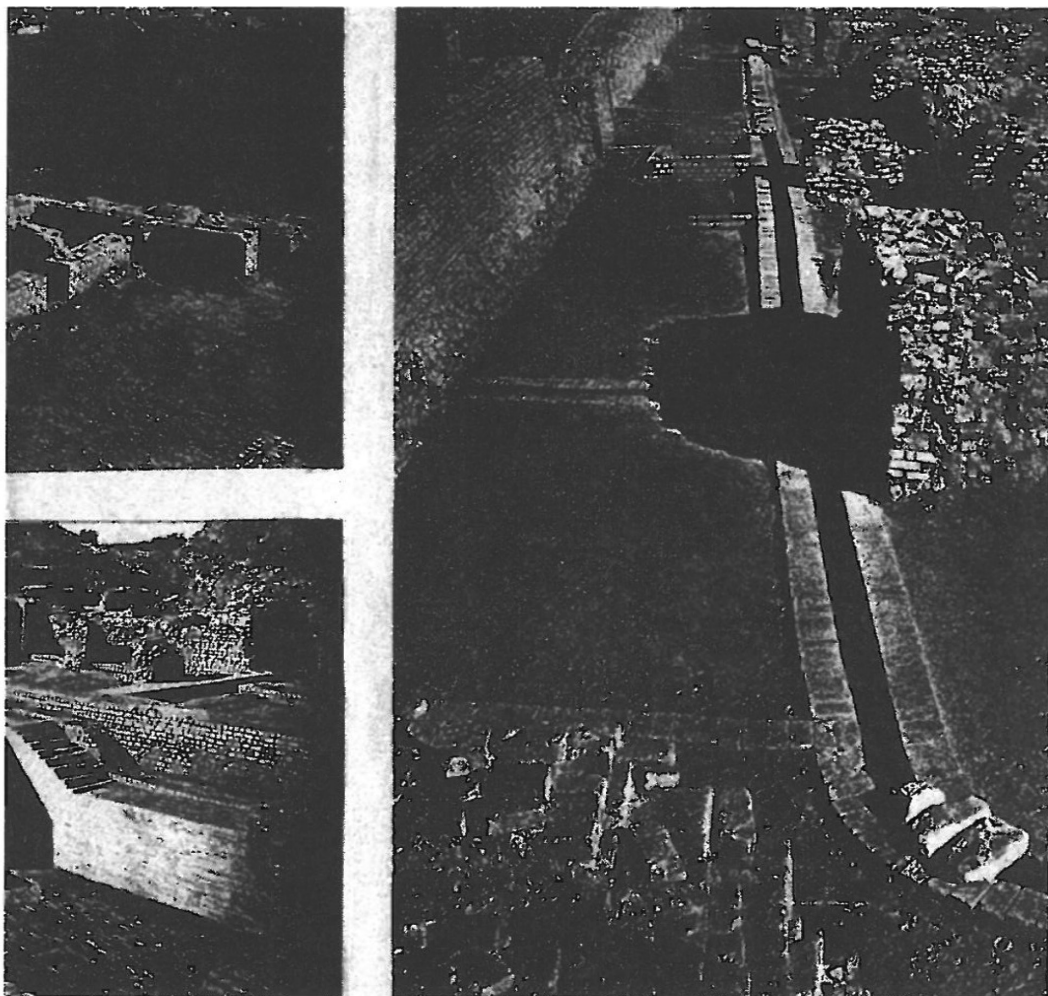
## Annex 2



The geo-political map of India in the period when the proto – Roma people were leaving their native places



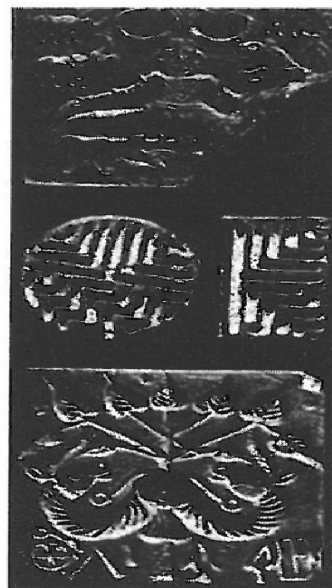
*Annex 3*



**Vestiges of the Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro cultures**



*Annex 4*



**Vestiges of the Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro cultures**





## Primul document atestând prezența romilor pe teritoriul României

3 octombrie 1385 (6894), Argeș

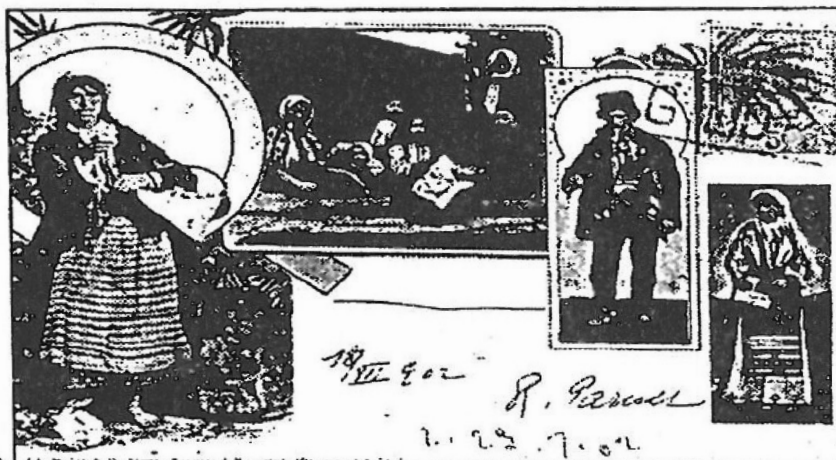
Io Dan voevod...

Pe lângă aceasta, întăresc și câte a dăruit și a dat în scris mănăstirii Sfântului Antonie unchiul domniei mele, sfânt răposatul Vladislav voevod: satul Jidoștița cu potocol și la Dunăre văltoarea de la mijloc toată și venitul de la opt pescării și Dunărea de la padina Orehova până la partea cea de sus și Vodița Mare pe amândouă părțile cu nuci și cu livezile și seliștea Bahnei și moara la Bistrița și **40 de așigani.**

*document slav  
originalul se află la Arhivele Statului București,  
Secția Istorie nr. 2*

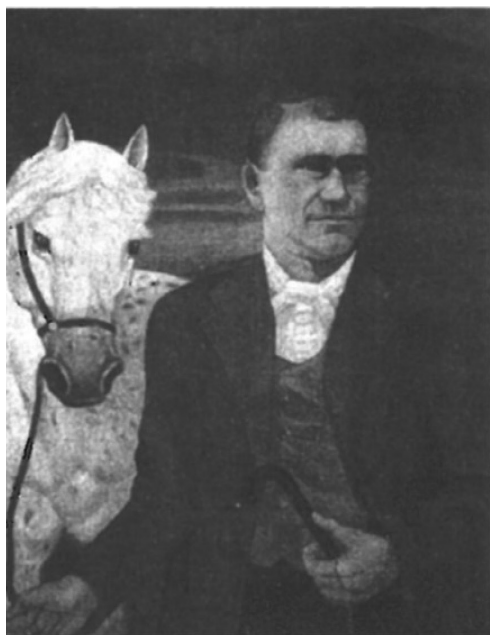
Documentul este publicat în:

*Documente privind istoria României, veacul XIII, XIV și XV;  
Țara Românească (1247-1300); Editura Academiei R.P.R., 1955;  
sub numărul 22, pag. 32-33; citatul de mai sus se află la pag. 33.*



???? NETRADUS





**Celebrazioni per la Beatificazione di**  
**CEFERINO**  
**GIMÉNEZ MALLA**  
**Gitano e Martire**  
**1861 1939**

Domenica 4 Maggio ore 15.30  
 aula Paolo VI (Sala Nervi)  
 Città del Vaticano

**I migliori artisti**  
**Gitani e Andalusi di Flamenco**

**“Un Gitano de Ley”**  
**oratorio**

direttore  
 José Heredia  
 Maya

**Al Cante:**  
 Chocolate  
 La Macanita  
 Joselito de Lebrija  
 Las Jiménez

**Al Baile:**  
 Concha Vargas  
 Antonio El Pipa  
 Juana Amaya  
 Miguel Toleo  
 Niños)

**Al Toque:**  
 Paco Cortés  
 Miguel Angel Corrés  
 Quique Paredes  
 Lillito

Con il contributo di:

**BNL**  
 Banca Nazionale del Lavoro

**MONTE DEI PASCHI DI SIENA**

**BANCA DI ROMA**



**ZEFIRINO HIMENEZMALLA PELE, who became the Saint Zefirino (for Catholics), celebrated on the 4<sup>th</sup> May, the first Romany man in the world who was sanctified by a church (catholic)**



*Annex 7*

**The houses belonging to the Romany copper-smiths in the locality of Sintesti – Ilfov County (close to Bucharest – Romania)**



*Annex 8*

**Woodworker woman – graphical representation made  
by Ferdinand Koçi**





A VINDE

*Un Trim Sălaş de Robi sau*

**SCLAVI**

**ȚIGANEȘTI**

Print o licitație la Amiașă a  
Mănăstire d. H. **ELIAS**  
la 8 mai *M. D. CCC. L. II.*



cine se compună din 18 Omeni,  
10 Bazași, 7 femei @ 3 ffete  
~ : in condiție fiind : ~

*Gnfo*



To,

---

We enclosed communicate the motivation and proposal of changing the Law no.18/1991 on the territorial funds, with the request of being up for debate and transmitted, in order to be approved by the legislative forum. If there's the likelihood of appreciating as timely a talk with the representatives of the Roma organizations, we inform you that these ones are available to participate to an efficient and constructive dialogue, as a part of them contribute to the formulating of the present proposal.

Expert,  
Sociologist Vasile Burtea

Bucharest, 19<sup>th</sup> April 1992

## MOTIVATION

Because of the viciously and, for many times, abusively and discriminating way the Law of territorial funds is implemented, a large part of the Romany ethnicity is unfrocked from the constitution and restoration of the ownership on area of arable ground.

That's how a population, whose existence was linked, for nearly half millennium of agriculture, at the end of 20<sup>th</sup> century, is in the impossibility of feeding their families from the legal point of view.

Because a great part of the Romany population, that before 1989 had worked in agriculture, did nor receive not even an inch, beside the request of adopting all necessary measures for Law no.18/1991 to be correctly applied, within the four corners of it, as well as with good faith, we are going to make the following

## **PROPOSAL**

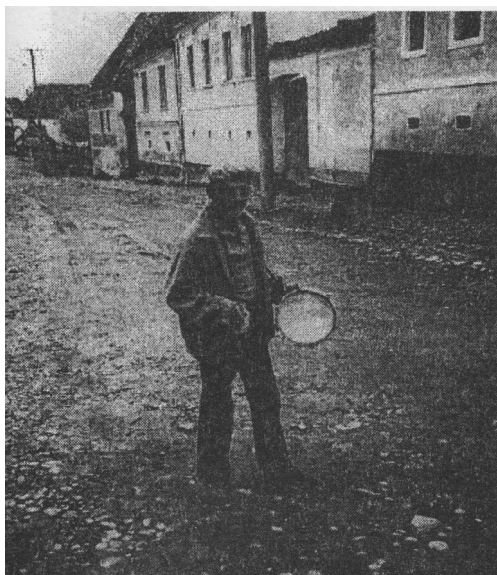
**of changing the article 18 ,paragraph (1) from the Law No.18/1991 of the territory funds, which is meant to attenuate the social pressure and the danger of some interethnic conflicts.**

**Article 1, paragraph (1) will change as follows:**

**“ The citizens who did not bring land in the co-operative or brought some ground which is less than 5.000 square metres, as well as the ones who prove they worked in agriculture (Agricultural Production Co-operatives, Public Agricultural Institutions, inter-co-operative associations) in the last 3 years or at least 3 years during other period and in present they have no earning sources, are assigned with property areas stipulated by article 17 or determined according to article 19, if they are settled in certain localities and do not have land in their own property in other localities.” The assigned areas... (exactly how they are presented by the law) after which other text is added : “ The stipulations of paragraph (1) are available as long as the n\beneficiary loves and carries on his activity in the locality where he was appropriated to.”**

**We request this because a lot of Roma people worked in agriculture ( public or / co-operative one) either seasonal, either on a certain period and as in present the Agricultural Production Co-operatives were cancelled and Public Agricultural Institutions reduced their activity the Romanies lost their jobs and possibilities of maintenance.**

*Annex 11*



**The Roma People in Archita (Mures County)**



*Annex 12*



**The Roma People in Archita (Mures County – Romania)**





*Annex 13*

## PROGRAM

of social promotion and the key to the employment problems of the Roma people

The complexity of the problems amassed on the time-scale within the Roma communities and in their relationships with the other social groups asks for a prompt intervention, organized and well controlled on many plans. The first step is to propose the formation of an inter-ministerial committee which can gather lots of complete pieces of information and data in order to propose integral solutions of approach and disposal of the aspects that are dysfunctional.

The committee, at the county level, will work with organized commissions at the county level (or at local level where there are many groups of Romanies) and the leader of the county commission will be a sub-prefect.

The commission is going to be formed by representatives of the Board of Labour and Social Protection, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture, the Health Ministry, the Ministry of Public Works, the Youth and Sports Ministry, the Ministry of Agriculture.

Within the strategy of approaching this problem needs the issuing of some programs of activities with results on long terms (educational-formative, cultural etc.) and actions on short terms and very short one with curing character.

As a starting point in the process of issuing the mentioned programs we present the following proposals, some of them were couched at different meetings of Romany organizations.

### I. Schooling, orientation and professional formation

Is supported by:

1. The cognition and inclusion of the entire population of schooling age in the forms of education that exist, according to each type of situation.

2. The solving of the present anachronisms (teenagers who were not in the first grade; children who were for one or two years at school and then abandoned school or they were abandoned etc.

3. The stimulation within the formative process of the Romanies' children who have remarkable qualities and that show they like school, the drawing of the others towards a profession according with their physical and intellectual-ability possibilities. In order to avoid abandon or indifferentism it's good for the educational staff which tries out results in training those kids (at primary level) to benefit of stimulus.

4. The temptation of those who exceeded schooling age (without being registered in schools) towards a form of education that can allow them to get minimum knowledge.

5. The training of teachers and educators within the Roma population who can work especially in the communities where a lot of Roma children live

6. Realizing projects-experiment of schooling the Romanies. For example the realization of the project of "the Experimental School" from Braila city see annex), where the inhabitants of the district (young and adults), the subjects but the achievers of the experiment want to take part in with money and work.

7. In order to learn useful jobs by the unskilled and illiterate people, some school workshops (eventually on the present structures) in form of apprenticeship, instructors who are very good as professionals must teach them a job without the need of procedures type write-read.

8. Within the qualification of the people who have no profession and can't go to an examination that certifies

certain skills and qualification on the basis of work form, it is necessary to give priority to those who worked as unskilled workers in different institutions (companies) because they adapted to the production discipline, to the discipline of industrial work.

9. Promotion of a place of work for a special employee who can attend the Roma problems at the level of each school inspectorate

II. Appointment and re-appointment in a job, referring to:

1. Determining of the indicator that shows the population joining a job (or of the number who are not appointed as staff) and localization of the areas where prevailingly there are unframed Roma people

2. Establishing the relationship (in the case of those who did not join a job) between skilled and unskilled work force as well as the structure on professions.

3. Studying the quantity absorption possibilities of labour (skilled and unskilled) within Romanies in the irrespective area or the possibilities of placement in other areas.

4. In the case of the unskilled people (without a qualification certificate) but who are very good at certain useful jobs they practice, it's needed to offer a qualification certificate based on work proof and talks on practical aspects of exerting the profession. The level of qualification must be established in according with the level of executing the test-work and not with the basic level like beginners. In this context some completions to H.G. 201/1990 annex 8 would bring some more clarity and efficiency in the activity of registering the level of practicing the profession for which they do not have certificate of qualification.

5. Supporting and providing material incentives of the Directions of Labour and Social Protection in

identifying the possibilities of labour placing and using these possibilities for placing Roma people who do not join a job. Following this reason we appreciate the necessity of issuing, at the level of each Direction of Labour and Social Protection, of a special program, whose objective can be the increasing of the grade of occupation of work force within Roma people (depending of the local functions and possibilities). That's why we need that at the level of every office or sub-office of labour at least a special place for one person must exist (preferably Roma) who care assure the practical implementation of the program.

6. In the case of Romanies who got a job there's the need to determine the correlation between the work that's done and the qualification they have and if there is a significant disaccord the balance possibilities must be found.

7. Re-application of those who have lost their job lately (for different reasons). This must be done where they had worked if possible or even at the work places they had and knew very well (with exception for those who do not want this). This aspect is possible because the great retirements allow application for labour even where the activity suffered from a restriction or dismiss.

8. Studying the conditions of wages and labour stimulation through them within Roma people and their labour's steadiness

### III. Professional reorientation, re-qualification, retraining

Without any doubts the low level of qualification exposes to unemployment. From this point of view the Roma people are the most vulnerable. That's why there's a special need:

1. To know the defective professions in labour at the country level, on the basis of the information from the institutions and Directions for Labour and Social Protection.

2. To offer some incentives for those who are oriented to those professions.

3. To represent the sources of these professions by: unskilled, those who cannot find work in the profession they have and those who wish to have a better salary

4. To find rapid forms for those who have a profession that is not very much looked for,

On the basis of their knowledge and present skills, to offer the possibility of learning professions in great demand on labour market. The action must have a preventive character and there's no way of waiting for unemployment.

5. To attend the training courses and increase the qualification for the Roma people who practice jobs that are well sought in the society and found their place in a system of production, as well as the presentation of the tools and new equipment to those who are interested in.

6. To arrange with the Romanies, who are not employed where the activity generated these cases, especially when talking about the young ones, and with the local leaders that the unemployment wages can be received in the form of a fund that's awarded to much more people or in the form of some materials and equipment which can be the starting point in private activities sustained with convenient credits.

#### IV. Stimulating and enlarging of the activities in specific

professions and occupations need:

1. An evidence of the traditional professions practiced by Romanies.

2. Evaluation of the professions which are still useful and stimulating their re-profession.

3. Liberalization of the way of awarding the authorizations for opening some workshops or exerting some occupations by different categories of enterprising Roma people. Great possibilities in this direction we meet in Braila, Bucharest, Tandarei, Craiova, Piatra Neamt, Buzau, Constanta, Toflea, Bacau.

4. Incentive taxes in the first activity years and advantageous crediting, so that these workshops could develop and become work places of learning a profession for a greater number of Romanies.

5. Contacting the present professionals who practice professions or exert manufacturing activities whose secrets are known only in the family or group of people and stimulating them in its production spread and transmitting those secrets to the youth they'll elect by themselves in the conditions they would like to.

6. Stimulating trade activity within Romanies, taking into account the tradition of this ethnicity regarding the commerce. It is said they Roma people were brought to Europe by trade. The present " funny business" instead of being a manner of money making or of police bravery they prefer to treat it according to the proposals coming from the material "Funny business - some considerations"(see annex). Thus the beginnings of a commercial successful, of wide scope activity can be grounded. This aspect was the object of discussions in all Roma meetings and organized assemblies.

7. Advantageous conditions and looking for some external contracts with the perspective of merchandising the artisanal products or of small series, produces by Roma people.

8. Implication of the government as a warrantor for the constitution of some mixed companies between Romanies living in Romania and the foreign partners.

9. Offering a minimum of space in the exhibition complex where the Roma people can show their specific products.

10. Within the area of services and service provider where Romanies have experience and can include a great part of the unskilled staff, a sustained stimulating and well led can give good results.

The Roma trade union, having the headquarters in Craiova, has already offered to assure sanitation services in the whole city (streets, markets, blocks of flats etc.) but they were refused. The Roma people living in Baia-Mare have some results in this domain.

#### V. Studying the seasonal and agricultural work (including stock raising) under the new conditions

1. Many Roma people were working during various seasons at some Agricultural Production Co-operatives. A part of them split, so here's the question: what happens with them?

A great part of the Romanies who were working in agriculture were practicing livestock. As the activities of animal breeding disappeared or were reduced in the Agricultural Production Co-operatives, the first who got unemployed were Roma people.

In order to avoid unemployment and/or deviation, parasitism and other tendencies for those who lost their jobs it's very useful either to put them in possession of land even if they did not bring land or cows in the Agricultural Production Co-operatives or ensuring the work places within the nearby the Public Agricultural Enterprises.

The support accorded to the proposals of changing Law No.18/1990 represent a solution for solving living problems of Romanies.

2. In this category on the basis of years of work in the production enterprises, the possibility of appearance

of some "compensations" which can allow them buying land or cattle, as well as the necessary equipment in order to carry on an activity on your own is pointed out.

As the initiated activity could have social utility an advantageous crediting should be imposed (especially if the enterprising people are young).

VI. Social protection for orphans, retired people, old and handicapped people will need:

1. Completion of the inventories and the quantitative evaluation of the phenomenon, because the lack of information (training) within Romanies contributed to a slow collaboration with local administrations and Directions of Labour and Social Protection, in order to elaborate the necessary forms for getting public support.

2. Popularization within all Roma people of the rights on social protection and helping them to get it in order to limit beggary, vagabondage, parasitism, juvenile deviance.

3. Giving the right to a public pension for the old people who seasonally worked or were daily labourers on different Agricultural Production Co-operatives. Finding a form which can allow the taking into account of seniority in different fields (industry, co-operation, agriculture, seasonal work in the State Agricultural Enterprises or Agricultural Production Co-operatives where they were not members-at-law).

4. Through the agreement with different Roma organizations forms of patronage should be promoted for the old-age or orphans homes that were erected for Romanies or for the present ones where the majority population comes from the families of Roma people.



## VII. Specific living problems

Beside the fact that Romanies were given the worst houses (refused) on the marginal areas of the town, in unhealthy areas (insanity that they emphasized) that lack the appropriate endowments of public utility on the ground floors or on the last floors these homes were and still are not fit to the specific and life style of the Roma people.

1. Thinking again about living areas according to the capacity and specific of Romanies is urgently imposed when building the houses in the areas with a great number of Roma people.

2. The transposition of these aspects in a vertical way, keeping the sensation of open field and yard could be an interesting theme for architects and cities' fathers. It would not be lacked of interest the competition production of a project theme for renovating some Roma districts, after a study of social specific conditions. The first experiment can be the reconstruction of the 33 Romany homes that were burned and destroyed in Kogalniceanu village in Constanta County.

3. A more intense report of the appropriate institutions about the sanitation of the houses and areas where Romanies live and the creation of the conditions of preserving of a civilized living climate should be imposed.

4. The creation of a renovation and modernizing fund of public utility regarding the streets and districts where Roma people live. The fund would be going to be formed by governmental, nongovernmental and private sources from the country and from abroad.

VIII. Promotion of the culture, customs and traditions of the Roma people. The spiritual and moral education of the Romanies

The lack of a common social-economic life, carried on within the same territory (which is specific to other nations) determined a pluralism and a cleavage of the culture, customs, traditions, religions of the Roma people (meanwhile those ones were poor, too).

The impossibility of expression and development of all those aspects is reflected in behaviour and education. That's why all efforts are necessary in order to:

1. Organizing a social-cultural centre of the Romanies having the headquarters in Bucharest.

2. Organising cultural or country clubs for the Roma population or giving them an area for a specific program and activity within the present cultural clubs would be important educational and training steps.

3. Awarding and supporting the Television space for the ethnic Roma programs.

4. Impelling the construction of Roma churches in Bucharest, as it was agreed with the Romanian Cathedral would be an important step in order to promote orthodoxy within Roma population as these are more and more tempted by the sectarian missionaries.

5. Supporting with governmental funds of a cultural Foundation of Romanies (as there are in Yugoslavia, France etc.) will stimulate the publishing of information about history, language and culture of the Roma people.

IX. Forms of social control and prevention of deviation with the involvement of Roma organizations and communities, as well as of the local leaders, which calls for the necessity of:

1. Another turn, swing of the pendulum within the Police authorities and prosecutors regarding Roma people not like an "outcast "ethnos, but like a population with severe social problems.

2. A stronger and more direct co-operation with a preventive and probation character within the Roma communities through the Romanies' organizations and regional leaders.

3. Schooling and training of the teachers. Regional police and within the Roma people, which can allow a better collaboration on irrespective communities, as well as through a more persuasive capacity and in this way the confidence increases and the suspicions back off.

4. The urgent organization of a governmental program of controlling the ethnic and racist prejudices on Roma people; a serious media campaign, organization of seminars and public courses about that subject can be considered. The stringency of this point is given by the regrettable events that took place in Constanta County (Topraisar, Cuza Voda, M. Kogalniceanu), as well as by 13 others which preceded them (Covasna, Mures, Satu mare, Sibiu, Alba, Hunedoara, Cluj, Maramures, Bucuresti); then SAI, Giurgiu, Mures, Timis followed them, that have nothing in common with the constitutional state and do not throw a favourable light on the Government.

We consider obvious the necessity of in the present program's implementation it must be taken into account the permanent collaboration with regional Roma organizations, with local leaders and by their help the close quarters with Roma communities. Otherwise the chances of success

are seriously affected and the program that was proposed, no matter how many improvements should have, runs a risk to stay a simple declaration of good intentions.

Expert,  
Vasile Burtea

*Annex 13, appendix 1***DECISION (PROJECT)****Regarding the constitution inter-ministerial  
structure for application of the program  
of the social promotion and the settlement  
of labour problems of Roma population**

Art. 1. - It is set up the Public Inspectorate for Integration and Social Promotion of Roma people, which will function at the level (under)....., starting with the date of .....

Art. 2. - The Public Inspectorate for Integration and Social Promotion of Romanies is coordinated by a public inspector coordinator leader, whose tasks are defined in the annex of the present project.

Art. 3. - The Public Inspector coordinator leader operates a public inspector leader (or the equivalent of him in the ministries : Labour and Social Protection, Education and Science, Culture, Health, Home Affairs, Justice, Youth and Sports, Public Works and Arrangement of the Territory, Agriculture etc. and will be member -of-law of the Council for Minorities.

Art. 4. - It will be supplemented with a place of work as constitutional inspector manager under the minister (a position will be changed within the scheme of the ministry into public inspector manager under the minister), the maximum number of posts of the ministers stipulated by article 3.

Art. 5. - The Public Inspectorate for Integration and Social Promotion of the Roma people has a technical secretariat made up of two people.

Art. 6. - The expenses for the supplemented staff are supported in 1992 by the budget spare at the disposal of Government and for the next year from the budget credits that are given.

Art. 7. - The Public Inspector manager coordinator, as well as the public inspectors managers of ministries will be members of Roma people as we take into account the studies that are necessary to have such a job.

In exceptional cases when an adequate person within Roma population in order to have the positions of public inspector manager within a ministry is not found, another person will be elected with the agreement of public inspector manager coordinator and consulting Roma organizations; that person will know very well the Romanies' problems, at least on the theoretical level he studied and researched about the knowledge, description and interpretation of the Roma people's problems or carried on activities or approaches meant to change the quality of the life and social position of this ethnos.

Art. 8. - The non-governmental organizations (human rights, religion, professional etc.) can designate representative with consultative character which can be part of this organism. In this way the public inspector manager coordinator will announce in pen and ink the non-governmental organizations they consider they can contribute to reach the aim for which this structure was created.

PRIME MINISTER

*ANNEX 14***ASSOCIATIONS OF ROMA PEOPLE IN ROMANIA****EVALUATION**

**of the stage of reception and practical application by the Romanian Government of the "Conclusions and Recommendations that were done by the I.L.O Investigation Commission (International Labour Organization) on discrimination of labour in Romania" (1991), referring to Roma population, 1991-1995**

**The I.L.O. Investigation Commission in Romania**

In June 1989 a group of people in Romania (who were not Romanies) had a grievance against labour discrimination at the International Labour Organization.

In 1989 I.L.O. started to investigate the above mentioned in the complaint through an Investigation Commission.

The Commission whose president was Mr. Jules Deschenes explored labour discrimination in Romania in all its aspects. Among these the investigation orientated towards labour discrimination on ethnical criteria.

The report analysed in details the labour situation in the specific social-economic framework of different national minorities in Romania.

As a result of the analysis of the discrimination forms towards the Roma ethnos, the Commission of Investigation stipulated a series of conclusions and recommendations in the session of June 1991.

These ones were meant to correct things and to assure both treatment and opportunity's equality for all Romanian citizens, including Roma people, too.

One of the methodological contributions brought by the Report of the Investigation Commission of I.L.O. is defining the notion of "discrimination" in the particular case of Roma minority, through assigning the distinction between "direct discrimination" and "indirect discrimination" and their illustration with specific situations of the Romanies after 1989:

"The situation of the members of the Roma minority was characterized by direct discriminations but also by indirect discriminations.

The direct discriminations are based on physical or moral supposed characteristics like, for example < Roma people do not like work>. These generalizations have a clear racist feature. They become concrete when talking about labour: through the distribution of the Romanies in the most difficult work positions with the lowest social status; through cleavage of the salaries ; and through difficulties in promoting."

The direct discrimination takes place in the field of professional training and access to work positions: some Roma people are marginalized because of their low income; as a result their children can't benefit of the professional and technical training that is offered by the scholar system. The result is that these kids have difficulties in accessing skilled professions and are reduced to a marginal status which tends to repeat the situation created by the antecedent generation (par.592, p.234).

### **Conclusions and recommendations for the Roma people**

One the conclusions highlights that in Romania "the situation of Roma people did not widely improve after the events from December 1989. The direct discriminations seem to be maintained and maybe worsen like the media



campaigns demonstrate as Romanies are considered scapegoat, responsible for all past, present and future difficulties" (par.600,p.236).

The commission stipulated a series of specific recommendations regarding the control of the effects of these complex forms that have deep roots, insisting upon an "all-embracing reflection ... in order to define the measures destined to assure equality of chances and treatment in *labour and training* (E.M) for members of this minority" (par.601,p.236).

The Investigation Commission mentioned the initiatives adopted by the Romanian Government, immediately after December 1989, for the compensation of the training downshifts and work placement of the Romanian citizens of Roma origin.

The report also mentions that these positive measures "are not proportionate to the frequency of the problems that come out because of the existence of the Roma communities which are not integrated in society and whose members risk, taking into account the complete reorientation of the economic system to be the first who lose their jobs and who will furthermore cast out" (par.601).

Even the modest initiatives adopted by the government at the beginning of 1990 "lost breath" while advancing in "the transformation".

### **The partial failure of the network of Romany employees within the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection**

As a result of the Roma leaders with the first government after December 1989 there were given more than 58 work positions to be occupied by Romany inspector that means more than the necessary normalized by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. These ones were going to solve the Roma' s labour and social problems that were of the competence and specific activity of each ministry

in every country and some districts of the capital. They were also going to collect and operate dates in order to "be possible to define the measures destined to assure the equality of chances and of treatment in work and training"<sup>1</sup> I for Roma citizens.

The first initial intention lost its significance while implementing it. Thus from the 58 work positions during 5 years only 16 were for Romanies. The rest were occupied through unfair methods by Romanians who took care of other problems than those for which the positions were filled in. From the 16 inspectors 5 abandoned their posts because they were staffed with the minimum salary of the function, did not benefit of any promotion or material stimulus and were not allowed to take care of the Roma people's problems as they were promised while being staffed and for one of them the labour contract was broken for indiscipline.

If we add the hostile attitude of some colleagues, the explanation of abandoning their positions by the 5 ones is more complete. This happens in the conditions of which finding a job in Romania nowadays is a very serious problem.

Not even the person who was staffed within the Ministry of Labour, for attending the Roma problems at the General Direction of labour and unemployment did not enjoy a better treatment.

This specialist is double-graduated, the way his managers and colleagues are not; he was vice-leader of his promotion, unlike most of his managers and mates; he's a doctor on the problems he attends unlike his managers and colleagues; he's author of many studies and articles that were published, unlike his most managers and mates and he's co-author in two volumes, unlike his other

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<sup>1</sup>The Report of the investigation commission of I.L.O., Par. 601, p. 236. in "Official Bulletin" supplement 3, vol. LXXIV, 1991, series B

colleagues and managers. In 1987, after the anti-communist demonstration in Brasov he was arrested and his colleagues and managers were stigmatizing him like all participants in the demonstration and in 1989 he was one of the leaders of the revolution in Brasov while his mates and managers were trying to hide and avoid the people and nowadays they stigmatize him as beneficiary of Law 42/1990. Before 1989 while he was not working as a Romany for the Roma people he was awarded all advancements at exceptional level. Now that he's working as a Romany for the Roma people he received a degree after 5 years (the minimum period is 6 months), he's "avoided" by material rewards, these are within a blatantly ridiculous sum.

He's teased and any proposals or initiatives on Roma people are hidden from him. Actually there are efforts done in order to demonstrate the lack of importance and the efficiency of the work Roma people are carrying on for the Romanies, they are shown that they do not like to work, they do not know the problems, can't be good office clerks etc., but they are accepted only because they're receiving a favour.

Instead Roma organizations within the activity "Work places for Romanies" developed some projects that can be experiences which can stay on the base of some common activities, based on partnership, with public structures and systems. They pointed out that Romanies are able to work well and handle resources if they have the possibility. These experiences are described in annex 2 of this work.

**A freakish "constitutionality". The Police can publish the law breakers' ethnos, but the Labour Ministry cannot register the nationality of the unemployed people**

One of the proposals made by the Roma employee from the Labour Ministry was to mention the ethnos or the

nationality in the application for a work position or unemployment compensation (annex 1). This indicator was meant to facilitate the collection of data that were necessary for some programs which could be more adequate to Roma people's necessities and possibilities of satisfying the social labour request.

The resistance to this proposal was so fierce that finally it had to be issued in written form (annex1), but under various pretexts it was constantly refused. Actually the reason of the refuse was exactly the dissimulation of the discrimination in the work field towards the Roma ethnos.

The argument of "non-constitutionality" of such inventory data has no value as long as the census follows the nationality's indicator, too. The Romanian Police has separated inventories of the transgression done by Roma people, information that is regularly transmitted to media and sometimes to the miners. The direct discrimination and the inequality of treatment is obvious in this problem.

**No schooling phenomenon for Roma kids increases ...the position of the educational inspector for Romany children goes down .....**

At the Ministry of Education while taking the profit of a rearrangement, the position of inspector with scholar problems for Roma people, which was approved in 1990, was cut down in November 1994 though the Roma minority is the second as amount and the first as a problem of schooling, training and educating.

Yet due to the special efforts done by the linguist Gheorghe Sarau the Ministry of Education accepted that "the manual of Romany language" that was published by The Didactic and Pedagogical Publishing House could be used

at schools by Roma pupils who prepare themselves to become primary teachers.

The Ministry of Education also accepted to use in schools "the alphabet book in Roma language" done by Mr. Marcel Kourthiade which was donated by the Council of Europe.

The paragraph 617, point 15, p.243 recommends to the Romanian Government to "intensify" all efforts, that have already been started in order to form educational staff of Roma origin".

This initiative was virulently and offensively attacked by people from the board of the extremist parties and the journalism with a nationalist view and all went against the "intellectual capacity" of the pupils who were attending the courses for the 3 grades of Roma educators and primary teachers and that Romanies were "favoured".

As a result the Ministry of Education, starting with 1992, did not grant position for Romanies; one of the grades that were initiated in 1990 (in Bacau) was out of service and the positions were offered to the Roma pupils; in 1995 when there were again offered positions for the Romanies at Normal School in Bucharest the Roma pupils were not registered anymore because of the sad experience of their colleagues.

We mention that a grade of training the future teachers for primary forms for the Roma pupils was set up in the scholar year 1995-1996, at the Normal School in Slatina, County of Olt. The Foundation "Rom Rom" from Caracal, Olt County had an important contribution to this positive evolution.

**From the denomination of "Rroms" to that of "gipsy":  
the institutionalization of the ethnic prejudices in the  
language of the public administration**

Paragraph 601 (p.236) of the Report I.L.O. recommends " total stopping within the mass means of communication depending on the Government of broadcast racist stereotypes which were addressed to the members of this community. The position of the other mass means of communication should be the object of a negotiation between authorities and all interested parts, including representatives of Roma communities."

Paragraph 617, point 13,p. 243 continues the idea above-mentioned and recommends to carry on "a large campaign in order to make it possible the disappearance of the traditional negative attitude towards Romanies (gypsies) in our mentalities".

For this reason the Romanian Government ,joining the Foreign Ministry and Non-governmental Organizations like PER and Ethnic Roma Federation, organized the international workshop which was called "Roma people and their daily life", during the period 29<sup>th</sup> April-3<sup>rd</sup> March 1993, in Snagov. This was a promising start of collaboration, even if the seminar that was organized before the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) on minorities' problems that was carried on in Warsaw (May 1993) had a strong propagandistic shade.

This beginning was seriously shaded by the Declaration of the Romanian Government regarding the events from Hadareni (23<sup>rd</sup> September 1993). The declaration justifies the violence acts without a dissociation and clear conviction of them and the confusion and Romanies' culpability were promoted.

The report of a sub-commission of the Romanian Parliament that was approved by the institution above-

mentioned justifies the violence and blamed the victims for the catastrophe, that means the Roma people.

The truncated pieces of information and the denigrating comments towards Roma people made by the National Television as well as the calumnious, insulting press articles of the allied parties and the present government party during the period 1993-1995 cancelled any positive acceptation of the beginning of "reconciliation" signed by the workshop from Snagov.

As for the agreement between authorities and all "interested parties"<sup>2</sup> or the carrying on of a "large campaign"<sup>3</sup> no way.

Moreover in April 1995 the Government approved the proposal of the Romanian Foreign Affairs of using in the official documents the deprecatory denomination of "gypsy" instead of Rrom. The Roma organizations aggressively protested against this position, as it comes out from annex 3.

In October 1995 within the conclusions of the Reunion of Evaluation of Human Dimension Implementation of the Organization for Co-operation and Security in Europe it was stated as discriminatory the decision of using the ethnic denomination of "gypsy" instead of "Rrom" that the Romanian Government adopted, without consulting the representatives of this minority.

## **TVR 2: is it an antenna for citizens of "grade 2"?**

To its honour the minority of German people which is concentrated (like the Hungarian one) in some countries has its own redaction in the Romanian Television (as the Hungarian minority) and benefits of 2,5 hours weekly on

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<sup>2</sup> Report, par. 601, p. 236

<sup>3</sup> Report, par. 617, pct. 3, p. 243

channel 1 and one hour on channel 2 to which we can add the programs on the local channels.

Comparing the Roma minority has just half an hour weekly on channel 2. This program is broadcast with difficulties only in 1/3 of the territory though the Roma minority is spread on the whole area of the country, in equal number for every country.

The program has no independence the cultural themes are also imposed. We consider as inequality of treatment which appears so obviously.

**The improvement of the living conditions for Roma people: a sub-column of the budget for "natural disasters"**

The paragraph 17, point 16, p. 23 recommends to the Government "to establish maximum available resources in order to take out the Roma families from the living conditions that were extremely deplorable under which they are living".

Because the program of buildings for the population was interrupted after the events from December 1989 and the construction of social houses or any other type had not started yet, it was impossible that in those present times the living conditions for Roma people could be improved.

But of all 46<sup>4</sup> collective attacks against Roma communities, 24<sup>5</sup> ended in arsons of houses and destructions of goods, dead or seriously injured people. In no cases it could not be integrally repaired the material and moral damages suffered by Roma people.

The Government publicly declared that the fire houses will be rebuilt in Hadareni, Mures County, in September

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<sup>4</sup> According to Mrs. Rora Roinita's Communication - governmental expert of the Council for National Minorities - in the seminar " The Unknown Romanies near Us", Tg.-mures, November,1994.

<sup>5</sup> Rromano Lil, Justice a Geometric Alternative, 1995, Rromani CRISS.



1993, but until nowadays they appropriated 60 million lei. This sum served for rebuilding only partially 6 of the 14 houses destroyed by the fire.

The General Secretary of the Government and the coordinator of the Council for National Minorities announced in Romanies' press in August 1993 that he appropriated the amount of 50 million lei for rebuilding the houses that were destroyed in fire in August 1991 in Valenii Lapusului, Maramures County. Until nowadays this announcement stayed as "for protocol".

The work of rebuilding, operated by the Ethnic Federation of Romanies, for the 12 houses which were rebuilt in Valenii Lapusului, were financed through the contribution of some non-governmental associations from other countries.

For rebuilding the houses that were on fire in Mihail Kogalniceanu, Constanta County (October 1990) the Prefecture of Constanta County appropriated 10 million lei, contribution that was equivalent to the one done by Central Council of Sints and Romanies from Germany, the Ethic Federation of Romanies in Romania, which was operating the work and that had to owe over 40 million lei to the constructor who executed in advance 9 (until December 1993) works that were going to be paid from a governmental contribution.

In October 1995 the Government approve the amount of 130 million lei for rebuilding the houses "damaged" in the village Mihail Kogalniceanu (Constanta County) the amount was transferred in December 1995 as "it was going to be used until the end of the year". As a result of this "kindness" 92 million lei came back to the budget (were lost) that stayed unspent. Comparing with the localities from the Moldavian countries that were affected by floods in 1991 the reparation of the damages was urgently been

done. Are the natural water disasters more impressive than the fire disasters done by human hands?

Or do we meet again here the activity of direct and indirect discriminations ....., registering in this field too a flagrant inequality of treatment?

**The impunity of the racial furies: an original contribution to the European campaign against racism, illiberality and xenophobia**

Setting up a constitutional state is a slower process than the reconstruction of the houses destroyed by collective attacks against the Roma communities. Until present days none of the situations of violence with racist character against Roma families and communities that had happened during the period 1+990-1995 have been resolved by justice yet under the penal and civil aspects.

According to Mrs. Maria Rus, prime-prosecutor of Harghita County, "the investigations will continue until the write-off of the cases-this much"<sup>6</sup>.

As for "the program of special measures like the ones stipulated by article 5 of the Convention 111/1958" that's stipulated in the report in paragraph 617, point 17, p.244, until present days we cannot signal an intention of implementing it at any decision level and for no administrative units.

**The nostalgia of the "monolithic union...": the policy of the Council of National Minorities of financial support of a single Roma association**

In September 1994 the Seminar from Warsaw on Roma people's problems within the area of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) which was

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<sup>6</sup> The Magazine "22 Plus", supplement of the magazine "22", no.15/07.06.1995, p.VII.

organized by the Council of Europe and the Board on Human Rights and Democratic Institutions of OSCE.

Few days before this workshop the Council of National Minorities of the Romania Government summoned a part of the Roma leaders in order to know them and propose the union into a single one organization, "in order to know exactly to whom we must deal with". Actually the Romanies were so stratified, spread on the territory, having so many different problems that a single organization of all of them in that moment of their public affirmation, an artificial construction, without a base in their social history and that could be inadequate to their action needs at the local level.

This fact is also known by the Government but because they know during this period such a construction is impossible they keep on asking for it and offer as an argument the fact of not being possible to have a dialogue with a large number of leaders and organizations belonging to the Romanies.

What would happen if the president of the country could refuse to dialogue with the leaders and parties who did not support his candidature and would ask them to make up a union into a single party? What would be the proportion between such a request and pluralism and democracy?

The proof that the meeting from September 1994 did not take place for the Roma people in Romania but for an image in Warsaw, as well as the seminar in Snagov 1993 is made up by the fact that the promised meeting by the Council of the National Minorities in October 1995 and other promised meetings have never taken place.

The Government understood to support the Roma ethnos by granting an amount of money from the budget to a single Romany organization which was represented in the Parliament and in the Council on National Minorities but

this had as result a much more separation among the Roma people.

Moreover the amount that was received on the behalf of the Romanies (the second minority in Romania after the census from 1992) was less than the one of the least minority (that of the Armenians) which made that discriminatory act to stay at the level of propaganda.

### **Where are our .....integrators?**

The paragraph 617, point14, p.243 from the Report recommends to the Romanian Government to grow better the social situation of the Roma people through an integrated program which was conceived in collaboration with their representatives which has to include in a whole piece education, labour, house and all other necessary elements for their progress.

As an answer to this recommendation the Roma organizations made up a complex program which they presented in 1992 on a friendly way and then officially in 1993 both to the Romania Government, having the no. 1785/22.10.93 and to the Parliament, having the no. 1254/22.10.1993 and to some political parties within the governmental side or to the opposition. (Annex 4).

The program was accompanied by a project of structure for ensure its implementation (annex 5). In the annex there was also a proposal of completion and changing of the Law No. 18/1990 of the territorial fund (annex 6) so that the Romanies who had worked in agriculture until 1989 wouldn't be missing any living resort.

The program was not implemented and none of the people whom it was assigned started even a discussion about its content. No observation, no critical appreciation, no proposal of change, improvement or adaptation.

In the same way the Roma associations initiated an analysis and an action program for the levelling of the educational chances of the Roma youth and kids. This document was the result of the collective evaluation of some experiences of innovation in this field and it was presented to the Ministry of Education in June 1994 and May 1995 as well as to the Commission on Education of the Council on National Minorities in June 1994.

The irrespective governmental organisms did not answer to the civic, non-governmental initiative of those who in official declarations are considered to suffer of problems of "social lack of integration", until April 1996 when the Ministry of Education finally accepted the beginning of a dialogue.

### **Conclusions**

The report of the Investigation Commission of I.L.O. found a series of aspects which placed a curb on the democratic development in the labour area and made a lot of recommendations in order to cut them off.

The frequent changes of the government in Romania had as a result the lack of possibility of knowing, deepening and implementing in an appropriate manner the recommendations of the Report.

The evolution of the Romanian society deepened and multiplied the number of cases of discrimination regarding labour on Roma people, inequality of treatment intensified and that of chances sank.

That's why we consider necessary the following:

- to re-engage the debates with the Romanian authorities regarding the conclusions and recommendations of the Report;

- to externalize the recommendations of the Report and to control more efficiently this process

- to initiate eventually a new investigation on the same theme with a strong emphasis on Roma ethnos because nowadays a new phenomenon is felt : that of **institutional discrimination**.

June 1996

The Alliance for the Roma Union

Vasile Burtea

The Federation of the Roma people  
in Romania

Nicolae Gheorghe

Rromani CRISS

Nicoleta Bitu

Foundation "Aven Amentza"

Vasile Ionescu

The Union of Roma people  
Raducanu

Gheorghe

*Annex 14, Appendix 1***The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection****NOTE**

Because the requests of situations and data regarding the labour and social protection problems of different national and ethnic minorities become more and more frequent and our inventory does not create the possibility of operation with correct data in this way I return to the verbal proposal that was often made with the stipulation that in the printed application for work position, unemployment benefit or support allocation it is necessary to introduce a rubric for nationality (ethnos) which can offer differentiated data and on the problem above-mentioned.

This fact is possible during this period when in the "application" other changes are operated, too.

The restrictive argument that such a rubric contradicts the constitutional stipulations is false and comes from the lack of study of the text of the constitution. This one does not interdict inventories and statistics on national or ethnic criterion, but interdicts the checking of the declared nationality by the citizen, which is something else.

Even the fact that the census of the population and homesteads in 1992 made such an inventory and data arrangement comes to confirm the lack of substance of the argument belonging to the ones who state the lack of constitutionality of such an inventory.

27.01.1995

Expert,  
Vasile Burtea

*Va se interzice introducerea de date  
si statistici, etc. in aplicatiile de  
cerere de munca, de concedii, de pensii  
si de alte drepturi - cf. Burtea, in raportul de  
se cercetare si prezentare a situatiei in  
juridica asupra problemei prezentei clasei de  
stat. Polit. sociale, politica si legislatie ca  
Judec. Bucuresti, 11.2.1995*

*Annex 14, appendix 2*

**Romani CRISS - The Centre of the Romanies on Social  
Intervention and Studies  
The Federation of Roma People from Romania  
Projectbuero zur Foerderung von Roma-Initiativen, Germany**

**PROGRAM**

**ACTIVITIES OF SELF-HELP, INCOMEGENERATING FOR ASSOCIATIONS  
OF ROMA PEOPLE IN ROMANIA. An element in Promoting the  
Human Rights and Minorities**

**Document of work  
October 1995  
Rromani CRISS**

**I. Aims and general objectives of the program**

I. 1. Creating jobs and capital for Roma people, in different communities in Romania, by launching local projects that are initiated, carried on and led by Roma associations or multi-ethnic associations. By doing this the project aims to reduce the migration based on economic reasons, to increase the confidence within the Roma communities and to the breakage of marginalization and dependence cycles.

I. 2. Procuring training and legal advice for the members of the local project as long as the process of planning, preparing, carrying on and evaluating the self-help projects which generate income take place.

I. 3. Promoting other local civic and developmental initiatives, in order to complement the projects which generate capital in the referred to communities. This includes initiatives regarding the schooling of Roma children, co-operation with local authorities for solving and prevention of the inter-ethnic conflicts, training of the Roma organizers/mediators in different communities.



## **II. Background: Creating projects which include on the whole advantageous elements - the role of the self-help projects that generate capital in the promotion of human and civil rights of the Roma people**

Starting with 1989 the Central and Eastern Europe passed through a number of initiatives of addressing the necessity of total recognition of the human and civil rights of Roma people both like national minority that was newly admitted and as citizens of the referred to states.

Until present days the majority of these initiatives are approached from the social point of view with the priority of solving: the social problems of Romanies" or even "Roma people's problem". While the goal is to promote the social reintegration of the Roma people actually this often means social assimilation. The social help is usually granted for specific projects on a well-defined field (schooling for the Roma kids, improving of the living conditions, improving the relations within communities). While evaluating the last projects lots of activists admitted the necessity of approaching the activities regarding the Roma people from other points of view: a global approach of the Roma's development with a great emphasis on the ethnic-political background of the Romanies from the Central and Eastern Europe. In this way the prejudices and discrimination that are deeply -rooted must be rewarded and refuted. The Romany status must be improved through the whole - recognition of their linguistic and cultural rights and more Roma people must take part into the political organisms at different levels, thus they improve their position of negotiating.

The relations between different activity fields must not be treated with superficiality. The tries of schooling the Roma children can be in vain if their families do not have the necessary money in order to dress and feed their kids or whether they are threatened by violence against Roma people within the community.

The tries to initiate participation and civic actions will also be in vain if the members of the families re unemployed and want to emigrate in order to gain money for living.

Developing activities regarding the solving of conflicts, training of Roma mediators, schooling the Roma children and repatriation of Roma people in Romania our organizers admitted the obvious and oppressive necessity of creating jobs for members of Roma communities. While considering that many Romanian people often confront with unemployment it was also admitted the fact that Romanies lived a long history of social and economic discrimination. The truth is that Roma people are the last in being employed and the first when being fired.

The International Governor Corpus of Labour Office wrote that there were no estimable changes regarding the Roma people's situation after 1989, as follows:

*"The situation of the members of Roma communities was characterized by discrimination, both direct and indirect. The direct discrimination was based on supposed physical and moral traits, like for example "Gypsies do not like to work". These generalizations have a racist character. They manifest in the area of hiring as Roma people are given the hardest jobs with the lowest social status, with salary cleavage and difficulties in promotion. The indirect discrimination appears while training and access to information: some Roma people are marginalized because of their poor incomes; as a consequence the children cannot benefit of technical or vocational training that comes from the educational system. The result is that these children face difficulties in their access to skilled work and are reduced to a marginal status which tends to repeat the model that was set up by the precedent generation."*

Regarding this aspect a program in 1994 was initiated, which can address both to the necessity of self-authorization for the employment initiatives in Roma communities and to

the training in managing the project and civic organization. In this project Rromani CRISS has the role of facilitating and be a mediator for the relations between the local project coordinators and founders 9 organize the training, to offer advice on evaluations, reporting etc.).

**III. Working from the experience: "Work and capital for Roma people in Romania" - Training for local development within the Roma communities**

*III. 1. Initiation of a program of self-help in Romania*

The program " Work and income for Roma people" was launched in 1994 through a co-operation NGO between the Federation of the Romanies in Romania, Rromani CRISS and a number of associations in Germany that are part of "The Group for Information and Coordination of the Labour Promotion".

The main initiator of organization and ethnics in this program is the "The Office for the Social Work of the Evangelic Church in Germany."

The proposal of the program was drawn by Mr. Andreas Freudenberg (Germany), based on specific aims for the activities that generate capital in the Roma communities where the associations and the representatives are members of the Federation of Roma people. The present monitor is Mr. Herbert Heuss.

The goal and details (technical, economical-financial, organizational) of these activities that generate income and the rules for granting financial credit by the Germany sources were debated in detail and issued during some group meetings that took place in Germany (December 1992 and June 1993) and in Romania (8 seminars in 1994-1995).

The program must provide the credit of starting the projects which generate capital for a period of two years. The Labour Associations have the necessary qualification

in the proposed activity area but they lack the capital in order to begin a beneficial business.

Today three self-help projects that are carried on by the civic associations and the registered work associations exist in Romania (at least 21 members). The three projects are the following:

- Palazu Mare, in Constanta city: plough-land
- in Bacau city: metallurgical shops
- in Coltau village : metallurgy, interlacing of baskets and brick manufacturing.

The fourth project for tailoring and furriery has recently been approved for a group of Romanies from the Ludus city where the violence against Roma people left the members of the group without houses.

There will be considered the requests for the foundation of some self-help projects belonging only to the groups that are or will be legally registered like:

- civic non-profit associations
- SRL (companies with limited responsibility)
- families with domestic authorizations
- agricultural associations, etc.

### *III.2. "The Rom Fund" self-sustained from the financial point of view*

The capital that was invested in the current projects which generate capital must be returned by the respective associations. This credit will be granted in order to set up the "Rrom Fund", which will support other self-help projects that generate capital and local development (example: schooling)

The Rom Fund will be a permanent source for the multiplication of the Roma communities that will aim to the self-help projects. The Fund will be administrated by members of the Roma Federation. In this way co-operation and mutual trust among various Roma associations are encouraged.

The Rrom Fund has something more than the generating capital projects, as the Rrom Fund will support other developing initiatives (building /repairing schools, prevention of violence, health etc.).

*III.3. Educational dimensions of the capital generating projects and of the development within the community*

The program "Work and Capital for Romanies in Romania" has a distinct chapter about "Preparing a Project and Professional Training for Management and Evaluation".

Rromani CRISS and the Roma Federation organized a series of nine workshops in order to train the members of the capital generating projects.

The workshops provide a favourable opportunity for the local coordinators of the project (and for the accountants) which is to debate the preparing and organizational problems that were arisen from the proposals and achievement of the local projects.

The project coordinators also benefited of individual consultancy in drawing the business plans. This consultancy was offered by Mrs. Carmen Zarzu from the Centre of Consultancy for Small and Medium Enterprises of the United Nations from Bucharest.

The goals of the training workshops and of the informative seminars included:

- establishing a "common group of work" for preparing and managing the land projects (status, registration of a company),

- preparing and managing the projects for the members of work groups (business plans, crediting processes, etc.),

- supervising and evaluating the process of carrying on these projects,

- providing expert consultancy (projecting the produced goods, evaluation),

- training in the techniques and management strategies of the managers of the project (aid, accountancy),

- training the representatives and associations of Romanies in order to know the organizational secrets,

especially in moral and leading values that are necessary for promoting some positive activities of relation with public (inclusively activities which generate capital. Schooling for the Roma children),

- exploring new efficient strategies for the development of the projects; identification and promotion of new generating capital projects for Roma communities (inclusively the possible co-operation with local authorities).

*III. 4. Promoting other civic activities of development that aim the complementation of the creation of jobs for Roma people in Romania*

For the complementation of the job creating projects for Romanies other local activities of development were encouraged and then they started. Benefiting of the organizational aspects and of the moral forming of the capital generating projects the Roma people within local communities have a greater possibility to be in charge of some other political and social problems (schooling; training the Roma mediators, etc.).

It was admitted the fact according to which creation of jobs and income for the members of the community play an important role in the implementation and success of other civic initiatives. Thus local development and the problems on human rights are treated together, as they complement themselves in a mutual way for the development of the civil society and recognition of the Roma people's rights.

#### **IV. Brief description of 3 projects of self-help for the Roma associations in Romania**

*IV. 1. The Agricultural Association "The Fraternity" in Palazu Mare, Constanta*

*IV.1.1 Content and description which generates capital*

In Palazu Mare the Roma people represent together with the Macedonians the greatest ethnic group. Taking into account the long discrimination history against Romanies,

together with the current economical tensions there is a risk that all this could lead to an inter-ethnic conflict in Mihail Kogalniceanu, the vicinal village and its result would be the burning-out and destroying of Roma houses.

The aims of the self-help project from Palazu Mare include the contribution to economic integration of Romanies in the region, the possibility of eliminating the migrations based on economic reasons and an improvement of social and local tensions.

The Agricultural Association of Roma people called "The Fraternity" is made up of approximately 18 families of nearly 100 people of which 40 are able to work. Each family received a plough-land through the new Romanian Law of the land. This social self-help association was created in order to be able to achieve its activities and take out necessary profits through dividing land, resources and experience.

Yet because of their poverty the members did not have capital to invest in machines and tractors they needed to work the land with. The high cost of renting equipment together with the low prices the state was practicing (that is the unique customer) on the products led to losses and members; desire to sell their land.

In the initial proposal of the project the invested capital had to be credited on a 3 years period. "The Fraternity" could buy the necessary equipment and build a store place for the goods and machines. Thus some losses are avoided because of the high price of renting machines. Moreover "The Fraternity" plans to use a part of the land for breeding.

In 1994 "The Fraternity" was given 33.000 DM. The money was used for machines investments (tractor, trailer, disc).

From the 30 hectares belonging to the society 24 hectares could be used because of the credit that was granted in 1994 as follows:

- 7 hectares with potatoes;
- 3 hectares with onion;
- 2 hectares with alfalfa;
- 10 hectares with corn;
- 2 hectares with cabbage;

The total number of the working people who benefit of this project is 30. A part of the goods was divided among the members of the association while the rest of it was locally sold.

In 1995 "The Fraternity" was credited until nowadays with the amount of 21,000DM for investments of machines, seeds and partial irrigation and plans to grow wheat that will be harvested in 1996.

*IV.1.2. Related activities of local development and promotion of human rights that were done by the members of the project*

The present project leader of "The Fraternity" is a mediator in the same time regarding the re-building of the Roma houses destroyed by fire in 1991 by the village Mihail Kogalniceanu and was elected as the country representative of the Union of Romanies in Romania.

## **IV. 2. The Association on Roma Traditional Jobs Development in Bacau -"ROM MESER"**

*IV.2.1. The content and description of the generating capital project*

There are approximately 9000 unemployed Romanies in Bacau County. Before 1990 the majority of Roma people were working in the local industry which from that moment on had to send a great number of employees into joblessness.

Their attempts in finding another position of work failed because of the deep roots discrimination of the Roma people, especially from the social and economic points of view.

"Rom Meser" was created in order to gather the Roma craftsmen or those who work in a family workshop and



to provide them a good work atmosphere, the increase of production and incomes. Moreover six members of the association were repatriated from the Western Europe and the project offered them a real chance to ensure their capitals for their families.

In Romania and other countries from the Eastern Europe the Roma people have a great tradition in manufacturing metals, wood, fur and leather. Within Ceausescu's regime these individual activities were forbidden. Yet a lot of craftsmen learnt many professions and technologies within the public enterprises of those times. "RomMeser" aims to "re-development" of Roma jobs in metallurgy by mixing the Roma old craftsmen's knowledge with qualifications and high technology which were learnt by the younger generations.

From its own resources RomMeser bought land to build a workshop. The project aims to provide capital in order to buy construction materials for the work shop, necessary equipment and technical materials, transport and starting utilities.

In 1994, 45,000DM were credited to Romeser and the production starts in 1995. In the first part of the project the production from melting houses began. The total number of workers was 7. The included goods include engine pieces, bars, etc.

In 1995 there were advanced 17.0000DM and other 48,500 waited for approval from Germany.

#### *IV.2.2. Related activities of local development and promotion of human rights in the project*

As a result of setting up the foundries in Bacau the road where it is situated is paved so the movement conditions improved. While the practical result of this one is clear there is the masked contribution for trust consolidation among different local groups.

Moreover besides creating work positions MonMeser aims to the promotion of Roma children's schooling and

initiatives for improving the inter-ethnic group relations in Bacau.

*IV. 3. Roma Association in Coltau, Maramures*

*IV. 3.1. The content and description of the generating capital project*

Coltau is a multi-ethnic village with approximately 1700 inhabitants. There are 565 Roma people in the village while the majority of the villagers are Hungarians. At the beginning of this project an average of 80% of them were unemployed.

The Roma Association from Coltau ("Tigla S.R.L.") was created in 1993 by 50 Romanies and Hungarians from Coltau in order to develop activities in 4 fields: brick manufacture (a special, traditional style used in building houses), twined materials (example-baskets, twines), metallurgy and agriculture.

In 1991 the Roma and Hungarian people opened an workshop for brick manufacturing which hired approximately 100 people (multi-ethnics). The project is going to improve and enlarge the workshop so the number of employees increases. While a considerable market for those bricks existed the production is seasonal taking place only during the hot summer months. Thus the other activities are considered a guarantee of the villagers' employment throughout the year.

Starting with the moment when the first credit of 41,000DM was granted in December 1994 which was going to be expenditure in February 1995 the Roma Association from Coltau decided to invest the money in the basket production (and other twined materials) and metallurgical production, as those ones did not depend on weather. The credit was granted in tow placements.

The first amount of 26,000DM was dedicated to metallurgical activities as follows:

- 20000DM for equipment and materials

- 6000DM for current expenses (organization / preparation of the work place, rent, electricity, etc.)

The second amount of 15,000DM was assigned to the production of baskets and twined materials (chairs, tables)

- 5000 DM for equipment (example: machines for wood shaping)

- 6500DM for materials

- 4000 DM for the production's area arrangement

Nowadays 5 work in metallurgy.

The second amount of 8000 DM was advanced in the summer of 1995 for the activities of brick manufacturing. Approximately 50 people were hired for brick manufacture. In terms of family income it was possible to earn 400,000 lei per month.

102,000 bricks were produced during summer time though the production started late because of the delaying of the credit from Germany. A part of the bricks (52,000) were sold until now and 20000 were given to a mentor in order to train 12 members of the local community. The left bricks are stored and are going to be sold.

A supplement of 15,000DM in autumn for the investment in agricultural machines was given as the Association plans to start the agricultural production in 1996.

An amount of 58,000DM, for the investment in brick production, metallurgy and transport in 1995, keeps on waiting for its approval.

#### *IV.3.2. Related activities of local development of the project*

In Coltau activities regarding the Roma children's schooling are developed by the members of the association and the commissions were formed for carrying on other activities of local development (sanitary, local cemetery etc.).

## **V. Projects of local development that are on the anvil**

### *V.1. The Organization "Romano Tolah", Palazu Mare, Constanta*

The organization "Romano Tolah", Palazu Mare - Furriery Work shop

In Ludus Hadareni, September 1993 the group violence against Roma people had as a result the destruction of 13 houses. While the Romanian Government promised funds for re-built the houses the progresses are slow.

The Association "Romano Talah" is founded by one of the families from Hadareni together with the members of the community Palazu Mare where that family moved since then.

Leather and fur tailoring was an old tradition of Roma people, especially for women having people who were below them some experienced members. So the project coordinator was encouraged to make up an NGO and a Company with Limited Liability. (Romanian term: S.R.L.). The funds for this project were granted and when the preparing details are ready money will start to come.

### *V.2. "Phralipe-Brotherhood RL", Valenii Lapusului, Maramures County*

In August 1991 the group violence against the Romanies resulted in burning and destroying the houses belonging to the members of the poor community of Roma people (about 200 people).

The Roma Federation intensively worked for their re-integration in the village, re-granting of houses or reconstruction of houses on the basis of an urban plus and launching the schooling of Roma children (who tried to be schooled during '70).

In order to provide a regular income to the children's parents and contribute to the setting up of confidence in the relations between the Romany and Romanian villagers the

Roma Federation encouraged the Local Council to register an association of production capital orientated.

"Phralipe-Brotherhood RL" was registered in 1993. A piece of land (one hectare) was bought in 1995 for the future location of brick factory for the Roma community. The money was supplied by CRISS from a donation of Kaplan-Fund through "Human Rights in Economical Activities" in 1994.

The financial help for the start of the production in this workshop of manufacturing bricks in Valenii Lapusului was identified as a project which can be developed.

### *V.3.The Masters' Associations in Ploiesti*

The associations are made up of families with domestic authorizations and domestic Companies with Limited Liability based on small commercial activities.

The Town Hall from Ploiesti offered space so that any economical agent could build small shops (boutiques) on the commercial areas of different parts of the town. The Masters' Associations are organized on residential criteria and Roma enterprises or employees of other nationalities are gathered together in those areas.

The Roma masters asked for credit from the Roma Federation and Rromania Criss in order to build shops on the commercial areas offered by the Town Hall under a condition (urban) that is to renew the contracts ensuring the domestic spaces and authorizations.

## **VI. Conclusions**

Romani Criss and Roma Federation plan to continue the development of self-help / capital generating projects within other activities for promoting the human rights. The projects were considered as key-factors in building the intra-community trust and promoting other initiatives of local development. Moreover the members of the project have the possibility to break the dependence

and marginalization circles; migrations based on economic reasons are reduced and new knowledge is learnt about project and civic organization.

The only way these projects could be realized is granting of credit for investment. Once the projects will be fully fulfilled the repayment of the loans will be done towards the Roma Fund, a permanent resource for the multiplication of self-help projects of Roma people in Romania.

This approach of Roma development takes into account the necessity of political integration, admitting the social measures that were taken, developing activities of promoting human rights. The results of the self-help capital generating projects create jobs for Romanies, but not only for them and contribute to the improvement of Roma social image, so that the tensions within communities are calmed down and the labour discrimination is discouraged.

Made by Jennifer Tanaka, Nicolae Gheorghe

*Annex 14, Appendix 3*

**THE RENEWED PROTEST OF ROMA ASSOCIATIONS FROM ROMANIA  
Regarding the Decision of the Romanian Government  
of using the name "gypsy" as an official denomination on  
Romanies in Romania - a document that was read  
and adapted in the assembly of Roma Party  
in the period 25-26 November 1995**

**Undersigned Roma Associations**

They were notified that the representatives of the participants states at the Reunion of Examining the Human Dimension of the Organization on Security and Co-operation in Europe that took place in Warsaw, 2-9 October 1995 reconfirmed the attention offered by the Organization on Security and Co-operation in Europe to the private problems which Romanies and Sints faced in Europe.

Within this context the recommendation of the Romanian Government of using in public life the denomination of *gypsy* and not that of the Romanies (Rromi) as all Roma people are called all over the world was criticized. The report of the Reunion OSCE consider that "... as being discriminatory" the fact of taking a decision like that without consulting the legitimate representatives of Roma people. It is reiterated in the same time the Roma and Sint people's right of asking that in the public life they have to be identified with the ethnic name that comes from their own language, which for the Roma people living in Romania, is the name Rrom, Roma.

**The Roma Associations in Romania express their dissatisfaction and protest towards the Romania Government's attitude of maintaining the recommendation which was issued in the Memorial H (03/169/1995 of using in the public life the denomination of "gypsy".**

After the period of signing the Memorandum of the Foreign Affairs Ministry H (03/169/1995 by the Romanian Prime Minister, some international organizations had a reaction towards the public protest of Roma people

living in Romania regarding the name of "gypsy" in public administration and assumed in the international documents the denomination of Rromi. This is the case, for example, of the Resolution Regarding the Roma's contribution to the Building a Tolerant Europe" that was adopted by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe, an organism of the Council of Europe (30<sup>th</sup> May 1995) or the Resolution of the European Parliament regarding the "discrimination against the Romanies" and "the situation of human and minorities' rights (July, 1995).

During the meetings from June and September 1995 the Committee of Ministers of the European Council decided the setting up of" a Group of specialists on Roma/Gypsies". This decision comes for the application of the Recommendation 1203 "on Gypsies in Europe' that was adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the European Council. The decision of the Committee of ministers signalizes a change in the terms used by the Council of Europe, that means the adoption of the denomination "Roma /Gypsies" name that was used within OSCE starting with the year 1990. The representatives of Roma associations gathered in the meeting from 25-26<sup>th</sup> November 1995 while confronting the attitude of the Romania Government of not considering the wishes expressed by the representatives of Roma associations and by the moral example given by the international organizations to which Romania joined or is going to do this refreshed up their

## PROTEST

On the issued recommendation by the Romania Government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of using in the public life the ethnic denomination "gypsy".

The Roma representatives ask for an official declaration of the Government regarding the cancelling of the Memorial H (03/169/1995. They also request the right of the representatives of the public administration, of educational institutions and of the press to use in their activity the denomination Rrom, corresponding to Romany traditions and rules, the living language of Roma people from everywhere.



## THE ROMA ASSOCIATIONS FROM ROMANIA

# AME SAN ROM!

### PROTEST

of the Roma associations from Romania, referring to the Memorandum MAE H (03) /169/1995 through which avoiding the denomination of Romany, Romanies (Rrom, Rromi into Romanian) and using the one of "gypsies" as a denomination of the Roma minority from Romania is recommended.

The Roma Associations from Romania were notified about the content of the document that was running by the Foreign Affairs Ministry with the title "**Memorandum - Theme: problems regarding the denomination of an ethnos that lives in Romania**", no. H(03)/169/1995.

From additional information it comes out that the text" was approved by Mr. Nicolae Vacaroiu, Prime Minister of the Romanian Government."

Memorandum MAE actually recommends - ... as obvious the need that the Romanian official authorities use nomenclature that was practiced in the international conventions and documents ONU, the Council of Europe and OSCE: "țigan" into Romanian, „gypsy" in English."

The subscribed Roma associations

### Protest

Regarding the contest of the recommendation that was formulated by the Romanian Government through the Foreign Affairs Ministry and

### Condemns

the severe, undemocratic way this recommendation was adopted and implemented.

A people and its name cannot be "decreed", it simply EXISTS.

The right of having a name and being called in a way by others through a name which comes from own language is an elementary right of any people or minority. The affirmation and claim of ethnic name is the first act of expressing the moral autonomy of a people and its members. Imposing through administrative means of a people's denomination or category of population is a form of ignorance, despise and oppression of the respective persons by the dominant political elite.

RROM expresses the complaint and right of Roma people to have a name and be called by others through an ethnic name that comes from their own language, Romany language which was transmitted and preserved as a living language, complete used in all countries by Roma people in Diaspora.

**The Memorial of the Foreign Affairs Ministry revokes the memory of slaves' masters.**

The denomination of "gypsy" circulated in the historical provinces of Romania having the judicial and social meaning of "slave", which indicates the situation of Roma collective and hereditary servitude, judicial condition of Roma people in Europe, which lasted until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.

By recommending the use of this denomination in the public administration the Romanian Government announced the tendency of coming back to the situation of Roma judicial and social subordination during Romanian Middle Ages. We remind that during that period the ethnic denomination of "Romanian" was designating in the Romanian Province the social and judicial condition of the peasants' servitude, "the land link", the bondage. The "gypsies'" masters were also the "Romanians'" ones, too; the nostalgia of manorial privileges infested the memory of the authors of the Memorandum of Foreign Affairs Ministry.

In a hasty and tendentious way the Memorial MAE wants to legitimate and to retain an unwritten law, a prejudice

that was created within the historical and cultural space under the pretext of alignment to supposed international standards.

We regret that such an attempt intervenes in 1995, *the International Year of Tolerance*, the *Year of European Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia and Tolerance*, the year when the Romanian authorities organize *International Seminar about Tolerance*, 23-26<sup>th</sup> May, in Bucharest.

The Romanian Government continues to practice "secret" decisions regarding the Roma people in Romania.

By approving the Memorial MAE the Prime Minister of the Government broke the right to ethnical identity that was stated by the Romania Constitution (art.6).The administrative document H (03) /169 /1995 was adopted without consulting the Roma deputy in the Romanian Parliament or of the Roma representatives in the Governmental Council for national minorities.

Although the Memorandum is a shot to the delicate matter of the ethnic denomination of a multiple category of Romanian population the text of the Memorial is not given to the public through the normal means of communication and in the civic life of a constitutional state.

The MAE and the Council of Europe for National Minorities' magistrates avoided to give authorized information when they were requested by the Roma representatives regarding the existence and content of the Memorandum.

The Memorial ran into various Ministries and official organisms in a "secret" way. This uncommon practice arises lack of tranquillity in our souls; we are preoccupied with the possibility of adoption by the governmental organisms of some more "decisions" can dramatically affect our families and collectivities' life. We remind to the public opinion that the deportation of a great part of Roma population during the period 1942-1944 was also done by "internal circular letter" of the administration of the pro-fascist government of those times; during 1977-1986 the Central

Committee of the Romanian Communist Party and the public administration applied a "program of social integration of Gypsy people" which has never been published.

The Roma associations claim the use of the name Rom, Romi (Romany, Romanies) in the public life and in the civic relations from Romania.

The Roma Associations ask the Government of Romania to CANCEL the recommendation formulated by the Memorandum MAE.

The Roma Associations ask the Romanian Government to reaffirm through the a public document the obligation of the governmental administration of using the name rom, plural form-romi in relations with Romanian citizens who claim the membership to this community, as well as in relations with civic associations that are registered under the name *rom ,romi,... romilor*.

Our associations will keep on USING THE ETHNIC NAME OF ROM, plural form-ROMI while communicating with the citizens, public associations and organizations from Romania.

Our associations call on all governmental and non-governmental organizations, publications and means of mass communication, civic associations to express solidarity with us by using the ethnic denomination *romi* in all circumstances of civic life within the constitutional state of Romania.

The Roma associations will REFUSE TO CO-OPERATE with Romanian official authorities, public clerks, non-governmental organizations, political parties etc., which by following the recommendation of the Memorandum MAE will use the denomination "gypsy" and not that of *rom*.

The participation of our associations and of their members to reunions of national, regional and local authorities, to meetings and assemblies regarding the activity of public administration, to internal and international seminars, etc. will be CONDITIONED by the use in the instance documents of the ethnic denomination of *rom, romi. (Romany, Romanies)*. The participants to these reunions will be asked to adopt clear positions

(declarations, resolutions) by which their attitude towards the Memorandum MAE and ethnic denomination's use of Romanies will be defined.

The representative of Roma minority in the Chamber of Deputies of the Romanian Parliament, the deputy *Mr. Gheorghe Raducanu* will present a motion to the Parliament regarding the Memorandum MAE. Mr. Raducanu, as deputy, will not participate to the works of the Chambers of Deputies until the date of adopting a clear position of the Parliament towards the opportunity and legality of the Romanian Governmental Memorial H (03)/169/1995.

The Roma associations recommend to all Roma councillors, the elected members of the local Councils and Roma public clerks from governmental organizations to hold back from taking part to reunions of organisms and organizations they are from till the date of reviewing the Memorial MAE.

The representatives of Roma Party, the formation which represents the Roma minority within the Council for national minorities of the Government won't participate to assemblies of this organism until adopting a new document of the Romanian Government regarding the correct use of the ethnic name of Roma people in public life.

We ask the programs "Cohabitations" of the editorial board "Other nationalities" of the Romanian Television to use the name *rom, romi*, that were claimed by Rom associations. If in the editorial office the denomination of "gypsy" will be used the *Romany language* responsible editor will come out of the editorial staff. If other editors or broadcasts of the Romanian Television will use the derogatory denomination "gypsy" the Roma associations will ask for giving up those programs.

The Romany associations will balance through their members' contribution the losses which were caused by possible sanction of Roma representatives and public clerks as a result of solidarity with our PROTEST.

The Roma associations will present to the political parties represented in the Romanian Parliament a document by which they will request their clear position towards the Memorandum MAE NO.8 (03)/169/1995.

**The Memorandum MAE misinform the governmental institutions and Romanian public who have no direct access to elaborated and adopted documents by international governmental organizations which Romania is part of and covenanter.**

From all pieces of information we offer in the attached compilation it issues out that lots of international organizations, as ONU, OSCE, Council of Europe adopted documents in the last years which use more and more the denomination of *rom*, plural *roma*, that come from Romany language as ethnic-political identification terms of our people. Ignoring this tendency the clerks MAE which are supposed to know these documents communicate to the Romanian governmental organizations that: " The use of the terms *rom*, *roma*, *romani*, *romanis*, *roman* ignored the used terminology in conventions and international documents on human rights, as well as the official documents of international organizations ..."

The Roma associations from Romania will address to the international organizations quoted from Memorandum MAE (ONU, OSCE, Council of Europe) and will ask for explanations regarding the interpretation that Mae offered to the documents which were elaborated by these organizations on Romi/Țigani (Romanies/gypsies).

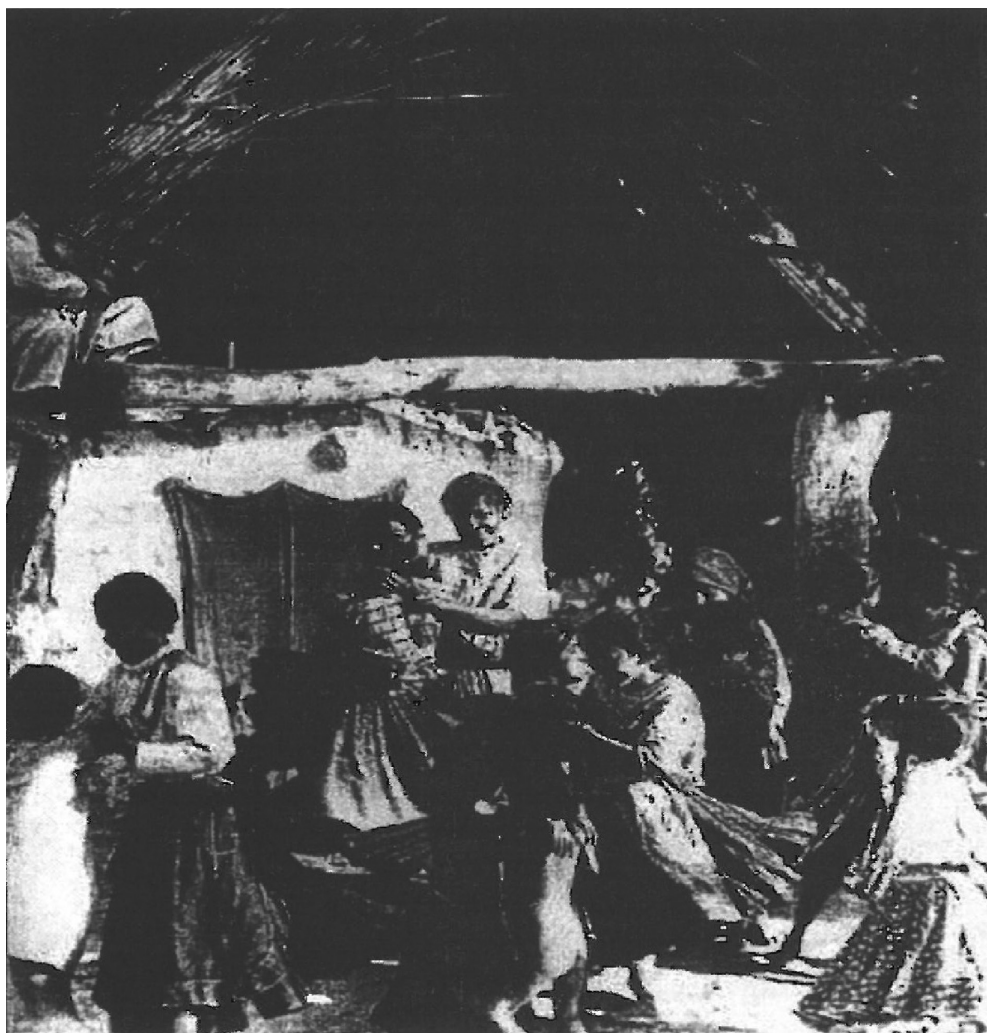
The present document will be sent to the Contact Point of Roma and Sint people of the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). A debate will be requested about Memorandum MAE within the "International Seminar on Tolerance" which will take place in Bucharest and is organized by the Romanian Government, OSCE and Council of Europe, during the period 23-26<sup>th</sup> May.

*Annex 15*

**Romany dwelling house**

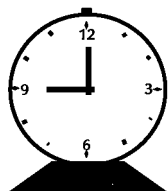




*Annex 16*

**Roma people's celebration**



*Annex 17*

O KHETANIMOS VAŚ E ROMENŢO JEKHIMOS  
 THE ALLIANCE FOR ROMA PEOPLE'S UNION

**THE STATUTE**  
of the Organization "Alliance  
for the Unity of Roma People"

**CHAPTER I**

**Name and nature of the Organization**

Art.1 The people, organizations, associations, communities etc. that are registered in the charts of the founder members come into a partnership through a free-expressed agreement in order to make up the organization of the Roma minority, which is also called "The Alliance for the Unity of Roma People in Romania".

Art. 2 The Alliance for the Unity of Roma People in Romania will be shortly called by the help of initials: A.U.Rr.

Art 3The organization "The Alliance for the Unity of Roma People" (A.U.Rr.) is a non-political, non-governmental and non-profit organization that brings together Romanian citizens (mainly ethnical Roma) organizations, associations, unions, Roma collectivities and local communities, without excluding the presence of members or formations belonging to other ethnic groups which joins and

respects the stipulations of the present statute and of the legislation of the Romanian State.

Art. 4 A.U.Rr. acts for its members in relation to other organizations, to institutions and public authorities, being able to propose and register candidates during elections, according to the electoral Constitution and Law.

Art.5A.U.Rr. will promote the active participation of the representatives of Roma collectivities within the central and local authorities of the management and state administration in accordance with the stipulations of the Romanian Constitution.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **Aim and Ways of Achieving**

Art.6. A.U.Rr. is going to reunite the majority of Roma intellectuals within its composition with the aim of establish, point out and hierarchy the priority problems the Roma ethnic group faces, in order to identify the measures and legal means which are necessary for solving them and for the social-economical promotion of Roma ethnic group.

Art.7 AU.Rr. will militate and collaborate for the social and professional emancipation of the Roma people, as well as for achieving the full equality of Roma people with the other populations which live on Romanian land, regarding the public, social, economic, political and cultural life.

Art.8 A.U.Rr. militates for the Roma ethnic group which should take benefit of all their citizen rights, without any discrimination in comparison with other ethnic groups or existing minorities on the Romanian territory.

Art.9 A.U.Rr. will action in order to support the formation of some political people and of a

staff of public administration within Roma people who are able to have a dialogue at the level of all governmental structures and to action within these structures in order to promote the Roma ethnic group and increase their participation as a loyal, credible and competent partner in the act of developing democracy and solving all major problems in accordance with the national and international legislation.

Art.10 A.U.Rr. will militate in order to achieve these goals together with the majority population and the other ethnical or national minorities, on the basis of understanding and mutual respect, of collaboration in all fundamental problems regarding democracy and civilization.

Art.11 A.U.Rr. will co-operate with all ministries and other state authorities, as well as with companies, organizations or non-governmental associations for social promotion, solving the Roma's problems related to work, education, learning system, sanitation, for a better integration in the social life and assuring the equality chances and treatment in all fields of activity.

Art. 12 A.U.Rr. will militate for the assertion, conservation and enriching the Rromany idiom through cultural and artistic activities, by the help of media and press, by making easier the use of this idiom in the private, collective and public life, by organizing courses, demonstrations, awarding grants.

Art.13.A.U.Rr. in co-operation with educational establishments (private or public ones) will look for the most appropriate means of adaptation of the preschool and school education to educative, cultural and psychological particularities of the children belonging to the Roma collectivities, inclusively forms of education in their native tongue. Specific

and pliant forms of education will be looked for where A.U.Rr can be a partner of the state institutions and being able to offer examination, studies and other forms of participation, in accordance with Education's law stipulations and international experience.

Art.14A.U.Rr. will promote activities of knowing the history, Rromany idiom, Roma customs and specific traditions through stimulating the activities of scientific research that are carried on by academic institutions, cultural organizations of research groups organized by Romanies. Activities of cultural, scientific and tourism collaboration will be initiated together with associations and organizations of Roma people living in other countries, which look for the same objectives for social and cultural assertion of the Roma population.

Art.15 A.U.Rr. militates for respect and promotion of multiculturalism and intercultural ,for integration of the Roma culture within the general circle of values in Romania and all over the world.

Art.16A.U.Rr. militates for organizing some programmes for Roma minorities regarding:

- offering law assistance,
- material support for old and handicapped people,
- protection of the minors coming from families with special problems,
- liquidation of illiteracy among people who are out of the scholar system,
- supporting the recharge of some traditional professions.

Art.17 A.U.Rr will co-operate with state authorities, with political bodies, with all democratic organizations, inclusively the ones belonging to other minorities in order to solve the specific

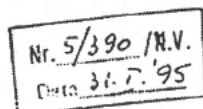
problems of Roma collectivities: dealing with labour, qualification, professionalization, orientation towards free initiative, social assistance, respecting the regulation of civic behaviour, achieving the internal and international unity.

Art.18 A.U.Rr. will have and develop collaboration with Roma organizations living in the country and abroad, as well as with internal and international organizations whose aim is to defend the human rights, to promote the pluralism and to develop democracy.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **The Central Headquarters, the Distinguishing Mark and Electoral Sign**

Art.19 The central headquarters of A.U.Rr. lies in Bucharest. Etc. etc. etc.



*Annexa 3*

*The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Romania*

**THE MINISTER'S CABINET**

**NO. H(03)/169**

**Bucharest, 31<sup>st</sup> January 1995**

**MEMORANDUM**

**To: Mr. NICOLAE VACAROIU, prime-minister in Romania**

**From: TEODOR MELESCANU, minister of state, the  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

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**Theme: Problems regarding the denomination of an  
ethnos that lives in Romania**

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The problems on social integration and situation of the Gypsies' ethnos became especially during the last years the subject of some international organizations and forums' activity associations of this ethnos and of some non-governmental organisms within the field of human rights.

On this occasion it comes out that some organizations or associations, especially international ones, use and impose new terms "rom" (French, Italian, Romanian), "Roma" and "Romania" (English, Germany), "roman" (Russian), "Romanis" (Spanish) while in the



official documents of the Council of Europe and of other international organisms the term "gypsy is constantly used for the members of this ethnos.

The confusion created especially on the level of international public opinion, is a possible identification of the Romanians with the members of this ethnos. It was initiated and kept alive by adjunction and following the same objectives with the Hungarian and Austrian "historical theories" which present the Romanians as having the origin in the gypsies brought by the Romans while occupying Dacia, as well as with the manifold news, relates and images in the press and in the international audio-visual means of mass informing, regarding the Romanies in Romania who live in Europe in negative aspects.

The use of terms rom, Roma, Romani, romanis, roman ignores the terminology which is used in international conventions and documents regarding human rights, as well as in the official documents of the system O.N.U. within the Council of Europe and the Organization on Security and C-operation in Europe: "Gypsy"-in English, "Gitan" or "Tsigane"-in French, "Tzigan"- in Russian. In the same way the word gypsy is used in the official documents from other countries, like "Zingaro"-in Italian, "Cygan" - in Polish, "Tsigan"-in Greek, "Cigano"-in Portuguese.

We mention that out of the existent information it does not result that in countries where the denomination of gypsy is used these ones could feel insulted.

On the other hand it's not normal for the same ethnos to have in Romania another denomination which is different from that established and used in other countries and in the international documents.

Taking into account the confusions created at the address of Romanian people and Romania, generally at Romanians, through the use of terms "rom", "Roma", "Romania", "roman", "romanis" instead of the words "gypsy", "gypsies" the need of the Romanian official organisms to use the terminology that's used in international conventions and documents O.N.U., the Council of Europe and O.S.C.E. appears obvious : gypsy -into Romania, Gypsy - into English, gitan / tzigane -in French, tzigán - in Russian, zigeuner - in German, zingaro - in Italian, Gitano - in Spanish, etc.

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