

Thematic issue of Romani Studies 34.1/2024

***Romani people as object and subject of scientific inquiry:
scientification of Roma or Romanifying science?***

Guest editors

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Call for papers

The burgeoning literature concerning Romani people highlights the multiple challenges that scholars and laypeople face when scientific argument has garnered the power to influence politics, public opinion, or even to shape identity. 34.1/2024 of *Romani Studies* introduces the debates surrounding the production and circulation of knowledge about Romani people. We invite those who are interested in critical reflection on their own research strategies to revise it in terms of epistemic justice and epistemic virtue. We ask the potential contributors to reflect on their own experience in terms of two interrelated but different streams of research, namely, the “scientification” of Romani people, or recognizing their history and contemporariness through the lenses of different theories, and the “Romanifying” of scholarship, or what happens when methods of scientific investigation are transformed or even deconstructed by introducing Romani people as subjects and objects of research.

The special issue aims to bring together scholars from different fields who employ participatory and interactionist approaches to the study of the past and present of Roma in different regions of the world. The main goal of the volume is to develop an interdisciplinary view on the options and limits for producing knowledge about Romani people, without aggravating epistemic injustice against them. Both processes, the scientification of Romani people and the Romanifying of science, bring advantages and disadvantages to Romani people themselves, and our mission is to discuss these processes in terms of interdisciplinary scientific argument. We are specifically interested in addressing questions concerning the role of scientific argument in

policymaking, scientific argument for recognition, and scientific argument in historicization:

Scientific argument in policymaking concerning Roma: What are some of the “good” and “bad” examples of using scientific argument in favor of advancing access to social rights for Romani people? How is scientific argument important to the aims of minimizing inequality and re-establishing justice? What are the perspectives and prospects of participatory, applied research for these purposes? What are the main obstacles to the “proper” recruitment of scientific argument in different strategies of achieving social justice for Roma, including strategic litigation, social inclusion, and so on? What are the hidden risks of using categories such as “human rights,” “justice,” and “anti-discriminatory practice” with the aim of making science more Romanified?

Scientific argument in recognizing Roma: How do we argue for distinctive experiences and subjectivities, without falling into the trap of essentialization or ignoring the issue of “otherness”? What are the options and limits for history, linguistics, anthropology, medicine, and interdisciplinary approaches to study individuality and collectivity among Romani people? How do different sciences solve the task of avoiding the production of epistemic injustice? How serious are the risks of producing new forms of symbolic violence aimed at imposing particular identities and patterns for self-determination, e.g. pro-activist positions within approaches like critical whiteness, postcolonial feminism, or intersectionality?

Scientific argument in historicizing Roma: What are the differences between the comparative history vs. the entangled history of Romani people? What is the role of bringing together the pasts of Roma and other minorities, e.g., Jews, African Americans, or Latin Americans? What are some of the commonalities and differences? What are the perspectives of transnational history on Romani people? What are the potentials and limits of critical pedagogical approaches to the history of Roma (to derive historical lessons from the past)? Does the timeline of Romani history matter?

Virtue and vice epistemologies in Romani studies: How can mapping the current scholarship of Romani studies in terms of epistemic virtues and vices contribute to epistemic justice for Romani people? In what ways can the epistemic behaviours that lead to epistemic vices be explored and discussed in order to prevent epistemic injustice? What are the possible pathways for interdisciplinary reflection aimed at advancing virtue epistemologies? Is it

reasonable to discuss the original accounts of epistemic injustice concerning Romani people as Romanifying science? Is gender-race-sexuality intersectionality an option or a trap for improving the epistemologies in Romani studies?

Final date for abstracts: November 4, 2022

Only the authors of accepted abstracts will be invited to submit a full paper. An invitation to submit a full paper does not constitute a commitment for publication; all papers will be subject to anonymous peer review following the submission. The special issue is planned to be published as open access.

Final date for papers: March 21, 2023

Feel free to contact the guest editors with any queries regarding the issue. If you would like to contribute, please send the title of your contribution and an abstract of the paper to victoria.shmidt@uni-graz.at and/or jaworsky@fss.muni.cz