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Crises, Securitizations and the Europeanization of
Roma Representation

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During the last decade, we have witnessed significant changes in the scholarly
field that is commonly identified as 'Romani Studies'. Apart from a variety of
other recent publications (such as: van Baar, Ivasiuc and Kreide, 2018; Beck
and Ivasiuc, 2018; Matras and Leggio, 2017; Vincze, Petrovici, Rat and Picker,
2018; just to name a few), the **Special Issue of** *Social Identities* **edited by Yıldız
and De Genova (2018)** provides an opportunity to assess the recent trends in
scholarship about the plight of the Roma in Europe. Not unlike some other
authors of these current publications, the editors of the Special Issue also
position their work as fundamentally different from earlier waves of Roma-
related research in terms of scale, foci, and conceptual toolkit. The aim of this
review is to consider the prospects as well as the potential pitfalls of this recent
shift that puts the issues of mobility, racial governance and securitization at the
heart of research. In fact, the shifts in scholarly attention also respond to
changes in the social and political contexts of research, so it is first worth
providing an overview of these far-reaching transformations.

The Europeanization of Roma representation refers to the development
of legal, political and institutional frameworks that aim to address the plight of
diverse communities brought together by the unifying Roma label and to
represent them as Europe's largest minority. The transnational dispersal, social
marginalization, and the prospects of shared identity-building of the Roma
have been recurrent themes among scholars and policy makers for several
decades. Especially after 1989, the terminology of the 'human emergency' has
been crucial to the efforts of human rights organizations and activists who have
worked to represent the Roma in the legal and institutional forums of Europe.
In such contexts, the plight of the Roma was handled either in terms of the
development of their own conditions, or as a security threat to others (van
Baar, Ivasiuc and Kreide, 2018: 15-16). According to van Baar's argument in
the Special Issue (as well as in the aforementioned edited volume), the Roma-
related development projects represent a continuation of European
developmentalism – this time not in the postcolonial territories or the Global
South, but in spaces 'at home'. As I clarify later, the assumption of this
developmental continuity is crucial to efforts that seek to find conceptual

bridges and political analogies between the plight and struggles of the Roma in Europe and those of other postcolonial or subaltern categories.

In early post-socialist times, academic and policy-oriented commentators discussed the challenges of poverty, discrimination, and anti-Gypsy racism among the outcomes of the regime change as such. In other words, the plight of the Roma appeared to be a test case (or 'litmus-test') of the actually existing conditions and development prospects of post-socialist societies. Therefore, the scholarly engagement with the intersections of poverty and ethnicity permitted taking a critical stance with regard to social injustices as constitutive features of an emerging post-socialist market economy. At the same time, when it came to the underlying assumptions of post-socialist democratization efforts – such as the policy incentives dedicated to tolerance work (see: Dzenovska, 2018) – the ubiquitous forms of discrimination, prejudices and stereotypes were usually apprehended as unfortunate symptoms of social change 'within' Eastern European societies. From the rather hopeful perspective of early post-socialist times, anti- Gypsy racism was expected to diminish, similarly to other forms of ethnic or national animosities, with the process of 'catching up', the declining significance of borders, the expansion of democratic institutions and, eventually, the EU accession of formerly communist states. The collaboration of governments, international organizations and the bodies of an emerging Roma civil society were expected to undertake the political and human-rights-related duties that are usually associated with the role of kin states in the case of other ethnic or national minorities.

The Eastward enlargement of the EU gave previously unforeseen impetus to policy-oriented attempts dedicated to the social integration and political representation of Roma. Moreover, from 2008 onwards the Europeanization of Roma representation continued in the midst of the financial crisis, as did recurrent inter-state conflicts due to the controversies surrounding the Westwards migration of citizens from the 'new Europe'. The resulting political conflicts coagulated around incidents such as fingerprinting in the nomad camps of Italy and the expulsion of Roma migrants from France. The plight of the Roma came to be discussed in public as part of an emerging security- or migration-crisis in Europe, hence the criticism regarding the putative failures of Roma integration (and the need for new alternatives) foreshadowed the themes of a much broader crisis-talk after 2008, and the debates about a unified but still highly unequal European super-polity. In the meantime, an increasing number of actors were making claims for titles of expertise and civil and political representation with regard to the Roma, or the right to speak about (or for) them. Academics found themselves in inconvenient situations as their seemingly marginal research subjects came to occupy highly central positions in an expanding and deeply politicized field of relations. In fact, the crisis and the transformation of the discursive landscape

were apparent in all the cases when discussion partners were not simply exchanging and criticizing relevant ideas, but they were preoccupied with questioning whether the others are entitled to speak at all on the issues at stake.

Amid the reverberations of the financial crisis, we witnessed the increasing political exploitation of moral panics and anti-Gypsyism as a fruitful vote-seeking strategy by the populist right wing in countries like Hungary (see: Szombati, 2018). Nevertheless, this time the spectacular rise of racism against Roma was not limited to the 'not-yet developed' post-socialist democracies that had just survived the shock therapy of rapid marketization. Instead, the related hate campaigns were now omnipresent in the 'new' and the 'old' Europe alike. States and governments seemed to be hesitant – or spectacularly unable – to cope with the controversies around free movement between countries such as Romania and France or Italy. A now all-European public preoccupation with national abjects or moral outcasts as objects of disgust (see: Tyler, 2013) further expanded in the 2010s as the rising social insecurities were projected onto dreadful figures such as Gypsy beggars or welfare tourists (among other folk-devils of the new age). The Europeanization of Roma representation remained a highly ambiguous project as it offered pretexts for individual states to ward off their related responsibilities and to overlook the challenges, as well as the shortcomings, of Roma inclusion on their territories – as if Roma issues were now to be handled rather by 'Europe' instead of them.

The plight of the Roma turned out to be a litmus-test again, this time with reference to the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion in the practical uses of EU citizenship and belonging. This was the case with the implementation of the right to free movement without that of labor mobility, and the claims for asylum of some EU-citizen Roma in Germany due to their past persecution – in spite of the legal principle that denies any justification for asylum-seeking within EU space (see: Caglar, 2016; and also van Baar's article in the Special Issue). Apparently, one of the conditions for the continuing Europeanization of Roma representation was the exposure of Western European countries to the outcomes of deprivation in the post-socialist periphery of Europe – this time in their own territories as migrant-receiving countries. In this context, the challenges of development or security may be related to a particular subordinated social category; they still affect a wide set of social relations beyond spatial units such as specific sending or receiving countries, regions, settlements, and communities – just to list a few of the categories that commonly define the field-sites of the empirical social sciences. In the course of these interstate conflicts, perhaps Romania occupied the most highlighted position in media accounts and public debates as a major migrant-sending country, as well as the home of the most populous Roma community in Europe. Under the disciplinary auspices associated with Europe, media-saturated campaigns and various Romanian politicians recurrently affirmed the

ethno-racial division of citizenry in order to distinguish migrant wrongdoers and decent (non-Roma) Romanians (see: Pulay, 2017). These cases all illustrated the ways in which a shared European citizenship was rather enhancing instead of alleviating ethno-racial cleavages and social inequalities in the course of crisis-ridden EU integration.

Especially since 2015, these past controversies have appeared in a different light. The troubles of interstate cooperation, the obsession with securitization and national borders, as well as the uses of moral panics and fearmongering in populist mobilizations remain persistent features of contemporary European politics. In fact, the crisis with the governance and control of Roma migration around the late-2000s and early 2010s now seems like a major political rehearsal of that complex phenomenon we call the global migration or refugee crisis today. Similarly to the latter, the Roma security crisis (Demossier, 2014) could be also conceived of as an instance of the EU's remarkable weakness (if not impotence) at handling the major challenges it faces as a bureaucratic organization that unites, but also stands beyond individual nation states. As Böröcz noted (2009), while the EU has certain features that are associated with states or state formations (including its geopolitical importance or capacity to exercise power over territories beyond its borders), it still cannot be conceptualized in terms of a uniform statehood since that would require an actually existing constitution, executive power, entitlement to sanction, or legally codified and enforceable forms of solidarity. Therefore, the crises and other instances of chaos in the course of the last decade do not seem to be mere exceptions but rather regular outcomes of the operation of the EU.

As De Genova and others have already argued elsewhere, we are witnessing a permanent proliferation of crises and a language of emergency as a defining feature of our contemporary existence (see: De Genova and Tazzioli, 2016; De Genova, 2017). Moments of crisis and various forms of social criticism are intertwined and mutually provoke one another. Any postulating about a specific crisis entails retrospective or comparative judgement of what went wrong, as it also allows for new types of resistance in the name of 'how it should be/have been' (see: Loftsdóttir, Smith and Hipfl, 2018). According to De Genova's approach to the autonomy of migrant subjectivities, mobility and the freedom of movement are elementary features of the human condition which are only followed by state technologies that produce borders. The contemporary movements of migrants or refugees have a postcolonial character as they calls into question the prevailing world order. In other words, such instances of migration should be approached and evaluated as practices of resistance through exit, or as claims for the right to escape (see also: van Baar, and Ivasiuc-Kreide, 2018; Durst and Nagy, 2018). Moreover, De Genova suggests that discourses on migration in the European context always contain

certain racial subtexts: the concept of migration serves as a proxy for race, while the notions of Europe and European identity are reinvented in terms of a postcolonial racial formation of whiteness. The concept of securitization serves as another main pillar of this approach that focuses on the (discursive) production of insecurities, particularly by agents who seek to defend states, communities, or other entities against putative existential threats.

Following these broader considerations, the editors make an ambitious proposal in the introductory text of the Special Issue of *Social Identities* to reposition research on Roma mobility and racial subjugation to the center of critical interests with regard to citizenship and the politics of European identity. As they suggest, migration in general and Roma im/mobility in particular serve as important flashpoints (or 'litmus-tests', to refer back to an earlier phrase) for critical scholarship in terms of raising questions about governance, borders, state-control and, ultimately, the very idea of Europe. To be more precise, the editors argue for the necessity of at least three shifts in Roma-related scholarship: first, the need to put migration, movement, or mobility at the center of inquiry; second, the need to replace the apparently false analytical concept of ethnicity with that of race and racialization; and third, the requirement of abandoning the restrictive frames of minority studies and working towards a research program that places the plight of the Roma right at the heart of the emerging critical studies of Europe.

The introduction to the issue positions this research program in opposition to earlier studies that are described by the futile polarization between two stances: one that fetishizes ethnic difference, and another that focuses on social and economic forms of subjugation while overlooking the cultural politics of racism. For those who are familiar with the research field, it is easy to discern that these two lines of scholarship broadly refer to the scholarly positions in the debate about post-socialist deprivation, social exclusion, and the concept of the underclass around the late 1990s and early 2000s (see: Emigh-Szelenyi, 2001; Stewart, 2002). According the editors' view, dominant representations depict the Roma in an isolated, self-contained, or reified manner that leads to the exaggeration of their differences, making it 'virtually impossible to recognize them as participants within wider social formations.' In fact, this point is valid for a wide array of accounts about marginality (and not only about on the Roma) that reinforce social exclusion at the level of analysis by representing their subjects in almost complete disconnection from the rest of their societies. As a way of returning to the familiar argument against 'victim blaming', the editors argue that the aforementioned fetishization of Roma differences reinforces a misconception that traces back marginalization to the inherent peculiarities of a group or social category. Apparently, the editors define the concept of ethnicity precisely by such assumptions about genealogically inherited, essentialized cultural

integrity or homogenized identity. In other words, the introduction of race and racialization are supposed to avoid the pitfalls of ethnicity as a rigid analytical concept which is not able to account for the diversity of Roma communities that is due to highly different national and imperial contexts.

Besides the criticism of ethnicity as an essentializing concept, the editors propose a framework that operates with a variety of '-izations' (such as: minoritization, racialization, securitization, criminalization, and irregularization) in order to shed new light on processes that have been grouped together under analytical concepts such as social exclusion or marginality. The apparent aim of introducing these multiple concepts is to emphasize the active or processual nature of the respective phenomena – instead of depicting putatively reified, passive or idle states or conditions (it is worth recalling here that, in the aforementioned earlier debate, the concept of social exclusion itself was supposed to serve a similar analytical purpose: maintaining the focus on dynamic procedures instead of the rigid terminology of class, or underclass in particular). In addition, the authors propose the notion of the security-development nexus for the purpose of pointing at the multifaceted forms of social reproduction and discrimination that maintain 'subordinate inclusion', rather than a general state of exclusion. This concept defines two major forms of policies, one of which is dedicated to the local improvement of social conditions or life chances, while the other is aimed at subjecting its target groups to forms of governance and policing in order to reduce insecurities. Both of these policies are conducive to the production of the Roma category as an essential problem for the racial order in Europe. According to the article by van Baar, development and security practices have been targeted at the Roma since the 1990s as part of neoliberal governance in Europe. Instead of ameliorating their hardships, securitization exposes the Roma to deportability and evictability, while institutional developmentalism serves as an asset of governing poverty through segregation. The interrelation between policies of development and security became all the more apparent after the EU accession of Eastern European states, when local development projects were introduced in order to ameliorate poor living conditions and through this to prevent the risk of further migration waves to Western countries. As mentioned above, van Baar depicts the development projects dedicated to the plight of the Roma in terms of an internal colonialism: a peculiar form of policy import which brought the colonial models of governance from the Global South back to European territories. These models typically rely on an idea of social inclusion in terms of a certain gradualism: 'underdeveloped groups' (such as the Roma) can take steps to eventually reach the stage of the developed majorities in terms of their capitals and capabilities.

As van Baar notes, there is a distinction between desired and undesired movements in the EU that juxtaposes the preferable ways in which persons,

capital or services circulate (as is the case of business, skilled labor or tourism) with those that threaten social and national security or endanger the functioning of the market. Such distinctions between normal and dangerous movements and social categories are conducive to the ongoing racialization of Roma in Europe. Expulsions, evictions and deportations are instances of the forced mobility of Roma, while their ghettoization, containment and segregation are the modes of their forced immobility. In her article, Kóczé also argues that the discourse on Roma migration has produced racialized divisions between white, non-Roma citizens (who can enjoy the freedom of movement) and the Roma. Kóczé engages with visual representations, media campaigns and narratives that influence everyday practices and policies by designating a subjugated place for the Roma as irregulars, and keeping whiteness in an unmarked position. The development of populism and anti-Gypsy politics have been an 'unintended consequence' of EU enlargement that have taken place in the broader structural context of neoliberal restructuring with the exaggeration of meritocracy and the denial of racial inequalities. According to the article, France and Italy are key examples of the way in which the racist rhetoric about the Roma (particularly Roma migrants from Bulgaria and Romania) has been mainstreamed in national politics during the last decade. At the same time, the state of exception and the discourse about the security threat caused by abject citizens recall the earlier colonial justifications of control, and are also akin to the subordinating representations of women in patriarchal settings.

Sardelić provides a historical account of citizenship regimes and the temporarily changing precarious statuses of Roma migrants from the states of the formal Yugoslavia to demonstrate how the EU's boundaries work through a process of racialization that leads to the disciplinary legitimation of governing non-EU citizens. These migrant statuses were affected by the policies that ruled the hierarchical relations between the states of the former Yugoslavia and the EU – especially Germany as the main destination of Roma who left during wartime. In these shifting contexts, Roma migrants were rendered liminal statuses (as temporary visitors or refugees) without full integration into the host countries, while as minority citizens they had limited rights in the sending countries where some were persecuted. As in other cases, Roma from the former Yugoslavian territories were part of broader migration waves together with other citizens from their countries, but the causes and patterns of their migrations remained specific because of their minority position and the obstacles to their permanent settlement in the host countries. Their typical form of mobility remained circular, including instances of deportation. Solimene offers a case study about the migration of Bosnian Roma families between Rome and other cities in Italy and Europe. He also departs from instances of the European border spectacle, followed by the reinforcement of

internal boundaries, as well as the legal and political proliferation of categories that name various forms of otherness and non-belonging. As he argues, these practices strive to maintain a sense of European identity by pointing at those who are excluded from it. As part of this 'invasion syndrome', political and media discourses in Italy have represented the Roma and Gypsies as 'social waste' to be expelled or contained in nomad camps. The Bosnian Roma protagonists in this ethnographic piece are rendered illegals with no Italian citizenship or legal permits (in spite of having lived in the country for decades); hence, their livelihoods are founded on the verge of legal and illegal practices that include begging, scrap-metal collection and informal trade. Nevertheless, they manage to respond to repression, police control and eviction by employing a set of tactics based on continued mobility and dispersal as ways to reduce the disturbance caused by their visibility. As the author convincingly argues, these Bosnian Roma can maintain a constant presence in Italy precisely because they appear to be in a transitory phase in each locality or encounter. Family members maintain their ties by paying occasional visits to one another even at great distance, while movement can also be a way of exploring new opportunities or avoiding conflicts and repression. In this perpetual state of mobility, these Bosnian Roma do not maintain idealized images of their homeland or a later return there. Solimene's account of tactics and the management of life and space among Bosnian Roma in Italy is quite special with regard to the robust forms of governance and subjugation, as reported in most other accounts on multiple '-izations'.

   Two further articles in the issue venture into the scholarly domain one may define as the ethnography of policy and bureaucratic intervention. Humpris provides a case study on migration control in the UK and the outcomes of the strict transitional restrictions on Romanian and Bulgarian citizens after EU accession. The article deals with the perceptions of racialization that unfold in the interactions of migrants with front-line workers, who represent the face of the state in everyday practice. These interactions take place in highly uncertain conditions because of the ambiguous legal and policy environment and the manifold rumors that circulate about the prospects and possibilities of migrants who have to rely largely on their own problem-solving networks. Front-line workers became experts about these new migrants who were EU citizens yet lacked access to state resources. Decisions about providing help to certain clients, the distinctions between Roma and non-Roma Romanians, as well as the different practices dedicated to the Roma have been produced and routinized on the basis of migrants' self-presentations and also on the ways in which front-line workers shared their experiences with one another. Vrabiescu and Kalir offer a similar grounded perspective about the street-level bureaucratic practices of civil servants – mostly women – who work with racially marginalized female Roma migrants in Spain. After social services

were privatized and decentralized from the 1980s onwards, these civil society actors came to represent a caring 'left hand' in everyday practice, opposed to the repressive 'right-hand' of the state. Through their interventions and evaluations, care-workers have a decisive role in mediating between official concepts of 'vulnerability' or 'failed integration' and the actual cases of the migrants with whom they strive to nurture trustful relations. For the migrants, the title of being a deviant or 'failed subject' means the withdrawal of state provisions and even the imposition of penalties. On the contrary, 'good subjects' can enter further phases of integration programs as they meet the neoliberal requirements of efficiency and progress (by acquiescing to mainstream norms of formal wage labor). According to the authors, these forms of decision-making represent a process through which care transforms into surveillance and control. The state of vulnerability is of crucial importance in these procedures: it represents the liminal condition in which poor migrants can obtain protection and provision as clients, but it also prepares the ground for possible punitive measures against them. Akin to the classifications by front-line workers in the UK, the Roma from Romania also represent a specific, inferior category of migrants in the eyes of social workers in Spain. Moreover, similarly to front-line workers in the UK, street-level agents in Spain are also aware of the ambiguities and deficiencies of the very programs in which they participate. In fact, they strive to do their best to make the system work, and they can end up blaming the victims if they perceive that migrants do not similarly endeavor.

As the authors argue in the Special Issue, the Roma have become a new racialized minority through their transnational movement in the EU due to their recently acquired visibility as unwanted migrants in Western states. In other words, racialization – a way of producing the Roma as an unruly problem-category – has taken qualitatively new forms with migration after the enlargement of the EU. At the same time, the Roma can also represent a certain supra-national formation that resembles the contested ideals of EU belonging. Consequently, the scapegoating of Roma reflects the incomplete integration of mutually hostile or distrustful member states, while it also serves as a symbolic mediator of fears concerning social downfall, foreign invasion, and the loss of national sovereignty (see also: Appadurai, 2006).

As a new core concept in Roma-related research, racialization creates a couple of dilemmas. First, the editors of the Special Issue introduce race and racialization on the basis of a severe and putatively new criticism that addresses the concept of ethnicity with reference to the Roma. This putatively new criticism of the view that links cultural particularity to shared ancestry and a monolithic and homogenized Roma identity is possible only if one deliberately ignores already existing contributions that have questioned the very utility of 'ethnicity' as an explanatory model of the actually existing, divergent ways of

being and becoming Roma/Gypsy (for example: Stewart, 2013). In social anthropology and other disciplines several scholars have argued already for constructivist and relational analyses to avoid essentialized approaches to ethnicity in general and the Roma in particular (for example: Ries 2008 among others). The editors' call to refuse 'cultural obsessions about Roma specificity' or 'pathologized otherness' may sound rhetorically convincing as a preface to engaged forms of anti-racist criticism, but under closer scrutiny rather proves to be an instance of academic shadow-boxing.

Second, the way it comes across from these recent accounts is that the visible appearance of (Eastern-European) Roma as migrants in Western states is the key event that legitimizes their inclusion among the subjects of scholarship on racialization and the European politics of identity. By this analytical move, critical scholars can work towards exposing the prevailing connections between racist anti-immigrant discourses – whether these target the categories of the 'Roma', or those of threatening '(Muslim) migrants', 'terrorists', 'criminals', or 'blacks'. In this framework, racialization is defined on the one hand as a form of sociopolitical domination that produces (and historically reproduces) distinct subjugated groups in hierarchical relations of power, but on the other hand the constitutive mechanisms of othering seem to follow more or less the same logic in each of the cases. Shall we assume that the concept of racialization is analytical shorthand for all those processes that distinguish the plight of Roma migrants from other precarious people on the move – including their Eastern-European fellow citizens? Or, on the contrary, does racialization refer to forms of governance and subjugation that render all these cases similar to one another? In order to accept that the transnational movement of the Roma has opened a new epoch in their history as a European racialized minority, we have to assume that the racialization of Roma has become prominent due to this recent migration wave, or that racialization – as a mode of governance – takes specific forms in the case of Roma as opposed to other minorities (or minoritizied categories). However, as argued elsewhere (for example: Fox, 2013), in Western states such as the UK the 'uses of racism' also target non-Roma Eastern European migrants who strive to improve their situation in segmented labor markets by referring to their putative whiteness as a mark of social worthiness that is often denied to them. Apparently, the racialization of migrants as a form of governance and control affects a wide range of people in Western states (and beyond), including many Roma co-citizens from the states of the post-socialist European periphery. As the editors of another recent volume also noted, while the migration of Roma has been irregularized and framed as a threat to public order in the host countries, the labels 'poverty migrants' or 'social tourists' have also been deployed in relation to Eastern European migrant citizens in general in appeals for forms of governance different from those employed with fellow EU citizens

(van Baar, Ivasiuc and Kreide, 2018). If the concepts of racialization or securitization are supposed to account for all such distinctions between more or less desirable migrants and forms of mobility in Europe, the conceptual grounds for developing a separate analytical category for Roma migration may turn out to be uncertain. As part of the long list of '-izations' that Roma are exposed to, the concept of nomadization refers to forms of governance based on repeated evictions, expulsions and other instances of forced mobility. The claim for the specificity of racialization with regard to Roma in 'EU-rope' is usually justified by reference to the existing stereotypes that present nomadism as an inherent feature of the Roma as such. In fact, one can rightfully refuse any racialized labeling of nomadism, or other notions about any Roma-specific inclination for moving around, on the basis of the long-term historical experience of sedentarization among the Roma populations of Eastern European states. However, such an overall refusal is still difficult to reconcile with the historical record of ways in which concepts of nomadism or travelling have been codified in the cases of autochthonous itinerant groups such as the Travellers in the UK or the Voyagers in France (see: Gheorghe and Pulay, 2013: 63-73). One may assume that the aforementioned resurgence of the nomad label was at least partly also due to these histories and legal traditions – besides the sheer racism of local majorities during the hectic times of the Roma-related security crisis in Europe. The reconciliation of these divergent histories of Roma as a European racialized minority is still largely ahead of us.

It has already been argued that the recent accounts of racialization and the governance of the poor and Roma in Europe tend to focus on the (discursive) production of subordination, while the related accounts often remain ethnographically weak in terms of the histories or the practical adjustments of their subjects to structures of domination (see: Grill, 2017). It is perhaps an effect of the analytical preoccupation with securitization in these accounts that the potential roles of the acting subjects seem to be limited to a pair of options. One of these options is to make certain negative policy effects visible (as occurs with highlighting human rights violations), and hence to occupy a position of victimhood that can be a starting point for humanitarian assistance and political claim-making. The other related option is to exercise some form of resistance to such forms of conduct which can be evaluated or interpreted in terms of 'pre-' or 'infra-political' action. However, the scholarly qualification of certain acts as 'pre-' or 'infra-political' is often just a way to say that in the respective practices are already embedded certain seeds of subversion and revolt that the engaged observers would wish to see unfolding in the future. Because of similar biases, students of resistance often tend to exaggerate the hopes their research participants share *against* and not *for* the state or certain types of state-intervention (Jansen, 2014). Some recent ethnographies of Roma migration have already pointed out the limitations and

ready-made assumptions of these perspectives. Legros and Lievre consider the multiple initiatives of Roma migrants (primarily from Romania) who search for better lives in the midst of constraints on their free movement and residence in France (2018). The main protagonists in their account do not refuse institutional conduct, but try to penetrate the structures of social protection and integration in order to gain access to its prospective benefits and opportunities. Not unlike the Bosnian Roma in Italy (as introduced by Solimene, see above), these migrants strive to avoid open confrontation with the authorities even when they anticipate evictions, move to other places or rely on the help of their relatives back home or in the receiving country. In his account of the movements of Roma migrants between Slovakia and Great Britain in search of better lives, Grill (2017) coins the concept of 'migrating racialisations' to account for the transformations of knowledge and dispositions regarding the move between societies with divergent racial histories, classifications and fantasies. Upon their arrival in Great Britain, Roma migrants from Slovakia found themselves in different and diverse settings where their skin color was not necessarily perceived as an indicator of the same subordinated status that was familiar to them in their country of origin. Nevertheless, this was not a durable state of affairs as anti-Gypsyism gained prominence in Britain, and the issue of Roma migration came to the forefront of interest among media-workers and public authorities, as well as activists and academic experts who were striving to fight negative stereotypes and to develop their own expertise about the Roma as a general category.

In sum, based on the recent Roma-related scholarship, it seems that the arrival of East-European Roma migrants to Western receiving states became an event that eventually legitimized the inclusion of the Roma (in general) among the subjects of critical scholarship on racialization and the European politics of identity. As mentioned above, during the 1990s and early 2000s the plight of the Roma was typically understood in scholarly and policy-related terms through putative analogies with the situation of Afro-Americans in deindustrialized US inner cities. In the current discursive setting, we come across similar analytical efforts aimed at making connections between the situation of the Roma and that of refugees, postcolonial migrants, or stateless people. In a rather paradoxical manner, while these approaches aim to be part of broader emancipatory projects, in practical terms they might reinforce the subordinated situation of the Roma as 'late-comers' in the fields of academic knowledge-production, as well as political and recognition struggles: as if their 'right to exist' as legitimate subjects of critical inquiry were limited to the extent that their situation fits (or at least its comparable to) the cases of other social categories that are exposed to 'more advanced' forms of marginalization. Similar to the concept of the ghetto in earlier scholarship, racialization is also an umbrella term that lumps together a wide set of different cases, hence it

entails the risk of conflation instead of the fostering of well-established comparisons (see: Wacquant, 2008). The focus on the recent forms of Roma mobility in Europe may foster new analytical (and with this, political) linkages between the case of the Roma and that of other migrants from postcolonial or other (semi-)peripheral regions. Even if the current modes of governance rely on similarly essentialized representations with regard to a wide variety of Europe's 'others', this fact should not serve as a basis for analytical misrepresentation – and therefore political misrecognition – that depicts the actual social positions and histories of the respective people as akin.

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