A Contemporary History of Exclusion

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Introduction

Contexts of Gypsy/Roma identity and history

“Do not ask me who I am and do not ask me to remain the same”—this is what the French philosopher and cultural historian Michel Foucault thought concerning the relationship we develop with our own image and the image of us formed by others.¹ In the 1950s a Gypsy nail-maker bitterly explained what people in Hungary generally thought about Gypsies: “The gadje [non-Roma] don’t even know that the Roma work for them, so they can have fancy houses. Who makes staples? The Roma. Who makes Rabitz mesh? The Roma. Who makes thumbnails? The Roma. Who makes steel clasps? The Roma. Who makes corner pins? The Roma. And who knows that the Roma make all these things? The Roma. No one knows, all they know about is lice and theft.”² These two quotes illustrate the difference between social science theory and the real relativism of a citizen living as a member of a minority group. What we say and what is said about us are equally relative. The important question is whether we have a real influence on what is said and written about us: on the discourse.

Historians largely treat the view that the past endures in various texts and interpretations as an axiom. Writings that analyze discourses (texts that have come to life) are largely characterized by the relationship between power and knowledge. Powers-that-be oversee and take ownership of discourses through institutions: historical individuals and groups can lose their voice this way.³ A fundamental question is how various discourses—political, policy or scientific—influence the opportunity to express identity.

There exists a substantive interpretation, according to which the historical determination of identity is not significant in the case of Roma. This approach
holds that Roma are a people “without history,” who did not preserve and share with one another the memories of the past, and do not even conceptualize such memories for the sake of the future. As such, the source of Roma identity is primarily everyday life. According to such authors, Roma remember the past differently than do members of modern societies. Memory in its textual form exists to a lesser degree in their case. As such, memory is neither reflexive nor discursive, but implicit: current experiences define their social lives.

A related interpretation holds that in the case of Roma, the nature of relations to the non-Roma world and the unity within Roma communities taken together define current group identity (many emphasize the former factor). This approach reflects Fredrik Barth’s anthropological theory, according to which the changing nature of borders separating social and ethnic groups is what determines group identity and—as an extension—its cultural content. It is worth noting that Barth described the social situation of Roma exclusively in terms of marginality, and characterized them as pariahs in the eyes of “majority” society. With one or two exceptions, writers who analyze Roma identity pay scant attention to the historical determination of such marginality.

Many connect the identity of Roma to a common past and certain traditional elements, that is, to the practice of certain traditional Gypsy trades or a nomadic lifestyle. However, as is rather evident in modern times, old customs have lost much of their ability to provide solidarity. As Jean-Pierre Liégeois—one of the proponents of this thesis—stated when examining the fate of Gypsy communities after the war: “It is at this point that tradition—having lost its dynamism—turns into ritual: it is transformed from a pillar of identity and lifestyle into a rigid identity in itself, a sort of last refuge.” In the life of Roma communities, the role of traditions fading into obscurity, disappearing lifestyles and community cultures based on oral tradition is being taken over by commonly written history and a national past.

Recent decades have seen the publication of several Roma history books that describe the history of Roma communities from ethnogenesis to the present in the framework of a unified narrative. Eighteenth-century “majority”-led science established that Roma originated in India, and today this is treated as fact. The historian Ian Hancock connects the discovery of Indian origin to a Hungarian theology student’s career, who was discussing the Sanskrit language in a salon at university in Leiden with three fellow students from India. He thought Sanskrit words were similar to the speech used by Gypsy day laborers on his land. Through intermediaries, this observation was conveyed to György Pray, who sixteen years later wrote about it in the pages of the *Wiener Gazette*. The myth about Roma origin—which purportedly should be questioned as much as the unifying histories of any other people or nation’s origin—was discovered by Roma communities themselves in
various countries. (In the case of Roma, this myth resembles mostly that of the 
history of the Jewish diaspora, given its formation in conditions of scattering and 
exclusion.) In 1971, in the spirit of unification attempts, various Roma communities 
and churches, with the cooperation of the government of India, organized the 
first World Romani Congress, where delegates declared that the peoples of various 
Gypsy groups were members of one Roma nation, and went on to proclaim the 
symbols of national unity: a flag and an anthem.\textsuperscript{11}

Hancock generally emphasizes the significance of positive historical discourses that strengthened unity, for example that of discovering a common Indian origin.\textsuperscript{12} As a result, there arose a need for history writers to form the conceptual Romani language of this history (and the writing thereof).\textsuperscript{13} Characteristically, many authors claimed that the genocide committed against Roma during the Holocaust (the murder of half a million people) was late in becoming a topic of scientific research and public discourse because of the implicit nature of Roma memory. Others, conversely, drew attention to the fact that the story-telling of collective traumas had already partially taken place, or was partially under way. The suffering of Roma was not documented, which is related to their marginal social position, and thus we must ask whether communities stayed silent or were silenced,\textsuperscript{14} or whether their voices went unheard because of their marginal situation. In any case, Roma history is being written now, independent of other histories. This is signified by arguments over what to call the Holocaust\textsuperscript{15} in Romani\textsuperscript{16} (the need for a unique name arose so that Roma could tell their own stories of the genocide). Not only the story of the origin, but further discussions and working through collective traumas have a role in the strengthening—i.e., the creation—of Roma national identity. From the point of view of identity politics, we feel that the integrative processing of Roma history within national history is just as important a task, and that this history should be rethought from the perspective of the minority itself.

Laying out Roma history has helped us formulate three general questions. The first is about opportunities, the second is about the modes of such, while the third concerns the role of the researcher.

(1) Through depicting Roma history we can question the borders of and difficulties associated with acquiring historical knowledge. Writing on common Roma history, which as a first step often deals with the issue of Roma origin, sees historians rely primarily on linguistic and archeological evidence. Even genetic research has become a largely cited source. These written resources are penned by outside observers about Roma. Due to the marginal historical situation of Roma groups, there are few sources about Roma and even fewer written by Roma themselves. This entails a number of research methodology issues.\textsuperscript{17}
The exploration of such “realities” of the past necessitated the analysis of new kinds of sources—diaries, letters, recollections, oral history interviews, artistic creations—and a further rereading of archival documents that had previously been examined with “traditional” methods of history writing. Historical sources should be seen as “period-documents,” given that they are characterized by the official discourse and linguistic rule system of the given period. Such an approach makes a critical study possible and allows reinterpretation of state policy, providing a close-at-hand opportunity to reconceptualize the national histories of given countries. One of the pioneering works in this field is by Zoltan Barany, who analyzed the issue in various periods in the East-Central European context. (His starting point was that various political systems and country-specific situations determined state policies, and as a result explain historical changes in the situations of marginalized groups.) This book makes use of similar sources, examining primarily official discourses and revealing state policies, in order to shed light on the situation of Roma.

(2) Roma history can be illustrated within the context of the history of given countries and—breaking somewhat from national histories—in the context of a unified Roma nation. These two approaches might be called the “integrationist” and the “separatist” depictions of Roma history. We can picture a combination of these approaches where the multiple identities of Roma communities would serve as a basis. We don’t feel the need to argue over the legitimacy of any of these approaches. The goal in this book is to examine the history of Roma in Hungary in the context of Hungarian national history. We make use of a critical and reflexive mode of integrative (or “integrationist”) discussion, which can be described as exploring events known in the country’s national history differently, from the point of view of the minority.

New directions in writing history—micro-histories that intersect at multiple points, historical anthropology, history of everyday life and new cultural history—aim at both examining other dimensions of the past and portraying unknown fields of meaning. The introduction of new topics, such as social gender, everyday life, or the study of ethnic minorities, serve to shake the earlier monolithic view of reality in historiography. Approaches we call “counter histories” (following in the footsteps of Foucault) have appeared as critiques of traditional history-writing discourses. Their fundamental goal has been to uncover the memories of oppressed and excluded groups and to criticize state power. The validation of this critical standpoint—in line with the values of the universality of human rights and equality—provides an opportunity for moral reflection on past and current issues of human social existence.

(3) A recurring question in Gypsy or Roma Studies is that of researcher activism. We do not believe that there are only two research positions in exis-
tence—that of the distant “outsider,” on the one hand, and the committed activist, on the other—nor that these can be sharply distinguished from one another. All authors approach their research topic based on some choice of value. This can be discovered in the researcher’s self-reflection during writing and in the text. A frequently emerging question in Roma research today is the role of Roma researchers. In a similar vein, the issue of the necessity of research on non-Roma by Roma has come up (Tidrick has humorously named this approach “Gadzology”). This is the case because for Roma, it is often the non-Roma “majority” or the state itself, which categorizes and thus wishes to define the question of ethnic belonging. We characterize our own role as follows: we present ourselves to the reader as non-Roma who seek to depict and equalize national history through the universal values of human rights. One of the goals of this book is to make the points of view of a minority that has been pushed to the periphery of society a fully integrated part of our shared history. For readers who are not well-versed in Hungarian and Roma history, this book offers insight into the history of the struggles of identity politics, as well as being an example of the reevaluation of Roma history in a national context.

Historical writing that considers itself objective and factual is paralleled by another interpretation of the role of the historian—one which to us is more appealing—whereby the historian is seen as an active participant in history, creating stories and writing messages. All products of writing are unique accomplishments, and there is no such thing as an independent discussant. As such, it is advisable for writers to clarify the aspects and aims of their research at the beginning of their texts. The aim of this book is to present the origins and relativity of discourse on the Gypsies in Hungary.

On the sources of Gypsy/Roma history

In their 1993 publication János Báthory and László Pomogyi stated that “to this point Hungarian historical science has not dealt substantially with Gypsies.” In the meantime, a number of Hungarian-language works have been published. These include: Pál Nagy on the feudal period, László Pomogyi on the history of the Gypsies in the so-called bourgeois decades in Hungary, and Csaba Dupcsik’s monograph on the history of the Gypsy-research projects of Hungary using social science methods. Summaries of Hungarian history to this day neglect or merely mention Hungary’s largest minority. According to the explanations of the authors listed above, Gypsies were always in a socially peripheral situation and lived outside the mainstream “majority” of Hungarian society. Despite this, they think that his-
torians who have silenced the fate of Roma have made a mistake, given “if we take historical science to be a model of historical reality, our documents would lead us to think there are no Gypsies living in Hungary.”\(^{33}\) (Naturally we can express similar observations with regard to the history of other groups that can be considered minorities, like women and sexual minorities.)

What is the reason that the results of research on Gypsies, despite this justified criticism, still have not, or have hardly made their way into history textbooks (which are the mainstream of history), summaries and historical visual books? How can the results of new research be synthesized into Hungarian history? The easiest answer is to state that Hungarian history writing is not self-reflexive enough, and that there is a need to sensitize and draw attention to past discourses on equality.

Hungarian history textbooks largely present the acts of politicians and statesmen who are deemed significant, and offer little information on the endeavors and experiences of other actors. Reading archival sources and documents in state offices of the era, it is obvious that we are left with the impression that Gypsies/Roma are backwards, live in a situation of disadvantage and marginality, and thus are a social group that requires assistance and direction. From time to time we see them through “situations of conflict,” in police reports or as suspects in criminal cases. These documents present them from the point of view of the power of the state, public administration and the courts, i.e., from the “majority’s” position, where the operation of the power of the state is a reflection of “majority” norms.

These sources make Hungarian history appear unified, as it has long been presented from the point of view of the power of the state and the “majority.” However, sources derived from state institutions can be reinterpreted through the critical, reflexive modes described above. New research has placed the point of view of Gypsies/Roma into this unified framework and one-sided discourse, highlighting crimes and historical injustices committed against individuals, groups and the minority. Personal recollections and individual histories have supplemented an earlier rough image.\(^{34}\) We must ask, however, whether wider discourses are able to maintain the memories of individuals and groups, or whether they will merely assimilate these memories and points of view into national history. According to Foucault’s well-known metaphor, “[O]ne can certainly wager that man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea.”\(^{35}\) The questions, thus, are largely the following: Can realities outside the discourse be depicted? Can the viewpoints of others be presented? Must we resign ourselves to the fact that we will only hear the voices of those who are close to positions of power?\(^{36}\)

In Hungary the best known framework for the interpretation of Gypsy history is the “change in coexistence models” paradigm. According to this paradigm,
similar events and changes play out in Gypsy communities that are often independent of one another. Metamorphoses, movements and social and economic processes are results of internal regularities. External effects, according to this theory, fundamentally and uniformly rearrange the Gypsies’ relationship to “majority” society and the state from time to time. Great economic and social changes and
consecutive periods of modernization cause challenges to the lives of these communities, and as a result the models of coexistence transform. According to this logic, history has a main current to which all historical actors, individuals and groups must adapt. However, history as a linear process is but one imagining, and as such the past of minorities is more than just an illustration of this system of relationships.

In the following chapters we will present different pictures, events, and points of reference in the hope that they will refine and transform assumptions made in society and in the mainstream interpretation of history. Writing history according to new interpretations, as we have suggested, is not merely a reconstruction but a creative process that entails construction and elements of fiction, and further—not inconsequentially—a practice of forming and strengthening community. In Hungary, the primary task of those writing the history of Gypsies is to step outside the framework of the earlier anti-egalitarian and nationalist discourse, and to rethink common history by offering viewpoints that differ from that of those in power and the “majority.” By anti-egalitarian nationalism we mean the pre-modern form of nationalism that limits and does not recognize the opportunity for people to belong to the nation independent of his/her group membership (i.e., material position, place of residence, origin). This is related to a history-writing practice according to which there exists a culturally, politically, and economically unified national history—although this reflects only the points of view and the self-affirmation of those in power—to which all citizens of Hungary must or can relate.

In this volume we track stories from a historical turning point (1945, the end of the Second World War) to current times. We feel that the political regimes that replaced one another, or the historical periods of Gypsy policy and discourse, can be presented not only in terms of shifts but also in terms of continuity and persistence of legacies. The effects of continuity appearing in Gypsy policy (e.g., enduring marginalization) and turns following changes in political institutions or processes supporting such developments are worth presenting and interpreting. (In Hungary, for example, such a turn is signified—according to new sociological research—by the fact that since the regime change the “majority” opinion on Roma communities has moved toward fulfilling a view of the Roma as a “deepest evil.” In this volume we will examine the historical reasons for this phenomenon.) When analyzing discourses the term Gypsy will denote times before the regime change, while the term Roma (Romani) will denote the period after. Until the regime change the term “Gypsy” (in Hungarian: cigány) was used in discourses. As such, this term was related to the choice of minority identity. Later the term was increasingly replaced in official documents with “Roma.” In our text we follow the use of Gypsy/Roma as found in various documents. When we speak of issues unrelated to Gypsy- or
Roma-policy, then we use the ethnic label that is adopted by the given organizations, researchers, or as Gypsies/Roma themselves when presented with the opportunity to take part in the discourse.\textsuperscript{39} However, we believe that nowadays the terms Gypsy and Roma cannot be used simply interchangeably, especially in the context of identity and “identity engineering.” In Western states, since the 1970s, and in East-Central Europe mostly since 1989/1990, Roma is meant to signify a new cohort of educated, European Roma, with positive identity markers, whereas Gypsy is still considered derogatory within society (signifying for the most part a social or ethnic group marked by outsiders). Thus, concerning recent social grouping and minority identities, we use the term Roma. The use of various labels generally, and specifically in the case of the Roma, is never neutral in terms of the creation of identity and referential knowledge related to identity.

All dialogues—at least in part—are characterized by the creation of fiction, “narrativization,” or using various formations and plot structures. Our writings are continuously formed by intertextual relations (known texts, narratives). There are archetypical schemes,\textsuperscript{40} which denote a basic pattern for narrativization.\textsuperscript{41} Hayden White, adapting Northrop Frye’s theory, distinguished four types of schemes: romantic, comic, tragic and satirical.\textsuperscript{42} The classic example of the tragic narrative is the discussion of Gypsy/Roma history when we approach the topic from current conflicts. Historians can, as such, speak of the breakdown of the relationship between “majority” and minority.\textsuperscript{43} We can create a romantic mythos when we follow the steps of Gypsy/Roma heroes who struggle against their situation but generally fail. But should we change the point of view and the self-representation of the Hungarian state and society (or its representatives), or observe its factual acts, so that historians would naturally have a comic or satirical dialogue mode available to them?

In the following we do not attempt to use dry language, strive for impartiality, or aim at a scientific writing style. We do not feel one has to be insensitive or stand pat in a conflict between a state acting on the behalf of some kind of “majority” on one side and a factually excluded minority on the other. We are aware that the Hungarian state is not personified with independent characteristics, nor can it be described as having unified characteristics. However, we still refer to it as an individual third person and independent actor. We view and picture it as akin to Mr. Smith, the grey character in \textit{The Matrix}, who must be fought, although he does not exist, as his being and actions are truly real in the lives of others.

The philosophical precursor to \textit{The Matrix} film is Hilary Putnam’s “Brains in a Vat” essay.\textsuperscript{44} In this piece Putnam imagines that someone (an evil scientist, the representative of a supreme power) has placed a brain in a vat, connects electrodes to it in the appropriate places, and then connects these to a computer. The com-
puter makes the brain believe that it is a real person in an existing and real world: it feels, moves, wants and acts. Then the philosopher asks the question: is it possible that we are all brains in a vat, that our operations are synchronized by a computer? He answers that no, this is not possible: the assumption “we are brains in a vat” cannot be true. Signals do not live up to phenomena on their own volition, but through the conceptual schemes of a community, and that community is created by individual interactions. This does not work in reverse: meaning cannot be dependent on things outside of us. The collective acts of the community or the actions of the state always reveal individual wills and actions. This must by all means be kept in mind when we search for points of reference while interpreting floating texts, abstract expressions and the statements of others. There is no secure and common point. History itself is the Matrix.

Who (what) is (was) Hungarian or Gypsy/Roma?

Roma identity can be interpreted in various contexts. We can speak of the Roma identity in general terms, or that of regions (e.g., East-Central Europe or Southern Europe), or the Roma communities of given countries, or through the examples of small local communities. This choice of perspective defines the given—historical, linguistic, anthropological, sociological—conclusions of studies. In this book, as we have emphasized, we will examine the question within one country, that is, within a national context. Before moving on to a review of literature on Roma communities in Hungary, we will outline the contexts of this issue in the country.

Unified Hungarian history—like other national histories—is obviously a construction, a post hoc creation that is an important part of the Hungarian national identity. In the Middle Ages the majority of people living in the territory of Hungary likely spoke Hungarian, but this does not mean that they were Hungarians in the sense of our time. To be Hungarian primarily meant to fill a social position. In the Middle Ages Hungarians were the subjects of the king, and social differences distinguished the Magyars (Hungarians) from the Magyar-speaking Szeklers. Later sources reveal considerably more about the Magyars, which primarily implied a social position, an exceptional feudal class, and membership in the noble nation. This concept of Hungarian nation is clearly not the same as the modern egalitarian concept of the nation. After the appearance of nationalism, all could in theory belong to the nation regardless of their social position, and the residents of the country—no matter what they thought—became members of a political nation through a construction of public law. This undoubtedly contributed to making society more egalitarian.
The anti-egalitarian social category interpretation of the pre-modern Magyars did not entirely disappear, given that over time it remained the basis of prejudice toward and exclusion of various minorities (e.g., Jews, Gypsies) and remains so to this day. According to Antal Örkény and György Csepeli, Hungarian identity as tied to social position was imposed on other groups. (Identity is not just a question of “who am I?” but also one of “who am I not?” As such it can be related to prejudices toward differentially situated social groups in “majority” society in an explicit fashion.) In the case of Jews, the basis of differentiation was success and wealth, while in the case of Gypsies the reason for differentiation was failure and poverty.\(^48\) The transformation of identifying membership in a social group into belonging to the “majority” or minority resulted in the birth of “Gypsy” as a social category distinguished from the Hungarian “majority” within society and formed the history of the Gypsy issue.

István Bibó, a definitive figure in twentieth-century Hungarian political thought, wrote the following about the failure of the assimilation of Hungarian Jews: “Hungarian society, from the very beginning, assimilated or offered the opportunity to assimilate on dishonorable, disrespectful terms,”\(^49\) given that the adoption of the Hungarian language or self-identification as a Hungarian did not result in the “majority” acknowledging one as a Hungarian.\(^50\) We feel that Bibó’s observations pertain to Roma as well: the Hungarian “majority” obstructed the masses of self-defined as Hungarian, socially marginalized, and Hungarian-speaking Roma from the opportunity to blend in. By assimilation we mean not only linguistic melting, but similarly to Rogers Brubaker, a phenomenon that necessitates the social acceptance of a group, and thus which cannot be realized through the marginalization and exclusion of a group.\(^51\) Typically, lacking social acknowledgment in contemporary Hungary, those Roma who have been successful in the labor world are challenged when trying to assimilate (Margit Feischmidt brings up the example of micro-villages in southwestern Hungary and describes how economic success of Roma does not guarantee social acknowledgment\(^52\)). All questions concerning the integration of Hungarian Roma can be examined within national history, and these questions are—among other things—about the relations between members of a political community.

“There are 320,000 Gypsies living in Hungary today. ... This is a very large number in terms of proportion as well (one in every thirty Hungarians is Gypsy!) and an ever-growing number as well (one in every fifteen newborns in Hungary is Gypsy, and in fifteen years one in twenty-two Hungarians will be Gypsy), but looking at proportions this is a gigantic mass: if they stood hand-in-hand in a line they would stretch from Mátészalka to Sopron!”\(^53\)—this passage is quoted by Zsolt Csalog from a letter to him by a friend in the afterword of his 1975 sociography
Kilenc cigány (Nine Gypsies). His response was as follows: “Gypsies are various. If I had to summarize the message of this book in a single sentence, it would be: there are many kinds of Gypsies. I described them as such, and then as the very opposite, and in all kinds of ways to underline this important fact: they are varied.” Csalog himself interpreted this plurality widely enough to include among his nine Gypsy speakers a “Szekler-Hungarian” woman whose husband and environment was Gypsy, meaning Csalog felt Gypsy was a social category, among other things.

To varying degrees, many authors refer to external markers that make the Gypsy/Roma population distinguishable within Hungarian society. From the point of view of Gypsies/Roma, this can be the basis for a feeling of difference and differentiation; circles of “majority” society for a long time have persistently clung to the position that Gypsies are recognizable based on visible “race markers.” Mainstream social science goes against this, and is characterized by color blindness, that is, researchers reject the view that Gypsies form a “visible minority” (neglecting for the moment cases of discrimination) and call for a (possible) debate on the question. We should note that in Canada, for example, there is a debate over the degree to which given minority groups should be considered visible minorities, within which various positions vie against one another.

Assumed heritage, however, is not necessarily equal to true identity. For historians, the greater challenge is to map struggles of identity politics and identity formation such as everyday ethnic categorization or the documentation of scientific practices in relation to the definition of ethnic identities.

Power relations generally define the constitutive conditions of knowledge and scientific cognition, and without analyzing these we cannot describe the history of social groups and conflicts. On the epistemological reading, the object of criticism is primarily not documented facts and earlier scientific results, but instead the operation and mutual effects of the power spheres that define their emergence, existence and effects. According to this epistemological approach Gypsy policy, the Gypsy issue, and Gypsy (conceptual) existence can be described in this logical order. We feel that a back-to-front consideration of the “issue” is just as justified.

Many authors have shown that earlier folk names for Gypsies arose from conflicts between classifiers and the classified (i.e., “majority” institutions and the excluded), and as such negative or positive connotations about them or romantic origin myths arose. The creation and use of Roma as an ethnic identifier can be—contrary to the above—an attempt to erase social stigmas and to create a positive or neutral image. The expression and adaption of Roma identity is connected to Roma political activism, and the result of a political movement. Regarding this movement, there are those who question the legitimacy of Roma nationalism. We must emphasize that positions that relativize a common past and origin are character-
istic of history construction of other peoples and nations, and not just the diaspora, including the history of the Hungarian nation, and thus all such movements deserve the same criticism. We hold that a constructivist approach to Roma history that is sensitive to the identity struggle that the minority wields against the state power of the “majority” is preferable. External “scientific” viewpoints do not question the legitimacy of identity struggle. (In this book the quotation marks around the term “majority” and the lack of such around the term minority are meant to signify that we aim foremost to rethink identities and policies formed vis-à-vis the minority.)

Our current knowledge of Gypsies/Roma is based on the work of social scientists who had state commissions or who stood up to official state policy, but still accepted such policy and its principles. Up until the most recent decades, their writings without exception aimed to summarize knowledge from the point of view of the state or of the “majority” when writing about Gypsies/Roma. They strove to be complete and representative, and to express basic truths. In all cases of social science research we must clarify who the researchers see as Gypsy/Roma. As such, this classification problem is the starting point of every research project. Although we may reject basic stereotypes, in Hungary the majority of researchers traditionally use “majority” judgement as the basis of categorization.

For a long time the national Gypsy population did not concern statisticians and social scientists with state commissions. Estimates of the number of Gypsies living with the borders of the Hungarian state date back to only the middle of the nineteenth-century. In 1873 the Ministry of the Interior studied the Gypsy population and estimated its number at 214,000. Twenty years later the first “Gypsy census” was conducted, in which statisticians put their number at exactly 272,776 persons; this study was conducted under the aegis of the Royal Hungarian Statistical Office in 1893. The social scientists taking part in the study were in fact searching for the roots of a social problem, trying to understand the problems with integration of Gypsies living a nomadic lifestyle. Regarding the definition, they used the position of the “majority” society, and defined the group according to their opinion through anthropological markers: “Public opinion and the knowledge of the people regularly and securely kept track of those of Gypsy origin, and the criteria of such was anthropological markers.”

Census data from the first half of the twentieth-century estimated the size of the Gypsy population based on mother tongue and language use, and as such did not assess their proportion within the population as a whole to be significant. The period between the two World Wars saw the emergence of estimates putting the Gypsy population at around 100,000, but these were not widely publicized. Beginning in the 1950s, officials of the Hungarian state and social scientists once again began to estimate the size of the Gypsy population and summarize knowl-
edge about them. Their estimates, which adopted the definition provided by the “majority” as the basis, were consistently similar. After some time, state officials treated the data as a social fact, and they went so far as to predict the expected demographic processes of the Gypsy population. Measurements of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party based on the estimates of county councils held that 200,000 Gypsies lived in Hungary in 1961, 220–250,000 in 1970, 235 thousand in 1978 and 350–360,000 in 1983. Based on “demographic tendencies” the 1979 proclamation of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party’s Political Committee estimated that the Gypsy population would be 400–450,000 by 1990. In 1980–81, researchers estimated that by the year 2000 their numbers would reach 600–700,000.65

Sociological research, which took place within the confines of the state-socialist ideology, started its attempt to estimate the proportion of Gypsies and to describe the population’s sociological characteristics from the 1960s. The Central Statistical Office’s 1963 income and stratification study saw statisticians estimate the Gypsy population at 222,000 persons, based on the number of homes in settlements. A representative sociological study in 1971 estimated the population to be 320,000.66 The study led by István Kemény, taking place almost a hundred years after the first “Gypsy census,” also used the opinion of “majority” society as a basis: the project considered those people who were labeled as such by their “non-Gypsy” environment to be “Gypsy.”67 Given that Gypsy origin was always a stigma in the eyes of the public, of all possible definitions this was the only designation upon which a “national representative study” could be executed. However, this definition suggested that the relationship of Gypsies with the “majority” population and their “separateness” was defined not by culture, the existence of a Gypsy nation/minority status or an identity choice, but by the exclusionary behavior of members of the “majority” society.68 (The researchers asked social workers, village teachers, council employees, police and from time to time neighbors to point out those in the given settlement they considered Gypsy.)

After the regime change, between 1993 and 2003, in representative studies about Gypsies, methods similar to those in the 1971 project were employed. This approach can be summarized as follows: “...we had the research goal of examining the social position of people deemed Gypsy by their surroundings in that well-known social stratum in which those who do not view themselves as Gypsy but as members of the “majority” society firmly and clearly differentiate themselves from people they consider to be Gypsy.”69 Based on the 1993 representative sociological study and school statistics, the number of people deemed Roma by the non-Roma environment at the beginning of the 1990s was about 455,000.70 Ten years later, in 2003, sociological studies estimated this number to be 550–570,000.
The 1990s saw a vigorous debate over the Roma/Gypsy concept used—partly through necessity—in sociological research. The question was over which ascription to use: self-ascription of interviewees, definitions of the external “majority” or the immediate environment, opinion of the interviewer, or some combination of the above. The debate was not primarily about who is a Gypsy, but the nature and difficulty of social science categorization. The sociological approaches were based on the realization that in Hungary the “majority” category could be seen as a “social fact,” given that social actions and many varieties of attitudes had a defining effect. Studies led by István Kemény reflected this phenomenon. With the goal of acquiring knowledge, social scientists sharply distinguish groups from one another, or create other entities. The question arises: how does knowledge constructed in this fashion play out in the future? Thinking back on his 1971 research, Zsolt Csalog said the following: “…the whole time we faced the research dilemma of whether we should provide data to a dictatorship, because I couldn’t know what they would use the data for… we were afraid: would things go as we had hoped once we finished the study, or were we just stupid dupes, who through our best intentions would help the executioner perfect his work?” Today, in many cases, researchers refer to the fact that research is not independent of power, that Gypsies/Roma as a group cannot be sharply “distinguished” from “majority” com-
munities and is not uniform. However, these observations seem to lose their weight when their research results are utilized. In fact, data and groupings from categorizations based on “majority” delineations are taken into account in most, if not all, policy areas. To a significant degree, all that we know about Gypsies/Roma is a result of research conducted with this approach and point of view.

In the second half of the twentieth-century state institutions (and hence the “majority”) began to perceive Gypsies as a significant “group” in society, one whose numbers were rapidly growing. We think there is another explanation for the perception of a mass Gypsy population of several hundred thousand—beyond demographic reasons, differences in categorization methods that made their number change and specific events (e.g., immigration)—whereby representatives of the state displayed the difference between “majority” and minority, “Hungarians” and Gypsies, on a national level and thus visibly drew a boundary between the two groups for all to see. Earlier, Gypsy communities were dealt with at the local level.
by representatives of the Hungarian state (who tried to supervise the lives of these communities), but thanks to their peripheral social situation they were generally not thought of as a part of society, and as such the Gypsies did not become actors in discourses about Hungarian society. Differences and contrasts that earlier existed on the local level now were accessible for the entire society and were given a new dimension. Furthermore, this constructed community of unified Gypsy/Roma people was connected by researchers and state officials to various social phenomena, such as poverty, low levels of education or unemployment. This book seeks to clarify the social and political events of this process.

Theoretically, in any case when we attempt to answer the question of who may be a member of a given minority or ethnic group, the primary aspect and starting point should be the individual’s free choice, or whether the individual ascribes him/herself as belonging to the minority or wishes to assimilate. In Hungary, however, the adoption of Roma identity, much like assimilation, has long been made difficult by an environment of prejudice and discrimination. For this reason many feel that when we speak of Roma, we must use sociological data as a foundation. The use of the results of such research does not mean that the methods of sociological classification are beyond criticism. We must mention that this approach to categorization is not typical in the cases of other minorities. We assume that there would be widespread dismay in Hungary if the size of the German minority in Hungary, or drafting of policies toward them, designated its members based on residential or visible markers in the eyes of the “majority.”

The generalization of this starting point can serve to justify the daily practices of differentiation and can reinforce several stereotypes about the Roma as seen in circles of the “majority.” It makes free identity choice impossible and obstructs the path to assimilation. We agree with Mária Neményi’s position, who said the following: “I can accept the hard data of the national representative Gypsy study by István Kemény, Gábor Kertesi and Gábor Havas, when it comes to schooling, opportunities for employment, residential and housing situations and social service, because they draw attention to the systematic disadvantage suffered in all areas of life by the people of a group signified by their bodies, when facing the institutions of majority society. But I can’t accept that this research is about Gypsies…”

How people labeled as Roma/Gypsy see their own communities and culture, or the society and culture in contrast to which they are defined, is a fundamental question. It is our position that this separation can only be defined through changes in relations among the groups, that is, the Roma and the “majority” society. We cannot state that Roma identity awareness is independent of “majority” society or the behavior of the state. (This position is true in reverse: the self-identity of those
belonging to the “majority” contains an important aspect whereby members disassociate themselves from the minority.) The question of “who am I not?” can even precede that of “who am I?” Ethnic association is not only a question of accepting identity (or identities), but also depends on how outsiders classify the individual. As such, disassociation from the “majority” community became one of the fundamental characteristics of Gypsy identity.

Researchers have approached the “who am I not?” question in various ways. Michael Stewart tackled it while studying a Vlach Gypsy community in Hungary under state socialism. In his example Gypsies sometimes defined themselves and their communities in direct opposition to the “majority” ideology. Further, in Hungary we can observe a process whereby extreme right-wing discourses on Gypsies have become increasingly mainstream, given that an ever-wider swath of society relates to these discourses. Having conducted focus group and ethnographic research in three Hungarian villages, Feischmidt analyzed discourse on Gypsies as a discourse of otherness, and the effects of such on “majority” and minority identity. The results of this research showed that the Gypsy-Magyar relationship reflected a power hierarchy of subordination and superiority, and that the “majority” is increasingly thinking in racial terms. As a consequence of this racist point of view, even if social difference declines, racist and mobility-obstructing thought can be an obstacle to integration. The prejudiced environment obstructs social mobility, further weakening the egalitarian character of society.

Those researchers who reject definitions based on opinions formed within the “majority” seek “internal aspects” (language use, culture, identity, etc.) to define the minority. Often they too refer to “objective” characteristics. Contrary to the position that the Gypsy problem is equal to the problems of those speaking Gypsy languages, we must note that the proportion of people speaking a Gypsy language as a mother tongue is lower than the full Roma population, if by that we mean those with a Gypsy/Roma self-identity.

Hungarian census studies have traditionally estimated minority identity based on mother tongue. The 1893 Gypsy census held that only under 30 percent of Gypsies spoke a Gypsy language as their mother tongue. Census statistics on the post-Trianon territory of the country showed that up until 1930 the number of “Gypsy as mother tongue” and “speaks Gypsy among others” respondents were both under 10,000. By 1941 these numbers were 18,640 and 9,587 respectively. (Gypsies who were later labeled Boyash were likely marked as Gypsies with Romanian as their mother tongue. For most of the twentieth-century Boyash speakers were automatically lumped in with “Gypsy as mother tongue” speakers.) After the Second World War census surveys continued to record the number of
those with Gypsy as their mother tongue and those who spoke Gypsy among other languages. Between 1949 and 1980 the number of the former group was between 20-30,000, where the latter group numbered between 10-12,000.81

Within the population deemed as Gypsy, the proportion of those speaking Gypsy languages did not change significantly since the time of the first Gypsy studies. In 1971 the fact that 71 percent of Gypsies living in Hungary spoke Hungarian as their mother tongue was considered a surprising result. (Between 1971 and 1993 the rapid linguistic assimilation of Boyash and Vlach Gypsies was observable. This trend eventually reversed for the Vlach group.)82 The data collected from the 2003 sociological study show that in that year the proportion of Roma who spoke Hungarian as their mother tongue was 87 percent. For Romani speakers it was 8 percent, and 5 percent for Boyash speakers.83

The census of 1941 saw the introduction of questions on ethnic identity: at this time 27,033 respondents identified themselves as part of the Gypsy minority and this happened to match the total number of people who spoke Gypsy languages. According to data on minorities, the number of respondents claiming to be Gypsy was 37,598 in 1949, the number grew to 56,121 in 1960, and fell to 6,404 in 1980. (The last figure is explained by the fact that affiliation with the “Gypsy” minority was available only within the “other” category.)84 Data from the census of 1990 indicated that only 143,000 Roma lived in Hungary. The 2001 census showed 190,000 people who claimed Roma/Gypsy identity (among others).85 Incorporating other kinds of census data as well, the Central Statistical Office also made estimates on the size of the Gypsy population. They considered all those who affirmed at least one of the four non-compulsory questions on minority status to be Gypsy. (The census questions were the following: What minority do you feel you belong to? Which minority’s cultural values and traditions do you relate to? Which language is your mother tongue? Which language do you speak among family and friends?) In other words, they labeled all who provided any information indicating Gypsy heritage as Gypsy, multiple answers/affiliations allowed for a presentation of an even higher number of Roma. Even with this mode of calculating, just over 30 percent of those considered Gypsy identified themselves as such. Consequently, the method of collecting data changed for the 2011 census. Questions pertained only to minority identity, mother tongue and languages spoken with family and friends. All three questions allowed for responses entailing dual affiliation.86 The results of the census showed that the number of those identifying themselves as Gypsy (among other categories) grew to 315,000. This number, which reflected multiple identities, despite showing considerable growth, was still far below the numbers based on categorizations of the "majority."87
The 2003 sociological survey held that self-identification of those labeled as Roma did not match the opinions of the “majority”: 37.8 percent of respondents identified themselves as Hungarian, 29.8 percent as Hungarian Gypsy, 26.8 percent as Gypsy, 4.5 percent as Boyash and 1 percent as belonging to another minority.88

Although the “majority” society traditionally view Gypsies as a unified group, those who identify themselves as Gypsies are significantly stratified. Researchers tend to identify three main linguistic groups, the “Hungarian-speaking Hungarian Gypsies or Romungro (people who see themselves as Hungarian Gypsies, Musician Gypsies or Muzsikus Gypsies), the bilingual Hungarian- and Gypsy-speaking Vlach Gypsies (who call themselves Roma or Rom), and the bilingual, Hungarian- and a pre-modernized, archaic version of Romanian-speaking Gypsies (who call themselves and their language Boyash — and accepting their self-definition, in this book we use only the Boyash designation, although they are usually called Romanian Gypsies/Roma in Hungary).”89 However, to a degree these groups are constructions and groupings designed by researchers, based on external categorization and empirical analysis of the languages and identities of small communities. At the end of the 1950s ethnographer Kamill Erdős created and published a typology that has defined the linguistic-ethnic grouping of Gypsy communities ever since, and has in turn affected the self-definition and identity of Gypsies/Roma themselves (it is worth noting that he identified no less then eleven groups or “tribes” among the Vlach Gypsies).90 The Boyash group that to this day is presented as unified speaks at least three dialects: Arđelan, Munćan and Tićan, each with its own vernacular.91

At the same time it is common for the cultural and linguistic differences between these groups to sometimes be hardly detectable in everyday life. Gábor Fleck and Tünde Virág’s case study gives the following account:

The vocabulary of the two dialects is almost uniform, in practice the Munćans and the Arđelans understand one another perfectly. However, when we asked, they stated that that is a completely different language, one they do not speak. This was well illustrated in the following story: during our field work a German priest visited the village, one who earlier has worked with Munćans and spoke the Munćan language. The locals asked for us to interpret through Hungarian, given they did not speak Munćan, only Arđelan. We encouraged them to speak with the priest on their own... They began talking and were happy to report that according to this, they speak Munćan.92

In an interview, Károly Bari referred to the following historical parallel: “In the Reform Age the Hungarian language—which was spoken in countless dialects—
was made capable of handling the communication tasks of the day. Today the Gypsy language needs to be unified, modernized."

The largest proportion of those deemed Gypsy/Roma speak Hungarian exclusively, and the majority of ethnographic and anthropological studies show they do not maintain customs that allow for their culture to be distinguished from that of the “majority.” At the local level there are more similarities between the traditions of minorities and “majority” communities living in close proximity to one another than there are among minority (or “majority”) communities that have little or no contact with one another. There are still those who feel that Gypsy culture and identity needs to be embedded in historical roots, traditions and shared lifestyles. This approach in social science is now less emphasized, perhaps because for a long time it was adopted by only those researchers who viewed “Gypsy lifestyle” as a negative phenomenon. (It appeared that they wrote of the customs and solidarity of these communities, when in fact they characterized them as transgressors of norms and outsiders from a “majority” perspective.) Of course this does not mean that the solidarity of the various groups of Roma/Gypsies cannot be explained by ethnography or cultural anthropology. The Roma/Gypsy identity can be interpreted through culture, lifestyle and daily customs of various communities. Ethnographic studies have revealed the uniqueness of this multicolored culture, which—as Péter Szuhay has put it—is based largely on oral culture, and is “in a state before cultural unification.” In a 2014 study Ernő Kállai concluded that although the concept of a unified Gypsy minority could change in light of identity construction projects, at this point it “merely signifies a community constructed by the majority.”

There are several historical explanations for the birth of a Gypsy/Roma minority/national identity. The most common interpretation, as discussed above, presents Gypsies as a historical diaspora. Accordingly, historical roots and shared patterns of lifestyle bind them together. This approach is contradicted by those who follow the constructivist view, suggesting that the “Gypsy people” have been created by the work of those researchers who have studied the separating (categorizing) steps of governments, courts and church institutions; such scholars are also concerned with understanding the society and culture of groups that have been excluded from the given society’s system of relations, creating among these groups a kind of virtual unity. Those who ascribe to the third position focus on the identity policy struggles of the recent past. They hold the category of Roma to be a constructed category, to which no historically present entity, shared tradition or unique history can be realistically attached. According to these authors, Roma identity cannot be interpreted through common heritage, lifestyle or other group markers, but instead should be seen as a result of classification struggles fought by and between “non-Roma” and “Roma” for decades, if not centuries.
The various approaches clearly illustrate the variety of Gypsy/Roma images in social science. Naturally, it is important to name the group we are studying, but generally the various group labels are not distinct, precise descriptions, and often they do not pertain to concrete individuals or communities. The meaning of these group labels continuously changes from text to text, and they thus lose their true reference points. (In this book, where possible, we reflect on the given time, how and when, and to what extent sources treated Roma as a social or ethnic group.)

The use of the Roma/Gypsy label will be developed over the course of this book: we will recreate the category several times. It is not the job of scientific research to create categorizations for daily use that are beyond reproach; however, researchers must always accept the critical and (self-)reflexive use of concepts.

Lately, history writing has accepted constantly changing, flexible and conceptually intangible formations of social groups. Individuals create for themselves images of society when they invest meaning into their own worlds and phenomena beyond those. External references for these group images are (or can be) provided by the conflux of individual ideas. All other (external) groupings transform—according to the interests of power and scientific goals—the individual (micro-level) construction of the existence (as opposed to experience) of groups.

In the following chapter, in accordance with this argument, we will not aim to draw the (non-existent) boundaries of a non-existent group. Instead, we will treat the existence of the minority (minorities) as a fact and view the constructions of a homogeneous “majority” and a unified national history by modernity and the modern state as a floating and pliable image.

Notes

1 "What, do you imagine that I would take so much trouble and so much pleasure in writing, do you think that I would keep so persistently to my task, if I were not preparing—with a rather shaky hand—a labyrinth into which I can venture, in which I can move my discourse, opening up underground passages, forcing it to go far from itself, finding overhangs that reduce and deform its itinerary, in which I can lose myself and appear at last to eyes that I will never have to meet again. I am no doubt not the only one who writes in order to have no face. Do not ask who I am and do not ask me to remain the same: leave it to our bureaucrats and our police to see that our papers are in order. At least spare us their morality when we write." Michel Foucault, “Introduction,” in The Archaeology of Knowledge, ed. Michel Foucault (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 17.


7 “An extreme form of minority position, illustrating some but not all features of minorities, is that of pariah groups. These are groups actively rejected by the host population because of behaviour or characteristics positively condemned, though often useful in some specific, practical way. European pariah groups of recent centuries (executioners, dealers in horseflesh and -leather, collectors of night soil, gypsies, etc.) exemplify most features; as breakers of basic taboos they were rejected by the larger society. Their identity imposed a definition on social situations which gave very little scope for interaction with persons in the majority population, and simultaneously as an imperative status represented an inescapable disability that prevented them from assuming the normal statuses involved in other definitions of the situation of interaction. Despite these formidable barriers, such groups do not seem to have developed the internal complexity that would lead us to regard them as full-fledged ethnic groups; only the culturally foreign gypsies clearly constitute such a group.” Source: Fredrik Barth, “Introduction,” in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, ed. Fredrik Barth (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1970), 31.

8 In his historical analysis Zoltan Barany also states that in various periods the situation of Roma was determined primarily by marginality: Zoltan Barany, *The East European Gypsies. Regime Change, Marginality, and Ethnopoltics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 2; see also Jean Pierre Liégeois, *Roma in Europe* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2007), 98.

9 Liégeois, *Roma in Europe*, 98.


13 For example, Hancock gave his book a Romani title and in his chapter titles named the periods and important events of Roma history in the Romani language: “O Teljaripe: The move out of India,” “O Aresipe: Arrival in Byzantium” or “O Baro Porrajmos: The Holocaust.” Ian Hancock, *We are the Romani People. Ame sam e Rromane dzene* (Hatfield: Centre de recherches tsiganes/University of Hertfordshire Press, 2002).

15 Historical and political science essays on Roma reveal the activist nature of their authors, see Yaron Matras “A conflict of paradigms: Review article,” Romani Studies 14, no. 2 (2004): 196.

16 Ian Hancock recommended the use of the term Porrajmos: Ian Hancock, “Responses to the Porrajmos: The Romani Holocaust,” in Is the Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative Genocide, ed. Alan S. Rosenbaum (Boulder: The Westview Press, 1995), 39–64. This is criticized in the following: Stewart, “Remembering without commemoration,” 564. Other names or spellings are found in: Claire Auzias, Samudaripen: le Génocide des Tsiganes (Paris: L’Esprit Frappeur, 1999); János Bársny and Ágnes Darócz, Pharrajimos: The Fate of the Roma During the Holocaust (Budapest: CEU Press, 2007); János Bársny and Ágnes Darócz, ed., Pharrajimos: The Fate of the Roma during the Holocaust (New York: International Debate Education Association, 2008); see also Chapter 1, footnote 8 in this book.


18 A number of oral history projects have been launched recently with a goal of gaining more complete knowledge of recent history. Books based on oral history projects concerning the fate of the Hungarian Roma are the following: János Bársny and Ágnes Darócz, eds., Pharrajimos: The Fate of the Roma during the Holocaust; Bernáth Gábor, Zor-sila najarané mashkar e Roma, 1940-1985 / Könyvésztermosdázások a cigánytelepeken, 1940–1985 / Forced bathings in Gypsy settlements, 1940-1985 (Budapest: Roma Sajtóközpont, Roma Sajtóközpont könyvek 3., 2002); Bernáth Gábor, ed., Porrajmos: E Roma seron, kon perdal zhuvinde / Roma Holocaust túlélők emlékeznek / Recollections of Roma Holocaust survivors (Budapest: Roma Sajtóközpont, Roma Sajtóközpont könyvek 2., 2000).


20 We do not see a clear cause-effect relation between changes in state policies and the development of the situation of Roma. Instead, we have chosen to analyze the discourses of those who were in power, regardless of the regime type, which in an indirect way certainly had an effect on the situation and identity of the minority.

21 Matras, “A conflict of paradigms.”


23 Thomas Lindenberger, “Alltagsgeschichte und ihr möglicher Beitrag zu einer Gesellschaftsgeschichte der DDR,” in Die Grenzen der Diktatur. Staat und Gesellschaft in

24 Foucault called critical history writing that stood in opposition to dominant historical writing "counter history." Counter history is an insurgent discourse aimed at the dominant discourse. It strives to integrate the points of view of groups that are pushed to the social periphery or are excluded from history writing (these include studies that give voice to the views of postcolonial, ethnic, or social gender groups). Michel Foucault, “Seminar: 28 January 1976,” in Society Must Be Defended. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–1976, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003), 66–84.

25 For example, in his book, Zoltan Barany goes beyond the regular researcher role and makes recommendations to policy makers, suggesting a long-term program of Romani integration for East European governments. Barany, The East European Gypsies, 344–53.


27 See, for example, Peter Novick, That Noble Dream: The “Objectivity Question” and the American Historical Profession (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). One of the common critiques of ethnohistory is that it can become based on political views built on grievances. One of the foundations of this is that the authors consciously avoid several criteria that are found in “scientific” history writing. These criteria (impersonal approach, provident and dry style of writing, hiding one’s own position) we can view as content-free stylistic elements, which serve as self-justification and eventually mask the ideological nature of historical writing. All works of history bring up the issues of the ability to illustrate and uniqueness, or that of knowability and understandability.


29 For a bibliography of works published up to the 1980s see: László Pomogyi, A magyarországi cigányság történetének válogatott bibliográfiája [A selected bibliography of the history of the Gypsies in Hungary] (Budapest: ELTE Állam és Jogtörténeti TDK, Állam- és jogtörténeti bibliográfiák 5., 1983).


33 Báthory and Pomogyi, “A történelem-tudomány szerepe a ciganológiai kutatásokban I.” [The role of historical science in romological research, I.], 21.


36 Certain authors—following the work of Foucault—generally use the subsequent steps when analyzing discourses. It is necessary to distinguish who is speaking in given texts, what institutional forums the speech is taking place in, and what the actual position of the speaker is. This helps understand the array of enunciation (l’énoncé, “the statement”) variants. The next step is the examination of the connections of the enunciations, seeing who intervenes in the discourse at what point, and with what methods (with the help of rewriting and overwriting) the discourses are changed. This helps us understand the organization of the enunciation field. Finally, what follows is the most important step, namely the examination of the strategic field. This entails the presentation of the reasons behind individual choices and the uncovering of the strategies of those in power. Foucault, “The discourse on language”; Foucault, The Order of Things.


48 György Csepeli and Antal Örkény, The Making of a Minority: Competing claims of definitions of being Roma in contemporary Hungarian society (manuscript, 2015).
49 István Bibó, "Zsidókérdés Magyarországon 1944 után" ['The Jewish question in Hungary after 1944"], in Válogatott tanulmányok II [Selected studies II], ed. István Bibó (Budapest: Bibó István örökösei, 1990), 746.
50 Writing about 1944, he emphasized the collective responsibility of Hungarian society for the annihilation of the Jews, and encouraged that social memory treat the Holocaust as a crime committed against members of the Hungarian nation, i.e., against itself.
53 From the Eastern border of the country to the Western, a distance of approximately 500 km.
54 Zsolt Csalog, Kilenc cigány. (Önéletrajzi vallomások) [Nine Gypsies. (Autobiographic reports)] (Budapest: Kozmosz, 1976), 225–226, 239.
55 Csalog, Kilenc cigány, 179–224.
59 According to Austrian statistician Karl von Czörnig they numbered 93,000 in 1846, 143,500 in 1857 and 155,700 at the end of 1864. Quoted in: Dr. István Hoóz, "A magyarországi cigányösszeírásokról és a cigány népesség számának alakulásáról" ['The surveys on Gypsies in Hungary and changes in the number of Gypsy population], in A cigányok számának és demográfiai helyzétének alakulása Baranya megyében [Changes in the demographic situation of the Gypsies in Baranya County], ed. István Hoóz (Pécs: Janus Pannonius Tudományegyetem, 1989), 15–16.
60 Antal Herrmann, Magyarországon 1893. január 31-én végrehajtott Czigány összeírás eredményei [Findings of the census of Gypsies carried out on 31 January, 1893 in Hungary] (Magyar Statisztikai Közlémenyek, IX. 1895), 81.
61 During the 1880 census those with Romani as their mother tongue were placed under the "other" mother tongue category. According to the 1893 Gypsy study, a little under
30 percent of the study’s subjects spoke Romani as their mother tongue. Those who spoke Romani (among other languages) numbered 94,769. Source: Hoóz, "A magyarországi cigányösszejrásokról,” 18–19.

62 Herrmann, 1893. Czigány összejrás.
63 Herrmann, 1893. Czigány összejrás, 11.
65 In 1981 7 percent of students in elementary schools and special schools were deemed Gypsy, and based on this, estimates of future changes in the population were made. Hoóz, "A magyarországi cigányösszejrásokról, 3.
67 István Kemény, "A magyarországi cigányok helyzeté” [The status of the Gypsies of Hungary], in Beszámoló a magyarországi cigányok helyzetével foglalkozó 1971-ben végzett kutatásról [Report on research carried out in 1971 on the situation of Gypsies in Hungary], ed. István Kemény (Budapest: MTA Szociológiai Kutató Intézete, 1976), 7–67. The 1993–1994 national representative Gypsy study was based on the same principles. See Gábor Havas and István Kemény, "A magyarországi romákér” [On the Hungarian Roma], Szociológiai Szemle 3 (1995): 3–20. The Szelényi-Treiman study empirically confirmed that the number of Gypsies in Hungary was much lower when measurement was based on self-proclamation of ethnic identity and higher when the environment (in this case the interviewer) was able to categorize the subjects. See Iván Szelényi and Donald J. Treiman, Social Stratification in Eastern Europe after 1989. General Population Survey (Los Angeles: UCLA, Department of Sociology, 1993).
68 István Kemény expressed the following in his summarizing work: “... we cannot speak of a Gypsy culture or subculture, but of the subculture of the lower strata, within which the lifestyle groups of Gypsies provide various colours.” Source: Kemény, "A magyarországi cigányok helyzeté”, 42. For more detail on the issue see Péter Szuhay, A magyarországi cigányok kultúrája: etnikus kultúra vagy a szegénység kultúrája [The culture of the Gypsies in Hungary: An ethnic culture or the culture of poverty] (Budapest: Panoráma, 1999).
71 Naturally the Gypsies/Roma, or the category of those people who were “deemed Gypsy by the majority” is also a construction. The border separating the two groups is malleable and crossable. Typically, even when sociologists use self-ascription of the individual as a starting point, they still incorporate the “majority” definition. For an analysis of the sociological approaches see: Csaba Dupcsik, Megnevezés, meghatározás, megszámlálhatóság [Denomination, definition, countability], 2011, accessed April 8, 2015, http://www.ideaintezet.hu/sites/default/files/Megnevezes_IDEA.pdf.
72 Zsolt Csalog, “Kaptam a romáktól emberi gazdagságot...” Csalog Zsolttal Daróczi Ágnes beszélget” [I discovered the human richness that lies in Roma communities. An interview with Zsolt Csalog, by Ágnes Daróczy], Beszélő 10 (1997): 38.


74 Mária Neményi, “Kis roma demográfia” [Brief Roma Demography], in Cigánynak születni, eds. Horváth, Landau and Szalai, 278.


78 Feischmidt, “A mindennapi nacionalizmus,” 446.


80 Herrmann, 1893. Czigány összeirás.

81 The number of “Gypsy as a mother tongue” respondents was 6,989 in 1920, then it was 7,841 in 1930 and 18,640 in 1941. The number of “speaks Gypsy along with other languages” respondents was 4,909 in 1920, then it was 6,632 in 1930 and 9,587 in 1941. Census surveys after World War II continued to measure these categories. The number of “Gypsy as a mother tongue” respondents was 21,387 in 1949, then it was 25,633 in 1960 and 34,957 in 1970, and later 27,915 in 1980. Numbers for the category “speaks Gypsy among other languages” were 9,958 in 1949, then 14,230 in 1960 and 17,613 in 1980. Data on minority populations recorded 37,598 people who identified themselves as Gypsy in 1949, with 56,121 in 1960 and 6,404 in 1980. Source: Központi Statisztikai Hivatal [Hungarian Central Statistical Office], “1960. évi népszámlálás: Összefoglaló adatok” [Census of 1960: Summary], 13 (Budapest: KSH, 1964), 27–28; Központi Statisztikai Hivatal [Hungarian Central Statistical Office], "1980. évi népszámlálás:

88 Janky, “A cigány családok jövedelmi helyzete,” 400.
93 Károly Bari, “A származás nem esztétikai kategória. Murányi Gábor interjúja Bari Károlyal” [Ancestry is not an aesthetic category. An interview with Károly Bari by Gábor Murányi], HVG 23 (June 12, 2010), 34.
94 A characteristic example of this is the work of József Vekerdi. See, for example, József Vekerdi, A magyarországi cigánykutatások története [History of Gypsy research in Hungary] (Debrecen: KLTE, 1982).
95 On the relations between Gypsy studies in Hungary and cultural anthropology, see Csaba Prónai, Cigánykutatás és kulturális antropológia [Romology research and cultural anthropology] (Budapest: Éötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem – Csongorai Vitó, Mihály Tanítóképző Főiskola, 1995), 95–129.
97 Ernő Kállai, “Vannak-e cigányok?” 142.