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The Roma in Romanian History



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INTRODUCTION

In traditional approaches, the history of Romania could be written without reference to the Gypsies.* For a long time, history was regarded as being about those who were in the centre of historical events. The Gypsies, however, have never been a part of “History with a capital H”. For centuries, on Romanian territories they were kept in a state of collective slavery. Emancipation from slavery in the mid-nineteenth century did not secure their complete integration into modern Romanian society, due to the nature of the conditions in which it took place. They have continued to occupy, even until the present day, a marginal social position. Even when writers of Romanian social history came to regard the masses as being in the vanguard of history, they paid but little attention to those on the margins of society, where the Gypsies were largely to be found. Similarly, not even the study of ethnic minorities and inter-ethnic relations has paid attention to the Gypsies. As a result of historical conditions, the Gypsies have almost never expressed themselves in the public domain as an ethnic group, and have consequently failed to awaken any particular interest in their past. The chapter about the Gypsies in the ethnic history of Romania is yet to be written.

Nonetheless, the Gypsies have been a permanent presence in Romanian history. From the second half of the fourteenth century onwards, this population of Indian origin has been present in the social and ethnic landscape of the Romanian lands. For four and a half centuries the Gypsies were kept in a state of slavery on Romanian territory. They were consequently a marginal element in society and had no impact on social developments, in which they were not included. Their status as slaves marked their destiny. The legal emancipation of the mid-nineteenth century was not accompanied by social emancipation. The authorities’ failed attempts to tie them to the soil and to an agricultural occupation only succeeded in perpetuating their

* The terms “Gypsy” and “Roma” are both used throughout the book in compliance with the historical reality. “Gypsy” is mostly applied for the past, referring to how those placed in this category have been treated within Romanian society. The term “Roma” represents the new emerging ethnic identity of this population.

marginal status in society. The history of this significant segment of the population of Romania cannot, however, be ignored. At the time of their emancipation in the middle of the nineteenth century, the Gypsies represented approximately 7 per cent of the population of the principalities, while according to the 1992 census they account for 1.8 per cent of the population, although the most credible estimates give a figure of approximately 5 per cent.

For a long time interest in the Gypsies was linked to the picturesque aspects of their existence, something that remains valid to a large extent today. In my case, I should acknowledge that what awakened my interest in the history of the Gypsies in Romania and convinced me to study the subject was the need to understand the current situation of this population. In my opinion, the Gypsy population in Romania is an illustrative case for the relationship between the past and the present—a relationship in which, according to the well-known formula, the past explains the present and the present explains the past. This factor strengthens the social value of the present historical study. The history of the Gypsies in Romania is marked by the survival over the centuries of certain characteristics, cultural patterns etc. Their inferior and marginal social condition, their particular symbiosis with the majority population, their distinct way of life, the discrimination on the part of the majority population and other features have persisted to the present day. The fact that the Gypsies were slaves for a long time has marked their way of life in a definitive fashion and explains the inferior social status that they have held until the present day. The separation of the Gypsies from the majority population is a legacy that derives from the social and legal status as slaves that they possessed until the middle of the nineteenth century.

It has been my intention to produce a work that reconstitutes the history of the Gypsies in Romania from the time of their appearance at the north of the Danube until the present day. I have above all traced the defining elements of the evolution of this population and the most important moments in this evolution. In the organisation of the work I have paid special attention to the long-term aspects of the history of the Gypsies, such as slavery or the processes of integration and assimilation within the majority population. Similarly, I have paid attention to the emancipation from slavery of the Gypsies, which is important in terms of its consequences, as well as the evolution of their social position after emancipation. I have equally examined the tragic fate of a part of the Gypsy population of Romania during the Second World War. The work in hand is almost entirely one of social and political history. I have referred only in a strictly tangential manner to the cultural specificity of the Gypsy population over time. If, for example, I have referred to the attempts during the 1930s of certain Gypsy intellectuals

to have the term “Gypsy” replaced with that of “Rom”, I have done so because this instance constitutes an element in the Gypsy emancipation movement of the time.

It was not at all easy to proceed with this scientific inquiry. Genuine contributions to the history of the Gypsies in Romania are few and far between. The history of this population has been neglected in Romanian historiography, while those studies that have been written are, in general, far from meeting contemporary research standards. For a long time in Romania, as it was indeed everywhere, the approach to the question of the Gypsies was dominated by a preoccupation with the sensational. Not even today has this state of affairs been completely overcome. Romology, the generic name attributed to those disciplines that deal with the study of the Gypsies, is a field in which dilettantism continues to be present.

There are, of course, some works which deserve a mention: I am indebted to the first Romanian study devoted to the Gypsies by Mihail Kogălniceanu, a work published in 1837 in Berlin under the title *Esquisse sur l'histoire, les mœurs et la langue des Cigains*, which in 1840 was translated into German. The writings of Kogălniceanu on the subject are typical of writings on the Gypsies that began to appear in the eighteenth century and which continue to the present day, combining historical data with linguistic, ethnographic, statistical and other data. The author adds his own observations on the Gypsies in the Romanian principalities to the general data he provides on the Gypsies, selected with discernment from the works of the time. The author's own observations, even if they do not reach the standards of scientific research, are very important when it comes to understanding the history of the Gypsies in Romania, since they reflect their situation on the cusp of emancipation. The work of Kogălniceanu constitutes a genuine contribution to this field of research. It was widely used at the time and remains a work of reference even today in the field of Romology.

In the 1840s and 50s, there was a very high level of interest in the “Gypsy question” in Romanian society. At a time when the emancipation of the Gypsies was gradually taking place, the problem of slavery occupied an important role in the discussion of ideas. Western-trained intellectuals argued against the old state of affairs, fighting for the abolition of slavery. The press of the time was preoccupied with the subject, which was equally present in political debate. However, preoccupation with the Gypsies remained completely within the domain of the social problem that it represented. At that time, no research discipline developed that would examine the history, language or folklore of this population. Of course, the priorities of an incipient Romanian science lay elsewhere, but the neglect of the Gypsies from a scientific point of view was also done out of motives of image: at the time,

history was conceived as a factor contributing to the cultivation of national sentiment and the slavery of the Gypsies was not a reason for patriotic pride.

A particular interest in the Gypsies only appeared in Romanian science during the inter-war period. It was then that George Potra's *Contribuțiuni la istoricul țiganilor din România* [Contributions to the History of the Gypsies in Romania] (Bucharest, 1939) was published. This work constitutes the first ever synthesis of the history of the Gypsies in Romania. It is built around numerous pieces of documentary data and covers some of the aspects of this problem. Approximately half of the work is composed of a collection of previously unpublished documents dating from the period 1600–1848 containing information on the legal, social and occupational conditions of the Gypsies in Wallachia and Moldavia. George Potra's work remains useful today.

However, the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s are particularly important in the Romanian scientific study of the Gypsies, because of the ethnographic and sociological studies carried out at that time. The surveys of rural communities carried out by teams from the Romanian Social Institute, led by Dimitrie Gusti, did not avoid families or communities of Gypsies living on the edges of Romanian villages. Particular attention was paid to the Gypsies' relations with the majority population and their economic and social function within the community. There are even a number of studies devoted to these aspects: Domnica I. Păun, "Țiganii în viața satului Cornova" [The Gypsies in the Life of the Village of Cornova] in *Arhiva pentru Știința și Reforma Socială*, X (1932), nos. 1–4, pp. 521–527; Aurel Boia, "Integrarea țiganilor din Șanț (Năsăud) în comunitatea românească a satului" [The Integration of the Gypsies from Șanț (Năsăud) into the Village's Romanian Community] in *Sociologie Românească*, III (1938), nos. 7–9, p. 351–365. The chief preoccupation of these studies was to examine the process of integration of the Gypsies into Romanian rural society. The studies were deeply committed and subordinated to the imperatives of Romanian sociological science, namely to influence the development of rural society. The work that is most representative of the interest accorded to the Gypsies during this time is that of Ion Chelcea. He carried out a large number of rigorous ethnographic studies of the Gypsies that were based on fieldwork. His book *Țiganii din România. Monografie etnografică* [The Gypsies in Romania. An Ethnographic Monograph] (Bucharest, 1944) is a sizeable ethnographic work of a high standard and of exemplary methodological rigour. The work brings together practically all of the data of this nature in existence at the time, and, in spite of certain shortcomings due to the ideological climate of the period, it remains the reference book on the subject until today. The sociological and ethnographic literature in Romania about the Gypsies produced in the 1930s and 1940s enables us to gain a

fairly good understanding of the social, employment etc. conditions of the Gypsies at that time.

After the Second World War, however, this direction of research was abandoned. During the Communist period, very little attention was paid to the Gypsies, with only a handful of studies devoted to their history. Only after 1989 has the preoccupation with the Gypsies been revived in Romanian science. The difficult social conditions endured by a significant part of this community and the movement for political organisation and public affirmation have affected a rethinking of the place occupied by the Gypsies in the current range of problems of the Romanian society. Tens of articles and even a few books have been published on the current state of the Gypsies (Roma) in Romania. However, we are still awaiting the appearance of historical research into the Gypsies.

Due to the state of history writing on the Gypsies, even if this work is formally a synthesis, it has only to a relatively small extent benefited from older studies. As it will be seen, I make frequent reference to sources: that is to say to collections of documents and archive material. It should be understood that many of these sources are being used for the first time in historical research. Certain sub-chapters within the work are based entirely around such sources. For this reason, in certain parts the work takes the form of documentary research.

This scientific investigation is not only addressed to historians and to members of the public interested in this subject, which I believe is of some importance in the history of Romania. Today the Gypsies have been brought to our attention by the acute problems, particularly of a social order, that they present to Romanian society. These problems make it necessary for those studying the past of this population to find explanations for their current situation. Without wishing to be too categorical at this stage, I should like to state that an initial explanation may be found in the way in which the emancipation of the Gypsies was actually carried out in the Romanian principalities in the middle of the nineteenth century. Due to the socio-political conditions of the time, the legislation pertaining to the emancipation of the Gypsies was restricted to the legal side of the problem, paying too little attention to the social and economic aspects of their situation. Emancipation did not also mean the granting of land and for this reason a substantial part of the Gypsies were not integrated into rural communities. Many of them remained within their ancestral trades as a distinct social and occupational category, even after they had settled into a sedentary way of life. Those that did manage to integrate from an economic perspective at the time of emancipation or at a later stage, whether through the acquisition of land or the adoption of an agricultural occupation, lost their Gypsy identity and became assimilated from an ethnic point of view into the majority population. The

inferior social status of the Gypsies today can be explained by the perpetuation of their marginality. Even if there have been significant changes from emancipation until the present day with regard to this population that has been forced to give up the majority of its traditional trades and adopt occupations offered to it within the framework of the modern economy, its marginal position in society has persisted. The Gypsies have taken up the worst paid jobs in society; jobs that the rest of the population has refused to carry out. Their reduced level of education and their lack of a predisposition towards modern professions have led to this situation. The marginal status of the Gypsies has prevented them from occupying positions in the new hierarchy of industrial society (including in the Communist period) similar to those taken up by other ethnic groups. The Gypsies have occupied and continue to occupy almost en masse the lowest level in society.

Of course, such historical explanations cannot account for the problem of the Gypsies today in all its complexity. (It should be recalled that even in those countries where in recent decades there has been special concern for the social problems of the Gypsies and where policies designed to integrate them into society have been employed, such efforts have resulted in failure.) It is, however, without question that the current situation of this population and the specific problems it faces are to a large extent the result of history. It is for this reason that I believe that the current work, by offering a diachronic analysis of the presence of the Gypsies in Romania, can contribute to the understanding of the present situation of this minority.

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This book has been developed from the work entitled *Țigani în România. Privire asupra istoriei unei minorități etnice* [The Gypsies in Romania. A Glance at the History of an Ethnic Minority], devised in the years 1993–95 with the support of the Research Support Scheme of the Central European University. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the leadership of this institution. The interest shown in my project provided me with the impetus to expand my research in this field. Without it, this book would not have been possible.

Equally, I should like to thank my colleagues at the Nicolae Iorga Institute of History for the bibliographical and other information offered to me, which was always done in a pleasant and helpful manner, as well as all those who encouraged me in undertaking this piece of work that has proved to be difficult, often discouragingly so.

CHAPTER I

THE ARRIVAL OF THE GYPSIES ON THE TERRITORY OF ROMANIA

1. THE GYPSIES' MIGRATION TO EUROPE

Virtually everything that is known about the more distant history of the Gypsies is due to linguistics. After centuries in which the most varied and lurid explanations¹ were advanced for the origins and history of this people, with racial and cultural characteristics different to those of the peoples of Europe, in the second half of the eighteenth century comparative philology discovered the similarity between the spoken language of the Gypsies and Sanskrit. On the basis of this discovery, German scholar H. M. G. Grellmann concluded in the first modern scientific work dedicated to the Gypsies, which appeared in 1783, that the Gypsy population was of Indian origin.² In later studies it was rigorously demonstrated that the spoken language of the Gypsies and Sanskrit were related. The Romany language, also known as Romani or Romanes, belongs to the Indo-European language family. It is a member of the Neo-Indian group of languages, making it a relative of certain languages spoken in the Indian subcontinent. However, in conditions in which Romanes possesses elements that are common to many Indian (and non-Indian) languages and in spite of numerous attempts on the part of linguists over the course of more than a century, it has not been possible to identify the region or population where the origins of the speakers of Romanes lie. The general consensus has been for either North-west or Central India. Neither physical anthropology nor ethnology has been able to provide a decisive response to this question and to locate the ethnic group or caste to which the ancestors of the Gypsies belonged. In the current century, the nomadic way of life can still be found in the Indian cultural space, in not negligible proportions. However, the nomadic tribes of India have not yet been researched sufficiently, while population movements have been frequent in this part of the world. Consequently, it has not been possible to locate precisely the area from which the Gypsies set off in their migration towards Europe. The reasons for their departure from their primordial homeland are not known, nor the period of the first migrations. Much remains unknown with regard to the early history of the Gypsies.³

There remain many unknowns with regard to the migration of the Gypsies out of India and as far as Europe. The migration took place over an extended period of time and was not dramatic in nature. Consequently, it

has left little documentary trace behind it. With the use of linguistics it has been possible to reconstruct in broad lines the itineraries followed by the Gypsies in the course of their migrations. The Romany dialects spoken in different European countries include numerous words and grammatical structures that have not been brought with the Gypsies from India, but which have been borrowed from the different peoples with whom the Gypsies have come into contact in the course of their migration. These linguistic borrowings are an indicator of the places through which the different groups of the Gypsies have passed. Studying the Romany dialects through the prism of these borrowings, more than a century ago the renowned linguist Franz Miklosich established the route followed by the Gypsies from India to Europe. He demonstrated that the Persian and Armenian elements present in all the dialects of Romanes indicate that they passed through Persia and old Armenia before arriving in Asia Minor. The abundance of words from medieval Greek in the language spoken by the Gypsies of Europe shows that they spent an extended period of time on Greek-speaking territories, i.e. the Byzantine Empire. The substantial amount of basic vocabulary from Slavonic is proof of the fact that the Gypsies spent some time in the Balkan Peninsula. Miklosich also affirms that the Romany dialects of Central and Northern Europe contain a smaller, though revealing, proportion of Romanian words, the presence of which he interprets as proof of the passing of the Gypsies through Romania. Finally, elements from German can be found in the Romany dialects spoken in England, Poland, Russia, Finland and Scandinavia, an indicator of the fact that those Gypsies spent a period of time within the German language space.⁴

Migration routes were thus reconstructed initially using the linguistic method, for its conclusions to be for the most part confirmed later on by historical research. However, the chronology of this process and the contemporary political context in which it took place remain problems that have only partially been explained. The literature on the subject, not negligible in terms of quantity, is quite lacking in the rigour that generally characterises European medieval studies. The history of the Gypsies prior to the fourteenth century remains, to a large extent, the domain of hypothesis.

It is generally accepted that the migration of the Gypsies from India to Europe took place between the ninth and the fourteenth centuries, in a number of waves.⁵ It is believed that the Gypsies arrived in Persia during the ninth century. Persian sources call them *Luli* or *Luri*; in the middle of the tenth century they are attested to under the Arab name *Zott*. These names were, however, used indiscriminately for anybody coming from India. The Gypsies would have been able to reach Persia as part of population movements from the East or a Persian military expedition to India. They stayed there for a long period of time, as demonstrated by the large number of Per-

sian words present in the European Romany dialects. The Gypsies also must have spent a fairly long period of time in old Armenia, since the Romany dialects of Europe contain Armenian terms. From here they entered Asia Minor, thereby entering Greek language territory.

The appearance of the Gypsies in the Byzantine Empire has been linked to the raids of the Seljuk Turks in Armenia in the middle of the eleventh century. It is certain that their arrival in the Byzantine Empire was a gradual process. It was here that they acquired the ethnic name they bear today: *Tsigane*.⁶ In Greek, they were called *Athinganos* or *Atsinganos*, after the name of a heretical sect. In Byzantine sources, there are more references to *Athinganos*, which some authors linked with the newcomers to the Empire. It is generally believed that the first attestation of the Gypsies in the Byzantine Empire is contained in a Georgian hagiographic text dating from the year 1068: in the text, there are references to so-called *Adsincani*, renowned for their sorcery and evil deeds. A recent study, however, claims that the earliest definite attestation to the Gypsies can be found in a letter of the Patriarch of Constantinople, Gregorios II Kyprios (1283–89), where there is mention of taxes to be collected from so-called Egyptians and *Athinganos* (*ὁ τοὺς καὶ Αἰγυπτίους καὶ Αθιγγάνους*).⁷ This means that if not all, then most of the previous attestations of the *Athinganos*, which have led to the attempt to date the presence of the Gypsies in Byzantium back to the eleventh century,⁸ in fact refer to members of the Manichean sect, whose name was also attributed to the Gypsies.

From Asia Minor they passed into Thrace. This probably took place at the start of the fourteenth century, when it is believed that the European history of the Gypsies began. From Thrace they were dispersed in all directions. One group headed south, into what is today Greece. In 1323, a Franciscan friar met them at Candia (Iraklion) on the island of Crete and produced a description of them. In the second half of the fourteenth century and the beginning of the fifteenth century in the Peloponnese, the western part of continental Greece and the Ionian Islands, the Gypsies are shown to already be a sedentary people, meaning that they must have been in that area for a considerable period of time; the migration probably took place at the beginning of the fourteenth century. They settled especially in the Peloponnese and on neighbouring islands, territories under the control of Venice. The Gypsies stayed for a long time on Greek-speaking territory (in Asia Minor, the Balkan Peninsula and the islands), the proof being the considerable influence of Greek on Romanes.

During the same period, the Gypsies arrived in the Slavonic countries of the Balkan Peninsula. The earliest mention of them comes from the year 1348, in the Serbia of Tsar Stefan Dušan; a number of *cingarije* are named among artisans working under the authority of the Prizren monastery.⁹ Start-

ing in 1362, they begin to be mentioned at Ragusa (Dubrovnik).¹⁰ In 1378, they are mentioned in Bulgaria: a document issued in that year by Ivan Šišman, the last tsar of Bulgaria, detailing the possessions of the Rila monastery includes a reference to *agupovy kléti* (“the huts of the Egyptians”), very likely a reference to the Gypsies.¹¹

From the Balkans, some of the Gypsies crossed to the north bank of the Danube into Romanian territory. They are mentioned for the first time in an official document in Wallachia in 1385, in Transylvania around the year 1400 and in Moldavia in 1428.¹² Others headed west into the Kingdom of Hungary and from there travelled further into Central and Western Europe.

It is not known exactly when the Gypsies arrived in the Hungarian Kingdom. The first attestation in an official document appears in 1422, when King Sigismund of Luxembourg grants free movement through his kingdom to a group of Gypsies, lead by the voivode Vladislav.¹³ However, it is certain their presence in the kingdom dates from sometime earlier. Evidence from place and personal names has been evoked to support the theory that the Gypsies arrived in Hungary at an earlier time.¹⁴

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Gypsies had already arrived in the countries of the Holy Roman Empire. In 1407, the documents of the town of Hindelsheim in Lower Saxony mention the presence there of “Tatars”, the name by which the Gypsies would be known in Northern Germany. In 1414, they are cited in the Swiss town of Basel as *Heiden* (“pagans”), a term that will be used for them for a long time in a number of German-speaking countries, as well as in Holland. The chronicles place them in Hesse in 1414 and in Meissen and Bohemia in 1416. These were probably small groups.

Central and Western Europe discover the Gypsies in the years 1416–19. At that time, there was a more sizeable influx of the Gypsies in the countries of Europe, from Hungary to Germany and France.¹⁵ Local records and chronicles attest to the arrival in different places of groups made up of people of foreign appearance, language, customs etc., stating that they come from Egypt and that they are pilgrims who have got lost on their way to Jerusalem. They are named “Egyptians” or “Saracens”. They were small groups made up of thirty to forty people, whose leaders were known as “dukes” or “counts”. Some groups presented to the authorities the safe passage they had been granted from Emperor Sigismund of Luxembourg. Contemporary sources describe them as a curiosity and generally speak of them in positive terms, while the local people gave them food and money. For a number of years the Gypsies wandered throughout Europe in genuine expeditions. Sometimes the same group is attested to successively in the different places.

In 1419, the first groups of the Gypsies are signalled on the territory of modern-day France, while in 1420 they reach the Low Countries. In 1422, a

large group enters Italy, reaching Rome. In the following decades, the Gypsies reached Spain, England and Scandinavia. In Spain, they arrived via two paths: through the Pyrenees from France (at the beginning of the fifteenth century) and over the Mediterranean (starting from 1488). The number of Gypsies in Spain was large from the beginning. They arrived in the British Isles at the start of the sixteenth century; the first mention of their presence there dates from 1514. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Gypsies entered Scandinavia, via England. They entered the Kingdom of Poland via two paths: from Hungary and from the Romanian territories. Their presence there is mentioned starting from 1428. From Poland they entered the Baltic lands, while in Southern Russia they first appeared around 1501.

If the Gypsies were initially known as “Egyptians” and “Saracens”, they very quickly acquired the name they still bear today in the languages of Europe. In Germany the most frequently used names are *Zigeuner*—noted for the first time in the journal of Andreas, a priest from Regensburg (Bavaria), in the year 1424—and *Sinte* (plural: *Sinti*); the latter term is used only for part of the population of Indian origin and is presumed to originate from a hypothetical king of theirs. In French the name *Bohémien* was adopted. This can be explained by the fact that the new arrivals presented letters of protection from Sigismund of Luxembourg, the Holy Roman Emperor and king of Bohemia, and it was therefore considered that they came from that country. In English and Spanish, they were given the names *Gypsy* and *Gitano* respectively, the names originating from their presumed Egyptian origin. In Denmark, Sweden and Finland, they were named *Tattare* (“Tatars”).

The migration of the Gypsies into Central and Western Europe was probably linked to the Turkish advance in the south-east of the continent. The appearance of the Turks in the Balkans forced the Gypsies further on. The European migration of the Gypsies in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was a lasting phenomenon. It was not, however, a mass exodus. The majority of the Gypsy population stayed on in Turkey and the countries of south-eastern Europe, as well as Hungary.¹⁶ From the Middle Ages until today, these territories have remained the geographical area where the number of Gypsies, both in absolute figures as well as in proportion to the total population, has been and continues to be the largest.

Thus was the migration of the Gypsies in Europe in broad lines. It represents, however, a particularly complex historical process that still contains many unknown factors. The linguistic method, particularly useful in this case, does have its limits. It has to be acknowledged that the migration of the Gypsies was not a targeted migration. The Gypsies living in India or Persia were not aiming to reach Europe. It was a spontaneous movement determined by an entire range of factors. Their arrival in Europe was conditioned by their contemporary surroundings. Military events played the prin-

cial role in determining the direction taken by the different groups of the Gypsies. Their migration took place in a time of major upheaval for the Middle East and South-Eastern Europe. Military events and population movements took place on those territories that could not have failed to have also an impact on the groups of the Gypsies. They fled first before the Seljuk Turks, then before the Ottoman Turks, heading inevitably towards the West.

The Gypsies form part of a major demographic trend of long-lasting impact over the history of Europe: in the course of over one thousand years, numerous peoples originating in Asia settled in Europe. The Gypsies were the last people of Asian origin to arrive in our continent. Their arrival in fact marks the end of the migrations of peoples. The distinguishing feature of the Gypsy migration is that it was not of a military nature.

However, the migration of the Gypsies from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries took many different directions and routes. For example, both recent and earlier research have demonstrated that in old Armenia the Gypsies scattered in three directions: one route took them through the countries of the Middle East as far as Egypt, another took them into the countries of the Caucasus and to the north of the Black Sea, while the third route, the most important of the three, took them into the Byzantine Empire and from there into Europe. Writers in the previous century, writing when the study of the history of the Gypsies did not yet have the rigorous foundations of later times, believed that the Gypsies had been brought to Europe by the Mongols (Tatars); it was stated that the Gypsies had been picked up by the Mongols in Asia and brought to Europe either in 1241 together with the great invasion of the Mongols or later on. We shall see that although some Gypsies could have reached the territories in the east of the continent under the domination of the Mongols, there are no arguments to support the existence of a migration route around the north of the Black Sea for the Gypsies on their way into Europe. Today it is well established that the Gypsies that arrived in Europe had passed through Byzantium and the Balkans. They are the Indian population that is known in European languages as *Tsiganes* (and all its derivatives). Their own name for themselves recalls their stay in the Byzantine Empire: *Rom*.¹⁷

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the Gypsies arrived almost everywhere in Europe. Already in 1404, Archbishop John of Sultanieh, a figure well acquainted with the realities of the situation in the Middle East and Eastern Europe, demonstrated in his geographical treatise *Libellus de notitia Orbis* that the Gypsies had spread everywhere.¹⁸ From the fifteenth century onwards, they are a part of the ethnic landscape of the countries of Europe. From the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, together with the expulsions and deportations to which they were subjected or the process of colonisation outside the borders of Europe which began in Portugal, Spain,

France and England, the Gypsies reached North and South America, Australia and New Zealand, South Africa and other places. From European Russia, they reached Siberia. To the migration of the Middle Ages can be later added, in the second half of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, another smaller wave of migration from the east of the continent, particularly from Romania, which contributed to the spread of the Gypsies throughout Europe.¹⁹ Today virtually every country in Europe has a Gypsy population. There are, however, also Gypsies living in the countries of the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia, present since the time of their first migrations. Of course, due to their different migration routes, or more precisely the fact that they did not pass through the Byzantine Empire, these Gypsies do not know the ethnic name *Tsigane* or *Rom*: they are known by and call themselves different names. They do belong, however, to the same population as the Gypsies of Europe.

2. FIRST ATTESTATIONS ON THE TERRITORY OF ROMANIA

The earliest written information about the presence of the Gypsies on the territory of Romania dates from 1385. In a deed issued in that year, Dan I, the prince of Wallachia, amongst other things awards to the Tismana monastery the possessions previously belonging to the Vodița monastery, which had been given to the latter by the Prince Wladislav I: among the possessions in question are forty families of Gypsies (*ațișani*).²⁰ The possessions in question had belonged to the Vodița monastery on the banks of the Danube, located in the western extremity of the country. The monastery had been founded by Wladislav I in the years 1370–71 and had ceased to function a short time after, probably in 1376, during the political and military events taking place in the area and the conflict between Wallachia and the Hungarian Kingdom for the land of Severin.²¹ It must have been in the years 1370–71 that the initial donation had been made to the Vodița monastery. The text of the donation, which has been preserved,²² mentions the possessions listed in the deed of Dan I from 1385, minus the forty Gypsy families. This means that the Gypsies were donated to the monastery later on, in a deed of donation which has not been preserved, or that they were omitted from the initial deed of donation. This author is inclined to believe that the Gypsies came to be under the dominion of the Vodița monastery via a new deed of donation. Since Wladislav I most probably died in 1377, the donation must have taken place between 1371 and 1377. It is during these years that the passing of the Gypsy families into the possession of the Vodița monastery can be placed. The first document attesting to the presence of the Gypsies in Wallachia is connected to this event.

Later on, information about the Gypsies in Wallachia becomes increasingly numerous. The Gypsies of the Tismana monastery are mentioned in all subsequent confirmations of the possessions of the monastery, in 1387, 1391–1392, circa 1392, 1439.²³ In 1388, the Wallachian prince Mircea the Old donated to the Cozia monastery, the monastery that he founded, 300 dwellings of Gypsies.²⁴ In general, in the fifteenth century, all the most important monasteries and boyars owned Gypsies as slaves. Official documents of the time that refer to donations or official acknowledgements of dominion record their presence on the most important feudal estates.

In Moldavia, the Gypsies are mentioned for the first time in 1428 when prince Alexander the Good awards to the Bistrița monastery thirty-one families of Gypsies (*țigani*) and twelve huts of Tatars.²⁵ Later on, Gypsies are attested as belonging to, in chronological order, the monasteries of Vișnevăț (1429),²⁶ Poiană (1434),²⁷ Moldovița (1434),²⁸ as well as to other monasteries and some important boyars.

In Transylvania, the first mention of the presence of the Gypsies refers to the land of Făgăraș. In the time of Mircea the Old, the prince of Wallachia, a boyar known as Costea, held dominion in the land of Făgăraș over the villages of Viștea de Jos, Viștea de Sus and half of Arpașu de Jos, as well as seventeen tent-dwelling Gypsies (*Ciganus tentoriatos*).²⁹ The original deed by Mircea the Old written in Slavonic has not been preserved, but is summarised in a text in Latin from 1511; however, from the title used by the prince, the deed can be dated between 1390 and 1406. Under the terms of the relations of suzerainty-vassalage that existed at the time between the king of Hungary and the prince of Wallachia, Mircea the Old held dominion over the land of Făgăraș with the title of fief. Therefore, Gypsies were already present in Transylvania around the year 1400. It can be presupposed that the Gypsies were present in Transylvania even earlier, since from the 1370s there are attestations to toponyms deriving from the Hungarian word *cigány* in North-western Transylvania; this from a time when similar toponyms and personal names deriving from the same word appear in many different regions of the Hungarian Kingdom.³⁰

Whether in the case of the earliest attestations mentioned above the Gypsies had arrived recently or had been present from an earlier time, this is a question that can only be answered via an analysis that takes into account both the nature of the problem of the European migration of the Gypsies and the socio-political realities of the Romanian space in the fourteenth century.

3. WHEN DID THE GYPSIES ARRIVE IN THE ROMANIAN LANDS?

In Romanian historiography the appearance of the Gypsies in Romanian territory was linked to the Mongols (Tatars).³¹ Nicolae Iorga believed that the Gypsies arrived in the Romanian principalities together with the Mongol invasion of 1241.³² Other historians shared this view.³³ The Gypsies in the Romanian lands were seen as a legacy of the Tatars. The Tatars supposedly brought them to this part of Europe, whilst the Gypsies remained after the withdrawal of the Tatars as the slaves of the Romanians. The theory is based on the fact that the institution of slavery is attested to in Romanian lands from the first official documents, so it is presumed that the practice existed before the founding of the principalities. Gypsy slaves, therefore, would have existed from the Mongol period, i.e. from the thirteenth century. Another opinion states that the Tatar slaves referred to even earlier than Gypsy slaves in Moldavian documents were in fact Gypsies from an ethnic point of view.³⁴ They were Gypsies brought by the Tatars as slaves, whose ownership was taken over by the Romanians. The Tatar slaves from the Moldavian documents were seen as the first wave of the Gypsy population to arrive in Romanian lands; the second wave would have been that which arrived from the south of the Danube beginning in the fourteenth century.

It is well known that during the invasion of 1241–42 and then during the period of more than a century in which they were a major power in Eastern Europe, the Tatars brought to the West numerous oriental populations as auxiliary troops or slaves. Certain of these populations, especially those of a military character, such as the Jazygians or Alans, are mentioned in contemporary documents. Others, however, are not mentioned, but later traces of these populations can be found in the countries in which the Tatars had ruled.

Were the Gypsies one of these populations brought by the Tatars? In some older works on the Gypsies it is stated that they arrived in Europe under the aegis of the Mongols. Either with the Mongols of Ghenghis Khan in the first half of the thirteenth century or Timur Lenk (Tamberlaine) at the end of the fourteenth century could have taken the Gypsies in India and brought them to Europe. As a rule, it is presupposed that this took place during the great Mongol invasion of 1241–42. The view that the Mongols brought the Gypsies to Europe was, however, abandoned when the study of the migration of the Gypsies was subjected to more rigorous methods, beginning with the philological study of Franz Miklosich.

Of course, the possibility that there were Gypsies among the populations brought west by the Tatars cannot be excluded. The camps of the Tatars were accompanied by craftsmen (especially blacksmiths and farriers) who

had the status of slaves according to the model of organisation used in Mongol society. There may have been Gypsies among them. It is plausible that some of the Gypsies who travelled from Asia Minor into the Caucasus, thereby cutting themselves off from the bulk of their tribes, who headed into the Byzantine Empire and from there into Europe, came under the control of the Tatars. There is, however, no clear proof that would enable us to state that the Mongols brought the Gypsies with them in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

As for the Tatar slaves in Moldavia, they are mentioned for the first time in a document from 1402 in which Alexander the Good donated to the Moldovița monastery (among others), four houses (families) of Tatars.³⁵ In another document, from 1411, the same prince donated to the Poiană monastery five homesteads of Tatars,³⁶ while in 1425 he confirmed to a boyar the possession of several villages and the Tatars living there.³⁷ The first slaves referred to in Moldavian documents are, therefore, Tatars. Only in 1428, do the first Gypsy slaves make their appearance in the documents. Sometimes mention of both categories of slaves can be found in the same document. Tatar slaves are also attested to later on, as late as 1488. The “Tatars” from the Moldavian documents were not Gypsies. An analysis of the documents from the fifteenth century that mention both categories of slaves leads us to the conclusion that there were differences between the Tatar and Gypsy slaves that exclude the possibility that they belonged to the same ethnic group. It is possible to observe different types of names among the two categories of slaves: aside from names from the Christian calendar, the Tatars have Turkic names while the Gypsies have Romany names. Between the Tatar slaves and Gypsy slaves there are also differences in terms of habitat: the Tatars lived in fixed dwellings on the estate of the boyar, in villages and especially around the residence of the boyar, while some even lived in towns (as in the case of the Tatars of Baia, who were the property of the Moldovița monastery), while the Gypsies lived in tents.³⁸ Official documents in Old Slavonic use different terms for the two populations: *hiži tatary* (Tatar huts) and *dvory tatary* (Tatar homesteads) and *celiadi tsigany* (Gypsy families). The legal status of the Tatars was also somewhat different to that of the Gypsies.³⁹ The Tatar slaves in Moldavia were probably the remains of the Cuman population that had settled in the region prior to the Mongol invasion.⁴⁰ It is clear that we are dealing with two populations that are different from an ethnic point of view, which shared the same social status, although even this contained certain differences.

The history of the Gypsies in the Middle Ages in the other countries of Eastern Europe bordering with the Golden Horde rules out the possibility that it was the latter who brought the Gypsies to Europe. Neither the Poles, nor the Lithuanians, nor the Russians received Gypsies from their Tatar

neighbours. The Gypsies in Russia originate from Romanian lands, not from areas ruled by the Tatars. The Gypsies arrived late to Russia, around the year 1500, while larger number settled there only in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There is no record of Gypsies among the ranks of *holops* (slaves) in medieval Russia. In medieval Poland and Lithuania, states that took over part of the lands that the Tatars had ruled in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Gypsies originate from Hungary and the Romanian lands, not from the east. Similarly, the name “Tatar” used to refer to the Gypsies in Scandinavia has nothing to do with the Gypsies there being of Tatar origin.

The fact that the Gypsies of Romania arrived there from south of the Danube is incontestable: there is a whole series of arguments to support this claim. The Romanians have always referred to them using a term of Greek origin: in the first documentary attestations they are referred to as *aṭigani*, which later became *ṭigani*, the term still in use today.⁴¹ Similarly, the spoken language of the Gypsies in Romania preserves a large number of Greek and South Slavonic words. In descriptions of the Gypsies made in Transylvania, they are presented as adhering to the Orthodox religion,⁴² even in conditions in which they lived not only among the majority Orthodox Romanians there, but also among the Catholic or Protestant Hungarians, Szeklers (Székely*) and Saxons. Contemporary sources demonstrated that it was from the area south of the Danube that a large number of Gypsies came or were brought to Romanian lands.⁴³ In 1445, Vlad Dracul, the prince of Wallachia, transferred 12,000 people to the north of the Danube. Chronicler Jehan of Wavrin, who recorded this piece of information for posterity, indicates that they resembled Gypsies.⁴⁴ The migration of the Gypsies from the Balkans into the Romanian territory was a demographic process of long duration. Even in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, there were groups of Gypsies, some Turkish-speaking and Muslims, who passed from the Ottoman Empire into the Romanian lands. In Moldavia, the vast majority of Gypsies were brought from Wallachia. There is documentary evidence for a permanent movement of Gypsies from Wallachia to Moldavia.⁴⁵ The Moldavian-German chronicle, recounting Stephen the Great’s expedition to Wallachia in 1471, indicates that he “took 17,000 Gypsies captive”.⁴⁶ There are also official sources that attest to the capture of slaves by Stephen the Great on the territory of his neighbour.⁴⁷

The Gypsies are nomads of Indian origin that arrived in the Romanian territories via the Balkans, after having spent a relatively long period of time

* Székely—a Hungarian-speaking people akin to the Magyars, settled as frontier guards of the Kingdom of Hungary in the early Middle Ages.

in the Byzantine Empire, where they acquired the name *Tsigane*. Despite the incompleteness of the information about the Gypsies, it has been demonstrated that their appearance in the Balkan Peninsula occurred no earlier than the beginning of the fourteenth century.⁴⁸ In 1348, they are mentioned in a deed of Tsar Stefan Dušan of Serbia.⁴⁹ In Wallachia at some point between 1371 and 1377, the prince made a gift of Gypsy slaves, as it arises from the aforementioned document from 1385. From Wallachia, the Gypsies entered Transylvania, where they are attested for the first time in the deed issued by Mircea the Old around the year 1400, referring to the land of Făgăraş then in the possession of the Wallachian prince, and Moldavia, where the Gypsies are mentioned from 1428 onwards.

But when does the presence of these Gypsies in the Romanian lands date from? When did the first groups of Gypsies cross to the North of the Danube? A precise answer cannot be clearly given. In Wallachia, from where the earliest attestation of the Gypsies originate, there are no official documents that have been located relating to the possessions of the Crown prior to the donation to the Vodiţa monastery. Therefore, it is not possible to say whether there were Gypsy slaves in Wallachia prior to this moment. It can only be supposed that in 1370–71 Wladislav I was not master of the Gypsies that he would later give to the Vodiţa monastery. It was only at a later stage that they entered into the possession of the prince.

The second half of the 1360s and at the beginning of the 1370s was a time of great turmoil in the north of the Balkan Peninsula. Political and military events succeeded one another at a rapid pace. The Hungarian–Bulgarian and Hungarian–Wallachian conflicts, the struggle for Severin and the military expeditions that preceded it and the transformation of north-west Bulgaria into a theatre of war, to which can be added the incursions of the Ottomans recently commenced in Europe,⁵⁰ all created population movements in the region. One source, admittedly from a later time, that presents the events that took place then in Bulgaria, in which Wallachia was also involved, indicates that after Prince Wladislav I had driven the Hungarian army out of Vidin in January 1369, he carried out substantial population transfers from the right to the left bank of the Danube.⁵¹ It could have been in the course of such population movements that the Gypsies given to the Vodiţa monastery arrived in Wallachia. The fact that at Vodiţa (and later at Tismana) monastery they are slaves is not an indicator that they had been living for a long time in Wallachia. Gypsy slaves also existed in the Balkan states, and if the Gypsies passed into Wallachia or Moldavia as freemen, as a rule they would have immediately been enslaved, entering automatically into the possession of the prince.⁵²

We believe that the first Gypsies are agreed to have arrived in Wallachia at this time, during the rule of Wladislav I, most likely at the begin-

ning of the 1370s, either crossing or being transferred from the south of the Danube. It is impossible to know whether they were the Gypsies of Vodița, but they were certainly contemporaries of that group. Therefore, the Gypsies arrived on Romanian territory around the year 1370, some decades after their arrival in the Balkan Peninsula.

The Gypsies did not arrive in the Romanian lands in a single wave, but rather over several centuries. Starting from the fifteenth century, there is evidence of Gypsies crossing to the north of the Danube.

The number of Gypsies in both principalities was already quite large in the fifteenth century. As arising from the documents relating to the possessions of the monasteries and the leading boyars, the social category of slaves was well represented there. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Dimitrie Cantemir stated that in Moldavia the Gypsies were “spread throughout the country” and that “there was almost no boyar that did not have several Gypsy families in his possession.”⁵³ In the absence of statistical sources that include slaves (a situation that continued until around 1800), it is impossible to estimate the number of Gypsies living in Wallachia and Moldavia.

With regard to Transylvania, it should be acknowledged that the Gypsies appeared here, as in the rest of the Hungarian Kingdom to which the province belonged, during the final decades of the fourteenth century. The Gypsies entered Transylvania via Wallachia. Some of them later passed into Hungary proper. However, the Gypsies who entered Hungary also arrived there directly from the Balkan Peninsula without passing first through Wallachia and Transylvania. It would appear that most of them followed the route through the Balkans, the proof being the fact that the language of the Gypsies in Hungary in this period did not contain Romanian elements. Even if documentary information about the Gypsies in Transylvania at this early stage is scarcer in comparison with Wallachia and Moldavia, towards the end of the fourteenth century and the beginning of the following century we find them present in almost the entire country. In Sibiu, they are attested to in royal privileges in 1476, 1487 and 1492.⁵⁴ In 1500, Gypsies are attested to at Bran castle.⁵⁵ In Brașov, where two persons with the name “Cziganen” appear in the tax records for the years 1475–1500, the first clear attestation of the Gypsies dates from 1524, when the tax records register the presence on the edge of the town of the toponym “By den czyganen” (later known as “Ziganie”).⁵⁶ In 1493, we find a band of Gypsies at Cladova in the county of Arad, led by their voivode, Rajkó.⁵⁷ Around the year 1500, Gypsies are casting cannons in the citadel of Timișoara,⁵⁸ while in 1514, we find Gypsy executioners carrying out the torture of György Dózsa. In Maramureș in the middle of the fifteenth century we come across the nickname “Țigan” applied to certain Romanian serfs and nobles.⁵⁹

The Gypsies formed part of the varied ethnic landscape of Transylvania. In 1564, referring to the Szekler land, the Italian Giovanandrea Gromo indicates that “among [the Szeklers] live a large number of Gypsies, whom they use to work the land”.⁶⁰ A century later, Laurentius Toppeltinus indicates that there are a large number of Gypsies living in Transylvania.⁶¹ The larger Transylvanian towns each had its own “Gypsy settlement”, usually located outside the town walls. These settlements were built of wood, so that if necessary the town authorities could easily destroy them and drive the Gypsies out.⁶² Gypsies are also found in some villages, settled on a noble’s estate and transformed into serfs. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a large part of the Gypsies living in Transylvania were already leading a sedentary life.⁶³ However, some continued to lead a nomadic existence even until the twentieth century.

The number of Gypsies living in Transylvania for the period prior to the seventeenth century cannot be estimated. In comparison with Hungary, the number was certainly larger as a proportion of the population. This was probably not the case in comparison to Wallachia and Moldavia. The principalities lying beyond the Carpathians played a role in supplying Transylvania with Gypsies. Slavery in Wallachia and Moldavia induced the Gypsies to pass into Transylvania, where they benefited from a better social status. For centuries there has been a certain movement of Gypsies from Wallachia and Moldavia into Transylvania. There are numerous documents attesting to the crossing of isolated groups of Gypsies into Transylvania, their subsequent revindication by their former masters and often their return to those masters.⁶⁴ A document from 1504 shows explicitly that a group of Gypsies settled in the district of Hațeg came from Wallachia.⁶⁵ It is true that there were cases in which Moldavians bought Gypsies from Transylvania,⁶⁶ but the migratory process for the Gypsies was moving the opposite direction.

4. THE TERRITORY OF ROMANIA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EUROPEAN MIGRATION OF THE GYPSIES (FOURTEENTH TO FIFTEENTH CENTURIES)

Specialist literature on the history of the Gypsies contains some opinions that confer an important role upon Romanian territory in the context of the European migration of the Gypsies during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. According to Carl Hopf, who dealt specifically with the problem of the migration of the Gypsies in a work that appeared in 1870, the Romanian lands were a site of concentration for the Gypsies that had arrived from the East. From here, they migrated south into the Balkan Peninsula at the earli-

est available opportunity due to the conditions of slavery imposed on them. According to the analysis of Hopf, the military campaigns conducted by the Serbian Tsar Stefan Dušan brought about the dispersal of the Gypsies throughout the Balkan Peninsula as far as Greece.⁶⁷

There is no documentary evidence to support Hopf's theory. On the contrary, the historical facts contradict it. The first mentions of the Gypsies in Romania occur after the earliest evidence of their presence in Greece. We come across Gypsies on the Greek islands prior to Stefan Dušan's Balkan campaigns.⁶⁸ The direction taken by the Gypsies was not from the Romanian territories to the area south of the Danube, but from the Balkan Peninsula to the area north of the Danube. Beginning with the fifteenth century, there is sufficient written evidence of the Gypsies being brought from the Balkans and of crossing to the north of the Danube by individuals or even by large groups. For Wallachia, the lands to the south of the Danube, served as a veritable reservoir of Gypsies, especially in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but also later on.

This theory is linked to the opinion popular in the nineteenth century that the Gypsies arrived in Europe under the aegis of the Mongols. It is generally considered that this population came to Europe via the steppes north of the Black Sea, either brought by the Tatars or contemporary to the Tatars. The oriental origins of the Gypsies, their cultural characteristics and their nomadic lifestyle as well as the fact that in many countries they were called "Tatars" all contributed to the creation of this opinion. According to this theory, the route followed by the Gypsies necessarily passed through the Romanian lands. The Romanian lands were therefore the first stage in the European migration of the Gypsies. However, the opinion that attributed to the Tatars the role of having brought the Gypsies into Europe began to be abandoned in the second half of the nineteenth century when, together with the linguistic study carried out by Miklosich, research into the European migration of the Gypsies acquired a more rigorous foundation. Today, it is clear that the Gypsies came to Europe via the Byzantine Empire and the Balkan Peninsula. Their arrival in the European continent took place only at the start of the fourteenth century. Over time, both philological and historical arguments have been adduced to support this version of events.

What role did the Romanian territory play in the migration across Byzantium and the Balkan Peninsula that brought the Gypsies to Central and Western Europe? The answer should not only take into account the geographical position of the Romanian territories and the possibility that the Gypsies stopped for a time north of the Danube before heading into Central and Western Europe. It is incontestable that the Romanian territories have always had a large number of Gypsies. If this is clear for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when it is possible, admittedly with a broad margin of

error, to estimate the number of Gypsies, the situation was probably not much different in previous centuries, for which there are no statistics. Already in the fifteenth century certain monasteries owned hundreds of Gypsy slaves, especially in Wallachia. It is clear that a large part of the Gypsies who left the Balkan Peninsula in the fourteenth and fifteenth century headed for the Romanian lands. The Romanian lands appear as one of the principal destinations of these migrations. It can be stated that in the Balkans these nomads of Indian origin that came via Asia Minor set off on three routes: to the south towards continental Greece and the Ionian islands; to the west, reaching Hungary and then later the countries of Central and Western Europe; and to the north, crossing the Danube into the Romanian principalities. It is certain that the pressure created by the Ottomans in the Balkans in the second half of the fourteenth century and the first half of the following century had a role in influencing the movement of countless groups of Gypsies north of the Danube. The Romanian principalities, which, unlike the Balkan states, were not occupied by the Ottomans and which preserved their internal forms of organisation were at that time a place of refuge for the population of the Balkans, a situation that is reflected in contemporary documents. The territories to the north of the Danube played an important role in the migration of the Gypsies.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Romanian principalities were not located on the route that led the Gypsies into Central and Western Europe. The possibility of a stay of either longer or shorter duration to the north of the Danube, followed by a movement towards the west of the continent, can be ruled out. There is no contemporary document, either Romanian or foreign, that refers to a population movement of this kind.

In his study in which he attempts to reconstruct the route followed by the Gypsies using linguistic data, Miklosich states that the Gypsies who reached Central and Western Europe passed through the Romanian territories. He bases his argument on the presence of Romanian words in the dialects spoken by the Gypsies.⁶⁹ This affirmation requires further examination. The method of research applied by Miklosich provides an interpretation of linguistic data accumulated over hundreds of years, but without making the necessary chronological distinctions. When he speaks about Romanian elements, he is referring to the Romany dialects spoken during his time. Yet the modern dialects are the result of the merging of vernaculars spoken by different groups of Gypsies. Miklosich does not grasp the fact that the respective dialects (like the populations that spoke them) were the result of the overlapping of two large migratory waves, the first in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and a second contemporaneous to Miklosich (about which he is in fact aware) which was taking place in the second half of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century. The second wave set off from Romania will be dealt with in one of the sub-chapters of

this book,⁷⁰ accounts for the Romanian elements in the dialects spoken in the second half of the nineteenth century, which are still spoken today by the majority of European Gypsies. These elements are not present as a result of the migration that took place in the Middle Ages. The philological studies carried out up to the present have not produced evidence of Romanian words in the spoken language of the Gypsies in Western Europe in the Middle Ages. Greek and Slavonic elements, on the other hand, are numerous, proving that the Gypsies did live for a time in Byzantium and the Balkans.

The territory of Romania did not constitute a stage in the migration of the Gypsies into Central and Western Europe during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. We do, however, note that movements of Gypsies from the Romanian principalities into surrounding territories were taking place virtually all the time. A possible cause for this could be the state of slavery imposed on the Gypsies. Such movements were likely to have been facilitated by the nomadic way of life of the majority of these Gypsies. Documents attest to the crossing of the Carpathians from Wallachia and Moldavia into Transylvania and Hungary, but here it is largely a question of individual action, and in many cases the fugitive was returned to his masters. The scale of these movements was in any case small. In some periods, however, there were crossings in the opposite direction from Transylvania into the principalities. If we consider the Gypsies living in Hungary today, with the exception of those who speak Romanian as their mother tongue, Romanian elements can only be found in the dialect spoken by the so-called "Vlach Gypsies" (*oláh cigányok*), who are considered to have settled here later on, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁷¹ The language spoken by the Hungarian Gypsies of the first wave does not contain Romanian elements. The Gypsies who reached Hungary at the beginning of the fifteenth century (or perhaps even at the end of the fourteenth century) arrived there straight from the Balkan Peninsula. Even if it is conceivable that a part of them passed through Wallachia and Transylvania, they did not remain there for long. Some time later, some groups of Gypsies moved from Moldavia into neighbouring southern Poland. However, the first Gypsies to arrive in Poland came from Germany and Hungary. Around 1500, Gypsies also appeared in southern Russia, seemingly having travelled there from Moldavia.

The fact that in the mid-sixteenth century the scholar Pierre Belon de Mans sought the country of origin of the Gypsies in Bulgaria and Wallachia and his contemporary Jean Brodeau (Brodaeus) believed that the Gypsies were Romanians (*Walachi*),⁷² has no connection with the supposed stay of the Gypsies in the Romanian principalities. These were just two of the tens of attempts, of the most lurid nature, made at that time to explain the origins of this population.

NOTES

- 1 A list of these hypotheses can be found in J-P. Clébert, *Les Tziganes*, Paris, 1961, pp. 15–40; F. de Vaux de Foletier, *Mille ans d'histoire des Tziganes*, Paris, 1970, pp. 18–25.
- 2 H. M. G. Grellmann, *Die Zigeuner. Ein historischer Versuch über die Lebensart und Verfassung, Sitten und Schicksahle dieses Volks in Europa, nebst ihrem Ursprunge*, Dessau und Leipzig, 1783, pp. 216–260.
- 3 The results of research carried out until the present synthesised by H. Arnold, *Die Zigeuner. Herkunft und Leben der Stämme in deutschen Sprachgebiet*, Olten und Freiburg im Breisgau, 1965, pp. 15–22 (with a bibliography in the notes); see also J. Bloch, *Les Tziganes*, Paris, 1953, pp. 19–25; A. Fraser, *The Gypsies*, Oxford UK, Cambridge USA, 1992, pp. 10–32.
- 4 F. Miklosich, *Über die Mundarten und die Wanderungen der Zigeuner Europa's*, vol. III, Wien, 1873 (extract from *Denkschriften der Philosophisch-Historischen Klasse der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, XXIII, 1873).
- 5 From literature regarding the migration of the Gypsies in Europe: C. Hopf, *Die Einwanderung der Zigeuner in Europa*, Gotha, 1870; A. Colocci, *Gli Zingari. Storia d'un popolo errante*, Turin, 1889, pp. 33–66; J-P Clébert, *op. cit.*, pp. 48–57; H. Arnold, *op. cit.*, pp. 22–32; F. de Vaux de Foletier, *op. cit.*, pp. 29–57; J-P. Liégeois, *Tziganes*, Paris, 1983, p. 14ff; A. Fraser, *op. cit.*, pp. 33–84; G. Soulis, “The Gypsies in the Byzantine Empire and the Balkans in the Late Middle Ages”, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 1961, pp. 141–165; G. Puxon, “Romite vo Makedonija i Vizantija”, *Glasnik Instituta za nacionalna istorija*, XVIII/2, Skopje, 1974, pp. 81–94.
- 6 See F. Miklosich, “Über den Ursprung des Wortes ‘Zigeuner’”, in *Über die Mundarten*, VI (Vienna, 1876), pp. 57–66.
- 7 Ilse Rochow, K-P. Matschke, “Neues zu den Zigeunern im byzantinischen Reich um die Wende vom 13. zum 14. Jahrhundert”, *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 41 (1991), pp. 241ff.
- 8 G. Soulis, *op. cit.*, pp. 145–147.
- 9 B. P. Hasdeu, “Rosturile unei cărți de donațiune de pe la anul 1348, emanată de la împăratul sârbesc Dușan și relativă la starea socială a românilor de peste Dunăre”, in *Arhiva istorică a României*, vol. III, Bucharest, 1867, p. 120.
- 10 Dj. Petrović, “Cigani u srednjovekovnom Dubrovniku”, *Zbornik Filozofskog fakulteta*, XIII/1, Belgrade, 1976, pp. 123–158.
- 11 Gr. A. Ilinski, *Gramoty bolgarskich carei*, Moscow, 1911, pp. 26–28.
- 12 See the following sub-chapter.
- 13 E. de Hurmuzaki, *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, vol. I/2, ed. N. Denusianu, Bucharest, 1890, pp. 527 (with the incorrect year: 1423). (Hereafter Hurmuzaki.)
- 14 J. Vekerdi, “Earliest Archival Evidence on Gypsies in Hungary”, *Journal of the Gypsy Lord Society*, 4th Series, 1 (1977), no. 3, pp. 170–172 (hereafter this journal will be abbreviated *JGLS* [(1)], [(2)], [(3)], [(4)] or [(5)] according to the series cited); Mezey B., L. Pomogyi, J. Tauber, *A magyarországi cigánykérdés dokumentumokban, 1422–1985*, Budapest, 1986, pp. 6–7.
- 15 See F. de Vaux de Foletier, *op. cit.*, pp. 44ff.
- 16 A. Fraser, *op. cit.*, pp. 81–82.

- ¹⁷ The meaning of the word *Rom* is that of “Roman”, *Romaíos*, a name that was in general applied to the population of the Byzantine Empire. The Gypsies assumed this name during their long sojourn in the Empire. See A.T. Sinclair, “The Word ‘Rom’”, *JGLS* (2), 3 (1909–1910), pp. 33–42.
- ¹⁸ “[...] generacio una parva sive populus, disperses per orbem [...]”. Vocantur Cyn-gani sive populus Pharaonis [...]”; Anton Kern, *Miszellen aus einem Text vom Jahre 1404: a) Erdöl im Kaukasus, b) Zigeuner, c) Krimgoten*, Vienna, 1948 (extract from *Frühgeschichte und Sprachwissenschaft*), p. 153.
- ¹⁹ See further on pp. 120ff.
- ²⁰ *Documenta Romaniae Historica*, B, *Țara Românească*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1966, pp. 19–22. (Hereafter *DRH*, B)
- ²¹ E. Lăzărescu, “Nicodim de la Tismania și rolul său în cultura veche românească”, *Romano-slavica* XI (1965), pp. 237ff.
- ²² *DRH*, B, I, pp. 17–19; the document is dated, we believe, incorrectly as “<1374>”.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 22–25, 33–36, 39–42, 154–156.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 25–28. Confirmations in <1392>, <1421> (where only 45 families of Gypsies are mentioned), 1443 (50 families), 1451 (50 families), 1475 (300 families), 1478 (350 families), 1488 (300 families); *ibid.*, pp. 42–45, 98–100, 167–168, 187–188, 247–250, 265–268, 337–341.
- ²⁵ *Documenta Romaniae Historica* A, *Moldova*, vol., I, Bucharest, 1975, pp. 109–110. (Hereafter *DRH*, A.)
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 124–126.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 184.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 185.
- ²⁹ *DRH*, B, I, pp. 32–33.
- ³⁰ J. Vekerdi, *op. cit.*
- ³¹ It has been stated that the Gypsies were present in the Romanian Plain even during the time of the Pechenegs and the Cumans, with whom they supposedly arrived in the area, in other words from the eleventh and twelfth centuries (Al. Gonța, *Satul în Moldova medievală. Instituțiile*, Bucharest, 1986, p. 315).
- ³² N. Iorga, *Anciens documents de droit roumain*, Paris–Bucharest, 1930, pp. 22–23.
- ³³ T. G. Bulat, “Țiganiii domnești, din Moldova, la 1810”, *Arhivele Basarabiei*, IV (1933), no. 2, p. 1; I. Peretz, *Robia* (course), Bucharest, 1934, p. 59; G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni la istoricul țiganilor din România*, Bucharest, 1939, pp. 17–18, 26; N. Grigoraș, “Robia în Moldova (De la întemeierea statului până la mijlocul secolului al XVIII-lea) (I)”, *Anuarul Institutului de istorie și arheologie “A. D. Xenopol”*, IV (1967), p. 34.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*
- ³⁵ *DRH*, A, I, p. 23.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 44–45.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 88–89.
- ³⁸ I. R. Mîrcea, “Termenii rob, șerb și holop în documentele slave și române”, *Studii și cercetări științifice*, Iași (1950), p. 863.
- ³⁹ See I. Peretz, *op. cit.*, pp. 46–58.
- ⁴⁰ N. Beldiceanu, Irène Beldiceanu-Steinherr, “Notes sur le *Bir*, les esclaves tatars et quelques charges dans les pays Roumains”, *Journal of Turkish Studies*, vol. 10, 1986 (Essays presented to Halil Inalcik on his seventieth birthday), pp. 12–13.

- 41 In Moldavia already in the first document to mention them (from 1428), while in Wallachian documents for the first time in 1478 (*DRH*, B, I, pp. 265–268).
- 42 L. Toppeltinus, *Origines et occasus Transsilvanorum seu erutae nationes Transsylvaniae...*, Lugdunum (Lyon), 1667, p. 55.
- 43 N. Grigoraş, *op. cit.*, pp. 37–38.
- 44 *Călători străini despre ţările române*, vol. I, ed. Maria Holban, Bucharest, 1968, pp. 112–113.
- 45 N. Grigoraş, *op. cit.*, pp. 34–36.
- 46 *Cronicile slavo-române din sec. XV–XVI, publicate de Ion Bogdan*, ed. P. P. Panaitescu, Bucharest, 1959, p. 30.
- 47 See G. Potra, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
- 48 G. Soulis, *op. cit.*, pp. 151–152.
- 49 See above note 9.
- 50 For events in the region during this period, see particularly Maria Holban, “Contribuţii la studiul raporturilor dintre Ţara Românească şi Ungaria angevină (Rolul lui Benedict Himfy în legătură cu problema Vidinului)”, in *Din cronica relaţiilor româno-ungare în secolele XIII–XIV*, Bucharest, 1981, pp. 126–154.
- 51 Mauro Orbini, *Il regno degli Slavi, hoggi corrotamente deti Schiavoni...*, Pessaro, 1601, p. 470; cf. E. Lăzărescu, *op. cit.*, p. 261, note 6.
- 52 N. Grigoraş, *op. cit.*, pp. 36–38.
- 53 D. Cantemir, *Descrierea Moldovei*, trad. Gh. Guţu, Bucharest, 1973, p. 297.
- 54 *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, vol. VII, Bucharest, 1991, p. 113; A. Gebora, *Situaţia juridică a Țiganilor în Ardeal*, Bucharest, 1932, pp. 13–16.
- 55 Hurmuzaki, XV/1, p. 152.
- 56 Maja Philippi, “Die Bevölkerung Kronstadts im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert. Siedlungsverhältnisse und ethnische Zusammensetzung”, in *Beiträge zur Geschichte von Kronstadt in Siebenbürgen*, ed. P. Philippi, Cologne, Vienna, 1984, pp. 142–143.
- 57 S. Márki, *Arad vármegye története*, vol. II, Arad, 1892, pp. 503–504.
- 58 Nicolae Stoica de Haţeg, *Cronica Banatului*, ed. D. Mioc, Bucharest, 1969, p. 48.
- 59 1442: “Czigan Karacion jobagio”; 1450: “Czigan Nan” (I. Mihály, *Diplome maramureşene din secolul al XIV-lea–XV*, Sighetul Marmăţiei, 1900, pp. 321, 343).
- 60 *Călători străini despre ţările române*, vol. II, ed. Maria Holban, M. M. Alexandrescu-Dersca Bulgaru, P. Cernovodeanu, Bucharest, 1970, p. 322.
- 61 L. Toppeltinus, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
- 62 Cluj’s town council took just such a measure in 1585, when it decided to demolish the huts constructed some time earlier by Gypsies who had arrived from other areas, since the huts represented a permanent fire hazard (A. Gebora, *op. cit.*, p. 26).
- 63 B. Mezey et al., *op. cit.*, p. 10.
- 64 N. Grigoraş, *op. cit.*, pp. 37, 75.
- 65 Hurmuzaki, II/2, p. 530.
- 66 N. Grigoraş, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
- 67 C. Hopf, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 23, 25–26.
- 68 See G. Soulis, *op. cit.*, p. 162.
- 69 Fr. Miklosich, *Über die Mundarten*, III, pp. 13–16.
- 70 See below, pp. 120ff.
- 71 See K. Erdős, “A Classification of Gypsies in Hungary”, *Acta Ethnographica*, 6 (1958), pp. 450–454.
- 72 Cf. H. M. G. Grellman, *op. cit.*, pp. 179, 182.

CHAPTER II

THE GYPSIES IN THE ROMANIAN LANDS DURING THE MIDDLE AGES. SLAVERY

1. THE AGE AND ORIGIN OF SLAVERY IN THE ROMANIAN LANDS

From the first attestations of their presence in Wallachia and Moldavia, the Gypsies were slaves. They were to remain in this social condition for many centuries until the laws abolishing slavery in the middle of the nineteenth century. The Gypsies were also enslaved in Transylvania, more particularly in the regions that were for a time under the control of the Wallachian and Moldavian princes. Even after the end of the dominion of the two Romanian states there, the Gypsies remained for a time as slaves, a vestige of that previous era.¹

The origins of slavery in the principalities have not formed the basis of an independent study in Romanian historiography. Generally speaking, works of social history, which inevitably make reference to the slavery of the Gypsies, content themselves with the statement that the slavery dates from before the creation of the principalities and that its origin is unknown. Since the appearance of the Gypsies in the Romanian territories was linked with the Tatars, who ruled there after 1241, the slavery of the Gypsies has been regarded as a vestige of that era. In the view of Nicolae Iorga, the Gypsies who were the slaves of the Tatars were taken over by the Romanians preserving their state of bondage.² Other writers explain the appearance of slavery in the Romanian territories with reference to the Romanians' battles with the Tatars. As a result of these battles, Gypsies captured from the Tatars were transformed into slaves.³

The problem of slavery in the medieval history of Romania is not restricted to the slavery of the Gypsies. Alongside the Gypsy slaves, in the Romanian states there were also Tatar slaves. Moldavian documents of the fifteenth century tell us about this second category of slaves. These Tatars were mistakenly identified as Gypsies and so the theory of the arrival of the Gypsies on Romanian territory in the thirteenth century during the Tatar domination was constructed on the basis of this identification. It is certain that the Tatar slaves mentioned in the Moldavian documents were a legacy of the Tatars. They were Tatars (or rather slaves of the Tatars) who had ended up in the possession of the Romanians. We find it highly plausible that at the time of the conflicts between the Romanians and the Tatars during the fourteenth century, the Romanians would have transformed Tatar prisoners of

war into slaves. Having spent a long period of time under Mongolian domination, we can hypothesise that the Romanians could have adopted from the latter the practice of enslaving captured enemies. It is not, however, obligatory to regard these prisoners of war as Tatars from an ethnic point of view. As has been supposed, it is highly probable that the Tatar slaves in Moldavia were in fact a population of Cumans, established in the region before the arrival of the Tatars.⁴ The Romanians took them over as slaves and kept them on in this state.

The question that needs to be asked is: when did they come into the possession of the Romanians? For how long had there been Tatar slaves? Since the founding of the principality in the middle of the fourteenth century? Or from a later time, when the Moldavian state had incorporated the territory to the south where Tatar domination had continued until the last decade of the fourteenth century? It is difficult to give an answer to these questions in the absence of any definite historical evidence. To historians, however, it is certain that there were also Tatar slaves in Wallachia, although they are not mentioned in official documents. The toponyms “Tătărași” in Muntenia (identical to the toponyms “Tătărășii” in Moldavia) appear to indicate this very population of slaves acquired from the Tatars. We believe that we may assume that “Tatar” slaves existed in Wallachia and Moldavia from the foundation of these principalities, which took place at the beginning and the middle of the fourteenth century respectively. Once passed under this new dominion, Tatar prisoners of war or Tatars’ slaves entered the service of the prince as slaves.

This is not, however, an instance of a phenomenon peculiar to Romanian history. In Eastern Europe, the turning of pagan enemies into slaves was practised in the first centuries of the second millennium. It is known that prior to their Christianisation, the Hungarians would turn prisoners of war into slaves. In the Hungarian Kingdom, Muslim Saracens and Mozaic Khazars were used as slaves until the thirteenth century, when they were forced to convert to Christianity.⁵ In fourteenth century Hungary, however, the institution of slavery no longer existed. The Eastern Slavs established slavery for those that they captured in battle.⁶ Prisoners taken by the Russian dukes from the Tatars were considered the duke’s slaves and as a rule used to populate certain border areas. The institution of *holop* continued for a long time, albeit in an increasingly watered down form, until the distinction between slave and subjugated peasant disappeared altogether in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁷ In any case, the practice of keeping domestic slaves existed almost everywhere in Europe in the early Middle Ages. The Romanians adopted slavery from the social system of the Tatars, from whom they also adopted certain institutions and elements of military, administrative and fiscal organisation. Slavery existed on the Romanian territories

even before the creation of the Romanian states, since the Tatars themselves had slaves.

It is evident that the origins of slavery in the Romanian lands have nothing to do with the appearance of the Gypsies there. They are two distinct questions. When the Gypsies reached the area north of the Danube at the end of the fourteenth century, slavery had already been in existence there for some time. The newcomers, foreign to the local society in every respect and with a nomadic way of life, were assured the same regime as that of the Tatars. The role of the Gypsies in the history of slavery in Romania lies in the fact that due to the relatively large number of Gypsies settled in the Romanian lands in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, slavery became a widespread phenomenon. The Gypsies managed to acquire the monopoly in this social institution, as by the second half of the fifteenth century they were the only slaves in the country. The Tatars, who had been present in small numbers, had disappeared, merging into the mass of Gypsy slaves. In this way the term "Gypsy" became synonymous with that of "slave".

Another question is whether the Gypsies arrived in the Romanian lands as slaves or as freemen. In order to provide a response, we need to bear in mind the social conditions of the time in the countries of South-Eastern Europe. Slavery in its medieval form was a conspicuous reality in the Byzantine Empire until later on.⁸ In these conditions, the Gypsies paid a special tax and were recorded in a special register. This system of taxing the Gypsies would later be adopted by the Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth century.⁹ In fact, in the Byzantine Empire, the Gypsies were in effect slaves of the state. It is certain that the same situation existed in the medieval states of Bulgaria and Serbia, however, the very few documents to have survived from these two states do not make explicit reference to the slavery of the Gypsies. This state of affairs is natural when we bear in mind the fate of Bulgaria and Serbia, conquered by the Ottoman Empire in the final decade of the fourteenth century and in the middle of the following century respectively, resulting in the destruction of their social organisation, and the fact that the period of time between the arrival of the Gypsies there and the liquidation of the two Balkan states was short in duration. Nevertheless, given the position of the Gypsies during Ottoman domination, we believe that they would also have been slaves in medieval Bulgaria and Serbia. This would mean that when in the second half of the fourteenth century the Gypsies travelling from the Balkans crossed to the north of the Danube, they were already slaves.

It is worth recalling that in the Romanian lands, until the abolition of the institution (although we can presume that this was also the case in the lands south of the Danube in the fourteenth century), the status of slave did

not necessarily imply being tied to a particular estate, but rather to a particular owner. The vast majority of the (enslaved) Gypsies were nomadic, tied to their master by certain obligations. The Gypsies that crossed the Danube into Wallachia, where they were “enslaved” (i.e., they entered into the possession of the Crown as slaves), did not lose their freedom, since they had never been free. By changing country, they in fact exchanged one master for another. Their social conditions did not, as a result, undergo any essential changes.

The slavery of the Gypsies in the Romanian principalities can, therefore, be also explained by the latter's location in the historical south-east European space, where Gypsies were held as slaves even before their arrival north of the Danube. The Romanian principalities acquired the Gypsies as slaves, although the institution of slavery dated from an earlier time there, from the time of the battles with the Tatars.

Another explanation for the slavery of the Gypsies in the Romanian principalities has also been offered. It has been stated that the Gypsies were not slaves from the beginning of their presence in the Romanian principalities, rather that their enslavement occurred at a later stage. P. N. Panaitescu, the author of this hypothesis, considers that their enslavement had a strictly economic motive, namely the need for labour force in the Romanian principalities in the Middle Ages. After the Crusades, when the Romanian states, thanks to their geographical position, took part in the East-West trade, the reduced number of peasants and the fact that those were not good craftsmen, especially blacksmiths, of which there was great need, determined their feudal masters to force the Gypsies to settle on their estates, thereby forfeiting their freedom.¹⁰ The importance of the trade route passing through the Romanian states, especially in the second half of the fourteenth century, and the relative prosperity generated by trade for more than a century are historical realities that are beyond question. It is, therefore, natural that there would have been need for labour force on the great estates. The donations and purchases of slaves are proof of this state of affairs. However, the economic role of the slaves on these estates and in the country's economy as a whole should not be exaggerated. When the Romanian states began to have a role in European trade, the Gypsies were already in a state of slavery. The economic interest of the leading estate owners cannot explain a social and institutional status. As we have seen, the slavery of the Gypsies is an older phenomenon.

2. CATEGORIES OF SLAVES

The classification of the Gypsy slave population in the Romanian lands¹¹ should be based on precise criteria in order to avoid the possible confusions and overlapping that often appear in literature on this subject. Romanians and foreigners living at the end of the era of slavery observed numerous distinctions within the Gypsy population and produced written descriptions of the different groups, while some even attempted a classification of these groups. In most cases, however, there is confusion with regard to the understanding of the different criteria that made the Gypsy slave population present a highly varied tableau.

The first, essential criterion is that of belonging to a master. From this point of view, Gypsy slaves can be divided into three categories: princely slaves, slaves belonging to a monastery and slaves belonging to a boyar. The first category of slaves is referred to in documents as “princes’ Gypsies”, “princely Gypsy slaves”, “Gypsies of the Crown”, later on as “Gospodar’s Gypsies” and in the nineteenth century as “Gypsies of the State”. In certain periods, these constituted the largest category of Gypsies. Gifts of Gypsies by the Wallachian and Moldavian princes to the monasteries and the boyars were made from this fund of princely slaves. It appears that initially the prince was in theory the sole owner of slaves, and he was responsible for the granting of official approval for any transfer of slaves just as in the case of estates. The number of princely slaves also grew via the acquisition of any Gypsy without a master. There are numerous cases of Gypsies passing from one country to another who thus join the ranks of princely slaves. In cases of treason, the boyar’s slaves, like the estates themselves, entered into the possession of the prince. The confiscation of slaves from disloyal boyars is recorded in official documents.¹²

Most princely slaves carried out their work in the countryside, apart from those who were actually forced to work at the princely court. Princely slaves were required to carry out any work demanded of them. They brought a substantial income to the Crown through the taxes that they were obliged to pay. Generally speaking, their situation was better than that of slaves belonging either to monasteries or boyars’ estates. Princely Gypsy slaves given to monasteries or estates were unwilling to accept their new situation, and for this reason some of them fled from their new masters and returned among the “bands” of princely slaves¹³. There were, however, plenty of cases where princely Gypsy slaves fled to other countries. Princely Gypsy slaves often mixed with “private” slaves, especially as a result of marriages contracted without the permission of their masters. Such cases led to many disputes between princes, boyars and the monasteries, which usually resulted in the annulment of the marriages or in exchanges of slaves

as compensation. Children born into such marriages were as a rule divided between the private owner and the Crown, represented by princely magistrates. If princely slaves became confused with those belonging to monasteries or estates, the magistrates were ordered to return them to the “bands of princely Gypsies”.¹⁴

A separate category of slaves that existed in Moldavia were the “princes’ slaves”. These were Gypsies who were solely the possession of the wife of the prince. They are attested for the first time in 1429, when amongst other things Alexander the Good granted his wife, Princess Marena, a number of Gypsy slaves.¹⁵ The slaves were the possession of the princess, in the sense that she could make a gift of them or sell them. Such slaves had their own organisation, even if they were sometimes included in the bands of princely Gypsy slaves.¹⁶

Slaves belonging to monasteries mostly originated from gifts made by the princes and the boyars. Gifts of slaves made by the boyars were more numerous than those made by the princes. The monasteries managed to possess a very large number of slaves, acquired via a number of paths. Cozia monastery, for example, received a gift of 300 families of Gypsies from Mircea the Old.¹⁷ The number of slaves belonging to the monasteries also increased as a result of marriages between freemen and Gypsy men and women belonging to the monastery. The rule was that these people, as well as their descendants, had to become slaves. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, enslavement as a result of marriage was a relatively common phenomenon.¹⁸ There are in existence a large number of documents concerning the monasteries’ ownership of slaves. The archives of the monasteries have preserved the deeds of donation and confirmation made by the princes, deeds of donations made by the boyars, statistics and registers (lists), and other documents; some documents record in detail the slaves’ origins, names, children, professions, and even any possible legal disputes held with regard to them. The monasteries’ registers also contain information about Gypsy slaves.¹⁹ The slaves were used either for agricultural labour or as craftsmen. When they had nothing to occupy them in the fields, they were used for the cutting and transportation of timber. Slave women were used to spin linen. When the slaves were sent to work somewhere else, payments had to be made to the monastery in exchange for their labour. Monastery slaves living around or even within the grounds of the monastery were required to carry out various special tasks. Among their number were included craftsmen and servants. It is supposed that these slaves enjoyed a better situation than those living in the villages (estate Gypsies), who were required to carry out more onerous physical labour.²⁰

The slaves of the boyars’ estates could be procured as a result of princely gifts, inheritances, dowries and from the spoils of war. Deeds of donation

show that the prince granted the slaves to the boyars or that the prince confirmed their possession by official deed as “official proprietor with full economic rights” or “hereditary and inalienable proprietor”. The gifts of slaves made by the prince were usually tied to villages. This demonstrates that the slaves dwelt on estates were granted to the boyars by the prince. The boyars were in full possession of their slaves, i.e. as with any personal property or real estate, they could sell, donate, exchange, mortgage, bequeath them etc. The prince funded the buying and selling, as well as the allocation of slaves. For the boyars, slaves were a cheap source of labour. In the running of a boyar’s estate, slaves played an important role, chiefly as servants and craftsmen, but also to a lesser degree as agricultural labourers.²¹

Clearly, classifying the Gypsies according to which of the three categories of feudal masters they served tells us little about the occupational and cultural diversity of this population. The Gypsies were far from constituting a homogeneous group. The tableau presented by the Gypsy population during the Middle Ages was particularly varied. Spread throughout the country in relatively large numbers, the Gypsies formed distinct groups that were specialised in certain occupations, with their own cultural and ethnographical characteristics and sometimes even speaking their own separate dialects. Documents produced inside Wallachia and Moldavia attest to these characteristics, even if their interest in them is strictly of a legal nature. Meanwhile, the descriptions provided by foreigners who came into direct contact with the situation in the Romanian principalities make the occupation and way of life of the different categories of Gypsies the principal, if not the only, criterion for their classification. In this way it has been observed that there were always both sedentary Gypsies working on the estate or at the residence of their masters as well as nomadic Gypsies who wandered the countryside. Both groups were slaves.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, Mihail Kogălniceanu divided the princely slaves into four categories: *rudari* or *aurari*, who were engaged in the collection of gold from river beds; *ursari*, who wandered the countryside, leading a bear, whom they would encourage to dance the *tanana* (a Gypsy dance) for paying spectators; *lingurari*, who made wooden spoons or other household objects; and *lăieși*, whose main occupation was as blacksmiths, but who also worked as stonemasons, comb-makers etc. In addition, some of them made a living from stealing. None of the aforementioned had fixed dwellings; instead, they lived in tents and travelled the countryside in search of fresh ways to make a living.²² As slaves, they paid a sum of money to the Crown, which varied from category to category and according to their specific situation. There were, however, also princely slaves in the towns and at the princely court, where they worked as slaves and craftsmen.

Kogălniceanu divided the private slaves, who belonged to the boyars

and the monasteries, into two categories: *lăieși* and *vătrași*. The *lăieși* belonging to private owners, like those belonging to the prince, wandered the country, under the obligation to pay a sum of money to their masters. However, when the master opened a building site, the slaves were used as labourers. The *vătrași*, meanwhile, had fixed dwellings and, at the time when Kogălniceanu was writing, were already assimilated into the local population; they had forgotten their mother tongue and could not be distinguished from Romanian peasants. There were two types of *vătrași*, divided according to their occupation: *țigani căsași* or *de curte* (manor Gypsies) and *țigani de ogor* or *de câmp* (estate or field Gypsies). Manor Gypsies served at the boyar's manor house, carrying out various tasks. The majority of manor Gypsies were craftsmen: blacksmiths, farriers, locksmiths, stonemasons etc. They had a better situation than the other Gypsies. The estate Gypsies were used for agricultural labour; among the privately owned Gypsies the latter were the most numerous and the most heavily worked.²⁴

Thus was the structure of the Gypsy population of Moldavia and Wallachia in the first part of the nineteenth century, shortly before emancipation. It is not a complete model, as there were other categories of Gypsies that are not found in the schema produced by Kogălniceanu but which are mentioned by other authors writing in the eighteenth century or at the beginning of the nineteenth century, or in later ethnographic studies of the Gypsies. In fact, over time the categories of the Gypsies have undergone various transformations. Even Kogălniceanu observed that the profession of *rudari* or *aurari*, once a very profitable business, was by his time in decline, indicating the start of an occupational shift in this category of Gypsies, who would re-orientate themselves as producers and sellers of wooden household objects. It is in this state that we find the *rudari* in all ethnographic studies devoted to them in this century. The Gypsies had an occupational dynamic that moved in accordance with the general economic changes that affected Romanian society during the Middle Ages and the modern era. The Gypsies were forced to adapt to new situations. Over time, the evolutions in their situation have led unquestionably to a gradual shift to a sedentary way of life. However, the process of transfer to a sedentary existence and the changes in occupation have not led to the shattering of the old divisions within the Gypsy population.

3. SLAVERY UNDER THE ROMANIAN ANCIEN REGIME

Slavery was an integral part of the social system of the Romanian principalities from their beginnings until the middle of the nineteenth century.²⁵

The terms “slave” (*rob*) and “slavery” (*robie*)²⁶ appear as such only at a

relatively late stage. Slavery is mentioned as such for the first time in a deed dating from 30 September 1445, in which the prince of Moldavia Stephen II makes a gift to the bishop of Roman a Tatar “from among our Tatars at Neamț”. In the deed, it is specified that the bishop may do as he pleases with the slave; if the slave had been freed, he would have been able to “live there freely according to Romanian law and nobody should dare to remind him of his former slavery (*a po holopstvo*) or try to enslave him”.²⁷ In 1470, the term “slave” is attested to for the first time, in a document issued by Stephen the Great “to our Tatar and slave (*holop*) Oană, who fled from Poland”.²⁸ Documents written in the Slavonic language used the term *holop* for slave. After 1600, in documents written in Romanian, we find the term *rob*, used initially in parallel with the term of Slavonic origin, only later to replace it altogether. Still, the term *șerb / șarbă* was also used very frequently in place of *holop*. Until the second half of the sixteenth century, however, the term *rob* and its variants were used rarely in Moldavia and not found at all in Wallachian documents. Slaves are indicated almost exclusively by their ethnic origin, either as “Gypsies” or “Tatars” (the latter found only in Moldavia). In the language of the medieval Romanian chancelleries, the term “Gypsy” (in Moldavia also “Tatar”) always had in addition to its ethnic sense, a social value, indicating a slave.²⁹

Slaves formed a separate category within the social organisation of the Romanian principalities. They made up the lowest rung of the subjugated classes. What defines their social condition is not the absence of personal freedom, since in feudal society the serfs (known as *rumâni* in Wallachia, *vecini* in Moldavia and *iobagi* in Transylvania) were also subjugated, but the fact that they had no status as legal persons. The slave was wholly the property of his master, figuring among his personal property. The master could do as he pleased with the slave: he could put him to work, he could sell him or exchange him for some other good, he could use him as payment for a debt or he could mortgage or bequeath him. The possessions of the slave (consisting mainly of cattle) were also at the discretion of the master. Masters were constantly abusing their rights, as slaves could at any time be punished with a beating or with prison without the need for the intervention of the state authorities. The master did not, however, have the power of life and death over the slave. His sole obligation was to clothe and feed those slaves who worked at his manor. The master was in no way responsible for those slaves who wandered the countryside in order to earn a living, paying the master an established sum of money.³⁰

In the Romanian principalities, there was a slaves’ law. It is mentioned in the Moldavian document of 1470 in which Stephen the Great frees Oană, a Tatar slave who had fled from Poland, as well as his children from slavery. The prince freed them from the obligations that resulted from one’s sta-

tus as a slave: “let them never pay anything according to the law of the slaves and the Tatars (*holopskym[i], tatarskym[i] pravom[i]*)”; they would be allowed to live in the country “as do all Romanians according to Romanian law (*voloskym[i] zakonomi*)”.³¹ Romanian law and slaves’ law were two different entities. Slaves had their own legal status that was different from that of the Romanian population. Slaves’ law consisted of a number of norms that referred chiefly to the obligations of slaves to their master and to the State, to the punishments they were liable to if they failed to fulfil their obligations or if they were found guilty of any crime, as well as the authorities that were put in place to judge them. There were equally norms that regulated relations between slaves and freemen, as well as the authorities that assured that the norms were respected.³² Slaves’ law is an ancient institution, which dates from before the foundation of the Romanian states.

Slavery in all its forms falls under common law. For a long time, there were no written laws relating to slaves. When later on in Wallachia and Moldavia there appeared a tendency to invoke Byzantine law, the provisions of Byzantine legislation were adopted with regard to slaves. The large number of Greek and Slavonic texts of legal nature with regard to slaves in Wallachia and Moldavia³³ is an indicator of the importance attached to the harmonisation of the de facto situation with the canons of Byzantine law. Legislative documents printed in Romanian in the mid-seventeenth century—namely the *Pravila de la Govora* (Law Book of Govora) of 1640 (in Wallachia) and the two legal codes, Vasile Lupu’s 1646 *Cartea românească de învățătură* (Romanian Book of Teachings) (Moldavia) and Matei Basarab’s 1652 *Îndreptarea legii* (Improvement of the Law) (Wallachia)—record the legal norms mostly of Byzantine origin but also with some norms that came under common law in use up until then, relating to slaves.³⁴ In practice, however, the status of slaves was dependent exclusively on common law. Official documents relating to slaves issued by the Prince Chancellery or by other state institutions, including those of legal nature, always make reference to customary laws (the “tradition of the land”), not to the written law of Byzantine inspiration.

The obligations incumbent on the Gypsies were fixed by tradition. Official documents enable us to gain a more intimate knowledge of the obligations that princely Gypsies had to the State, their mode of organisation, the exemptions and the other privileges from which the different categories of princely Gypsies benefited. Private slaves were in principle exempt from any obligations to the State. We find that in the fifteenth century, both in Moldavia and Wallachia, it was forbidden for princely officials to impose royal service on private slaves.³⁵ Princes would make reference to such provisions whenever they gave confirmation of previous awards of slaves or at the request of their masters. On some occasions, however, the Crown, in

search of fresh sources of revenue, sought to impose at least partially on private Gypsies the same regime as that applied to princely Gypsies. At least from the first half of the seventeenth century, if not from the second half of the previous century, we find that slaves belonging to monasteries and boyars' estates are also obliged to pay certain taxes and carry out certain tasks for the State. In Moldavia, we find them paying tax as early as the 1620s. Later on, still more obligations were imposed upon them: they were obliged to pay tithes on beehives (*desetină de stupi*) and on boar (*goștină de mascuri*) (if they owned such goods), to place post horses (*cai de olac*) at the disposition of the Crown and provide transport (*podvoadă*) (if they had horses), to pay the *mucarer*,* to carry out certain labour tasks for State etc.³⁶ These petty obligations were numerous and varied from era to era. Freeman and princely Gypsies were required to carry them out unconditionally, while private Gypsies carried them out only in exceptional cases. Furthermore, when the obligations were applied to private Gypsies, the slaves of some monasteries and boyars could be exempted from carrying them out by special deed issued by the Crown. Such obligations were not only a heavy burden for the slaves, but also for their masters, who were in fact responsible for ensuring that their slaves carried out their obligations. There are many cases where the increased exploitation of Gypsy slaves resulted in the fleeing of Gypsies from one estate to another or even from one country to another. The most radical measure of this kind was the introduction of *țigănărit* (Gypsy tax) in Moldavia at the beginning of the eighteenth century. It was introduced by Nicolae Mavrocordat, probably in 1711, as an exceptional tax "for the needs of the country", and was abolished in 1714. Mihail Racovița reapplied it in 1725, but withdrew it as a result of the intervention of the boyars and the monasteries. Under the terms of the tax, boyars and monasteries were required to pay two ducats for each Gypsy in their possession.³⁷ In fact, the tax was an extension to all the Gypsies of the *dajdie* (tax) paid by princely Gypsies.

There were special officials appointed to supervise the princely Gypsies. In time, a network of princely officials was organised on a hierarchical and territorial basis, which dealt with every aspect of relations between the Gypsies and the State and those between the Gypsies and the inhabitants of the country. Special officials collected the taxes owed by the Gypsies to the Crown.³⁸

Disputes that arose among the Gypsies, with the exception of manslaughter cases, were dealt with by their leaders: village leaders, sheriffs and Gypsy leaders. The master and his clerks in the case of boyars' and monastery Gypsies, and the special officials in the case of princely Gypsies were invested with the power to punish and fine Gypsies. Cases of manslaughter and disputes between Gypsies and other inhabitants of the country fell under the

jurisdiction of the state judiciary. Slaves found to be counterfeiting money and those who committed crimes out of the ordinary were judged by the State Council itself. Slaves did not have the right to defend themselves before a tribunal and at the same time they could not be held legally responsible for damages caused to freemen, for which their masters were accountable. However, as part of the compensation they were required to pay, masters could renounce their ownership of the guilty slaves in favour of the injured party. If a slave killed a slave belonging to another owner, as a rule the killer, although condemned to death, was not executed but given in exchange for the dead slave. The decision to annul the implementation of capital punishment was taken by the prince with the approval of the family of the deceased. Owners of slaves did not have the right to punish their slaves by putting them to death. Generally speaking, any free person who killed slaves with premeditation was liable to receive the death penalty. Such cases were judged by the country's supreme court and presided over by the prince. There are, however, no known cases in which a boyar who killed one of his slaves suffered the same punishment. In cases where a master killed somebody else's slave, the former offered the injured party a slave in place of the one he had killed.³⁹

Generally speaking, the law was lenient on Gypsies. The law book of Vasile Lupu made the following provision: "If a Gypsy, his wife or his offspring should steal once, twice or three times a hen, goose or other small thing, the theft shall be forgiven: if they should steal again, they shall be punished as would common thieves."⁴⁰ The explanation for this state of affairs lies of course not only in the fact that the slave has no legal status, but also in the large number of crimes that took place among this marginal social category, as the application of those punishments resulting in imprisonment or execution to which the slaves were subject was not in the interest of their feudal masters. The work provided by the slave was as a first or last resort addressed to his master.

Slaves were allowed to marry, but only with the approval of their master.⁴¹ In cases of marriage between Gypsies belonging to two separate masters, the Gypsies were required to obtain the approval of both masters. In most cases, a preliminary financial settlement was agreed by the two masters: under the terms of such an agreement, it was settled that either one master purchased from the other the Gypsy set to move to his estate as a result of the marriage, or a compensatory exchange of slaves would be carried out, in which the master providing another slave of equal value in exchange for the Gypsy he was to obtain. Marriages performed without the prior approval of the masters were common. Particularly those cases involving a princely Gypsy and a Gypsy from a boyar's estate or a monastery were recorded in contemporary documents. If in such situations an

arrangement could not be reached, the two Gypsies were separated by force by their owners and the children resulting from the marriage were divided between the owners without parental approval.⁴²

Such situations were commonplace. In the eighteenth century, modifications were applied to the ancient law. The resolution of cases of marriage between Gypsies belonging to different masters was no longer left to the discretion of their masters. The indissolubility of marriage was decreed regardless of the conditions under which it was contracted. The “establishment” of Constantin Mavrocordat of March 1743 in Moldavia forbade owners of slaves from separating married Gypsies belonging to different masters. In such situations, the masters were only allowed either to divide up the children resulting from the marriage or to carry out a compensatory exchange for the Gypsy (or Gypsy woman) and the children to which the respective parties were entitled.⁴³

This first intercession into the old tradition relating to slavery was the work of the Phanariot ruler Constantin Mavrocordat who, in the spirit of the age, introduced both in Moldavia and Wallachia a series of reforms that aimed at ensuring the social, administrative and fiscal modernisation of the principalities. The most important of these reforms was the one that abolished serfdom in Wallachia in 1746 and in Moldavia in 1749, giving the peasants back their freedom. As for the status of slaves, the modifications carried out at this time were limited to the problem of marriage.

The same regulations were applied in both principalities. Subsequent laws made strict provision for the way in which owners of slaves were to carry out transfers of slaves. The *Sobornicescul hrisov* (Ecumenical Charter) of 1785 (Moldavia) established a fixed price for such transfers: fifty lei for a Gypsy woman and seventy lei for a Gypsy man. A slave skilled in a particular trade, however, was worth more, as to the price per person was added the “price for the trade of the Gypsy or Gypsy woman”. Likewise, it was no longer permitted for children to be taken from their parents. It was compulsory for those children to whom in theory the master was entitled to be bought back by the master who retained the family. Children over the age of sixteen were paid for like adults, while those under the age of sixteen were worth half price.⁴⁴ It was at this time that the principle that the family was to remain whole was established. Gypsy slaves acquired the right not to have their families split up, that is to say that they acquired the right for children not to be donated or sold separately from their parents nor siblings to be donated or sold separately from one another.⁴⁵

The most important new element to be introduced in the eighteenth century was that regarding mixed marriages (i.e., a Gypsy with a Romanian woman or a Romanian with a Gypsy woman). Until then, the rule had been that by marrying a slave, the free husband would also enter into the state of

slavery, together with children born out of their union. The “establishment” of Constantin Mavrocordat stipulated that a Romanian man or woman who married a Gypsy could no longer be made a slave. The freeman retained the social status he or she held before the marriage, while the slave remained a slave. Children born out of their union were to be free.⁴⁶ It appears that in the period immediately before the adoption of this measure, mixed marriages were fairly frequent. For the boyars, mixed marriages were a means of increasing the number of slaves. For the State, however, mixed marriages represented a loss, with the peasant transformed into a slave becoming exempt from the payment of tax and other public obligations. For this reason, we believe that the relinquishing of the common law that allowed the enslavement of Romanians was also done for fiscal reasons. In Wallachia, the measure was respected, but in Moldavia opposition from the boyars to this innovation led to the gradual restricting of its scope and finally to its abandonment. In 1766, such marriages were outlawed, with priests prevented from officiating at such weddings. In cases where such a marriage did take place, the spouses were to be separated. The children of such marriages, however, “remained among the Moldavians”, i.e. free.⁴⁷ The *Sobornicescul hrisov* (Ecumenical Charter) of 1785 completely outlawed marriages between Moldavians and Gypsies and declared such marriages to be invalid. Children born out of such marriages were considered to be Gypsies. This meant a return to the “centuries-long tradition” of the past, in other words, to the annulment of the reform. In Moldavia, the phenomenon of enslavement through marriage continued to exist until a late stage. In Wallachia, the *Pravilniceasca Condică* (Legal Register) of 1780 stipulated that marriages between Gypsy men and free women were immediately split up, and the children born out of their union became freemen.⁴⁸ In the final years of slavery, the Organic Regulations introduced in the two principalities in the years 1831–32 had a similar content when it came to the matter of marrying slaves. Marriages between freemen and slaves were forbidden. A freeman who married a Gypsy woman without knowing her to be so was allowed to buy back her freedom. The same applied to a Romanian woman married with a Gypsy. Any person who married a Gypsy in full knowledge of what they were doing was required to pay the price of the Gypsy woman to the alms-house. Children from such marriages were free.⁴⁹

The reverse phenomenon, of release from slavery, also existed. In certain situations, for example for particular services carried out during the life of the master or after his death through his testament, the master could “release” a slave from slavery. The latter would thus obtain personal freedom and joined the ranks of Romanians. As freemen, these Gypsies could own land, while in towns they could own property. There were numerous cases of Gypsies who ended up selling themselves to a boyar or to a

monastery in order to escape punishment, to escape their debts or to avoid dying of starvation.⁵⁰ Even if medieval documents provide us with sufficient examples of free Gypsies, release from slavery was carried out only in exceptional circumstances. Only towards the middle of the nineteenth century, in the conditions of the appearance of a new attitude towards slavery and the abolitionist movement did gestures of this nature become relatively common. One of the princes of Moldavia, Ștefan Răzvan, was himself of Gypsy origin.⁵¹ In a text originating from Michael the Brave,⁵² we learn that Răzvan was the son of a princely slave woman from Wallachia. He managed to become a boyar, was sent in delegation to Constantinople, became hetman in the Cossack and Polish armies and finally occupied the throne of Moldavia for a short period of time (April to August 1595). The rise of Ștefan Răzvan is indicative of the social mobility that existed in the Romanian society, where some slaves could obtain their freedom and in exceptional cases could accede to the status of nobles and obtain high positions. At the end of the eighteenth century, regulations regarding the way in which slave owners could carry out the release of their slaves were introduced, as in the case of the *Sobornicescul hrisev* of 1785. In Wallachia, release from slavery was also carried out through marriage. A slave married to a freewoman with her knowledge and with the permission of his master (including verbal permission) would become a freeman and the marriage would not be annulled, while their children would also remain free.⁵³

The new elements that appeared in the regulations relating to slavery in the eighteenth century referred almost exclusively to instances of marriage and the social consequence of such marriages. Collections of laws of the Phanariot rulers from the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, namely the *Pravilniceasca Condiță* (Legal Register) of Alexandru Ipsilanti (1780) and the *Legiuirea Caragea* (Caragea Legislation) (1818) in Wallachia, the legal code compiled by Andronache Donici in 1814 and the *Condița civilă a Principatului Moldovei* (Legal register of the Principality of Moldavia) (also known under the name of *Codul Callimach*) (Callimach Code) (1817) in Moldavia, all contain special chapters relating to slaves.⁵⁴ Influenced by Western laws, these legal codes attempted to introduce certain elements of natural law into the treatment of slavery. *Codul Callimach* speaks of slavery as being “against the natural law of man”, but the institution is justified by the fact that it has been followed since ancient times. The code tries to define a modern concept of slavery.⁵⁵ In essence, however, slavery did not undergo modification. The State did not intervene in relations between master and slave. In any case, slavery as an institution could not be reformed. It remained as such until abolition. Nor were the restriction of nomadism and the settling of the Gypsies who wandered the countryside of concern to lawmakers in this new era. Nevertheless, in accor-

dance with the Enlightenment, a new spirit had begun to manifest itself, which, if it did not question the institution of slavery itself, tended to regard slaves as human beings. The arguments of the Metropolitanate and the bishops of Moldavia in 1766, when it was forbidden for families of Gypsies to be split up, are indicative of this new spirit: “if they are Gypsies, being part of God’s creation, they can by no means be shared out as if animals”.⁵⁶ A parallel can be drawn between this attitude and certain initiatives undertaken by enlightened members of the church linked to the conversion of groups of nomads to Christianity.

4. THE SOCIAL AND LEGAL SITUATION OF THE GYPSIES IN TRANSYLVANIA

With regard to the situation of the Gypsies during the Middle Ages in Transylvania,⁵⁷—a Romanian province then belonging to the medieval Kingdom of Hungary, becoming an autonomous principality in the midsixteenth century only to pass under the dominion of the Habsburg Empire at the end of the seventeenth century—their social and legal status was marked by the manner in which the Gypsies appeared in the region and by the regional specificities that prevailed there.

We have already seen that the first evidence of the presence of the Gypsies in Transylvania, which originates from the official records of Wallachia, refers to the land of Făgăraș, where around the year 1400 a boyar was recorded as being in possession of several villages and seventeen Gypsies dwelling in tents.⁵⁸ This area, which borders Wallachia, was for a long time (from the second half of the fourteenth century until the end of the fifteenth century) under the control of the prince of Wallachia, who held the title of fief there. As a consequence of its being part of Wallachia and the perpetuation of the old Romanian mode of organisation there, the social institutions in Făgăraș were identical to those in Wallachia, i.e. the Gypsies were the slaves of the boyars of Făgăraș. In the fifteenth century, the princes of Wallachia confirmed the dominion of the boyars of Făgăraș over the Gypsies in their possession.⁵⁹ The slavery of the Gypsies in Făgăraș continued as a legacy of Wallachian rule even after reincorporating of the region into the Transylvanian voivodate (later principality). Transylvanian documents attest to this special social regime in force in Făgăraș that differed from the rest of the country until the end of the seventeenth century with the establishment of Habsburg rule.⁶⁰ For example, in 1556 Queen Isabella issued confirmation of the possessions of the boyars in Recea, which included several families of Gypsies. Mihály Apafi, prince of Transylvania, confirms the deed later on, in 1689.⁶¹

There are also indicators that the Gypsies were also enslaved in regions of Transylvania that were temporarily under the authority of the princes of Moldavia in the Middle Ages. For example, Petru Rareș purchased from the mayor of Bistrița, a family of Gypsies composed of husband, wife and six children for fifty Hungarian florins and a horse.⁶² There are also cases of Moldavian boyars purchasing slaves from Transylvania.⁶³

It appears that the Gypsies of Bran Castle also had the status of slaves. They are mentioned for the first time only in 1500, when the king of Hungary, Vladislav II, ordered the voivode of Transylvania to prevent his civil servants from arresting or judging Gypsies (*certi Egiptii seu Cigani*) who *ab antiquo* belonged to Bran Castle as only the castellan had the right to do so.⁶⁴ From a list of the castle's accounts from 1504, we learn that the obligations of the Gypsies to the castellan consisted in the annual payment of a money tax and in certain services. It appears that King Vladislav II subjugated the Gypsies to the town of Brașov in 1498 together with the award of Bran Castle. In this way, they became the town's serfs. The rights over them formerly held by the castellan at Bran Castle were passed to the town.⁶⁵ How can we explain the fact that Bran Castle owned Gypsies, a case that was unique both in Transylvania and the other Romanian lands? Bran Castle, built in 1377, was ceded by King Sigismund of Luxembourg to Mircea the Old, prince of Wallachia, probably in 1406. It remained in the possession of Wallachia until 1419. It is possible that the attention paid by the Wallachian prince to the castle, which controlled the main route into Transylvania and which held an important strategic and commercial role, could have manifested itself by an award (or awards) of Gypsies. These Gypsies were undoubtedly princely slaves who had been allocated to the castle and placed under the direct control of the castellan. The 1500 Gypsies owned by Bran Castle at the beginning of the sixteenth century is unusually large. When the castle and its estate were awarded to Brașov, the Gypsy slaves found themselves under the authority of the town. The social status accorded to the Gypsies under their new masters was that of serfs, in line with the social system in place in Transylvania at the time. Their *de facto* situation, however, their dependence and regime of obligations, remained unchanged in comparison with the period of Wallachian dominion in Bran.

A small part of the Gypsies from medieval Transylvania lived under conditions of slavery. The majority of them were a kind of "royal serfs", directly dependent on the king. It was the king who accorded to different groups of Gypsies the freedom to live in the country, while the only obligations imposed on them were those they had to the Crown: they were required to pay certain taxes and to provide certain services for the State. The first deed relating to the Gypsies issued by the royal authorities in Transylvania is a grant of 1422 in which King Sigismund grants the voivode Vladislav

the right to travel the country freely with his band of Gypsies.⁶⁶ It would appear that the legal status that would for a long time apply to the Gypsies in the voivodate of Transylvania and the later in the Transylvanian principality was established during the reign of Sigismund. That is, they were placed under the protection of the Crown. In the medieval Kingdom of Hungary, with a few exceptions, the Gypsies were not the possession of any feudal master, whether secular or religious. Their admission to and settlement on private estates was done solely with the approval of the king. Thus, in 1476 King Matthias Corvinus granted permission for the town of Sibiu to make use of Gypsies living on the edge of town for labour where required.⁶⁷

The status of the Gypsies was quite distinct from that of the rest of the population. In fact, the Gypsies had the status of one of the autonomous ethnic groups that existed in the kingdom at that time. It is significant that they were not placed under the jurisdiction of the authorities; instead they were allowed to remain under the authority of their leaders, known as “voivodes”. In theory, the authorities did not have power over the Gypsies, who were directly dependent on the king. In the deed of 1476, Matthias Corvinus ordered that voivodes and deputy voivodes should not dare to attempt to take the Gypsies settled in Sibiu under their jurisdiction, leaving them instead under the jurisdiction of the town.⁶⁸ The grants to the Gypsies are a constant reminder of this exceptional situation. They attest to the Gypsies’ freedom to travel the country freely, to sojourn on lands belonging to the Crown, the internal autonomy of the bands of Gypsies, the regime of obligations to the State (fewer than those of the sedentary population), the absence of military obligations, the authorities’ tolerance of the Gypsies’ non-adherence to Christianity. All of the above made up a system of wide-ranging privileges that functioned in the medieval Kingdom of Hungary until its collapse with the occupation of Buda by the Ottomans in 1541, and which even continued to function after this time in the autonomous Transylvanian principality.

In the sixteenth century, in Transylvania a Gypsy voivodeship was created, an authority led by a noble holding the title of voivode. The voivode held fiscal, judicial and administrative responsibilities and managed all aspects of the Gypsies’ relations with the State.⁶⁹ The Gypsies were a source of revenues to the State. Under the Transylvanian principality, each tent-dwelling Gypsy was required to pay a qualification of one florin—fifty dinars on Saint George’s day (24 April) and fifty dinars on Saint Michael’s day (29 September)—at the headquarters of the county in which he was then staying, while the money was collected by a civil servant in the service of the Gypsies’ voivode.⁷⁰ During this period a serf was required to pay a qualification of two florins per year. At the time, society was tolerant towards the

nomadic lifestyle of the Gypsies, while craftsmen, especially blacksmiths, were integrated in the rural economy of the time. The Crown had a vested interest of a fiscal nature in the existence of these social-ethnic categories, hence the preoccupation that their status as “royal serfs” be maintained.

While the different groups of nomadic Gypsies benefited from the aforementioned privileges, a part of the Gypsies of Transylvania with time settled into a sedentary lifestyle, settling on some nobles’ estates, in villages of serfs or at the edges of free villages and towns. In both cases, the respective Gypsies lost their privileges, if not at once, then after a relatively short period of time. The Gypsies who settled on the nobles’ estates became serfs or landless peasants, while those who settled in towns and Saxon villages preserved their personal freedom, living as second-class inhabitants on the edges of those localities. The process of linguistic and cultural assimilation took place more particularly in the case of Gypsies settled in villages of serfs and less so in the towns and the Saxon villages.

5. THE POSITION OF THE GYPSIES IN THE ECONOMY OF THE ROMANIAN LANDS

P. N. Panaitescu, the author of a study that looks specifically at this problem, considered that “the history of the Gypsies in Wallachia and Moldavia forms part of the economic history of the two principalities”.⁷¹ He shows that the Gypsies acquired an important role in the Romanian economy after the era of economic prosperity of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (when the Romanian principalities participated to the full as transit countries on the East-West trade routes linking Europe to the Black Sea and the East) had come to an end following the occupation by the Ottomans of the Romanian ports on the Danube and the Black Sea in 1484 and 1540. The ensuing economic transformations led to the disappearance of the great farms. These great estates needed craftsmen of all kinds. Since there were no Romanian craftsmen, while the foreign craftsmen who had come to the principalities together with the East-West trade of the previous centuries, had disappeared along with the decline of the trade, the Gypsies were a welcome source of skilled labour. They had been craftsmen since ancient times and possessed the extra advantage of being able to adapt quickly to the economic needs of the country. Panaitescu draws a connection between the Gypsies’ status as slaves and the boyars’ interest in guaranteeing a supply of this precious source of labour, thereby preventing their flight from the principalities. In this way, the great estates are shown to have been the cause of slavery.⁷²

This theory is debatable from several points of view. However, there is

no doubt that the function performed by the Gypsies in the Middle Ages in the Romanian lands is that of craftsmen, especially in the principalities. As in the entire Central and Eastern European area, town dwellers and craftsmen were originally overwhelmingly of foreign ethnic stock. In Wallachia and Moldavia, the history of the oldest towns is linked to the communities of German craftsmen and merchants who settled to the south and the east of the Carpathians at the end of the thirteenth century and during the fourteenth century. Romanian society, an agricultural society *par excellence*, was in need of foreign craftsmen. At the same time, there were also Romanian craftsmen. A little later on, even in the urban centres initially populated by foreigners, the vast majority of craftsmen and merchants were Romanians. In the villages, a relatively broad range of crafts had always been practised on the farmsteads, whilst in some regions there were villages specialised in a particular craft. The Gypsies who arrived from the south of the Danube added to the numbers of craftsmen present in the country. They were specialised (or became specialised) in crafts that could not be provided by rural Romanian craftsmen. Filling in this absence they were thus able to find a purpose in their new homeland. In the second half of the eighteenth century, an observer of the contemporary situation in Moldavia and Wallachia commented that here “all the mechanical crafts are in the hands of the Gypsies or of foreigners from neighbouring countries”.⁷³

Documentary information enables us to gain a better understanding of the occupations of the Gypsies, especially in the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century. There is a paucity of information of this kind for the first centuries of the Gypsies’ presence in the Romanian principalities. We can suppose that over time an evolution took place in this field, with different groups of Gypsies adapting to situations that existed in different periods, leading eventually to the accentuation of the differentiation in their occupations. Generally speaking, however, the bands of Gypsies preserved their characteristic pursuits for a long time, with this situation continuing in some cases almost until the present day. A general characteristic among the Gypsies was the passing of a craft from generation to generation within a family. Furthermore, crafts did not pass from one clan (or category) to another, but remained within that particular clan. It is for this reason that observers have spoken of the division of the Gypsies into “natural guilds”.⁷⁴

The Gypsies’ preferred craft was that of blacksmith. Throughout the Middle Ages on the Romanian territories the working of iron was an occupation reserved almost exclusively for them. The oldest literary reference to the presence of the Gypsies, the *Ruinae Pannonicae* by Christian Schesaeus, published in 1571, alludes to this occupation of the Gypsies.⁷⁵ Foreigners familiar with Romanian realities constantly attributed the profession of blacksmith to the Gypsies, such as Charles de Peyssonnel in 1765.⁷⁶ The

production, whether for the boyars' estates, for peasants or for the State, of tools made of iron—horseshoes, nails, even armour—was one of the chief occupations of the Gypsies. There were certain categories of Gypsies who specialised in this occupation. The *lăieși*, who wandered the countryside, were exclusively engaged in this occupation until the beginning of the nineteenth century. The *ursari* also produced small objects from iron such as knives, axes and locks. Slaves working as blacksmiths were indispensable to any feudal economy and they existed in quite large numbers.⁷⁷

Some Gypsy blacksmiths practised their craft either in workshops at their master's residence or elsewhere on his estate, or in the towns, in workshops that belonged to themselves. The majority of them, however, were itinerants, moving from place to place and working with rudimentary tools. Bands of Gypsy blacksmiths, whether princely, boyars' or monastery Gypsies, wandered throughout the country plying their trade. A band, or more probably a family or two, would stop for a time in a village and carry out, either in exchange for goods or money, all the iron work requested from them and sell the iron goods that they produced during their stay there. The Gypsies would regularly return to the village, and in time some would settle on the edge of the village where they would set up their workshop. Initially, they would build a shelter and then later a house of the kind built by the villagers. However, Gypsy families' transition to a sedentary way of life in the villages only took place at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when there was an increasing need for their services and when the authorities actually encouraged the process. Ethnographic research carried out in the first half of the twentieth century found that in the former principalities there was not a single peasant farmstead that did not own pieces of iron-work produced by Gypsies.⁷⁸ As a consequence of their monopoly in this field, "Gypsy" came to mean "blacksmith" in the Romanian villages.

There were also Gypsy locksmiths, knife makers and sword makers, coppersmiths and goldsmiths. Among the crafts practised by the Gypsies, there is also reference to the manufacture of sieves, stone working, brick-making, the production of spoons and saddles, pottery and milling. There were also Gypsy slaves who worked as cobblers, harness makers, cooks, innkeepers etc.⁷⁹ Gypsies were used to extract salt in salt mines, namely at Ocele Mari, the largest salt mines in Wallachia. From the time of Mircea the Old until almost the mid-eighteenth century, salt extraction at Ocele Mari was carried out by Gypsy salt miners, slaves of the monasteries of Cozia and Govora. Later on, they were joined by workers recruited from among the peasantry. Slaves from the two monasteries worked there until emancipation. They were paid wages in return for their labour, like free workers.⁸⁰ There were also other occupations that fell to the slaves to perform.

Gypsy craftsmen were also present in the towns. Some lived at the residence of their master or in the Gypsy quarter of the monastery. Others, even though they were slaves, had their own homestead and made a living from a particular craft. In Wallachian and Moldavian towns there existed a certain division of labour between the Gypsies and craftsmen of Romanian or other origin organised into guilds. Meanwhile, Gypsies living in towns in Transylvania had a well-defined role in the life of the town. From the tax records of Braşov from the sixteenth century, for example, we learn that Gypsies were required to provide certain services to the town, such as repairing the gates of the town as well as its roads, the manufacture of weapons including cannons, keeping the streets clean, sweeping the market place and emptying sewers and latrines. They provided the town with its gravediggers, dogcatchers and executioners.⁸¹ In Sibiu, the Gypsies settled at the edge of town performed different tasks and services as ordered by the town and were responsible for taking letters to their destination. From an order issued by Matthias Corvinus in 1487, we find that the Gypsies of Sibiu were obliged to carry out certain tasks to help with the defence of the town.⁸² In some Transylvanian towns, over time it happened that the activities of the Gypsies came to affect the craftsmen who belonged to the town guilds. In Braşov in the years 1685–86, it was forbidden for the Gypsies to own sheep and they were deprived of the right to engage in commerce. The only activities permitted to them were horse-trading, the manufacture of nails and minor repair work.⁸³ Such measures undertaken to protect other craftsmen from Gypsy craftsmen were not, however, introduced everywhere. In 1689, the Transylvanian Diet introduced a new tax for Gypsy craftsmen, more specifically for Gypsy blacksmiths working with their own tools and for Gypsies working as gold-washers. They were required to pay fifty dinars per person (in the case of gold-washers, the sum was added to a special tax that they paid).⁸⁴

Skilled slaves were very much in demand by princes, boyars and the monasteries. Since the Gypsies had a natural predisposition for craftsmanship, certain of their masters actually attached them as apprentices to master craftsmen. The Gypsies did not only practice crafts where they were regarded as having a kind of monopoly. In the last years of slavery, the boyars even used slaves in the new professions that were appearing at the time. Young Gypsies became proficient in their profession from a master craftsman, either on an estate or in the town. They became the cheapest craftsmen at the disposal of their owners. Similarly, the Gypsies also provided labour for private manufacturing enterprises in Moldavia and Wallachia. In the nineteenth century, we find that the activity of slave craftsmen is regulated and that the slaves are incorporated into guilds that were already in existence at the time. Gypsy craftsmen occupied a well-defined role in the economy

of the principalities. Without doubt they constituted a source of wealth for the country.

It was undoubtedly at a later stage that Gypsies took up occupations in agriculture. Moreover, these occupations never played an important role. It has been maintained that on the boyars' estates, alongside the slaves employed at the boyar's residence, there was also a category of agricultural slaves used in the fields and in the rearing of cattle that existed from the fifteenth century.⁸⁵ However, it has been demonstrated that the only document that can be cited in this sense—a document from 1480 in which there appears the village "Golești and its Gypsies" (sixteen families)⁸⁶—does not justify such a conclusion.⁸⁷ The appearance in the sixteenth century of the large feudal estates specialised in the production of grain destined for Istanbul led to the use of Gypsy slaves in various forms in this kind of work, especially where there were acute labour shortages. Miron Costin states that rich inhabitants (boyars) of lower Moldavia worked the land with "purchased Gypsies".⁸⁸ In Transylvania, Giovanandrea Gromo shows that in 1564 the Szeklers were using Gypsies to work the land.⁸⁹ Generally speaking, on estates that owned Gypsies, the Gypsies made up an auxiliary labour force. Neither the Gypsy slaves on the estates of the boyars and the monasteries in the principalities, nor the Gypsy serfs on the nobles' estates in Transylvania were farmers in the medieval sense of the term, that is to say the owners of a piece of land which they cultivated under a particular regime of obligations to a master and to the State. It was the peasantry who worked exclusively as autonomous farmers. Until their *de facto* assimilation into the peasantry, which took place later on, even in the first half of the nineteenth century, in most cases the Gypsies were used for certain agricultural tasks that did not require any particular skill. In Wallachia and Moldavia, the boyars and the monasteries did not consider the need for a rational and economically profitable utilisation of their slaves until the era of emancipation. Only then did the slaves, forced to adopt a sedentary way of life, find themselves required to embrace agricultural occupations. Previously, the exploitation of the majority of the Gypsies had taken place through the *dajdie* (tax) they were required to pay to their master, with the Gypsies themselves earning their existence on their own, wandering the country and plying their trades.

In the Romanian principalities, slaves provided the cheapest and most reliable labour force, their legal status tying them to the estate and their owner. For their masters, slaves constituted a source of income. For that reason they were highly sought after. Until the middle of the eighteenth century, the boyar class was engaged in a veritable race to obtain slaves. Boyars would buy slaves whenever the opportunity presented itself.⁹⁰ The importance of their economic function also resulted from the high prices for which they were traded. An even more important reason for the high price

of slaves was the prestige attached to the owning of a large number of slaves in medieval Romanian society.

If private slaves generated an income for their master through the labour they provided or through the *dajdie* they paid, princely slaves paid tax to the state and were also subjected to other obligations. Since their numbers were fairly high, they generated substantial revenues for the Crown. In 1810, the revenue that the State generated from the 3427 families of princely slaves recorded in Wallachia totalled 700,000 thalers, 3000 gold ounces and countless payments in kind.⁹¹ In Moldavia in 1810, the Crown owned 1878 families of Gypsies. Prior to the Russian occupation of 1806, they generated annual revenues of 25,000 lei. In 1810, after several years' experience of hiring out Gypsies to private persons, who paid up to 125,000 lei for them, obligations were established for the Gypsies whose total value was equal to the latter sum.⁹²

The gold-washers formed a separate group among the Gypsies. They were skilled in the collection of gold from riverbeds rich in gold-bearing alluvia and diluvia. The technique they used consisted of washing the gold-bearing sands, which led to the Gypsies being given the name of "gold-washers" in Transylvania (in official documents in Latin the term *aurilotores* is used, while documents in German use the term *Goldwäscher*). In Moldavia and Wallachia, they were called *aurari* and *rudari*.⁹³ The occupation was undoubtedly learned from the Romanians. Even though gold-washers were above all Gypsies, there were also Romanians who were skilled in the washing of gold. In Transylvania, in years of poor harvest, some needy peasants who lived close to areas with gold deposits occasionally practised this occupation.

The entirety of the gold collected in Moldavia, the majority of the gold obtained in Wallachia (there were also Romanian *aurari* in the counties of Vâlcea and Argeş) and a substantial part of the gold of Transylvania were provided by the labours of this population. According to statistics from the year 1813, eight to ten *măji* of gold were collected from the rivers of Transylvania, while in 1837, seven to eight *măji* were collected.⁹⁴ In Transylvania, there were two centres of gold washing, in the gold-bearing area of the Apuseni Mountains and in the area around the town of Sebeş. In 1781, in the Transylvanian principality there were 1291 Gypsy families registered as gold-washers.⁹⁵ In the Banat in 1774 there were 84.5 families registered as being skilled in the washing of gold, a total of 244 people, while in 1801 there were 413 gold washers operating in thirty-eight villages recorded in the whole province.⁹⁶ In Moldavia and Wallachia, such Gypsies constituted their own special guild of *aurari* or *rudari*. They were all princely Gypsies, totalling several hundred in each of the two principalities, and generated substantial revenues for the Crown.⁹⁷ In 1810 in Wallachia, the principality-

ty's treasury recorded a hundred Romanian gold miners and 400 Gypsy gold-washers.⁹⁸

The authorities showed a special interest towards the Gypsy gold-washers. The revenues generated by the latter were substantial and were made up on the one hand by the tax that the Gypsies paid to the State and on the other hand by the gold that they were obliged to hand over to the tax office at the official price. The State, which had an interest in the continued existence of this group, protected them and instituted a privileged regime for them, under which they were exempted from any public tasks and sometimes also from certain obligations that they were otherwise obliged to provide to the owner of the estate on which they dwelt. In Transylvania from 1747 to 1832, gold-washing Gypsies were organised into their own voivodeship and kept separate from the other Gypsies. In Wallachia and Moldavia there was an official who dealt specially with the gold-washing Gypsies. In the last decades of the eighteenth century and at the beginning of the nineteenth century, both the Habsburg authorities in Transylvania and the Banat and the authorities in Wallachia and Moldavia undertook measures to regulate the activity of the gold-washers, establishing their status and their obligations to the State in a more organised manner, as well as the exemptions granted to them.

These Gypsies led a nomadic way of life. The collection of gold could be carried out only in the warm season. Times of rain and flooding were particularly favourable to gold washing. The washers themselves lived in tents. In autumn and winter, they would as a rule move their tents to the plain or to some other suitable place where they could carry out other activities to earn their existence, such as the production and selling of pots and other objects made of wood. However, the washing of gold was not always a profitable activity. Contemporary reports illustrate the poverty in which these Gypsies lived. In spite of appearances, neither was the income they generated for the tax authorities always large. During the nineteenth century, the occupation entered into a decline until it virtually died out, in line with the dwindling of the gold deposits and the gradual settling of those Gypsies who practised it into a sedentary way of life.

6. WAY OF LIFE. NOMADISM AND SEDENTARISATION. MARGINALITY

During the Middle Ages, on the Romanian territory, the Gypsies had their own habitat and social organisation, which differed from those of the Romanian population. The most distinctive feature was the nomadism of the Gypsies. Generally speaking, from the first attestations of the Gypsies

in the fourteenth century and also later on, the Gypsies are referred to as living in *sălașe*. For example, the Tismana monastery owned forty *sălașe* of Gypsies, the Cozia monastery 300 *sălașe* etc. Today, the term *sălaș* (plural: *sălașe*) is usually translated in historical studies as “family”. In the Middle Ages, however, the term meant “tent”. In Latin texts, Gypsies living in these family units are referred to as *Ciganus tentoriatu*s (tent-dwelling Gypsy), clearly expressing the contemporary understanding of the term. This understanding of the term as an improvised and mobile shelter exists even today in some regions of the country. The word is of Turkic origin, and can be found in the neighbouring Slavonic languages, as well as in Hungarian. It is an inheritance from the peoples of the steppe, who dwelt in this type of accommodation. Gypsy *sălașe* as referred to in Romanian medieval documents were tents in which dwelt one or more families of Gypsies.⁹⁹ The inhabitation of these mobile shelters was linked to the nomadic way of life of the Gypsies. In the first centuries of the Gypsies’ residence on the Romanian territories, almost all Gypsies led a nomadic way of life. The condition of slavery and belonging to a master, whether to the Crown or to a monastery or boyar, were not obstacles to the continuation of this way of life.

The occupations practised by the Gypsies made it possible for their nomadic lifestyle to survive for a long period of time. The Gypsies were not farmers. Until late on, official documents that make reference to the occupations of slaves and the observations of foreign travellers in the Romanian countries make a clear distinction between the majority population of the country and the Gypsies when it came to their respective occupations. Sometimes the occupations of the two populations are even presented in opposition to one another, i.e. the peasants are engaged in agriculture (working the land and rearing animals), while the Gypsies practise certain professions. The use of Gypsy slaves to work the land and their consequent transition to a sedentary way of life belongs to a more recent era. Even as late as the second half of the eighteenth century, the *vătrași* (sedentary) Gypsies, be they manor or estate Gypsies, were still few in number, not only among the ranks of this population but also among the slaves of most boyars and monasteries. Wherever there are records of slaves on an estate, in most cases we find this kind of situation. A substantial proportion of private slaves were left to “feed themselves” by travelling the country, practising “their craft”. In return for this freedom, they paid their master a sum of money, the *dajdie*.¹⁰⁰ Until the era of emancipation, most Gypsies were used by the monasteries and the boyars in such a way.

As for the princely slaves, with the exception of the few slaves who worked at the princely court, almost all of them wandered the country in search of means of making a living, practising the occupations and crafts. Nomadic Gypsies, whether they were princely, monastery or boyars’ slaves,

travelled the country in bands made up of a varying number of tents, carrying all their possession with them. They would set up their tents on the edge of a locality, where for a time they would practise their crafts, or, as in the case of the gold-washers and spoon-makers, who worked in isolated locations, they would set up their tents by rivers or in forests. Their horses and asses would graze on the land around the Gypsy encampment. In cases where blacksmiths, farriers, coppersmiths, locksmiths etc. were engaged in a constant movement from place to place in order to obtain work, Gypsies of this kind would practise seasonal migration, working and living in mountainous areas or in forests during the summer and descending to the plains for the winter, staying on an estate prepared to accept them.

However, the nomadism of the Gypsies in the Middle Ages in the Romanian lands should not be understood in the strict sense of the term. Gypsies we call "nomads" lived on the estate of their master in winter (bands of princely Gypsies could, if they received the necessary permission, sojourn on the estates of monasteries or boyars), while in summer they wandered the land to earn their existence. In general, they would follow the same routes year after year. Gold-washers would stay in specific locations where they would collect gold, to which they would return every year. This seasonal migration was made possible by the social status and regimes of obligations of the Gypsies. Private slaves would return to their master's estate in order to pay tax. The tax paid by princely Gypsies was collected by their leaders and handed over to state officials who were specifically responsible for the supervision of these slaves. Both private slaves and bands of princely slaves could equally be summoned by their master in certain situations or in order to carry out certain services. In Transylvania, twice a year, on Saint George's day and Saint Michael's day, bands of Gypsies would present themselves at the county seat to pay their tax.

Therefore, it can be said that a limited and controlled nomadism existed. Of course, this nomadic way of life formed a contrast with the sedentary character of Romanian society, but it was not destructive or dangerous in nature. The way of life of the majority of the Gypsies was controlled by the public authorities and regulated in many ways. There was no conflict between the sedentary way of life of the autochthonous population and the nomadism of the Gypsies. In the Middle Ages, Romanian territories were sparsely populated. Until the nineteenth century, unoccupied lands were continually being populated with new settlements, often under the aegis of state policy. There was thus also room for the nomadism of the Gypsies in Romanian society. There was neither the demographic pressure nor the lack of spare land that existed in Central and Western Europe, which resulted in intolerance of the way of life of the Gypsies.

Clearly, evolutions in the habitat of the Gypsies led to the gradual tran-

sition to a sedentary way of life. The domestic and agricultural occupations the Gypsies were with time forced to adopt tied them to stable settlement and a fixed dwelling. Settlements of Gypsy slaves appeared near some boyars' residences and monasteries, where the servants and craftsmen of the master or even agricultural labourers worked. Such settlements were known as *țiḡăanii* (singular: *țiḡănie*). Later on, even farming settlements made up of Gypsy slaves were created. The great monasteries in particular led a policy of capitalisation of their estates through the labour of the slaves. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (although we presume that this was also the case earlier on), Gypsy settlements existed on the estates of the great monasteries. It is known that the largest concentration of Gypsies existed on the lands of the monasteries. Such settlements were, however, also created on the boyars' estates.

The way of life of the Gypsies was different to that of the Romanian population. The organisation of the Gypsies was also different. The regime of obligations imposed on the Gypsies was different to that of free peasants or serfs. Distinctions between the two societies, Romanian rural society and the society of the Gypsies, were great for a long time. Peasants and Gypsies were involved in certain economic relations, but they constituted two separate communities that functioned on the basis of different rules. For a long time the separation between the two communities was quite clear-cut.

In medieval Romanian society, Gypsies had an inferior social status. Due to their social condition, they were considered to be living outside of society and were treated with the greatest disdain. This state of affairs can be discerned from contemporary documents. An English traveller wrote at the beginning of the nineteenth century: "Although the Gypsies form such an integral part of the community, they are regarded with the greatest disdain by the rest, whose behaviour towards them is scarcely better than towards animals; a man could more easily bear being called 'thief' or something similar than 'Gypsy'."¹⁰¹ Two centuries earlier, Laurentius Toppeltinus indicated that people avoided the Gypsies, refusing to greet them or show any sign of respect when they met them.¹⁰² In any case, their contacts with them were limited. It is indicative that when a group of Gypsies settled (either voluntarily or by force) in a Romanian locality (or in a Hungarian, Szekler or Saxon locality in Transylvania), their presence was only accepted on the edge of the settlement. In the Romanian principalities, Gypsies were not buried together with the other inhabitants, even though they were Christians. Instead, they were buried in a separate cemetery.¹⁰³ Sources show that the Gypsies were treated with suspicion, particularly for the petty thefts that they carried out. The Gypsies' wandering through the countryside to practise their trades was also regarded as suspect. Similarly, Gypsies constituted part of the ranks of beggars, vagrants etc.¹⁰⁴ Even if the Gypsies

were not persecuted in Wallachia and Moldavia on the same scale as in the countries of Central and Western Europe, we sometimes find that the local authorities would deal with groups of Gypsies. For example, whenever the first signs of an outbreak of plague appeared in Bucharest, usually the first measure to be taken, under the instructions of the prince, was the expulsion of the Gypsies from the town.¹⁰⁵ The Gypsies were suspecting of spreading the epidemic via their itinerant lifestyle and wretched living conditions.

Over time the distance between the agricultural population and the Gypsies began to decrease. Historical developments resulted in the increased dependency of the peasantry. From the sixteenth century, subjugated peasants in the Romanian lands (*rumâni, vecini, iobagi*) were tied to the land. They could not move anywhere else without the permission of the master of the estate upon which they worked, while the feudal lord could make use of them as he pleased, including the right to sell individual serfs, thereby separating them from their families. In this respect, the subjugated peasants were reduced to a state similar to that of the slaves. Slavery and serfdom, although states of dependence, were, of course, not identical to one another. Unlike the slave, who, together with his wife and children, had to serve his master in any way his master required on a daily basis, the obligations of a Wallachian or Moldavian serf were, in accordance with common law and the official law, far fewer and meant in effect only a certain number of days per year working the lands, in addition to obligations of transportation, guard duty and payments in kind. Furthermore, the serf's family was exempt from the aforementioned work. The regime of obligations imposed on the serfs continued to worsen until the middle of the eighteenth century, although in this respect a distinction had always existed between a serf and a slave. However, the fiscal burden, the tax and an increasing number of other obligations to the State in reality rendered the situation for Wallachian and Moldavian serfs just as tough as that of the slaves. The latter had the greater obligations to their master, but in exchange they were exempt from tax obligations. In the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century, the subjugated peasants became considered the full property of their master, who could use them for any kind of work and could sell them, separating parents from their children, just as in the case of slaves.¹⁰⁶ To a certain extent slavery and serfdom became confused, such that when in the middle of the eighteenth century the status of the peasant was regulated via the granting of personal freedom, the lawmakers felt it necessary to distinguish explicitly between serfs and slaves. The 1749 deed abolishing serfdom in Moldavia issued by Constantin Mavrocordat established that serfs are not slaves "because only Gypsies can have the status of slaves, serving together with their wives and children their masters every day. Among the serfs, only the men serve their master, with only one person per household required to

work in this way, all the male offspring of the aforementioned will work as his assistants: the women do not serve the master; nor are serfs subjugated like slaves, because a serf is a free villager who owns no land.”¹⁰⁷

During the same time, the transition to a sedentary way of life that the Gypsies were undergoing and their becoming tied to agricultural occupations brought them closer to the peasantry. The monasteries were particularly active in using Gypsy slaves in the exploitation of their estates. The regime of obligations imposed on these slaves evolved in the direction of that of the subjugated peasants, being required to pay tarrage and carry out days of corvee (*clacă*). At the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, many monasteries regulated the regime of working obligations imposed on their slaves. In some places, these obligations were fixed at three days per week, whilst in other places Gypsies were required to work a week out of every three for their masters. In other places, there were fewer obligations: sometimes the amount of corvee was fixed at twenty-four days per year, the same as it was for serfs in Wallachia.¹⁰⁸ The transition to a sedentary way of life led over time to the disappearance of the ethnic character of a part of the Gypsy population. Living alongside the Romanian peasants, possibly practising the same occupations as the latter, living in isolation from their traditional way of life and constituting a small proportion of the entirety of the population, over the course of a few generations the Gypsies lost many of their cultural traits, chiefly their native language, but not only this. Mihail Kogălniceanu states that in 1837 the *vătrași*, private Gypsies with fixed dwellings, remained Gypsies in name only, as they had completely forgotten their mother tongue and had lost the habits and customs of the Gypsies that were maintained only by the nomadic population. They could no longer be distinguished from Romanians.¹⁰⁹ In 1800, the term “Gypsy” was in the first instance a social term, being an ethnic term only on a secondary level. Clearly, slaves who had been assimilated into the majority population were Gypsies only in the social sense of “slaves”, having already become Romanianised. When the Gypsies were emancipated, in the middle of the nineteenth century, some of those who benefited from emancipation (it is not possible to make an estimate of their number) had already lost their initial cultural traits, or at least the fundamental ones (i.e., language and customs) and had become Romanianised. After emancipation, their integration into Romanian society took place at a rapid pace.

Changes of social nature affecting the peasantry and changes of habitat in the case of some Gypsies facilitated contacts between individuals belonging to the two populations and caused the old social barrier separating the Gypsies from peasants to fall in part. In this context, mixed marriages between Gypsies and Romanians appeared. In the seventeenth and eighteenth cen-

turies, mixed marriages were not a rare phenomenon. For feudal masters they were a means of increasing the number of slaves. Enslavement through marriage seems to have been a widely used procedure, especially on the estates of the monasteries. In such situations, freemen would hand letters to the abbots declaring that they accepted the situation freely, that they would carry out the same work as other slaves and that they would never seek to regain their former legal status via a tribunal. Likewise, the children resulting from such marriages would also remain slaves.¹¹⁰

The phenomenon whereby a number of peasants entered the ranks of the slaves is too large to be explained only by mixed marriages. The system of tax exemptions that existed in the Romanian principalities, according to which even private slaves were exempt from public duties, and the boyars' and especially the monasteries' pursuit of a labour force that was exempt from such public duties led to situations in which some feudal masters would declare certain of the peasants tied to their estates to be "Gypsies" in censuses organised periodically by the State to determine the number of taxpayers present on its territory. In this way, serfs were included among the ranks of those exempt from obligations to the State. The Austrian authorities noted at the beginning of their rule in Bukovina that on the estates of the monasteries lived a category of "Gypsies" who kept clean houses and who were well dressed etc., who were in fact peasants recorded in the monasteries records as slaves in order not to pay tax on them.¹¹¹ Certainly, the number of Romanians in this situation was not great, but we should bear such arrangements in mind when we find that the censuses include some Romanians among the "Gypsies".

There is no doubt that in the eighteenth century there were individuals and families of Romanians who entered the ranks of slaves. We can speculate as to how many of the slaves lacking Gypsy characteristics referred to by Kogălniceanu were in fact Romanian peasants who through marriage or tax evasion had been added to the ranks of boyar or monastery slaves. At the same time, we can observe that through the medium of marriage an ethnic mixing of Gypsy slaves and Romanian peasants took place. When situations of this kind became relatively numerous, the authorities intervened to forbid mixed marriages. The *Sobornicescul hrisov* of 1785 forbade even Gypsies who had been released from slavery to marry Romanians; only the second generation of such Gypsies were allowed to marry Romanians.¹¹²

The ethnic mixing of Gypsies and Romanians also occurred as a result of freed Gypsies entering the ranks of freemen. They became members of rural and urban communities, were considered to be Romanians and quickly became assimilated in all respects. This phenomenon was, however, a minor aspect of the ethnic contacts between Gypsies and Romanians in the Middle Ages. Boyars very rarely freed their slaves.

During the lengthy period of time when the Gypsies were slaves, the ethnic mixing between Gypsies and Romanians did not become a major phenomenon. The legal and social distinction and the different way of life meant that only in exceptional circumstances did such situations occur.¹¹³ Only in the nineteenth century, with the advent of emancipation did it become possible for a part of the Gypsy population, more specifically the former slaves who had changed their way of life, becoming peasants or craftsmen in villages or towns, to become fully integrated into Romanian communities. In the second half of the nineteenth century and during the twentieth century, the Romanianisation of a relatively significant part of the Gypsy population took place, which was noted by sociological studies and confirmed by demographic statistics. The process whereby a part of the Gypsy population lost its ethnic identity occurred throughout the entire country, not just in the principalities. In areas inhabited chiefly by other ethnic groups, the Gypsies adopted the language spoken there and were sometimes assimilated into the respective population. In Transylvania, sometimes even in the Middle Ages but to a greater extent in the nineteenth century, certain groups of Gypsies became Magyarised or Germanised. In Dobrogea, some Gypsies became completely integrated into Turkish or Tatar communities.

7. SOCIAL ORGANISATION. THE LEADERS OF THE GYPSIES

The Gypsies living in the Romanian states during the Middle Ages constituted their own microcosm that was separate from the local society. They also had their own social organisation. Contemporary written sources, interested almost entirely in the possessions of the Gypsies and their obligations to the State, paid no attention to the internal organisation of this population. Consequently information on this subject is scarce. On the other hand, the way in which communities of nomadic Gypsies were organised in the modern era is known. There is large body of evidence in this sense, which may be used as an indicator for the situation in earlier times. Ethnological studies provide us with interesting information on this subject. The most comprehensive study of this kind was carried out in the Romanian lands by Heinrich von Wlislöcki at the end of the nineteenth century. He studied many different aspects of the life of tent-dwelling Gypsies in Transylvania and his writings are perhaps the richest in information of the social organisation of bands of Gypsies.¹¹⁴ The method used by the Transylvanian ethnologist is, however, questionable, and we may wonder to what extent data collected at the end of the nineteenth century is also valid for previous centuries. However, it is certain that some of the results produced by von Wlislöcki are of use to historians. It was nomadic Gypsies who best maintained

the cultural specificity of the Gypsies, preserving it almost until the present day. As a result of many factors, starting with the type of habitat in which they dwelt, nomadic Gypsies were far less affected by the impact of European feudal society than other Gypsies. The form of organisation of nomadic Gypsies displayed a remarkable longevity. The social evolutions that took place in Europe from the Gypsies' arrival there until the modern era had little effect on the nomads.

It is chiefly this category of the Gypsies that is meant when we consider the organisation of the Gypsies in the Middle Ages. Until the modern era most Gypsies were nomadic. The transition of a community to a sedentary way of life would lead sooner or later to its dissolution.

The study of the social organisation of the Gypsies in the Romanian principalities during the Middle Ages will by its nature bring out both elements of specificity and continuity in the organisation of the Gypsies and the impact of local society and political factors on their organisation.¹¹⁵

The Gypsies lived in groups. The smallest of these groups was the family. Official documents from Wallachia and Moldavia used the term *sălaş*, while in Transylvania the term "tent" was often used. The family was composed of a Gypsy man, a Gypsy woman and their children. Thus, the form taken by the Gypsy family did not differ from that of the autochthonous population.

Several families living in the same place made up a band. In Transylvania, this unit of organisation was usually referred to as a company. Generally speaking, the number of families that made up a band of Gypsies was small. From the relatively numerous statistics at our disposal from the second half of the eighteenth century, it emerges that a band was usually made up of between thirty and forty families. Bands were usually composed according to profession: gold-washers (*aurari*), bear-baiters (*ursari*), musicians (*lăutari*), spoon-makers (*lingurari*) etc. The whole band moved together as it travelled the countryside. It possessed a number of characteristics that distinguished it from other bands.

Each band had its own leader, who was known as *jude* or *giude* in Wallachia and Moldavia and *voivode* in Transylvania. The Gypsies chose the leaders of the bands during an assembly attended by the entire group, which was carried out according to a certain ritual. Those chosen to become leaders were selected from among the men considered to be the strongest or wisest. The function of leader was held for life, but it was not hereditary. These leaders constituted a kind of aristocracy of the Gypsies. The *voivode* or *jude* became the all-powerful head of that particular community of Gypsies. He enjoyed the complete obedience of the band.

Contemporary documents are able to tell us something of the prerogatives of the leader of the band. The leader's first duty was the power to

resolve disputes between members of the band. He had the power to pass judgement and to administer punishment. This aspect is revealed to us by certain grants issued by Hungarian kings and Transylvanian princes in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to bands of Gypsies. In the grant of 1422, King Sigismund grants (in fact confirms) the voivode Vladislav *facultas judicandi* over his Gypsy subjects (*Ciganos sibi subjectos*).¹¹⁶ The administering of justice among the Gypsies was the sole responsibility of their leader. Evidently, this is the case only for disputes within the community. In such cases the local administrative authorities had no prerogative. According to the verdict of 1476 given by King Matthias Corvinus in connection with the Gypsies living at the edge of the town of Sibiu, the voivode and vice-voivode are explicitly forbidden from intervening in the administering of justice among the Gypsies.¹¹⁷ However, cases where the Gypsies entered into legal dispute with somebody from outside the band came under the jurisdiction of the state legal system. In Wallachia and Moldavia, there is evidence of the legal autonomy of the bands of Gypsies only from the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the Crown, concerned to halt the decline in the numbers of Gypsies in its possession, confirmed the rights of different bands that had been held in ancient times, but which had been violated. The charter of 25 March 1793 issued by Mihail Șuțu regarding *ursari* and *lingurari* Gypsies in Moldavia renewed their right to have problems that arose within the band resolved solely by their leader: "any legal dispute or implementation of legal judgements will be dealt with by them alone, according to their ancient custom, only their headmen have the right to try them. Prefects and other officials are not to interfere in their affairs, except in cases where the death of a man is involved." The authorities intervened only in cases where the Gypsies entered into legal disputes with other inhabitants.¹¹⁸ This is the most important aspect of the autonomy enjoyed by communities of nomadic Gypsies, both in Transylvania and medieval Hungary and in Wallachia and Moldavia. Evidently, the judgements handed down by Gypsy leaders within their communities were given in accordance of the unwritten rules of that population.

The second important duty of the Gypsy leader was the collection of taxes that the community as a whole or Gypsies individually owed to the State, the local authorities or in certain cases to the feudal master of the estate on which the band was staying. For fulfilling this task, the Gypsy leader was exempt from the payment of tax and other obligations. In this way, the Gypsy prince played the role of intermediary between the community and the authorities.

We can, therefore, see that the Gypsy band had its own internal autonomy. There were no significant differences between the three Romanian principalities in this respect.

Thus was the Gypsy community. In exceptional circumstances, two or more bands linked by ties of kinship or occupation might live together. However, there never existed an original master community of the Gypsies. From the beginning, there was no organisational structure of the Gypsies that included all Gypsies living on a region-wide or country-wide level. Organisational structures of this kind appeared later on. They were created by the State for fiscal reasons or in order to exert a more efficient control over the Gypsies. In Wallachia and Moldavia, several Gypsy bands living within a certain region and sharing the same occupation were placed under the authority of a Gypsy sheriff (*vătaf*). Together, the bands composed a Gypsy shire (*vătăşie*). The Gypsy sheriff was himself a Gypsy. From the eighteenth century he began to become known as the *bulucbaşa* or *bulibaşa*. The sheriff or *bulibaşa* was the head of a number of leaders from a particular region who also belonged to the same clan. As illustrated by a deed of 1753 issued to Iancul, he was appointed *bulucbaş* over the leaders of the princely *lingurar* Gypsies of lower Moldavia by the prince of the principality. The document makes reference to the functions of this particular sheriff: to watch over all the leaders and their bands and to round up and bring back, together with the band leaders, Gypsies who had wandered away from their bands and entered other bands, whether princely, boyar or monastery bands.¹¹⁹ The *vătaf* or *bulibaşa* collected tax, presided over disputes between bands or between Gypsies from different bands and sometimes even in disputes between members of the same band. The *vătaf* would also represent the Gypsies under his authority before the official responsible for the Gypsies and before the authorities. *Vătafi* and *bulibaşi* were exempt from the payment of tax and from other obligations to the State.

Such organisational structures were creations of the State. They were set up on a territorial and occupational basis and had nothing to do with the original social organisation of the Gypsies. With regard to the latter, it is possible that there may have existed some sort of tribal organisation of the Gypsies, but in the Romanian lands there is no evidence to confirm this. In any case, for Romologists, the extent to which a tribal organisation of the Gypsies actually existed is a question that remains unanswered.

In Wallachia and Moldavia, in parallel with the sheriffs, a network of officials was set up to monitor princely Gypsies from a particular region, all Gypsies belonging to a particular clan within the whole country or a part of them. In the first document attesting to their existence, from Wallachia from 1458, these officials were given the name *cnezi* of Gypsies.¹²⁰ Later on, these officials were known as sheriffs (*vătafi*) of Gypsies or *vornici* of Gypsies. At the beginning of the nineteenth century in Wallachia, they were known as *zapcii* of Gypsies and there were four of them appointed for the entire principality: one responsible for the counties west of the river Olt,

two for the counties east of the Olt and one responsible only for *aurari*.¹²¹ Their responsibilities were chiefly fiscal in nature. In order to fulfil their responsibilities, they collaborated with the Gypsy *bulibași* and leaders. They were not subordinate to the administrative authorities, because the authorities did not have responsibility for the Gypsies. There was, therefore, a doubling of the authorities at the level of Gypsy bands. Alongside the Gypsy leaders drawn from the ranks of the Gypsy communities, the authorities also appointed officials in charge of the administering state authority over this population. The latter were not Gypsies. Some were low-ranking boyars. They carried out a service for which they were paid out of a certain quota from the taxes gathered from the Gypsies. Confusion can appear because at the time both Gypsy leaders and the state officials in charge with problems related to the Gypsies were known as sheriffs (*vătafi*).

In Transylvania in the eighteenth century, there was a voivodeship of the Gypsies of the Făgăraș land. The prince of Transylvania, who had in its possession the Făgăraș estate, would appoint to this office a boyar from the region. That is how the situation appears in a deed of 1679, when Șerban Comșuț was appointed to this office; the prince was responsible for the organisation of the Gypsy labour force, the collection of taxes and other contributions and for the fining of lawbreakers.¹²²

A high official was responsible for the supervision of all princely slaves within a principality. In Wallachia, this function fell to the great *armaș*, while in Moldavia from the eighteenth century the function was appointed to the hetman (*hatman*). For this reason, princely Gypsies were also known as “the hetman’s Gypsies”. In the nineteenth century in Moldavia, the official responsible for the superior supervision of the Gypsies was given the title of *nazâr* or *epistat* over the princely Gypsies.¹²³

In Transylvania during the sixteenth century, in the period of the autonomous principality, the function of voivode of the Gypsies of all the country was established.¹²⁴ He was appointed by the prince from the ranks of the nobles of the principality. The first, succinct, reference to this function that has come down to us dates from 1541, when the general commander of Transylvania, Balthazar Bornemisza, confers the position of voivode of the Gypsies of all Transylvania to Mathias Nagy and Thomas of Aiud (Enyed).¹²⁵ There is also the grant with which Queen Isabella grants the voivodeship of the Gypsies to Gáspár Nagy and Franciscus Balásfi, two nobles with close links to the palace. This document, together with two other documents also from 1557 relating to the voivodeship of the Gypsies, enables us to learn something of the responsibilities of the voivodes. They had authority over all the Gypsies living in the country, while the leaders of the Gypsy bands were subordinate to them. They were responsible for the collection of the taxes the Gypsies owed to the State. They were equally

responsible for issuing and collecting fines. The two voivodes enjoyed complete freedom in the exercise of their duties. The leaders of towns, market towns and villages were ordered to give them their full co-operation, with those attempting to obstruct them liable for prosecution by the royal court.¹²⁶ In 1588, the Diet of Transylvania decided to abolish the office as a result of the abuses perpetrated by the holders of the office. Such abuses were also an annoyance to those nobles who had Gypsies under their authority. The tax that the Gypsies were required to pay to this leader of theirs was abolished together with the office itself. At the same time, it was decided that the masters of the Gypsies would be free to decide whether they would collect taxes from their Gypsy serfs or not, and that in cases where the boyars had many of this kind of serf, they were required to appoint a voivode to lead them.¹²⁷ Later on, the voivodeship of the Gypsies was re-established. The Diet of Transylvania returned to this office on a number of occasions during the seventeenth century. The functioning of the office was subject to strict regulation, as was that of the problem of the Gypsies as a whole.¹²⁸ The last voivode of the Gypsies was Peter Vallon, appointed by Prince György Rákóczi I.

The voivode of all Gypsies dealt with all problems concerning their relations with the State. The voivode's duties were predominantly fiscal in nature, as well as legal and administrative. In essence, we are dealing with the delegation of the sovereign's authority with respect to the Gypsies. The voivode was in fact an official charged with the administration of the Gypsies on a particular territory, in this case the principality of Transylvania. Such voivodes also existed in areas of Hungary that had not been occupied during this period by the Ottomans and that were then under the authority of the Habsburg Empire. In total there were four such voivodes; one had his seat in Satu Mare. This innovation existed not only in Transylvania and Hungary: it also existed in Poland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, where the leaders of the Gypsies, chosen by the authorities from among the nobility, were given the title of "king".¹²⁹ These voivodes of the Gypsies should not be confused with the Gypsy leaders who also bore the name of voivode.

This organisational structure did not exist for all privately owned Gypsies. It is known that there were bands of nomadic Gypsies (*lăieși, lingurari, aurari* etc.) who belonged to private owners and were led by their own heads (*juzi*). We can, therefore, presuppose that they would have been organised in the same manner as the bands of princely Gypsies. Some of these Gypsies had, however, settled into a sedentary lifestyle. In such cases, for a period there existed a certain form of communal living, with its own autonomous organisation. Especially on the estates of the monasteries there were numerous communities of slaves. Supervision of boyar and monastery slaves fell

under the authority of one of the master's stewards, as a rule known as the *jude* of the Gypsies. Here the prince's officials could not interfere. In Transylvania in the seventeenth century, we find voivodes of the Gypsies actually present on some feudal estates.¹³⁰ In such cases, we are of course dealing with Gypsy leaders settled on these estates as craftsmen or agricultural workers. Families of Gypsies separated from their band or even entire bands carried out certain services on some estates. To begin with, no relation of legal dependency existed for the Gypsies in relation to the feudal master. As they were royal serfs, their employment by a private landowner was carried out with the permission of the sovereign, as we earlier saw in the case of Sibiu in 1486. With time, however, the Gypsies became serfs of their respective master. Since the Gypsies remained a separate social and occupational group even after they had acquired their new social status, relations with their master were carried out via the intermediary of their leader, the voivode. It is for this reason that in Transylvania some sedentary Gypsies also had voivodes.

As we can easily observe, all the terminology used to refer to the leaders of the Gypsies has been borrowed from elsewhere. The Gypsyheads bore names acquired from other peoples, and not Indian names. *Jude* and *vătaf* are terms that belong to the administrative vocabulary of medieval Romania. "Voivode" (Romanian *voievod*) is a term of Slavonic origin, used, however, by the Romanians and the Hungarians. The Gypsies adopted this term in South-Eastern Europe, probably on Romanian territory. In Transylvania and Hungary, the leaders of the Gypsies were thus known from the beginning. The Gypsies who reached Central and Western Europe did not use it. In Wallachia and Moldavia, the leaders of the Gypsies were never known as voivodes. *Bulucbaşa* or *bulibaşa* is a Turkish term. Since in the Romanian principalities its sense was strictly reserved for that of the head of the Gypsies, we can presuppose that it originated from the Ottoman Empire together with the groups of Gypsies that used it in the Romanian lands for the first time (and this at a late stage) in the eighteenth century. However, this borrowed terminology covers a specific organisational structure of the Gypsies which, with some differences, we meet almost everywhere in the European countries where the Gypsies were present from the Middle Ages. The political powers of the different countries recognised this autonomous organisation of the Gypsies, regardless of the social status that they held there.

In Romanian historiography the opinion has been advanced that the organisation of the Gypsies presents indicators of the Romanians' nature of organisation during the period of crystallisation of the Romanian states.¹³¹ Certainly, the Gypsies adopted a great deal from the peoples alongside which they have lived, including the Romanians. However, when it is a question of the organisation of the Gypsies in the Romanian principalities, it does

not differ in essence from the situation among the Gypsies of Transylvania, Hungary, Poland or other states. The Gypsies had nothing to do with the political organisation of the Romanians in the period prior to the formation of the principalities. When the Gypsies arrived in the area north of the Danube, the principalities had already become a fact of history. The Gypsies arrived on Romanian soil with their own form of organisation, which was tolerated by the political authorities, which incorporated it into the fiscal and administrative system already present in the country.

8. THE SITUATION OF THE GYPSIES IN THE ROMANIAN LANDS AND IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES—A PARALLEL

In the previous sub-chapters, we have examined the legal status and economic and social condition of the Gypsies in the Romanian lands during the Middle Ages. To what extent, however, do these realities correspond to the history of the Gypsies in other countries of Europe during the same period? In these considerations the slavery of the Gypsies, the nomadism of the majority of them, the economic functions they fulfilled, their relations with autochthonous populations and the social evolutions they experienced can be included. Such aspects are characteristic of several centuries of the history of this population in the Romanian lands, and which may or may not have reoccurred in other European countries.

From the beginning of the fourteenth century until the first part of the fifteenth century, the Gypsies who had left the Byzantine Empire scattered in all directions, reaching virtually all the countries of Europe. Groups of Gypsies have managed to live in various countries, each beginning a separate chapter in the history of the Gypsies. Once the Gypsies leave the Balkans, we in fact are no longer dealing with a single history of the Gypsies, but rather many histories of Gypsies, based around countries and possibly around larger geographical areas. What unites all these histories is the Gypsies' extraordinary ability to conserve their cultural identity and their obstinate refusal to adapt to the values of European civilisation and to give in to assimilation. It is in this respect alone that historians believe it possible to speak of a single history of the Gypsies in the medieval and modern eras.

From the beginning it is necessary to state that the Gypsies' status as slaves marks out their history in Romania from the general history of this population.

Slavery existed throughout Europe in the Middle Ages, especially in the countries bordering the Mediterranean and Black Sea basins, but also in other countries. Legal documents from these countries and the history of trade in the Mediterranean are full of information regarding this social reali-

ty. However, generally speaking it was confined to the early Middle Ages. In the Byzantine Empire, where there was continuity from ancient times with regard to slavery, the institution acquired a minor, domestic role, leading to its eventual disappearance.¹³² In medieval Hungary, the institution of slavery, which affected certain populations of oriental or non-Christian origin, disappeared in the thirteenth century.¹³³ In Russia, where in the time of the Kievan Rus slavery was an institution that affected relatively large numbers of people and which was strictly regulated, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the *holops* were gradually freed and transformed into serfs.¹³⁴ In the fifteenth century, domestic slaves more or less disappeared from the countries of Southern Europe (Italy, France, Spain) where they had previously been present. Trade in slaves originating from the east of the Mediterranean basin and from the Black Sea basin was no longer practised in the Christian countries.¹³⁵ In all of these countries, as well as in other European countries, for as long as it existed, medieval slavery was domestic in nature. The use of slaves in production was extremely limited. To a large extent, slavery was dependent on wars, on the capture of non-Christian slaves, on piracy and on slave trading from the Mediterranean basin. At a time when medieval slavery was disappearing from Western Europe and Russia, the slavery of this population of Indian origin arriving from the Balkan Peninsula was being established in the Romanian lands. In the countries of Central and Western Europe, the Gypsies never experienced slavery.

Why did this difference of social and legal status occur? Slavery in the Romanian principalities did not exist as a result, as has been claimed, of the "heavy dependence of the Romanian principalities on the East, where slavery was even more widespread".¹³⁶ It is true that for centuries the history of the principalities was linked to the Ottoman Empire. However, even if there were slaves in the Ottoman Empire,¹³⁷ living under a regime similar to that in the north of the Danube, the social regime in the Romanian principalities had nothing to do with the East. Romanian feudalism was European in nature, with certain characteristics common to the area of South-Eastern Europe. In the case of the slavery of the Gypsies, there is no question of the adoption of some Eastern institution. This is confirmed when one considers that slavery existed in the principalities before any contacts were made with the Ottoman Empire.

As we have seen, the appearance of slavery in the Romanian principalities can be explained by the way in which the Romanians to the south and east of the Carpathians replaced the Tatar domination that had ruled there after 1241. The creation of the Romanian states was the result of a series of battles that applied the rule, at that time in general use in Eastern Europe, according to which prisoners of war were to be enslaved. The Gypsies that arrived in the Romanian principalities from the south of the Danube, added

weight to the institution of slavery. Slavery formed part of the social system of the Romanian principalities, undergoing certain modifications over time before being abolished in the nineteenth century.

It is worth bearing in mind that the Gypsies were also enslaved in other countries in South-Eastern Europe. Neither in the Byzantine Empire nor the Ottoman Empire were the Gypsies a free people: there the Gypsies were in a situation similar to that of the princely slaves in the Romanian principalities.¹³⁸ The regime of obligations and the legal status imposed on the Gypsies of Corfu in the fifteenth century during Venetian rule—as they appear in a decree of 1470—amounted, formally speaking, to a regime of serfdom.¹³⁹ However, the regime was also very close to the regime of slavery, as it existed in the Romanian principalities. The presence of the Gypsies in Corfu is attested to from the second half of the fourteenth century, before the island fell into the hands of the Venetians (1386), and it is certain that the Gypsies had arrived there earlier. In the case of Corfu, we are very likely to be dealing with state slaves from the Byzantine period organised into a fief (*feudum acinganorum*) by the Venetians. The situation of the Gypsies in 1470 was in fact a continuation of the status imposed on them in the Byzantine era. The Gypsies were also enslaved in the medieval states of Bulgaria and Serbia. Direct documentary evidence of this is lacking due to the political history of the region at the time, but we can presuppose that the status imposed on the Gypsies in these countries was similar to that in the Romanian principalities. Following the disappearance of the Christian states to the south of the Danube, the Romanian principalities remained the only countries in Europe where the Gypsies were enslaved.

When the first Gypsies appeared in the Romanian principalities in the second half of the fourteenth century, the political conditions of the time (namely the battles with the Tatars and the Ottomans) meant that the sense of confrontation between Christians and non-Christians, between the sedentary Romanian population and the foreign nomads, was still fresh. Due to their characteristics, their way of life and their organisation into bands, the Gypsies were regarded as enemies and enslaved.

Contact between the peoples of Central and Western Europe and the Gypsies had a different character. Here the Gypsies were not identified as enemies. During the Gypsies' first penetration into Western Europe, which took place in the years 1416–19, interest and tolerance was even shown to them.¹⁴⁰ Consequently, there was no question of enslaving these Gypsies. The main reason why these countries did not seek to enslave the nomadic Gypsies was that at the beginning of the fifteenth century when the Gypsies first appeared, social structures in Western Europe had already been well established, with slavery absent from these structures, even slavery of a patriarchal nature, which admittedly existed there until the start of the sec-

ond millennium. Only in the Mediterranean countries was this kind of slavery maintained for a time, but at a more or less insignificant level.

Even if slavery did not exist as an institution, when the peoples of Western Europe realised that the bands of nomadic Gypsies made a living from fortune telling, sorcery, theft etc., measures were soon taken against the new arrivals. The history of the Gypsies in Central and Western Europe was until the eighteenth century an endless series of persecutions, expulsions, deportations, pogroms etc. The population was constantly hostile towards the Gypsies, while in many places public authorities had an overtly anti-Gypsy policy.¹⁴¹ The situation that the documents of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) indicate is quite unique. Here, in the fifteenth century, the inhabitants of Ragusa treated Gypsies who practiced various trades or who were engaged in commerce as equals. There was no prejudice and no persecution of them.¹⁴² This case was, however, exceptional. In the West, the Gypsies never found their place in society. They remained always outside society, regarded as a foreign element. The situation that existed in the Romanian principalities, in which the Gypsies were accepted as part of the social structure as a servile and inferior class and occupied a position, however marginal, in the economy, did not exist in the West. Consequently, even if the Gypsies, who represented the bottom rung of society, were treated with disdain, measures were never taken against them along the lines of those taken in the West.

Why did this difference in the treatment of the Gypsies exist? It is possible that the answer lies in the different stages of development that existed in the Romanian principalities in comparison to the countries of Central and Western Europe. In the Romanian principalities, the quasi-agrarian nature of the economy and the small number of craftsmen either of local origin or originating from neighbouring countries meant that Gypsy blacksmiths and those practising other crafts were able to find a place in society, being in demand both by the owners of the great estates and by the agrarian population. Furthermore, the sparseness of the population made it possible for groups of Gypsies seeking to earn an existence to practise a limited and controlled form of nomadism. In Central and Western Europe, however, the situation was completely different. In the economic and social system in place in those countries there was no room for populations who did not lead a sedentary lifestyle. Crafts were strictly organised into guilds of closed nature, while production was monopolistic in character and was subject to the power of cartels. Access to this system for foreign craftsmen was completely out of the question. The Gypsies, with their professions and the rudimentary goods that they produced had no place within such a system. Consequently, in the West, the Gypsies did not work as craftsmen; instead they forced to orientate themselves towards marginal occupations such as rearing

horses and performing music, or to make a living from fortune telling, counterfeiting money, theft etc. Already by the mid-fifteenth century they were regarded as a burden on the local population. They were forbidden access to towns and villages, they were driven out of some areas and other measures were taken against them. For the peoples of Western Europe the Gypsies were an unwanted group and were treated as such.¹⁴³

The process by which some of the Gypsies living as slaves on the estates of the boyars and monasteries in Moldavia and Wallachia, as well as Transylvania, settled into a sedentary way of life was repeated in corresponding forms in other parts of Europe. Already in the fourteenth century there were sedentary Gypsies living in villages in the Byzantine Empire, married to Greek women and more or less converted to Christianity, thereby separated definitively from their original communities.¹⁴⁴ In the second half of the fourteenth century and the first half of the following century, there are a number of descriptions that attest to the existence of sedentary Gypsies settled in the Peloponnese, the western part of continental Greece and the Ionian islands.¹⁴⁵

The process of sedentarisation was on a larger scale in Moldavia and Wallachia compared to neighbouring countries. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the vast majority of the Gypsies were tied to agriculture, so that at the time of emancipation, only certain groups of Gypsies, especially those belonging to the State, still practised nomadism. The process of sedentarisation was a natural one, but one that had more important consequences than the policy of forced assimilation practised in Hungary, Transylvania and the Banat in the second half of the eighteenth century by Empress Maria Theresa and Emperor Joseph II.¹⁴⁶ The more open nature of Romanian society, where in spite of slavery, social barriers could be more easily overcome, also contributed to this phenomenon. As there were Gypsies who managed to liberate themselves from slavery to become freemen, so there were also Romanians from the ranks of the bounded peasantry who, through inter-marriage with Gypsies, became slaves.

9. THE POLICY OF SEDENTARISATION AND ASSIMILATION OF THE GYPSIES PROMOTED BY THE HABSBURG AUTHORITIES IN TRANSYLVANIA

The second half of the eighteenth century in Transylvania was for the Gypsies the time of the first concerted effort to convert them to a sedentary lifestyle. As a result of the major political changes that occurred in the middle Danube basin at the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Habsburg Empire established its authority in Tran-

sylvania in 1688 and in the Banat in 1718. Habsburg rule over these two provinces, as for Hungary and the other territories that for one or two centuries had been under the direct or indirect rule of the Ottoman Empire, resulted in social and institutional modernisation. Aside from the preservation of certain provincial particularities, major transformations were wrought, in accordance with the spirit of the time and the House of Habsburg's interest in increasing the fiscal and military capacity of the Empire. The reigns of Empress Maria Theresa (1740–80) and her son, Emperor Joseph II (1780–90), were particularly marked by a major intervention on the part of the State in the social organisation of the provinces. This was the era of enlightened despotism. The directed reformism of the Habsburgs targeted every aspect of social organisation. Regulation of the status of the bounded peasantry, institutional modernisation, religious tolerance and commercial and population policies were just some of the aspects of the reformist policy of the Habsburgs.

The Gypsies, who were relatively many in number in the eastern countries and provinces of the Habsburg Empire, for a long time remained outside the great socio-economic transformations that the Empire was undergoing. They continued to live as they had done in previous times. There were many Gypsies concentrated in particular within the Kingdom of Hungary (which at that time included the western regions of present day Romania) and the Great Principality of Transylvania. A list of the number of families according to their tax status from 1772 in the Great Principality of Transylvania recorded 3769 families of settled Gypsies and 3949 families of nomadic Gypsies.¹⁴⁷ This gives a total number of families of 7718, which, if we estimate that there were an average of five persons per family, gives us a total of 38,590 Gypsies. If we compare the number of families of Gypsies to the total number of families registered in Transylvania at the time (302,986), it can be concluded that the Gypsies accounted for 2.55 per cent of the population of the principality. The conscription of the population in the principality of Transylvania of 1776 records 3562 families of settled Gypsies and 3867 families of nomadic Gypsies, giving a total of 7429 families.¹⁴⁸ Compared to the 271,852 families in total living in Transylvania, the Gypsies accounted for 2.73 per cent of the principality's population. In the Banat, according to figures provided by Francesco Grisellini in 1780, in the cameral districts there were 5272 Gypsies, while in the military districts in the south-east of the province, there were approximately 2800, meaning that in the whole of the Banat there were approximately 8072 Gypsies. The cameral districts had a total population of 317,928, while the total population of the Banat was approximately 450,000.¹⁴⁹ This meant that the Gypsies accounted for 1.6 per cent of the population of the Banat. Aside from the differences regarding the status of the Gypsies from place to place, the rev-

enues a Gypsy generated for the State were generally speaking of a limited nature; in any case, smaller than those generated by a serf or a craftsman. Nor were they a source of soldiers. On the other hand, the Gypsies created problems for the authorities due to the nomadic lifestyle led by many of them and the crimes that they committed. It was in these circumstances that the Habsburg authorities sought to integrate this population into the social structure of the country.

In previous centuries and even in the first half of the eighteenth century until the reign of Maria Theresa, the authorities paid little attention to the sedentarisation of the Gypsies. It is true that over time some Gypsies settled on the edges of towns or on certain nobles' estates. However, only a part of the Gypsy population was affected by sedentarisation and in most cases, it did not mean complete integration into the economic and social life of the respective communities. The authorities showed no intention to integrate either these relatively settled Gypsies or those Gypsies leading a nomadic lifestyle under certain privileges accorded to them in ancient times. The authorities' interest in the Gypsies was strictly fiscal, and following the establishment of Habsburg rule in Transylvania and in other Romanian provinces on the other side of the mountains the Gypsies make frequent appearances in official documents. For example, there are instances of tax records at the level of the principality of Transylvania and the Kingdom of Hungary respectively, where Gypsies are registered under separate headings as well as tax records at the level of counties and other administrative units or towns, which record Gypsies together with their obligations, or even the amount of tax paid by them, particularly the gold-washers from the principality or the Banat.

After the middle of the eighteenth century, this strictly tax-related interest in the Gypsies changed. A general and all-encompassing settlement of the problem of the Gypsies was undertaken during the reigns of Empress Maria Theresa and her son, Emperor Joseph II. A number of measures were adopted in succession with regard to the Gypsies; these were gradual in nature, indicating that we are dealing here with a clear policy elaborated by the Viennese Court in relation to this population.¹⁵⁰ Maria Theresa issued four decrees relating to the sedentarisation and assimilation of the Gypsies.¹⁵¹ In 1758, she decreed that the Gypsies would be tied to one place and who would be required to pay taxes to the State and would be subject to a regime of obligations to their feudal masters; they would no longer be allowed to own horses and carts and would require special permission in order to leave the village in which they were settled. In 1761, the name "Gypsy" was replaced by decree with the name "new peasants" (*neo-rustici*, *Neubauer*) or "new Hungarians" (*újmagyarok*); according to the terms of the same deed, young Gypsies over the age of sixteen would be required to perform mili-

tary service. The decree of 1767 abolished the jurisdiction of the voivode of the Gypsies, with the population now placed under the jurisdiction of the regular authorities; the use of Romanes was banned, as was the wearing of clothing and the practice of occupations specific to the Gypsies. In 1773, marriages between Gypsies were forbidden, while mixed marriages (with non-Gypsies) were strictly controlled. Gypsy children over the age of five were to be taken away from their families and raised by non-Gypsy families. These decrees and orders issued by Maria Theresa were targeted at the Gypsies from the Kingdom of Hungary, which at that time included western regions of present-day Romania. The administrative authorities also took them up at a county level. The measures issued by the Empress were not applied to the principality of Transylvania.

Emperor Joseph II, who continued the policy of his mother with regard to the Gypsies, extended the measures introduced by her to cover Transylvania as well. On 12 September 1782, he gave an order regarding the Gypsies of the principality of Transylvania, known as the *De Regulatione Zingarorum*.¹⁵² This order contained the following requirements:

- Gypsy children were to be sent to school;
- they were no longer to be unclothed;
- children of different sexes were to sleep separately;
- Gypsies were to attend church on Sundays and public holidays; they were to follow the advice of priests; they were to follow the customs of the place where they lived with regard to what they ate, how they dressed and the language they spoke;
- they were no longer to wear coats in which they could conceal stolen items;
- no Gypsy was allowed to own a horse, with the exception of gold-washers;
- the latter category of Gypsies were not permitted to trade in horses; village authorities were not to allow Gypsies to laze about;
- Gypsies were required to work in agriculture;
- where possible, the landowners who received Gypsies on their land were to provide them with a parcel of land, while anyone who refused to work the land was to be punished;
- Gypsies would be allowed to perform music only when there was no work to be done in the fields.

On 9 October 1783, Joseph II published the *Hauptregulatio*, a decree consisting of fifty-nine points regulating the status of the Gypsies in Hungary and Transylvania in all its aspects.¹⁵³ This deed is a synthesis of all the previous measures adopted with regard to the Gypsies under the Habsburg

monarchy. However, the regulations issued by the Emperor went even further. The following is a comprehensive tableau of the Habsburgs' programme for the Gypsies in the second half of the eighteenth century:

- Gypsies were forbidden to live in tents;
- Gypsies previously under the authority of their voivode would from now on be under the authority of the village sheriff;
- Gypsy children of four years and over were to be shared out among neighbouring settlements, at least every other year;
- nomadism was forbidden, and Gypsies already leading a sedentary way of life were permitted to go to market in another area only in cases of necessity and with special authorisation;
- Gypsies were forbidden to own horses with the intention of selling them; Gypsy serfs were allowed to own horses, but only for use in agricultural work and they were not allowed to trade in them;
- Gypsies were obliged to adopt the costume and language of the inhabitants of the village in which they are settled;
- use of the Romanes was punishable by twenty-four lashes with a bat;
- the same punishment would be applied to those found eating carcasses;
- Gypsies were forbidden to change their names;
- Gypsy houses were required to be numbered;
- marriage between Gypsies was forbidden;
- the local legal authorities would supply monthly reports on the way of life of Gypsies living in their district;
- the number of Gypsy musicians had to be kept to the strictest minimum;
- begging was forbidden;
- it is compulsory for Gypsy children to attend school, with the priest responsible for ensuring their attendance;
- landowners were required to make a parcel of land available to Gypsies in order to ensure their adoption of a sedentary way of life and an agricultural occupation;
- anyone who abandoned their residence or occupation will be treated as a vagrant and returned to their residence.

It can clearly be seen that the decrees and orders issued by the Habsburg emperors, as well as the measures taken on a local scale, constitute a carefully drawn-up policy that addresses every element of the Gypsy problem. It is difficult to estimate the effects of the policy following its introduction. Under the conditions of the autonomy and given the major differences from province to province within the Empire, decrees were as a rule applied either partially or even not at all. Only in certain places did the local author-

ities treat these instructions with utmost seriousness. It is reckoned that only on the western border of Hungary (today Burgenland, in Austria) did the measures taken by the local authorities match up more or less to the demands of the imperial decrees. However, there is no doubt that a part of the Gypsy population was settled into a sedentary way of life and tied to agricultural occupations. Contemporary sources note the existence of this rural population of “new peasants”, “new Hungarians” (in Hungary) or “new Banatians” (in the Banat). The 1780–83 census of the Gypsies living in the Kingdom of Hungary (together with Croatia–Slavonia), which did not include Transylvania proper, just happens to capture the moment when the policy of the Habsburgs with regard to the Gypsies was being put into practice.¹⁵⁴ The number of the Gypsies recorded in 1780 was 43,609; in 1781—38,312; in 1782—43,772 and in 1783—30,241. The fact that in 1783 13,531 fewer Gypsies are recorded in comparison to the previous year is due to Gypsies no longer being registered as such but instead as sedentary “new peasants”. These changes in the figures reflect the process of sedentarisation of the Gypsies. The number of Gypsies that the census recorded in the counties and towns illustrates the scale of measures undertaken in this respect by the respective administrative units. In some counties the number of Gypsies fell, while in others it increased. If we examine some of the counties inhabited mainly by Romanians, we find that in Bihor the number of Gypsies fell during the period 1780–83 from 2289 to 1906; in Caraș, the number of Gypsies fell by 1008 in the space of a single year (1782–83); in the county of Arad, this number increased from 1135 to 1255; in Maramureș the number of Gypsies recorded fluctuated over the years 1780–82 from 446 to 903 and back to 717. Aside from the migration from one part of the country to another undertaken by the Gypsies during this period, the statistics of the census reflect the manner in which the measures ordered by Maria Theresa and Joseph II were applied from place to place. From this it follows that the process of sedentarisation did not take place on a large scale. Furthermore, in the following period, the “successes” of this time were lost, with some of the “new peasants” returning to their old way of life.

The census of 1780–83 offers us a comprehensive tableau of the Gypsy population. It recorded all the elements that had a bearing on the policy of Vienna with regard to the Gypsies. Consequently, aside from general demographic data, the statistics reproduce for us the number of Gypsies living in houses and the numbers living in huts; the numbers of Gypsies with and without a fixed residence; among sedentary Gypsies, the number who owned a plot of land or part of it; those who wore normal dress (that is, similar to the locals) and those who wore traditional Gypsy costume. The census also tells us the distribution of occupations among the Gypsies: musicians, blacksmiths, other craftsmen, beggars; it tells us about those who obeyed the local

legal authorities and those who did not; those who ate dead animal carcasses and those who did not; those who engaged in horse trading and those who did not, as well as the total fiscal obligations of the Gypsies. Special attention was paid in the census to the Gypsies' children. It recorded by sex the number of children living with their parents and those who were taken from their parents and entrusted to other persons, the number of children who went to school and the professions for which they were trained.

If we consider the data produced by the census of the Gypsies living in Hungary in 1780–83 as well as data from other official documents and contemporary testimonies, we can appreciate that the policy adopted with regard to the Gypsies did not lead to the desired effect. One explanation for this outcome might be that the policy was promoted at the highest level for too short a period. After the death of Joseph II, the Gypsies no longer represented a preoccupation of the Imperial Court. The three decades in which a concrete policy was applied to the problem of the Gypsies were not able to alter the destiny of a population that was both relatively numerous and in possession of a powerful sense of individuality. We believe that the causes of the policy's extremely limited success lay principally in the fact that society was at that time not prepared to fully integrate the Gypsy population. Neither the nobility nor the local population were interested in the sedentarisation and assimilation of the Gypsies. Nobles had no interest in this because they were required to provide land for the newly sedentary Gypsies and to pay for the schooling of their children. The peasantry had no interest in the policy because the introduction of Gypsies onto the estates where they worked would have created extra pressure on them, as the parcels of lands that they worked barely enabled them to live as it was.¹⁵⁵ As with other reforms introduced by the two emperors (especially those of Joseph II), imperial policy with regard to the Gypsies came up against hostility from the privileged classes, particularly from the nobility. Proof of this state of affairs is provided by the fact that after the death of Joseph II, the policy with regard to the Gypsies was abandoned, as was the case with other measures introduced by the reform-minded emperor. For a long time, the Imperial Court produced no new legislation with regard to the Gypsies.

Another explanation for this state of affairs lies with the characteristics of the Gypsy population itself. Contemporary observers remarked on the difficulties faced by those who tried to implement the measures ordered by the Empire. When Gypsies were received on a noble's estate, efforts to accustom them with agricultural work and with an orderly way of life as a rule failed to produce the desired results: the Gypsies refused to occupy the houses put at their disposal, preferring to live in huts; they refused to wear the same clothes as the other villagers etc.¹⁵⁶ The policy of the Habsburgs aimed at more than just converting the Gypsies to a sedentary way of life

and their integration into agricultural occupations; it aimed to assimilate the Gypsies, to erase their identity. The measures taken against the Gypsies were not, of course, conceived as measures based on ethnicity and race: rather, the Gypsies were treated as an asocial minority that ought to disappear. Perhaps this is what caused the Gypsies to demonstrate their powers of resistance, refusing to accept the extinguishing of their identity. The successes of the policy were limited and, to a certain extent, of a short duration. After 1790, some sedentarised Gypsies abandoned the houses and villages in which they had been settled and went back to their tents and huts or even to a nomadic existence. Children who had been removed from their families returned to their parents. Marriages among the Gypsies continued to take place, even in places where the ban on such marriages remained in force, evidently without any legal problems arising.¹⁵⁷ In the Banat, the policy of sedentarisation was more successful than in other areas. In this province, which in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the most representative for the population policy of the Habsburgs, the authorities were greatly concerned with applying the measures stipulated in imperial decrees and orders. Although up until the reign of Maria Theresa almost all the Gypsies had been nomadic, already by the reign of Joseph II the majority of the Gypsies living in the province were sedentary. In the documents of the time they are the so-called *Neubanater* (new Banatians). According to the locality in which they settled, the Gypsies either adopted Romanian, German, Serbian or Hungarian as their native language. In the census of 1784, in Timișoara there were fifty Gypsy families, of which thirty were “German”. Out of the total number of Gypsies, thirty-six worked as musicians; out of these, thirty were “Germans”.¹⁵⁸ In the Banat, only the gold-washers maintained a nomadic way of life for a time, but their freedom of movement was increasingly restricted. From the beginning of the nineteenth century, Gypsies from this category were also sedentarised, the majority of them in the military districts, that is, in the mountain villages in the south-east of the province.

In Transylvania, the settlement ordered by Joseph II in 1783 was only partially implemented. Here, the status of the Gypsies came under the attributes of the Diet of the principality. A preoccupation with regard to the Gypsies on the part of the authorities in the principality dates from an earlier date: as early as 1747, the Diet had ordered that Gypsies who had fled their feudal masters were to be gathered and settled in a particular location. In 1791, the Diet renewed these measures.¹⁵⁹ From a fiscal point of view, there were three categories of Gypsies living in Transylvania:

1. *Fiscal Gypsy gold-washers*. These were authorised to engage in the collection of gold from riverbeds. Mining offices supervised the activity of these Gypsies, who were also under the jurisdiction of the offices. The

occupation of such Gypsies was seasonal and they were nomadic. In 1781, 1291 families of gold-washing Gypsies were recorded. The revenues they generated for the State were relatively large.

2. *Fiscal taxed Gypsies.* These Gypsies were so called because they paid an annual tax to the Treasury. They led a nomadic existence. They were organised into bands led by a voivode. In 1781, 1239 tents were recorded as well as twenty-six voivodes. The cameral tax was 933 florins and 8.5 kreuzers.

3. *Gypsies attached to the leading landowners and the towns.* These were serfs or landless peasants tied to nobles' estates, where they were chiefly employed as craftsmen, or they were living in relations of servitude to towns for whom they were required to carry out certain tasks. In the census of 1781, 12,686 heads of Gypsy families were recorded, together with their wives, giving a total of 35,539 people living in this state. A total of 8598 families had fixed dwellings, while 4088 were nomads, 10,947 were serfs, while 1739 were landless peasants.

The situation of these Gypsies, together with all the data mentioned above, was contained in a report produced in the year 1794, entitled *Opinio. De domicilitatione et de regulatione Zingarorum*.¹⁶⁰ The report makes note of all Transylvanian legislation regarding the Gypsies starting with the year 1747 and in the spirit of this legislation and of imperial policy, presents the appropriate means of achieving the sedentarisation and assimilation of the Gypsies. As the structure of the Gypsy population in Transylvania was different from that of Hungary, the solutions to which this material refers, even if they are essentially the same, are appropriate to the realities in Transylvania. Pressure for the sedentarisation of the Gypsies, particularly the taxed Gypsies, was greater in Transylvania, which explains why at this time, in earlier periods and in the nineteenth century we come across the migration of the groups of the tent-dwelling Gypsies from Transylvania into the Hungarian *puszta*, an area more suitable to a nomadic way of life.¹⁶¹

The measures ordered by Maria Theresa and Joseph II gave impetus to the process of sedentarisation of the Gypsies in Transylvania, the Banat and in the west of present-day Romania, as in Hungary and on territories constituting present-day Slovakia. Even though it is necessary to recognise that there were cases of sedentarisation and assimilation of the Gypsies prior to this time, such cases were isolated and did not determine a major change in the way of life of the majority of the population. Only in the second half of the eighteenth century can we speak of a large-scale process in this sense, which affected the Gypsy population at large. Now the Gypsies were given permission to build fixed dwellings and to own land, rights previously denied to them. Over a few decades, the majority of the Gypsies moved to a sedentary way of life. They settled in villages, working as farmers or craftsmen

(especially blacksmiths). Their status underwent a fundamental change: from being members of a tolerated socio-ethnic group, they became inhabitants of the country, with a social and fiscal status identical to the other people living in the locality where they settled. In this way, they were integrated into society, even though they preserved, either as individuals or as a subgroup, certain distinctive features. Linguistic and ethnic assimilation did not take place necessarily, and when it did occur, it was the result of evolutions spread over two to three generations. From the end of the nineteenth century, the nomadic Gypsies became the minority. The proportion of nomadic Gypsies fell from generation to generation. Of course, it cannot be said that this process was a creation of the legislation introduced with regard to the Gypsies during the reigns of Maria Theresa and Joseph II. It is first of all the result of the natural evolution of society in this part of Europe, which, together with the reforms introduced in the middle and second half of the eighteenth century, offered fewer and fewer opportunities for the practice of a nomadic way of life. The assimilation policy promoted by the two monarchs with regard to the Gypsies belongs within this trend. It had the advantage of intensifying a natural process and leading it in the direction of the Habsburg population policy.

NOTES

¹ See below pp. 42–43.

² N. Iorga, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

³ Al. Gonța, *op. cit.*, p. 313ff.

⁴ N. Beldiceanu, Irène Beldiceanu-Steinherr, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

⁵ See Al. Gonța, *op. cit.*, pp. 307–311, with the references in the notes.

⁶ B. D. Grekov, *Țăranii în Rusia* (translation), Bucharest, 1952, pp. 151–153.

⁷ See Al. Eck, “Les non-libres dans la Russie de Moyen-Age”, *Revue historique de droit français et étranger*, 1930, pp. 26–59.

⁸ See Helga Köpstein, *Zur Sklaverei im ausgehenden Byzanz*, Berlin, 1966 (with bibliography).

⁹ Ilse Rochow, K.–P. Matschke, *op. cit.*, pp. 243–246.

¹⁰ P. N. Panaitescu, *Le Rôle économique et social des Tziganes au Moyen Age en Valachie et en Moldavie*, in *XVII-e Congrès International d'Anthropologie et d'Archéologie Préhistorique. VII-e Session de l'Institut International d'Anthropologie. Bucarest, 1–8 Septembre 1937*, Bucharest, 1939, pp. 933–942; *idem*, “The Gypsies in Wallachia and Moldavia. A Chapter of Economic History”, *JGLS* (3), 15 (1941), pp. 58–72.

- ¹¹ This problem is dealt with by G. Potra, “Despre țigani domnești, mănăstirești și boierești”, *Revista Istorică Română*, V–VI (1935–1936), pp. 295–320; *idem*, *Contribuțiuni*, pp. 26–65; N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, (I), pp. 40–70.
- ¹² Examples in N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
- ¹³ See for example the complaint made in 1753 by a number of princely slaves in Moldavia awarded to the Metropolitanate: “Ioan Neculce”. *Buletinul Muzeului Municipal Iași*, fasc. 2 (1922), p. 308.
- ¹⁴ N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, pp. 45–46.
- ¹⁵ *DRH*, A, I, pp. 124–126.
- ¹⁶ N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, pp. 48–49.
- ¹⁷ *DRH*, B, I, pp. 25–28 (from the year 1388).
- ¹⁸ See below, pp. 57–58.
- ¹⁹ N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, pp. 50–51.
- ²⁰ G. Potra, “Despre țigani domnești”, pp. 317–319; Olga Cicanci, “Aspecte din viața robilor de la mănăstirea Secul în veacurile XVII–XVIII”, *Studii și articole de istorie*, X (1967), pp. 158–160.
- ²¹ N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, pp. 59–70.
- ²² M. Kogălniceanu, *Esquisse sur l'histoire, les mœurs et la langue des Cigains*, Berlin, 1837; reproduced in *Opere*, vol. I, ed. A. Oțetea, Bucharest, 1946, pp. 572–574. (Future citations will refer to this edition.)
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 575.
- ²⁴ G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni*, pp. 62–65.
- ²⁵ Works specially devoted to the institution of slavery in the Romanian territories: I. Peretz, *Robia* (lithographed course), Bucharest, 1934; B. Th. Scurtulencu, *Situația juridico-economică a țiganilor în principatele române*, Iași, [1938]; N. Grigoraș, “Robia în Moldova (De la întemeierea statului până la mijlocul secolului al XVIII-lea)”, *Anuarul Institutului de istorie și arheologie “A. D. Xenopol”*, Iași, IV (1967), pp. 31–79 (I); V (1968), pp. 43–85 (II). See also V. Costăchel, P. P. Panaitescu, A. Cazacu, *Viața feudală în Țara Românească și Moldova (sec. XIV–XVII)*, Bucharest, 1957, pp. 143–164.
- ²⁶ For a treatment of this problem, see I. R. Mircea, “Termenii rob, șerb și holop în documentele slave și române”, *Studii și cercetări științifice*, Iași, I (1950), pp. 856–873.
- ²⁷ *DRH*, A, I, p. 367.
- ²⁸ *DRH*, A, II, pp. 239–241.
- ²⁹ I. R. Mircea, *op. cit.*, pp. 860–862.
- ³⁰ N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, (I), pp. 67–70; *Istoria dreptului românesc*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1980, pp. 486–489.
- ³¹ *DRH*, A, II, pp. 239–241.
- ³² N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, (II), p. 43.
- ³³ For the old legislation with regard to slaves used in the Romanian principalities, see I. Peretz, *Curs de istoria dreptului român*, vol. II, part I, Bucharest, 1928, pp. 187–440.
- ³⁴ For their content, *ibid.*, pp. 315–440; J. Peretz, *Robia*, pp. 83–119.

- ³⁵ *DRH*, A, I, p. 23 (31 October 1402, Moldavia); *DRH*, B, I, pp. 201–202 (5 March 1458, Wallachia).
- * *Desetină de stupi*, *goșină de mascuri* and *mucarer* were all taxes that those subject to tax were required to pay to the State. *Cai de olac* (post horses) were horses that villages situated on major roads were obliged to make available to officials so that the latter could continue their journey at maximum speed. *Podvoadă* or *cărătură* was the obligation of transport to be provided to the crown. An explication of these obligations can be found in *Instituții feudale din țările române. Dicționar*, Bucharest, 1988.
- ³⁶ N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, (I), pp. 70–76.
- ³⁷ See G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni*, pp. 69–71; N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, pp. 73–74.
- ³⁸ See below pp. 61–62.
- ³⁹ N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, (II), pp. 43–52; *Istoria dreptului românesc, loc. cit.*
- ⁴⁰ *Carte românească de învățătură. Ediție critică*, Bucharest, 1961, p. 68.
- ⁴¹ For the problem of the marriage of slaves see B. Th. Scurtulencu, *op. cit.*, pp. 19–26; N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, pp. 70–75; Gh. T. Ionescu, “O anaforă din domnia lui Constantin Hangerli privind un interesant caz de eliberare de robie prin căsătorie”, *Analele Universității București*, ser. Științe sociale, Istorie, XVII (1968), pp. 155–168.
- ⁴² N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, (I), pp. 45–46.
- ⁴³ Gh. I. Brătianu, “Două veacuri de la reforma lui Constantin Mavrocordat 1746–1946”, *Analele Academiei Române, Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice*, s. III, t. XXIX (1946–1947), p. 450.
- ⁴⁴ T. Codrescu, *Uricariul*, vol. I, 2nd ed., Iași, 1871, pp. 320–327.
- ⁴⁵ N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, pp. 64–66.
- ⁴⁶ Gh. I. Brătianu, *loc. cit.*
- ⁴⁷ I. Peretz, *Curs de istoria dreptului român*, vol. IV, *Hrisoavele domnești*, Bucharest, 1931, pp. 47–54.
- ⁴⁸ B. Th. Scurtulencu, *op. cit.*, pp. 25–26.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 24–25.
- ⁵⁰ For free Gypsies, see G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni*, pp. 43–44, 59–62; N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, (I), pp. 36–38, 76–77; (II), pp. 76–80.
- ⁵¹ See A. D. Xenopol, *Istoria românilor din Dacia traiană*, vol. III, Iași, 1890, pp. 194, 216–218, 481.
- ⁵² N. Iorga, “Originea lui Ștefan Răzvan”, *Analele Academiei Române, Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice*, s. III, t. IX (1930), pp. 157–163.
- ⁵³ See Gh. T. Ionescu, *op. cit.*, pp. 162–166.
- ⁵⁴ See these texts in I. Peretz, *Curs de istoria dreptului român*, IV, *Hrisoavele domnești*, pp. 169–216.
- ⁵⁵ “[...] the slave is not reckoned completely to be like an object, where his deeds, rights and obligations affect others (although not his master), he is reckoned to be like a person; thus is the slave subject to earthly laws and is protected by them.” Cf. *Istoria dreptului românesc*, vol. II/I, Bucharest, 1984, p. 244.
- ⁵⁶ I. Peretz, *Curs de istoria dreptului român*, IV, *Hrisoavele domnești*, p. 49.

- ⁵⁷ There is a work devoted to this subject, which should, however, be treated with caution: A. Gebora, *Situația juridică a țiganilor în Ardeal*, Bucharest, 1932.
- ⁵⁸ See above p. 14.
- ⁵⁹ In 1441, the boyar Stanciu Moenescul of Voila received confirmation of ownership of his Gypsies Manea, Pascul, Cazac and Micul (*DRH*, B, I, pp. 160–162), while in 1476, in a deed issued by Basarab the Old, we see that the boyar Șerban of Șinca was master over the Gypsies Radul, Lalu, Curchea, Mujea and Costea (*ibid.*, pp. 253–256).
- ⁶⁰ See D. Prodan, *Boieri și vecini în Țara Făgărașului în sec. XVI–XVII*, in *Din istoria Transilvaniei. Studii și evocări*, Bucharest, 1991, pp. 22–27, 149.
- ⁶¹ I. Pușcariu, *Fragmente istorice despre boierii din Țara Făgărașului*, Sibiu, 1907, pp. 416–422.
- ⁶² *Documente privind istoria României*, A, *Moldova*, veac XVI, vol. I, Bucharest, 1953, p. 409.
- ⁶³ See N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, (I), p. 37.
- ⁶⁴ Hurmuzaki, XV/1, p. 152.
- ⁶⁵ Maja Philippi, *op. cit.*, pp. 142–143.
- ⁶⁶ Hurmuzaki, I/2, p. 527.
- ⁶⁷ A. Gebora, *op. cit.*, pp. 13–14.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁹ See below pp. 63–64.
- ⁷⁰ D. Prodan, *Iobăgia în secolul al XVI-lea*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1967, p. 415.
- ⁷¹ P. N. Panaitescu, “Le Rôle économique”, p. 936.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 938–940.
- ⁷³ I. St. Raicewich, *Bemerkungen über die Moldau und Wallachey in Rücksicht auf Geschichte, Naturprodukte und Politik*. Aus dem Italienischen, Vienna, 1789, p. 126.
- ⁷⁴ I. Chelcea, *Țiganii din România. Monografie etnografică*, Bucharest, 1944, p. 102.
- ⁷⁵ Cf. Șt. Bezdechi, “Christian Schesaeus despre români”, *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie Națională*, IV (1926–1927), p. 448.
- ⁷⁶ “Dans la Valaquie, la forge est l’unique occupation des Bohémiens” (Ch. de Peyssonnel, *Observations historiques et géographiques sur les peuples barbares qui ont habité les bords du Danube et du Pont-Euxin*, Paris, 1765, p. 111).
- ⁷⁷ N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, (II), p. 67.
- ⁷⁸ M. Block, *Die materielle Kultur der rumänischen Zigeuner. Versuch einer monographischen Darstellung*, comp. and ed. J. S. Hohmann, Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York, Paris, 1991, p. 131.
- ⁷⁹ N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, pp. 68–69.
- ⁸⁰ Aurora Ilieș, “Știri în legătură cu exploatarea sării în Țara Românească până în veacul al XVIII-lea”, *Studii și materiale de istorie medie*, I (1956), p. 180ff.
- ⁸¹ Maja Philippi, *op. cit.*, pp. 143–145.
- ⁸² A. Gebora, *op. cit.*, pp. 13–14.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁵ V. Costăchel, P. P. Panaitescu, A. Cazacu, *op. cit.*, pp. 152–153.

- ⁸⁶ DRH, B, I, p. 275.
- ⁸⁷ D. C. Giurescu, *Țara Românească în secolele XIV–XV*, Bucharest, 1973, pp. 259–260.
- ⁸⁸ Miron Costin, *Istoria în versuri polone despre Moldova și Țara Românească (1684)*, translated by P. P. Panaitescu, Bucharest, 1929, p. 108.
- ⁸⁹ *Călători străini despre țările române*, II, p. 322.
- ⁹⁰ N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, (I), p. 62.
- ⁹¹ T. G. Bulat, “Dregătoria armășii și țiganii la sfârșitul veacului al XVIII”, *Arhivele Basarabiei*, VIII, 1936, no. 1, p. 6ff.
- ⁹² *Idem*, “Țiganii domnești, din Moldova, la 1810”, *Arhivele Basarabiei*, V (1933), no. 2, pp. 1–6. The total revenues of the State in 1810 came to 2,411,464.48 lei (*idem*, “Veniturile și cheltuielile Țărilor Românești între 1810–12”, *Arhivele Basarabiei*, VI (1934), pp. 135–136), which means that princely Gypsies contributed 5.18 per cent of revenues.
- ⁹³ For the *aurari* and their occupation, see in particular C. Șerban, “Contribuțiuni la istoria meșteșugarilor din Țara Românească: țiganii rudari în secolele XVII–XVIII”, *Studii. Revistă de istorie*, XII (1959), no. 2, pp. 131–147; M. Acker, “Vechile spălătorii de aur din jurul Sebeșului”, *Apulum*, V (1965), pp. 647–658; C. Feneșan, “Date privind exploatarea aurului în Banat la sfârșitul sec. al XVIII-lea și începutul sec. al XIX-lea”, *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai*, Series Historia, Fasciculus 1, 1967, pp. 55–64. See also H. Wilsdorf, “Zigeuner auf den karpathobalkanischen Bergravieren – montan-ethnographische Aspekte”, *Abhandlungen und Berichte des Staatlichen Museums für Völkerkunde Dresden*, 41 (1984), pp. 138–173; I. Chelcea, *op. cit.*, pp. 143–149.
- ⁹⁴ M. Acker, *op. cit.*, p. 656. One *majă* = 56 kg.
- ⁹⁵ See below p. 77 with note 160.
- ⁹⁶ C. Feneșan, *op. cit.*, pp. 59–61.
- ⁹⁷ See C. Șerban, *op. cit.*, pp. 131–137.
- ⁹⁸ T. G. Bulat, “Dregătoria armășii și țiganii”, p. 6.
- ⁹⁹ I. R. Mircea, *op. cit.*, pp. 863–864.
- ¹⁰⁰ N. Grigoraș, *op. cit.*, pp. 72–73.
- ¹⁰¹ W. Wilkinson, *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia*, London, 1820, p. 175.
- ¹⁰² L. Toppeltinus, *op. cit.*, pp. 59–60.
- ¹⁰³ D. Dan, *Țiganii din Bucovina*, Czernovitz, 1892, p. 17.
- ¹⁰⁴ Nicolaus Olahus describes in 1536 a band of Gypsies, established near Șimand (in the west of present-day Romania), which lived exclusively from begging (*Călători străini despre țările române*, I, pp. 499–450).
- ¹⁰⁵ For such measures see V. A. Urechia, *Istoria românilor*, Bucharest, vol. VI, 1893, p. 761 (from the years 1794, 1795 and 1796); vol. X/1, 1900, pp. 949–950 (from the year 1813).
- ¹⁰⁶ *Instituții feudale*, p. 411.
- ¹⁰⁷ Gh. I. Brătianu, *op. cit.*, p. 415.
- ¹⁰⁸ Olga Cicanci, *op. cit.*, pp. 160–162.

- ¹⁰⁹ M. Kogălniceanu, *op. cit.*, p. 575.
- ¹¹⁰ N. Grigoraş, *op. cit.*, pp. 52–53.
- ¹¹¹ R. Fr. Kaindl, *Das Unterhanswesen in der Bukowina. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Bauernstandes und seiner Befreiung* (extract from *Archiv für Österreich Geschichte*, LXXXVI), Vienna, 1899, pp. 39–40.
- ¹¹² T. Codrescu, *loc. cit.*
- ¹¹³ As for the *rudari*—who refuse to be known as Gypsies, considering themselves to be Romanians and speaking no language apart from Romanian, who distinguish themselves from other Gypsies through their customs and character—it is supposed that they are the result of a mixing of Gypsies and Romanians that took place some time during the Middle Ages (see I. Chelcea, *op. cit.*, pp. 57–59). In our opinion, there are no arguments that would support this hypothesis. It is difficult to explain when and in what circumstances such a mixing could have taken place.
- ¹¹⁴ Particularly *Vom wandernden Zigeunervolke. Bilder aus dem Leben der Siebenbürger Zigeuner. Geschichtliches, Ethnologisches, Sprache und Poesie*, Hamburg, 1890, pp. 49–82; “Die Stamm- und Familienverhältnisse der transilvanischen Zelt-Zigeuner”, *Globus*, Braunschweig, 53 (1888), pp. 183–189; “Beiträge zu den Stammesverhältnissen der siebenbürgischen Zigeuner”, *Ethnologische Mitteilungen aus Ungarn*, I (1889), pp. 336–338.
- ¹¹⁵ Concise data on the organisation of the Gypsies in the Romanian lands: N. Grigoraş, *op. cit.*, (II), pp. 52–58; G. Potra, *Contribuţiuni*, pp. 71–74; *Instituţii feudale*, pp. 412–413. For Transylvania see below p. 62–63 with note 124.
- ¹¹⁶ Hurmuzaki, I/2, p. 527.
- ¹¹⁷ *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, VII, p. 113.
- ¹¹⁸ T. Codrescu, *op. cit.*, pp. 286–287. These privileges were renewed in 1804 (G. Potra, *Contribuţiuni*, pp. 327–331).
- ¹¹⁹ G. Potra, *Contribuţiuni*, pp. 72–73.
- ¹²⁰ *DRH*, B, I, pp. 201–202;
- ¹²¹ T. G. Bulat, “Dregătorii armăşii şi Țigani”, p. 7.
- ¹²² D. Prodan, *Iobăgia în Transilvania în secolul al XVII-lea*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1986, p. 110.
- ¹²³ *Instituţii feudale*, pp. 412–413.
- ¹²⁴ See H. M. G. Grellman, *op. cit.*, pp. 138–147; A. Gebora, *op. cit.*, pp. 17–18, 28; D. Prodan, *Iobăgia în Transilvania în secolul al XVII-lea*, vol. I, pp. 109–110.
- ¹²⁵ A. Gebora, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
- ¹²⁶ B. Mezey et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 78–79.
- ¹²⁷ D. Prodan, *loc. cit.*
- ¹²⁸ B. Mezey et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 71–74.
- ¹²⁹ J. Ficowski, *Wielki Trauen und Wege. Zigeuner in Polen*, Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York, Paris, 1992, pp. 21–34.
- ¹³⁰ D. Prodan, *Iobăgia în Transilvania în secolul al XVII-lea*, vol. I, p. 109.
- ¹³¹ “Through their current organisation, the Gypsies show to us how the Romanians were organised in the thirteenth century: their heads, the voivodes, wore their

- hair long, wore reed slippers, they held the *juzi* under their authority; the names chosen by the Romanian princes were adopted by their slaves: Vlad, Dan, Radu. They have even preserved certain linguistic archaisms.” (N. Iorga, *Locul românilor în istoria universală*, ed. R. Constantinescu, Bucharest, 1985, p. 128.)
- ¹³² See Helga Köpstein, *op. cit.*
- ¹³³ See Al. Gonța, *op. cit.*, pp. 307–311, together with the references in the notes.
- ¹³⁴ B. D. Grekov, *op. cit.*, pp. 141–163 and 560–577.
- ¹³⁵ For this problem see Ch. Verlinden, *L’Esclavage dans l’Europe médiévale*, vols. I–II, Brugge-Ghent, 1955–1977.
- ¹³⁶ *Istoria României*, ed. M. Roller, Bucharest, 1947, p. 385.
- ¹³⁷ See H. Inalcik, “Servile Labor in the Ottoman Empire”, in *The Mutual Effects of the Islamic and Judeo-Christian Worlds: The East European Pattern*, eds. A. Ascher, T. Halasi-Kun and B. K. Király, Brooklyn N.Y., 1979, pp. 25–52.
- ¹³⁸ See above p. 29 with note 9.
- ¹³⁹ G. Soulis, *op. cit.*, pp. 164–165; A. Fraser, *op. cit.*, pp. 50–51.
- ¹⁴⁰ See F. de Vaux de Foletier, *op. cit.*, p. 42ff.
- ¹⁴¹ For anti-Gypsy measures and policies in Western countries in the Middle Ages and at the beginning of the modern era, see A. Colocci, *op. cit.*, pp. 67–107; J-P. Clébert, *op. cit.*, p. 83ff; F. de Vaux de Foletier, *op. cit.*, p. 58ff; M. Hasenberger, “Die Zigeuner in Europa mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des mittel- und südosteuropäischen Raumes. Ein historischer Abriß über die Reaktionen zwischen Wirtsvölker und Zigeuner” (doctoral thesis), Vienna, 1983, p. 22ff; R. Stangl, “Die Verfolgung der Zigeuner im deutschsprachigen Raum Mitteleuropas von ihrer Anfängen bis heute” (final-year undergraduate dissertation), Vienna, 1986, p. 18ff; J. S. Hohmann, *Verfolgte ohne Heimat. Geschichte der Zigeuner in Deutschland*, Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York, Paris, 1990, pp. 17–26; A. Fraser, *op. cit.*, pp. 85–190.
- ¹⁴² Dj. Petrović, *op. cit.*
- ¹⁴³ R. Stangl, *op. cit.*, pp. 16–17.
- ¹⁴⁴ Ilse Rochow, K-P. Matschke, *op. cit.*, p. 253.
- ¹⁴⁵ G. Soulis, *op. cit.*, p. 151ff.
- ¹⁴⁶ See following sub-chapter.
- ¹⁴⁷ A. Răduțiu, *Populația Transilvaniei în ajunul călătoriei din anul 1773 a lui Iosif al II-lea*, in *Sabin Manuilă. Istorie și demografie. Studii privind societatea românească între secolele XVI–XX*, coord. S. Bolovan, and I. Bolovan Cluj-Napoca, 1995, pp. 76–77.
- ¹⁴⁸ C. Feneșan, *Izvoare de demografie istorică*, vol. I (*Secolul al XVIII-lea. Transilvania*), Bucharest, 1986, table XI.
- ¹⁴⁹ Fr. Griselini, *Încercare de istorie politică și naturală a Banatului Timișoarei*, translated by C. Feneșan, Timișoara, 1984, pp. 157–158.
- ¹⁵⁰ For the policy of the two emperors with regard to the Gypsies, see: H. M. G. Grellmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 143–151; I. H. Schwicker, *Die Zigeuner in Ungarn und Siebenbürgen*, Vienna und Teschen, 1883, p. 53ff; M. Tomka, “A cigányok története”, in *Cigányok, honnét jöttek — merre tartanak?*, ed. L. Szegő, Budapest,

1983, pp. 46–49; B. Mezey et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 14–19; R. Stangl, *op. cit.*, pp. 32–35; Gy. Szabó, *Die Roma in Ungarn. Ein Beitrag zur Sozialgeschichte einer Minderheit in Ost- und Mitteleuropa*, Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York, Paris, 1991, pp. 69–75; A. Fraser, *op. cit.*, pp. 157–159.

¹⁵¹ See I. H. Schwicker, *op. cit.*, pp. 53–56.

¹⁵² H. M. G. Grellmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 147–150.

¹⁵³ The text was republished in B. Mezey et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 85–94. See I. H. Schwicker, *op. cit.*, pp. 56–58.

¹⁵⁴ I. H. Schwicker, *op. cit.*, pp. 62–69.

¹⁵⁵ See R. Stangl, *op. cit.*, pp. 34–35.

¹⁵⁶ I. H. Schwicker, *op. cit.*, pp. 59–61.

¹⁵⁷ A. Fraser, *op. cit.*, pp. 159–160.

¹⁵⁸ I. H. Schwicker, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

¹⁶⁰ S. l., s.a., p. 17 in folio. The material was republished in *Ethnologische Mitteilungen aus Ungarn*, III (1893–1894), pp. 55–56, 114–116, 168–170, 210–212, 221–223. See also A. Gebora, *op. cit.*, pp. 52–60.

¹⁶¹ I. H. Schwicker, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

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CHAPTER III

EMANCIPATION

1. THE GYPSIES IN THE ROMANIAN PRINCIPALITIES IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In the first part of the nineteenth century in the Romanian principalities, the Gypsies continued to have the same status and led the same lifestyle as they had done since the beginning of their presence on Romanian territory.¹ The evolutions that Romanian society had undergone over the centuries, evolutions that were largely in line with general trends taking place across Central and Eastern Europe, had had very little effect on the category of Gypsy slaves. While the status of the peasantry and serfdom had undergone significant modifications, the institution of slavery remained practically unchanged until almost the middle of the nineteenth century.

Until late on, nobody in Romanian society took it upon themselves to take action to modify the social condition and legal status of the Gypsy population at large. Slavery was perceived as an integral part of the country's social system. As a result of the circumstances of the time, and particularly their close relations with the Ottoman Empire, the policy of the Phanariot rulers of the principalities (whose rule began in 1711 in Moldavia and 1716 in Wallachia and lasted until 1821) was a long way from the reformism of the emperors of the House of Habsburg. After 1821, when the principalities obtained greater autonomy from the suzerain power, Romanian society made significant progress in all domains. Particularly in the 1830s, a process of institutional modernisation and socio-economic development was undertaken, which eliminated many of the components of the *ancien régime* and opened the way for an evolution towards a type of state and society that shared many of the characteristics of Central and West European countries. This evolution of society as a whole had precious little effect on the Gypsies. The basic law of the two principalities, namely the Organic Regulations (a kind of constitution) adopted both in Wallachia and Moldavia in the year 1831, maintained the slavery of the Gypsies. In fact, the Organic Regulations represented the beginning of the process of institutional renewal in Romania. In that moment, however, slavery was not in any way challenged by political actors and was regarded as one of the social institutions of the country. During the period of the Regulations (1831–48), slavery was recognised as a social institution via the two founding acts. Until the laws of emancipation enacted in the 1840s and 50s, in the Romanian principalities slavery

continued to exist in its three established forms: princely slaves (slaves of the State), monastery slaves and boyars' slaves.

There is a rich body of information about the situation of the Gypsies in the first part of the nineteenth century. Unlike in previous centuries, when information about the Gypsies was confined almost completely to official documents of legal or fiscal nature, in this period the sources became much more varied, providing us with a fairly detailed portrait of the situation of Gypsy slaves. With some circumspection, some of the data from this period can be extrapolated back to the previous era when documentary information was scarcer. In addition to this internal information, there is also the testimony of foreign visitors to the principalities.² The diplomats, savants and artists from Western and Central Europe that travelled across the principalities at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century would invariably remark upon the picturesque realities of the Gypsy population living there. In an era when exoticism was in vogue, in the pages (sometimes the books) devoted to the principalities, writers would almost obligatorily stop to consider the Gypsies. They would observe the specific racial, linguistic and cultural features of the population. They describe the Gypsies' nomadism and primitivism, their hovels, their superstitions, their laziness and the poverty in which they lived, the character of the Gypsy musician etc. They were struck by the mixture of the picturesque and the barbarous in the Gypsies, which gives one of the characteristic notes to the lands of the Danube and the Carpathians. Also, they always paused to consider the slavery of the Gypsies, which they regarded as a vestige of times long past.

Although slavery remained unchanged as an institution until the time of the laws of emancipation, over time, certain new elements appeared with regard to the slave population.

Firstly, the structure of the Gypsy population in terms of its various groups in the first part of the nineteenth century was significantly different from that of previous centuries, as a result of the social and professional evolutions experienced by the different groups of the Gypsies. Such evolutions had been determined by the decline of certain occupations and the appearance of others, as well as the transition to professions that were in high demand. This modified structure to the Gypsy population is important because together with certain other transformations that occurred over time, particularly after the mass sedentarisation during the era of emancipation, it remained in place until the Second World War, while basic characteristics have continued to exist within the modern-day Gypsy population. In the language of the day, the categories of the Gypsies were known as *tagme* (castes).³ The *aurari* (gold-washers), who belonged in their entirety to the State, underwent a radical change in occupation at this time. As a result of

the dwindling of gold deposits in riverbeds, they were almost all forced to abandon the collection of gold and devote themselves exclusively to wood-working. At this time the term *aurar* was replaced with that of *rudar*. The latter term also existed in previous centuries, but from this time became the only term in use for this category of the Gypsies. At the time of emancipation, they were already settled, living mostly in their own settlements in forest areas in the mountains in huts or houses. When beginning with the first half of the nineteenth century, the peasantry ceased to live in huts, building new dwellings out of brick, the *rudari* living in certain areas began to manufacture bricks and adobe, consequently giving rise to the term *cărămidari* (brick-makers) that became attributed to them. The *lingurari*, who manufactured basic wooden objects such as wooden nails, spoons, spindles, pots etc., had their dwellings (houses and huts) close to forests, as a rule far from peasant settlements. Some *lingurari* belonged to the State, others to private owners. The *ursari*, who in summer continued to practise bear-baiting in towns and villages, had as their basic occupation the rearing of mules and the manufacture of sieves or other small iron objects. They were all nomads and lived in tents. Also belonging to the caste of *ursari* were the *zavragii*. Few in numbers, the latter had ceased to be blacksmiths and instead worked as labourers. They were nomadic, too. The *ursari*, and especially the *zavragii*, were renowned for their petty thievery. They were state slaves. The *țigani de laie* or *lăieși* (camp Gypsies) were specialised as blacksmiths or in the manufacture of copper tubs, hence the name of *căldărari* (boiler-makers), which became increasingly used to designate this category of the Gypsies. The majority of them lived on boyars' estates and at the beginning of the nineteenth century they were mostly nomadic. Organised in bands led by *juzi*, in the summer months they would travel the country in their covered carts. They would set up their camp at the edge or in the vicinity of villages and towns and would make a living by providing the locals with the entire range of metal objects necessary for a peasant homestead. In winter they would withdraw to the forest, where they would build huts. Among the Gypsies who wandered the country they were the most numerous. Consequently, both for Romanians and for foreigners travelling through the principalities, the standard image of the Gypsy became confused with that of the *lăieș* and the latter were considered to be the most authentic of all the Gypsies. Nonetheless, some of them were already settled in villages even before emancipation. During the period of emancipation virtually all of the Gypsies of this category became sedentarised. The majority of them settled on the edges of towns and villages and lived in houses and huts. They were the blacksmiths of Romanian settlements, and were skilled in all manner of things. A separate group of the Gypsies was that of the *netoți* ("idiots"), so called because of their way of life, which

was different to that of the other Gypsies. The *netoți* practised no craft, lived like animals, had no dwellings, tents or carts, and instead wandered the countryside on foot in groups of twenty to thirty families, living from the proceeds of theft and robbery, sometimes feeding themselves with dead animal carcasses. Contemporary sources are unanimous in their presentation of the *netoți* as savages, totally lawless etc. They had no master and had arrived in the eighteenth century from the Habsburg Empire. Even though they were few in numbers, the *netoți* represented a problem both for the authorities and for the population. To the aforementioned categories of the Gypsies, the *țigani de vatră* or *vătrași* (“hearth” or house of Gypsies), who were in fact the most numerous should be added. These were boyars’ or monastery slaves settled in villages or towns and tied to an agricultural occupation (either as ploughmen or craftsmen of agricultural nature). Slaves carried out domestic tasks in the boyars’ estates. The *vătrași* had lost many of their characteristics of Gypsy life and had already entered into a process of sedentarisation. From the ranks of the *vătrași*, came the *lăutari* (musicians), who formed a separate group. For a long time the profession of musician was reserved for the Gypsies. The monasteries and the boyars also owned nomadic Gypsies, from the category of the *lăieși*, who wandered the country practising their crafts or gaining employment as seasonal workers for other private landowners. Provided that they paid their dues to the master, they had the right to travel the country in order to earn their existence, similar to freemen.

As can be seen from this brief summary of the categories of the Gypsies, a quite substantial part of them were already living a sedentary way of life prior to their emancipation. In 1837, Mihail Kogălniceanu observed that the *vătrași* had fixed dwellings, that they had completely forgotten their ancestral language and that they had lost the habits and customs of their nomadic brethren, to the extent that they could no longer be distinguished from Moldavians and Wallachians.⁴ It would appear that the second half of the eighteenth century and the first part of the nineteenth century was the time in which the sedentarisation of the Gypsies became a mass phenomenon. As the authorities in the Romanian principalities had put the Gypsies under no pressure to sedentarise prior to emancipation (unlike the situation in the Habsburg Empire), we can estimate that here the sedentarisation of the Gypsies was a natural process. Nevertheless, nomadism continued to be a significant phenomenon. As a rule, this was a seasonal nomadism, practised during the warm months of the year when the weather made it possible for the Gypsies to travel the country practising their crafts. On certain days during the year, and then again in winter, the Gypsies would return to their master in order to pay tax and to carry out any work obligations required of them. At this time they would also re-register themselves with the authorities

and resolve various problems within the community. In Romanian society at the beginning of the nineteenth century, due to the sparseness of the population and the fact that agricultural land was in abundance, the nomadism of the Gypsies did not create a problem. Consequently, for a long time the idea of settling the Gypsies to a sedentary way of life did not occur to anyone. In the Romanian principalities, the colonisation of agricultural land was carried out always with peasants from mountainous areas or with people arrived from outside the borders of the country; therefore there was no need to make use of the nomadic Gypsies. Only from the 1830s, when in the new economic conditions certain major landowners began to engage in the mass exploitation of their estates and new lands became available for agriculture, boyars preoccupied with the need for fresh labour began to settle the *lăieși* in their possession in villages and to tie them to the profession of ploughman. It was in these conditions that the idea of converting the nomadic Gypsies to a sedentary way of life appeared in the Romanian principalities.

During the period of the Organic Regulations, the exploitation of the Gypsies took place on larger scale than in the past. At this time, when the principalities were in the process of entering into a capitalist-type economy, some boyars set about the transformation of their slaves into profitable capital. They made use of slaves in agricultural labour proper to a greater extent than in the past, subjecting them to a regime of work to which they were not accustomed. Similarly, it became common practice for a boyar to employ Gypsies belonging to the State or other private owners as seasonal workers for grape-picking, scything, reaping and other tasks.⁵ Gypsies were also used as labourers on construction sites. Generally speaking, the range of tasks for which slaves were used had become more diverse. Some slave owners used their slaves in workshops and factories that they built on their estates.⁶ At the time, the view that the Gypsies were particularly suited to being factory workers was widely held. This view probably stemmed from the Gypsies' skill as craftsmen and their well-known repulsion for working in the fields. The usefulness of the Gypsies was perceived in terms of this kind of future development of the country.⁷ Generally speaking, during this period, in which the development of manufacturing and new industry was largely linked to the utility of the subjugated workforce, the Gypsies appeared to be the group most suited to these kinds of activities. It is significant that projects and experiments of a socialist-utopian nature (after the model of Charles Fourier) that were floated at this time in the principalities were aimed precisely at the Gypsies. The phalanstery of Scăieni, organised by Teodor Diamant on the estate of the boyar Emanoil Bălăceanu, which functioned for a time in the years 1835–36, brought together Gypsies emancipated from the ownership of this boyar.⁸ The report that Diamant sent to the Administrative Council of Moldavia in 1841 proposed the organisation of

the Gypsies tied to state lands due to be emancipated into agricultural-industrial work colonies, according to Fourier's model. As a first step, Diamant proposed the establishment for a ten-year period of an agro-industrial colony with 200–300 families of state Gypsies on a leased estate.⁹

Some private slave owners and monasteries were in the habit of leasing out Gypsies in their possession for a certain number of years in exchange for substantial sums of money. Even the State made use of this lucrative practice, as was the case in Moldavia at the beginning of the century.¹⁰ At this time, the Gypsies became a good in the full sense of the term. The patriarchal relationship of the past, in which the selling of slaves was carried out chiefly where necessary and via a direct relationship with the buyer, with a degree of care taken to avoid the splitting up of families, disappeared. In the decades that preceded emancipation, trade in slaves took place openly and on a large scale in the principalities. In towns, veritable auctions involving hundreds of slaves were organised, in which not one of the restrictions imposed by common law or even by the country's laws were respected. Outrageous scenes took place, which scandalised public opinion and which certainly had a role in forming abolitionist attitudes in Romanian society. In his book of 1855, Elias Regnault mentions just such a slave auction which took place in Bucharest and which provoked a powerful response throughout the city.¹¹ Public opinion both at home and abroad reacted to these barbaric spectacles. Even foreign political figures made representations to the Romanian authorities on this subject.

Nevertheless, the exploitation of the slaves should not be exaggerated. A large proportion of the Gypsies continued to live on the boyars' estates, practising the crafts and way of life as they had done so in previous centuries. The most important boyars kept a multitude of Gypsies: servants, cooks, bakers, blacksmiths, coachmen, grooms, tailors, maids, washerwomen, seamstresses etc. Some boyars even had bands of Gypsy musicians. Contemporary sources are unanimous in agreeing that these slaves did not actually do a great deal, but the mentality of the period meant that the number of slaves one kept was a mark of one's social status. The revenues generated by a slave (whether one employed at the boyar's residence or one who wandered the country) for his master were usually small. The bounded peasant guaranteed far greater revenues for the master's estate. Slaves were not always profitable from an economic point of view, and at this time it was one of the arguments used by abolitionists in their attempts to convince the main slave owners to give up their slaves. At the same time, the Gypsies belonging to the monasteries and to private owners were exempt from state obligations; their only obligations were those that they bore to their master. As for the state Gypsies, according to the Organic Regulation they were included among the taxpayers and were forced to pay capitation. The level of this tax was

higher than the sums that they had paid in the past and consequently it is fair to talk about a worsening of the situation of Gypsies from this category at this time. However, at the same time, their feudal obligations did not exist.

Thus it can be seen that the first half of the nineteenth century meant the appearance of certain new elements with regard to slaves. The State intervened to an unprecedented extent in the regulations relating to slaves and even in relations between the Gypsies and their masters, but without the cornerstones of the institution being affected. In contrast with the dynamism within Romanian society at this time, slavery remained the same institution that it had been under the *ancien régime*. Slaves became isolated within society, thereby creating one of the major problems of the time. The political figures of the period would solve this problem by adopting a whole series of measures, which led to the release of the different categories of the Gypsies from their old social and legal situation, transforming them, from a legal point of view, into freemen.

Despite the relatively rich body of information about the Gypsies, an evaluation of their number at this time is not at all easy. Population censuses were not carried out at the time in the Romanian principalities, nor were thorough censuses of the kind carried out in Transylvania, making it difficult to establish the size of the population, particularly that of the Gypsy population. There are exact figures only for the number of Gypsies in the possession of the State. The censuses that were carried out every seven years and other tax records included figures for the aforementioned category of slaves, and only in exceptional circumstances did they carry figures for privately owned Gypsies, who were exempt from taxes. For the latter category, the statistics that are available are rather approximations made by certain authors. Only when privately owned Gypsies enter into the possession of the State (as a result of purchase) or enter, following the promulgation of the laws of emancipation, into the ranks of corvee-peasants (*clăcași*) or tax-paying craftsmen (*patentari*), do they figure in the tax records.¹² However, even official statistics should be regarded with caution. This is because they operated with two sets of data with regard to the Gypsies: sometimes figures are recorded by family, thereby providing us with the number of families of Gypsies, but on other occasions the figures record those registered as being liable to pay tax. Unlike in the case of Romanian taxpayers, when the number of persons liable to pay tax coincides with the number of families, in the case of the Gypsies there are more taxpayers than families, as bachelors and single men were registered as separate fiscal entities. Not knowing that the authorities made use of such practices can create confusion when it comes to examining the demographics of this population.¹³

Since no study of the number of Gypsies living in the Romanian principalities during the period of emancipation has been carried out, we shall

quote from the most apt contemporary sources. In 1819, Dionisie Fotino indicated that in Wallachia there were 23,300 families of Gypsies,¹⁴ which amounts to almost 120,000 people. In his work on the Gypsies from 1837, Mihail Kogălniceanu estimated the Gypsy population in both principalities at 200,000 people.¹⁵ Félix Colson, a commentator with a good knowledge of Romanian realities, established on the basis of statistics from the census of 1838 and estimates of the numbers of privately owned Gypsies that in Moldavia there were 3551 families of state Gypsies and approximately 120,000 private Gypsies, while in Wallachia there were 5582 families of state Gypsies (therefore 29,910 people) and 18,000 families of privately owned Gypsies (90,000 people).¹⁶ This means that there were approximately 139,255 Gypsies in Moldavia and 119,910 in Wallachia. According to Colson, the total population of Moldavia was 1,419,105, while that of Wallachia was 2,402,027. This would mean that the Gypsies accounted for 9.81 per cent of the total population of Moldavia and 5 per cent of the total population of Wallachia. In 1849, Paul Bataillard estimated the number of Gypsies living in the principalities to be approximately 250,000.¹⁷ In 1857, J.-A. Vaillant calculated a population of 137,000 Gypsies in Moldavia and 125,000 in Wallachia,¹⁸ while A. Ubcini estimated their number at around 250,000: 150,000 in Wallachia and 100,000 in Moldavia.¹⁹ J. F. Neigebar provides data for Wallachia only. On the basis of the census of 1844, he mentions 5,782 families of state Gypsies (in other words 28,910 people) and estimates the number of Gypsies belonging to boyars and the monasteries to be 150,000 (30,000 families).²⁰

These figures should be regarded with caution, since in the case of privately owned Gypsies they are based on estimations made in the absence of tax records. Only with the emancipation of this category of Gypsies (which was the most numerous category) do official statistics reproduce the total number of Gypsies living in the country.

In Wallachia, the statistics compiled by the Ministry of Finance in 1857 record all freed Gypsies in categories according to their origin. The figures show 33,267 families of emancipated slaves, of which 12,081 originated from the monasteries and 14,945 from private owners.²¹ If we relate this figure to the 466,152 families (in other words, 2,330,760 people) who, according to the same set of statistics, were living in the country, we find that emancipated slaves represented 7.13 per cent of the population of the country. In the tax records of Wallachia from the beginning of the year of 1859,²² compiled according to fiscal categories, there were 30,181 families of emancipated taxpayers, 1851 emancipated bachelors and 1819 emancipated tax-paying tradesmen, giving a total of 33,851 families of emancipated slaves. The total number of families living at the time in Wallachia, whether taxpayers or benefiting from privileged status (not including inhabitants

under foreign jurisdiction) was 426,120. Emancipated slaves therefore represented 7.94 per cent of the population of the country. If we multiply the number of families of emancipated slaves from the two sets of statistics, we obtain figures for the total number of emancipated slaves of 166,335 and 169,255 respectively. Ordinarily the figures should be somewhat smaller, since in the case of emancipated slaves the older practice of recording bachelors as a separate tax entity was maintained. The proportion of emancipated slaves living within the population of the country was in fact somewhat less than the figures calculated above, but still around 7 per cents.

In Moldavia, Gypsies were no longer recorded in official statistics, whether tax records or ethnic data, after 1856 when privately owned slaves were emancipated. After this time, the Gypsies were included among the Romanian inhabitants of the principality. Statistics were not published in the period prior to emancipation for all categories of Gypsies, meaning that we do not know how many they were at this time. If we take contemporary estimates into account (estimates which in the case of Wallachia were confirmed by the official statistics), we can presuppose that out of a population of 1,463,927 according to the 1859 census of Moldavia,²³ approximately 100,000 were emancipated Gypsies. We estimate the proportion of Gypsies within the total population of Moldavia to also be around 7 per cent.

On the basis of all the above information, we can deduce that during the period of emancipation, i.e. in the years 1830–60, the total number of Gypsies living in Wallachia and Moldavia was between 200,000 and 250,000. The first figure relates to the beginning of this period, while the second figure to the 1850s. Gypsies accounted for approximately 7 per cent of the total population of the country.

The Romanian principalities were the country with the largest number of Gypsies. According to Mihail Kogălniceanu, 200,000 of the 600,000 Gypsies in Europe at the time were living in Moldavia and Wallachia.²⁴ Generally speaking, in all the estimations of the number of Gypsies living in Europe made in the middle and the second half of the nineteenth century, it was reckoned that around a third of them lived in Romania.²⁵

2. ABOLITIONIST TREND

Together with the change of political regime in 1821, when as a result of the withdrawal of the Phanariot rulers by the Ottoman Empire, Moldavia and Wallachia reverted to the rule of local princes and simultaneously acquired greater autonomy from the suzerain, the Romanian principalities entered a new era in their history. The introduction of reforms that would bring about

the modernisation of the State and Romanian society, thereby bringing it into line with Europe, were a pressing concern at this time.

During this period, especially during the decade that preceded the 1848 revolution, a large number of reform programmes and projects originating from different groups and political movements or individual personalities were circulating in Romanian society. The chief preoccupations were the problem of the autonomy and independence of the principalities, the search for a means of affecting the unification of the principalities into a single Romanian state, access to power for a broader range of social categories, the establishment of a liberal political regime, economic freedom, measures to support the peasantry, the transformation of landed property into capitalist-type property and the formation of a modern national culture.²⁶ The position of the Gypsies was of little concern to this reformist movement. It is not even mentioned in the majority of the reform programmes that appeared during the period, demonstrating that in general the abolition of slavery was not considered to be one of the priorities of the modernisation of society. If we consider that the reform movement was relatively moderate in nature and that its promoters were generally representatives of the minor and middle-ranking boyar class, which from a political point of view was dissatisfied with its exclusion from the government and interested in preserving its social privileges including the right to own slaves, it is easy to understand why the legal and social condition of a relatively important part of the country's population was of so little interest to it. The constitutional project of the Moldavian "Carbonarists" (*Cărvunari*) from 1822, a document that is representative for the way of thinking of the petit boyar class, does mention the Gypsies, but limits itself to proposing their settlement.²⁷ Later on, however, the idea of the emancipation of the Gypsies does find its place within the reform movement. The programme of the confederative conspiracy, organised by Leonte Radu in Moldavia in 1839, made provision for the emancipation of the Gypsies belonging to the State and the monasteries; these Gypsies were to be regarded as "new Romanians" and settled amongst the rest of the inhabitants of the country, benefiting from the same rights as the latter. With regard to the Gypsies that belonged to the boyars, special measures were to be taken to ensure that their situation improved.²⁸ In Wallachia, among the social and economic reforms included in a memorandum drafted in 1841 by Dimitrie (Mitică) Filipescu, one of the ideologues of the reform movement, was the elimination of the "social leprosy" that was slavery. According to the memorandum, the problem was to be solved by allowing the Gypsies the right to buy their freedom.²⁹ The emancipation of the Gypsies featured as one of the main social demands of the revolutionary programmes of 1848.³⁰

The idea of the emancipation of the Gypsies had a hard time establishing itself. Romanian society was deeply marked by its past. The political power was in the hands of the conservative leading boyars, who were also owners of Gypsies. As for the Church, at least of the level of the high clergy, attitudes towards slavery had not undergone any change. From the end of the eighteenth century some enlightened prelates took extra care to baptise and tend to the religious needs of the different groups of nomadic Gypsies who at that time had not been integrated into the Church, but the Church had never contested slavery as an institution. It is, however, true that one of the first voices to speak out against slavery came from among its ranks. As early as 1827, Eufrosin Poteca, one of the intellectuals of the period with democratic views, in an address delivered on Easter Day before Prince Grigore Ghica, called for the liberation of the slaves, using arguments from the Bible and the history of the Church.³¹ In a work from 1842, he refers to slavery as “a harmful and barbarous thing”.³² The Church’s position as a major slave owner meant that it constantly sought to limit the losses imposed on it by the laws ordering the emancipation of the Gypsies. The monasteries continued to ensure a labour force for their estates via the use of former slaves, often in conditions that were quite favourable to the monasteries. When the State intervened, limiting the advantages they were reaping from the former slaves, the monasteries protested.³³

In the 1830s, a generation of intellectuals that had carried out their studies in the West, particularly in France, entered public life. The majority of them originated from the ranks of the boyars. They had been won over by the liberal ideals of the West, which they attempted to cultivate back home. They played an important role in the institutional, cultural etc. modernisation of the principalities as well as in the political developments that led to the realisation of a national Romanian state through the unification of Moldavia and Wallachia in 1859. They also contributed substantially to the creation of a public spirit that made the transformations within Romanian society possible. To this category can be added the revolutionary exiles from France and other countries that settled in the principalities and who served to bring the ideas of the French Revolution to a wider audience in Romanian society. These foreign intellectuals who settled in Romania were creators of public opinion, including attitudes towards slavery. The Swiss intellectual Emile Kohly de Guggsberg, who spent a long time in Moldavia and who was well acquainted with realities in the principalities, pointed to the necessity of abolishing slavery in a work published in 1841 and entitled *Le Philodace. Aperçu sur l’éducation chez les Roumains, suivi de quelques remarques relatives à la prospérité des principautés*. According to Kohly de Guggsberg, “slavery is the country’s greatest shame, a black stain in front of foreigners”. Reforms in the principalities needed to start with the aboli-

tion of slavery. He puts a question to his readers: "Will you dare to count yourselves among the civilised peoples as long as it is possible to read in your newspapers 'for sale: a young Gypsy woman'?"³⁴ The work made a powerful impression at the time. The Frenchman Félix Colson in 1839 proposed that a law should be passed freeing all Gypsies, with the sum of ten to twelve ducats to be paid as compensation to their owners.³⁵ This measure was introduced sixteen years later.

At this time, the Romanians were receptive to the problem of slavery in the colonies and in other countries. Information about measures taken to abolish slavery in English and French colonies, about the situation of slaves in the southern United States and about the American abolitionist movement were quickly picked up by the Romanian press. Slavery was a subject that interested the intellectuals who wrote these newspapers. There is no doubt that this kind of information played a role in creating anti-slavery attitudes among the Romanian readership. This is perhaps the first indication of the start of an abolitionist current in Romanian society. A future study of such journalistic material would make it possible to determine to what extent similar, much larger movements in the West influenced Romanian abolitionism. In this respect, it is significant that Harriet Beecher-Stowe's masterpiece *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was the first American novel to be translated into Romanian. It was published in Romanian in 1853 in Iași in a translation by Theodor Codrescu, under the title *Coliba lui Moșu Toma sau Viața negrilor în sudul Statelor Unite din America* (*Uncle Tom's Cabin or The Life of Blacks in the South of the United States of America*). The book was very widely read, with subscribers including boyars, soldiers, priests, and ladies and even emancipated Gypsies.³⁶ In his preface to the book, Mihail Kogălniceanu published an unfinished study of slavery throughout the ages, another indicator of the preoccupations of the time. In conditions where the West had rid itself of the slavery of black people, the Romanian principalities remained one of the few countries that wished to count themselves among the "civilised world" where slavery continued to exist. Yet the process of social and institutional modernisation underway in the principalities was supposed to be in emulation the model of the West, particularly France. Among the Romanian intelligentsia of the generation of 1848, there was a feeling of shame for what was regarded as an outmoded and barbaric social reality. This sentiment comes through in the writings of the time. The abolition of slavery in the West unquestionably played a role in the creation of abolitionist feeling in Romania and in the adoption of the laws of emancipation. In the preamble to these laws, it is recalled that slavery has already been abolished in the civilised countries, remaining in the principalities as a vestige of the past and of a barbaric society. In this sense, we can even speak of

external “pressure” in favour of the laws of emancipation. Romanian intellectuals felt themselves duty bound to take a step towards Europe.

To begin with, in the 1830s, the idea of emancipation was embraced by a small number of people. Mihail Kogălniceanu mentioned this fact in his book on the Gypsies that appeared in 1837, expressing the hope that the book “will for the moment serve those voices who have risen up on behalf of the Gypsies, although sadly this interest will be passing in nature, because that is how Europeans are”.³⁷ It is indicative that when in 1834 Ion Câmpineanu decided to free from slavery the Gypsies he had inherited from his parents, his gesture was hardly understood by his contemporaries and for many years was not followed by any similar gestures. In time, however, the idea of the emancipation of the Gypsies acquired a larger audience. All the major names of the liberal intelligentsia became involved in the effort to force the prince and the political classes of conservative boyars to abolish slavery.

The greatest effort on the part of the intellectuals involved in the abolitionist movement was aimed at bringing private slave owners to free their slaves. Propaganda, both written and spoken, was particularly intense after the introduction of the laws of 1843, 1844 and 1847, which left in existence only one category of slaves, namely the slaves of the boyars. In 1844, Cezar Bolliac published in the journal *Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură* (Newspaper for Mind, Heart and Literature) an appeal to intellectuals to fight for the cause of the emancipation of the Gypsies: “Found societies, proclaim, write, praise, satirise, put all your intellectual and moral reserves to work and slavery shall fall, for already it has fallen in part and you shall be hailed by future generations as true apostles of this holy mission, apostles of brotherhood and liberty [...]. Come sirs, come all of you who have taken up your pens, driven by noble sentiment, teachers, journalists and poets, let all of us fight for their freedom: religion, the interest of the State and the spirit of the progress of peoples shall help us in this cause. The Gypsy reaches out his hand and in your name demands the moral rights that you demand in society and adjures you in the name of the duty that imposes these rights.”³⁸ The Iași-based magazine *Propășirea* (Progress) played an active role in the struggle for the emancipation of the Gypsies. Between the law emancipating the Gypsies of the monasteries and the law that would emancipate state Gypsies, issue no. 5 of *Propășirea* from 6 February 1844 was published with a special supplement, printed on green paper (the symbol of hope) with the exultant headline “The Great Reform”. In the supplement, Kogălniceanu published an article entitled “The Emancipation of the Gypsies”, in which he hails the decision of the prince of Moldavia, pointing out that the deed “raises the country to the same level as the most civilised states with regard to the principles of morality and justice” and that “all Romanians, all lovers of humanity and all the partisans of new ideas have

united their voices to praise a law that gives freedom to an entire people.” The author expresses patriotic pride at the fact that “by emancipating the Gypsies, our fatherland sanctifies the principle that all men are born free, at a time when in the colonies of France and many of the states of North America millions of blacks are suffering under the yoke of oppression and when slavery still can count many advocates in the legislative assemblies of those countries!”³⁹ The supplement also contained four poems dedicated to the date of 31 January 1844, when the law was promulgated.

From just a handful of isolated voices in the 1830s, abolitionist views were embraced in the 1840s by an entire generation of educated Romanians, before becoming generalised in Romanian public opinion after the revolution of 1848, with the exception of certain representatives of the conservative boyar class. In the 1850s, we can actually speak of the existence of an abolitionist movement in the Romanian principalities. At this time, there was public debate on the subject of slavery. The newspapers of the time featured often highly contrasting opinions in connection with the situation of privately owned Gypsies and methods of emancipating them. Over time, the abolitionist discourse evolved: initially, the arguments utilised by the abolitionists referred mainly to the material and spiritual poverty endured by the slaves, which was a source of shame for the country; later on in the 1850s the discourse became modern in content, bearing the stamp of humanistic thinking, the philosophy of liberalism and natural law. The abolitionists also made use of arguments of economic nature in order to better make the case for the necessity of abolishing slavery. In his paper of 1841 supporting calls for the abolition of slavery, Dimitrie Filipescu made reference to the works of Henri Storch, who in his economic writings, which were widely read at the time, had taken a stand against slavery. In an article published in 1855 that refers to the bill for the emancipation of the Gypsies in Moldavia, Alecu Russo states that slavery is not profitable from an economic point of view. Slaves represented a form of capital that did not produce gain. They were unproductive and often were unable to feed and take care of themselves. The way the law conceived their liberation, which was to be carried out on the basis of compensation, meant that emancipation would be a profitable business for their owners. The compensation was greater than the price at which the Gypsies were normally traded. The author proposed that the compensation be transformed into an allowance of 6, 7 or 8 per cent.⁴⁰ This transformation gives expression to the leap in the direction of modernisation that Romanian society had made during the period.

At this time, in the context of militant abolitionism and the full flourishing of Romanticism, the theme of the good Gypsy makes its appearance in Romanian literature. Writings of this type expressed compassion for the unhappy lot of these native sons of Romania. In 1843, Cezar Bolliac pub-

lished the poems “Fata de boier și fata de țigan” (“The Boyar’s Daughter and the Gypsy’s Daughter”) and “Țiganul vândut” (“The Gypsy Sold”). In 1848, on the occasion of the freeing of the Gypsies by the revolutionary government in Bucharest, he wrote the poem “O țigancă cu pruncul său la statuia Libertății” (“A Gypsy Woman and Her Child at the Statue of Liberty”). In 1844, Ion Heliade Rădulescu published “Jupân Ion” (“Master John”), the moving story of a Gypsy slave who works as a labourer to support both his family and his young masters, a pair of orphaned boyar’s children. The text is a plea both for the human dignity of slaves to be recognised and against slavery itself: “My modern-minded poets, Master John may be a greater inspiration to you than a king; his deeds should free all of his brethren from slavery; try to look upon them as the dawning of that great and blessed day when no slave shall remain on Romanian territories, if there is a God up in the sky.”⁴¹ In 1844, Vasile Alecsandri’s *Istoria unui galbân* (Tale of a Ducat) appeared, evoking the life of Gypsy slaves and which was in fact a satire against the institution of slavery. Such literary creations, written by major personalities of the period, had a strong impact on public opinion. Also highly influential was the play *Țiganii* (The Gypsies), written by Gheorghe Asaki, which was performed at the National Theatre in Iași on 24 January 1856 after the adoption of the final law of emancipation.

In time, virtually the whole Romanian society embraced the idea that it was necessary to liberate the Gypsies. On the eve of the adoption of the final laws of emancipation, even the leading slave owners declared themselves to be in favour of emancipation. After the State had freed its own slaves as well as the slaves of the monasteries, it became especially clear that the emancipation of all the Gypsies was just a matter of time. What distinguished the leading boyars from the liberally-minded intellectuals was the practical manner in which emancipation was to take place. Unlike the young liberals, who wanted the emancipation of the Gypsies to take place immediately, the boyars considered that the process should take place gradually and that attention needed to be given to the future of this population. The landed aristocracy was in favour of moderate reform that would not undermine the structure of society. In their view, the emancipation of the Gypsies should be preceded by a period in which they were prepared for life in freedom so that they would be capable of earning a living and of integrating into rural communities. For this reason, many boyars sent their Gypsies to learn a trade with which they could earn a living and be of use to the rural population.⁴² Some slave owners made the gesture (which was widely popularised by the press of the time) of freeing their slaves without any condition even before the laws of 1855–56. On the other hand, after the adoption of the laws, many boyars gave up on the compensation to which they were entitled by law. Militants of the abolitionist movement demanded

this on the grounds that it was immoral to receive compensation for giving up one's slaves.

The abolitionist current in the Romanian principalities did not restrict itself to the moral aspect of the problem of slavery and to the attainment of emancipation by law of the Gypsies. The arguments of abolitionists were also characterised by concern for the future of this mass of new citizens, in other words, for the social and economic future of the emancipated slaves. In an article published in *Zimbrul* (The Aurochs), the author called upon the State "to take a decision as soon as possible with regard to the organisation of this great body of people [the freed Gypsies—note V.A.] suddenly thrown from a position of servitude and despair into the free world; a means of organisation is required that will transform them, under strict supervision and even by force, from a state of demoralisation and other failings to a position of love for work, until such time that the newly emancipated slave understands that by work he can improve his knowledge and material position."⁴³ We shall see that when the emancipation of the Gypsies actually took place, the social and economic dimension of the reform was left to the responsibility of the landowners and the local authorities, if not neglected altogether. As a result of all manner of interests and the by no means negligible fact that reforms implemented at this time in Romanian society were limited in nature, the social integration of the Gypsies imagined by the militants of the abolitionist movement (in other words, their social and ethnic assimilation by the Romanian peasantry) took place only for a part of the Gypsy population. Many of them were effectively left outside of the new social organisation, whose foundations were laid from the 1830s to the 1860s.

The emancipation of the Gypsies was one of the components of the social modernisation in the Romanian principalities. Chronologically speaking, it was the first major social reform to take place there. The abolition of the corvee labour and the transformation of the corvee-peasant into a small-holder became law only in 1864, almost a decade after the final emancipation laws. The opinion at the time was that the emancipation of the Gypsies could and should be carried out before the resolution of the more important and more complicated problem of rural property. Certain radical voices viewed the emancipation of the Gypsies as the forerunner of the abolition of the corvee. In an article published in *România literară* (Literary Romania) in the issue of 3 December 1855, after pointing out that the "dark-skinned serf" and the "Romanian pleb" "have linked arms and borne together the burden of this land", he author hails the emancipation law and the beginning of a new era of freedom: "Today marks the fall of the slavery of the dark-skinned people: tomorrow we hope will mark the end of the serfdom of the white people [...]"⁴⁴

3. THE LAWS OF EMANCIPATION

The emancipation of the Gypsies in the principalities was a process that lasted approximately two decades.⁴⁵ In the context of the entire range of problems involved in the modernisation of Romanian society after 1821 as perceived by the political forces of the time, the Gypsy question was of minor importance. The problem of the peasantry, of the guilds etc., was infinitely more important and was granted attention accordingly by the authorities. Even for the promoters of abolition, the elimination of slavery was to be just one part of the social reforms they were demanding for the country as a whole. Only at a late stage, once the authorities had already taken certain decisive steps in this direction did the abolition of slavery become a goal in its own right. The slow speed at which society and the political powers came around to the idea that the abolition of the slavery of the Gypsies was necessary is perhaps indicative of the overall evolution of the Romanian principalities during this period: that is to say, an evolution in the direction of a modernisation that was becoming ever more evident, while still deeply marked by the past; the transformations in Romanian society were characterised by a process of moderate reformism. An increasingly pronounced opening towards the West on the part of the Romanians together with the entry into public life of the generation of 1848 gave fresh impetus to the process of internal modernisation. It was then that the question of slavery became one of national interest and was accordingly dealt with on a legislative and administrative level.

The process of institutional modernisation of the principalities began in fact with the Organic Regulations, founding documents with a virtually identical content in both of the principalities adopted by the Extraordinary Public Assemblies of Wallachia and Moldavia in 1831 during the Russian military occupation. They were the work of the leading boyars and the Russian general Pavel Kisselev, who was the administrative head of the occupation during those years. However, the abolition of slavery did not appear among the numerous innovations and elements contributing to the forging of a new society that were introduced by the Regulations. The Organic Regulations maintained slavery as a part of the country's social regime. The status of slaves did not alter from that which they had endured since ancient times. The boyars and the monasteries continued to own slaves without any restrictions being imposed upon them by the State. The regulations introduced with regard to slaves only affected state-owned Gypsies. According to articles 67 and 95 of the Organic Regulation of Wallachia and article 79 of the Organic Regulation of Moldavia, state-owned Gypsies were required to fulfil the same tax obligations as freemen. They paid capitation, which was fixed at thirty lei per family. Gold-washing Gypsies (*aurari*) from Wal-

lachia were required to pay fifty lei. State Gypsies living in towns and market towns who practised a craft or trade were required to join guilds (*bresle*) and to pay *patenta* (tradesmen's tax) together with other craftsmen. Gypsies belonging to monasteries or boyars continued to be exempt from any obligations to the State. At the same time, within the Organic Regulations we find the expression of an interest in the sedentarisation of this population. The authorities were entrusted with the task of finding the most appropriate methods of settling state Gypsies, eliminating nomadism and binding these Gypsies to an agricultural occupation or a craft (article 95 in Wallachia and article 86 in Moldavia).⁴⁶

The two areas in which the Organic Regulations expressed an interest in the Gypsies—namely their tax regime and sedentarisation—were to return to the attention of the lawmakers and the authorities on a number of occasions during the 1830s. The State was interested in transforming slaves into taxpayers and to bring them to an occupational status that was similar to that of the vast majority of the population of the country. At this time there was no question of abolishing slavery.

The major preoccupation of the Gypsies was naturally the elimination of nomadism and the transformation of nomadic Gypsies into agricultural workers and craftsmen. In Wallachia, the Extraordinary Public Assembly, the body that drew up the Organic Regulation, adopted the "Regulations for the improvement of the conditions of state Gypsies" in 1831. The aim of the regulations was to eliminate nomadism, to settle the Gypsies and to train them in the tilling of the land. Plans of action suited to each Gypsy caste were proposed. Gypsies from certain categories (*lingurari* and *aurari*) already had fixed dwellings and lived in their own settlements located usually on the edge of a village. Consequently, it was proposed that these categories be trained in the tilling of the land and that they be provided with the same regime of obligations to the master of the estate where they resided as the peasants. In the case of Gypsies who caused problems for the authorities, it was proposed that such groups be dispersed and resettled in groups of five to six families per village. Restrictions were to be placed on the freedom of movement of these groups, who were allowed to leave the village only with written permission from the authorities. As for the *netoți*, "being a public hazard and of little use to the State, they shall be driven out of the principality and sent back whence they came". Likewise, the regulament called on the monasteries and the boyars to take similar measures with regard to the nomadic Gypsies under their possession.⁴⁷

In accordance with the model of the Wallachian regulations, the Moldavian Assembly adopted a set of "Regulations for the settlement of the Gypsies", which became an annex to the Organic Regulation.⁴⁸ The regulations contained measures that were designed to stimulate the settlement of

state Gypsies on private estates. Landowners wishing to use state Gypsies in the tilling of the land, in woodworking or as industrial labourers could obtain them under contract from the Ministry of Interior on the condition that they settled them on their estates, providing them with a parcel of land and garden and to facilitate their building of houses. In order to encourage their settlement in this fashion, the affected Gypsies could obtain a series of tax breaks, including exemption from the payment of tax for a year. They were not permitted to leave the estate where they were settled and could travel on a provisional basis outside the region only on the basis of written permission from the local authorities. In order to restrict their movement, with the exception of Gypsies engaged in the rearing and trading of asses, mules and horses, Gypsies were not allowed to keep such livestock. At the same time, even the boyars were required to take care of the settlement of the nomadic Gypsies (*lăieși* and *lingurari*) in their possession, either on their own estate or if they did not have an estate, on that of another boyar.

These measures were taken at a time when nomadism was practised by only a relatively small part of the Gypsy population. Sedentarisation had begun to occur naturally and in the absence of a specific state policy some time before this period. In the 1830s, nomads could still be found among the ranks of state Gypsies in particular. The efforts made to sedentarise state Gypsies bore fruit: censuses and other official statistical documents of the time reflect the phenomenon of sedentarisation. When in Wallachia in 1839 a fresh census of state Gypsies was held, it was found that this category of Gypsies had settled in villages and was living in houses, having been assimilated in many respects among the local ploughmen of the country.⁴⁹

Also at this time in Wallachia the State began to buy Gypsies from private owners, with the Gypsies entering the category of state Gypsies. This process took place on the basis of the 1832 law “for the correction of the organisation of state Gypsies”. The law regulated the tax obligations of state Gypsies. The *aurari* were to pay fifty lei per year plus a tithe, in other words a total of fifty-five lei, whilst all the other Gypsies were to pay thirty lei plus a tithe, i.e. thirty-three lei. As was the case for other taxpayers, state Gypsies could practise any profession apart from that of *aurar*. The *aurari* needed official authorization in order to practise their profession. They were exempt from all other obligations to the State. Gypsy craftsmen settled in towns and belonging to a guild were required to respect the rules of their respective guild. The tithe collected from the Gypsies (five lei from the *aurari*, three lei from the rest) was kept by the Prison Authority. One leu per year from the tithe of each tax-paying Gypsy was used to pay the Gypsies’ *vătaf* (who was responsible for the actual collection of the head tax). The money left over after the payment of the *vătafi* (i.e., four lei per *aurar* and two lei from the rest) was to be used “solely for the purchase of Gypsies, in

order to achieve a gradual increase in the number of Gypsies in the service of the State" (Article 12). The head of the prison authorities was responsible for the purchase of Gypsies from private owners and the courts were instructed to notify this official of all cases in which Gypsies were put on sale (Article 13). Gypsies who were bought in this way would then enter the ranks of those paying tax to the State.⁵⁰

Buying Gypsies in this way effectively meant their removal from the possession of private owners, where they benefited from exemption from all tax obligations. We saw earlier that the Organic Regulation did not alter the tax status of privately owned Gypsies, which in fact amounted to a privilege for slave owners. The transfer of a slave from private property to the property of the State was equivalent to the acquisition of a new taxpayer. It is in this light that we should understand the State's preoccupation with increasing the number of state slaves by purchasing them from private owners. At the same time, the law satisfied the desire of some boyars to get rid of their slaves, in conditions in which keeping slaves was not profitable and the sale of them to other private owners was not always possible. The price that slave owners received from the State for their slaves was sizeable. Consequently, the 1832 law was not promulgated out of humanitarian motives or out of concern for the fate of privately owned Gypsies. Such concerns appeared later on, when abolitionist feeling began to make its presence felt in Romanian society. At that time the buying of privately owned Gypsies by the State was presented as an improvement of their situation. The law of 1832 is important in the history of the process of emancipation in the sense that it laid down the conditions by which slaves could be extracted from the possession of a private slave owner. This was achieved via the payment of compensation at market price (in practice a sum in excess of market price was paid), so that property rights were not violated in any way. The later laws of emancipation were to follow this principle in spite of the voices calling for freeing slaves without any compensation. On the basis of the 1832 law, the head of the prison authority was able to buy Gypsies from private slave owners with the money collected from the tithe charged to state Gypsies. From 1833 until 1 July 1839, 185 Gypsies were bought from private owners in this way, at a cost of 86,328 lei. These Gypsies all became state Gypsies.⁵¹

Also in Wallachia, in 1838 the head of the prison authorities, colonel Herăscu, proceeded with the settlement of a number of Gypsies belonging to the State in villages and fixed dwellings. In this way, the Gypsies *de facto* entered the ranks of the peasantry. At the same time, measures were taken that led to their complete assimilation into the Romanian population via mixed marriages.⁵² This measure was perceived as a first step towards the emancipation of state Gypsies, although this was in fact just an arrange-

ment. As noted by an observer of Romanian politics during this period, the liberated Gypsies were not settled on state lands but were instead given by the prince either to political supporters or to those he was interested in winning over to his side. The Gypsies would fulfil towards the owners of the estates where they settled the same obligations as a peasant, which amounted to a much larger sum than the thirty-five to fifty lei that they previously paid to the Treasury. Consequently, it can be seen that the prince's gesture was motivated not by humanitarian feelings but by political interest. Boyars close to the prince in this way gained a new workforce.⁵³

With time, the regulation of the obligations of state Gypsies was extended to the rest of the Gypsies. In Wallachia in 1840, the Public Assembly established new regulations for monastery Gypsies, who were subject to abuses both from their leaseholders and the monasteries themselves. During this period, the monasteries leased out the Gypsies under their possession. As the obligations of the Gypsies were not regulated by law, the obligations were left up to the discretion of their owners and leaseholders. The State intervened to curb abuses of this system and to improve the fate of the Gypsies. By law, their obligations to the monastery that owned them were limited to the head tax paid by Romanians, namely the sum of thirty lei per year plus the tithe (in other words, a further three lei) used to pay the *zapcii* and *vătafi* who collected the taxes. This sum was fixed for six years, until 1846. After this time, they were each to pay forty lei, including the tithe. Leasing contracts for these estates were required to respect this law. The Gypsies were also required to fulfil "duties to the owner" for the master of the estate where they were living.⁵⁴

In Moldavia, the State did not attempt to acquire privately owned slaves during the 1830s. However, measures were taken to limit abuses perpetrated by slave owners. In 1839, privately owned Gypsies were granted the right of pre-emption over themselves in cases where their owner wished to sell them. Instead of selling the slave to a third party, the slave owner was required to emancipate the slave for the sale price, if offered to him. In the same year, a deed from the prince established that in cases where they were to be sold, the respective Gypsies should be consulted and that the transaction could only go ahead if the Gypsies made a written statement that they did not wish to buy their freedom.⁵⁵ At the same time, modifications were made to the *Sobornicescul hrison* issued in 1785 by Alexandru Mavrocordat. The law was still in force and had been republished in 1835. In the spirit of the Organic Regulation and the evolutions that had taken place in society, certain of the segregationist provisions of the law were abolished, although official marriages between freemen and slaves remained forbidden in principle. In 1839, the prohibition of marriages of Romanian men and women to Gypsies released from slavery by their masters was abolished.⁵⁶ In 1844,

it was forbidden for a marriage between a Gypsy and a Romanian to be sundered. In such cases, the slave became a freeman and was obliged to redeem his freedom, by means of payment to his master; if the slave did not possess sufficient funds, the money would be lent from the revenues of the Church. Children born to marriages between freemen and slaves were declared to be free.⁵⁷

The first law to abolish slavery for one of the categories of the Gypsies was adopted in Wallachia in 1843. This was the law “for the withdrawal of taxpayers from the control of the prison authority and their transfer to the control of the county authorities”, which was voted in by the Public Assembly on 16 March and promulgated by the prince on 22 March 1843. The abolition of the slave status of these Gypsies was carried out via their removal from the tax records of the prison authority and transfer to the civil authorities. The head tax that they had previously paid to the prison authority was now to be collected by the local authorities. For a time, when it was hoped that the complete sedentarisation of the Gypsies would be possible, the level of the head tax remained as it had been in the past, including the tithe. The tithe was intended for the redeeming of the Gypsies from private owners. Through this law, a further 23,800 lei were added to the fund intended for the redeeming of the Gypsies, representing half of the sum of 47,600 lei that the State had saved from the abolition of the financial office of the prison authority. The other half of this sum went to the State Treasury. After these people had been fully integrated from a fiscal point of view into the ranks of village ploughmen, their tithe was to go to the village coffers, while the Treasury was to pay the sum of 47,600 lei only into the redemption fund.⁵⁸ It is clear that the State did not lose anything as a result of this law. The head tax remained the same, while the sums intended for the redeeming of the Gypsies required no additional financial effort on the part of the State Treasury.

On 28 August 1843, the Department of Internal Affairs of Wallachia issued an order that all owners of Gypsies were required within a period of eighteen months to make provision for the settlement of nomadic Gypsies in their possession in fixed settlements and houses, either on their own estates or on the estate of others. Any Gypsies found wandering the countryside after the end of this period would be settled on State land by the authorities.⁵⁹

In Moldavia on 31 January 1844, at the suggestion of Prince Mihail Sturdza, a law was adopted “for the particular regulation of the situation of the Gypsies of the Metropolitanate, the bishoprics and the monasteries.” On the basis of this law, Gypsies belonging to the Church and the monastic establishments became freemen. *Vătrași* Gypsies (those who were living on the estates) entered the ranks of taxpayers, thus having the same rights and

obligations to their master as the peasants, while *breslași* Gypsies (those who were members of a guild) were integrated into the category of tax-paying tradesmen. At the same time, they acquired the right to marry with Romanians. The tax collected from these Gypsies was placed in a special fund destined for the redemption of Gypsy slaves put up for sale by private owners.⁶⁰

Also in Moldavia, on 14 February 1844, the law was voted in that granted both nomadic and settled Gypsies their freedom, thereby acquiring the same rights as the other inhabitants of the country. In order to encourage the settlement in villages of nomadic Gypsies, the law made provision for certain exemptions for this category of Gypsies: they were exempt from the payment of tax for a year, while from all other state obligations of taxpaying inhabitants they were exempt for three years from the time of settlement. The exemptions were also valid for Gypsies that were already settled, being applicable from the moment of their settlement.⁶¹

A few months later, the Administrative Council of Moldavia specified that emancipated slaves settled in villages whose tax exemption had expired were to pay their tax to the Treasury, with the aforementioned being registered in the same tax records as the other inhabitants of the country, while former monastery slaves were registered in a separate tax record, with their tax intended for the redemption of the Gypsies.⁶²

The Wallachian emancipation law of 1843 applied to state Gypsies only. On 11 February 1847, at the suggestion of Prince Gheorghe Bibescu, the Assembly voted in a law freeing all slaves belonging to the Metropolitanate, bishoprics, monasteries and succursal monasteries, churches and any other public institutions. The law made no provision for compensation. In the explanatory text accompanying the bill, the prince points out that this measure was necessary since on the one hand the sums fixed by the laws of 1832 and 1844 for the redemption of the Gypsies were too small, while on the other hand the incomes of the Metropolitanate, the bishoprics and the monasteries were in excess of their needs to a considerable extent. The head tax that the Treasury would charge this category of emancipated slaves incorporated into the ranks of taxpayers was to be used for the redemption of slaves put on sale by private slave owners. The head tax accruing from privately owned Gypsies freed in this way was to be used for the same purpose.⁶³ The law would provide, without any additional expenditure on the part of the State, the necessary monies for the Reserve Fund founded in 1832 and thus for the continuation of the process of emancipation of privately owned Gypsies without the rights of private owners being affected.

In the 1848 revolution, which included among its leaders in Wallachia and Moldavia declared abolitionist radicals, the complete abolition of slavery was included among social priorities together with the emancipation

of corvee-peasants. Item 4 of the proclamation and programme of the revolution in Wallachia on 9/21 June 1848 ordered “the emancipation of the Gypsies by means of compensation”.⁶⁴ On 26 June, the provisional government issued a decree declaring that privately owned Gypsies were free and founding a Commission for the liberation of slaves.⁶⁵ The Commission, which comprised three members (Ioasaf Znogoveanu, Cezar Bolliac and Petrache Poenaru), set about the implementation of the decree. Emancipated Gypsies received notice of liberation, while their former owners were to be compensated by the State. In this context some boyars freed their slaves without asking for any compensation, but there were also a substantial amount of opposition; some boyars dragged their feet over the implementation of the law. The stifling of the revolution in the autumn of 1848 put an end to these social transformations; with all Gypsies being returned to the status they held prior to the revolution.⁶⁶ The abolition of slavery was included among the “Wishes of the National Party in Moldavia”, the programme of the Moldavian revolutionaries published in August 1848 in Czernowitz.⁶⁷

Nonetheless, the process of emancipation of Romanian society had reached a stage where slavery was regarded by almost everyone as a vestige of the past that needed to disappear. From the Organic Regulation until the 1848 revolution, in other words in less than a generation, Romanians had gone from the acceptance of the slavery of the Gypsies as a natural given to the identification of slavery as a barbaric institution.

Barbu Știrbei, the new prince of Wallachia after the revolution, who reigned from 1849 to 1856, was a promoter of modernisation and was pre-occupied by the Gypsy problem. On 22 November 1850 a princely decree was issued, forbidding the splitting up of Gypsy families by means of donation or sale. Similarly, the sale of Gypsies among private slave owners was forbidden in cases involving between one and three families; a slave owner wishing to sell slaves was required to make a request to the Treasury, which bought them and immediately set them free.⁶⁸ The following year, it was ordered that the State would buy back Gypsies who were mistreated or suffered as a result of other forms of negligence on the part of their masters.⁶⁹ Barbu Știrbei prepared at an early stage the liberation of the last category of slaves, namely privately owned slaves. In a report compiled in June 1855, among measures recommended for the reorganisation of the country, he included the abolition of slavery, which he regarded as an outrage.⁷⁰

“The law for the emancipation of all Gypsies in the Principality of Wallachia” was promulgated on 8/20 February 1856. The law enacted the abolition of slavery for privately owned slaves. Slave owners were to receive compensation of ten ducats for each individual slave. The money was to be paid in stages over a number of years from the Compensation Fund. The tax that was to be collected on behalf of the State from the freed slaves was

paid into the Compensation Fund. All taxpaying Gypsies contributed to the fund, as well as the tax collected from former monastery and state Gypsies. At the same time, the law made it obligatory for the Gypsies to settle. Gypsies already settled in villages were to remain where they were and would be incorporated into the tax records for the respective locality. Those Gypsies who did not have a fixed dwelling, in other words, the nomads who wandered the country, were required to settle in villages wherever they desired as long as they established fixed dwellings there. Gypsies living on the boyars' residences were to be settled by the administration in the towns or villages of their choosing. After all Gypsies had been settled, they would be forbidden from moving from their new places of residence for the period of two censuses, according to the law of 1851.⁷¹

In Moldavia, where following the application of the law of 1844, as in Wallachia, only privately owned Gypsies were still living under conditions of slavery, Prince Grigore Alexandru Ghica (1849–56) undertook a similar measure. On 28 November 1855, he addressed the Administrative Council on the subject of the necessity of abolishing the slavery of the Gypsies and proposed the drawing up of a bill to this end.⁷² Petre Mavrogheni and Mihail Kogălniceanu drafted the bill. On 10/22 December 1855 the Public Divan voted in the “legislation for the abolition of slavery, the settlement of compensation and the transfer of emancipated slaves to the status of taxpayers”.⁷³ Under the terms of this law, the Gypsies belonging to private owners were declared free. The slave owners would receive compensation of 8 ducats for *linguari* and *vătrași* and 4 ducats for *lăieși*; however, no compensation was offered for invalids and babies. The money intended for compensation payments was to be provided partly by the tax paid by emancipated state and monastery slaves, as well as privately owned Gypsies emancipated at an earlier stage, and partly by additional funds from the Treasury, as well as certain sums collected from the treasury of the clergy. Due to the fact that the State's finances had been exhausted, slave owners were given state bonds with annual returns of 10 per cent. Slave owners who gave up the compensation to which they were entitled by law were offered exemption from the payment of tax and other state obligations for their former slaves for a period of ten years. This arrangement was beneficial both to the State and to slave owners, since it made it easier to settle emancipated slaves on the estates.

Once the two laws had been voted, some boyars gave up their slaves freely, claiming no compensation from the State. In the newspapers of the time, declarations by slave owners announcing the waiving of their entitlement to compensation appeared on an almost daily basis; lists of these slave owners were published, resulting in the popularisation of gestures of this kind made by certain slave owners. Wallachian boyars proved less generous

than their Moldavian counterparts, where there were a large number of owners waiving their right to compensation. In a report of the Moldavian Department of Finance from June 1856, it emerges that 334 slave owners claimed compensation for their former slaves, while 264 gave up their entitlement. The number of Gypsies for whom the State had to pay compensation was 16,023 *vătrași* and 4566 *lăieși*; the total sum to be paid out was 4,613,112 lei. Entitlement to compensation was waived for 10,424 persons. The statistics in the report are nonetheless partial, as they do not include the situation in several districts which had not sent the results of censuses of emancipated slaves.⁷⁴

Thus it can be seen that the abolition of slavery in the Romanian principalities was carried out via a whole series of laws. Slaves were not freed en masse; instead, emancipation took place category by category through a process that lasted two and a half decades. Practically speaking, it began with the Organic Regulation and closed with the laws of 1855–56. The legislative measures enacted were also linked to the social evolutions that Romanian society underwent during the period and the change in the sense of civic spirit that took place, as illustrated by our outline of abolitionist feeling in the principalities and the actions undertaken in its name. The result of the emancipation laws, a population of approximately 250,000 people was freed from slavery and integrated, from a legal point of view, into the ranks of the citizens of the country.

4. SOCIAL EVOLUTIONS AFTER EMANCIPATION

The laws that enacted the emancipation of the enslaved Gypsies secured the legal status of freemen for their beneficiaries and settled the issue of the compensation that their erstwhile owners were to receive from the State Treasury. In terms of their tax status, the Gypsies were assimilated into the ranks of taxpayers. They were recorded in the tax register of the village where they were living at the time of emancipation and were to perform the same state obligations as the peasantry. However, these laws dealt only partially and in a general sense with the economic and social facets of the future of this population. The laws speak of establishing the emancipated Gypsies in a village or on an estate; in some cases, until their complete entry into the ranks of corvee peasants, their tax obligations were reduced by half. However, there is no mention whatever of obliging private landowners or monasteries to provide their former slaves or former state slaves settled on their lands with parcels of land, livestock or tools, which would have been the only means of guaranteeing conditions similar to those of corvee peasants for emancipated slaves.

The main goal of the law was in fact to settle (sedentarise) this category of population. The policy of settling Gypsies in villages and houses actually preceded the legislation abolishing slavery. In the 1840s and '50s, the governments of the two principalities and the county and district authorities adopted a series of measures to this end. In this way, there was particular interest in the settlement in villages of Gypsy blacksmiths. When in 1847 the authorities in Wallachia carried out a rigorous registration of blacksmiths by village, district and county, it was found that there were blacksmiths virtually in every village, one in most villages.⁷⁵ The deeds issued and measures adopted by the central and local administration in connection with the implementation of the emancipation laws of 1855–56 were intended exclusively to promote the sedentarisation of the Gypsies. In Moldavia on 6 April 1856, the Department of the Interior put forward a set of regulations designed to assure the settlement of the newly emancipated slaves. It was established that the settlement of the Gypsies was to take place within a period of three months, in principle of the estate of their former master. If the latter no longer wished to keep Gypsies on his estate or if the Gypsies no longer wished to remain on the estate of their former master, the ministry was responsible for the settlement of the Gypsies in another location, where their owner was prepared to receive them. If the settlement of emancipated slaves was not achieved by this method, as a last resort the Gypsies were to be settled on the monastic estates. At the same time, the *lăieși* were forbidden from establishing their own hamlets or villages or to settle in forests, at the side of major roads or in isolated locations. They were similarly forbidden from wandering the country in bands and living in tents. The district authorities were responsible for monitoring the way in which the settlement of the Gypsies was proceeding.⁷⁶

The legislation left the actual process of sedentarisation of emancipated Gypsies and, generally speaking, the living conditions of these communities up to the estate owners themselves. There were frequent cases of boyars continuing to use a substantial number of Gypsies for agricultural labour and especially for domestic labour (cooks, servants, coachmen) even after 1855–56.⁷⁷ There was no enthusiasm for the loss of this workforce, as demonstrated by the obstinacy with which some boyars opposed the idea of emancipation right up until the adoption of the final law and the protests mounted by some of them with regard to the law.

Generally speaking, however, the slave owners complied with the law. At a time when there was an excess of available agricultural land and labour was scarce, many slave owners were happy to provide emancipated slaves with strips of land that by law had to be provided to each taxpayer. According to the system in place at the time, possession of a strip of land required its holder to provide a payment in goods and to perform *corvee* to the land-

owner. Some boyars attempted to introduce such an arrangement even before the emancipation laws of 1855–56. It was believed that this process would effect the transformation of the Gypsies into peasants. Some emancipated slaves acquired exactly the same status as peasants on a boyar's estate. They entered into possession of a portion of agricultural land, which they cultivated under the same regime of obligations to the landowner as the peasants. Nevertheless, as becomes clear from contemporary documents, many newly emancipated Gypsies obstinately refused to accept the portion of land offered to them or to cultivate it. They did not attempt to adopt the profession of ploughman or the other forms of labour typical to the peasant economy, instead continuing to work as blacksmiths, spoon-makers, brick-makers etc. With regard to formerly nomadic Gypsies, such attempts as those mentioned above resulted in almost complete failure. Even if the majority of the Gypsies settled in fixed settlements, they did not become ploughmen. Not even the *vătrași*, who in some cases had lived in the villages and at the boyar's residence for generations all adapted to agricultural labour. Some of them continued to practise their former occupations.

It is true that some owners applied special conditions to the Gypsies: there were many cases of Gypsies being allocated land that had not been cleared of scrub as well as parcels of lands that were smaller than those allocated to Romanian taxpayers. On the other hand, the Gypsies were obliged to carry out the same quantity of work as the Romanians, with the quantity of work far outstripping the benefits they might receive from the cultivation of the portion of land they received.⁷⁸ However, the principal cause of the refusal of a large part of the Gypsies to embrace the agricultural work designated to them by law was the economic and tax burden that came with their new social status. Becoming freemen meant joining the ranks of taxpayers, while receiving a portion of land on the estate of a landowner meant the imposition of *corvee*. In comparison with earlier times, when the Gypsies were *de facto* a privileged section of the population because the obligations they owed to their master and the State were limited, they then had to pay tax and carry out corvee together with the peasants. Paradoxically, from the point of view of their obligations, emancipation made their situation worse, even if the level of the obligation to which they were bound were reduced for a time. They perceived their new social and legal status as a worsening of their exploitation. Their refusal to become ploughmen and their flight from the estates where they were settled actually amounted to a flight from the payment of tax and the carrying out of corvee labour.

There were differences between the two principalities with regard to the integration of the Gypsies into agriculture. In Moldavia, even though the regime to which the estate owners subjected emancipated Gypsies was harsh, the proportion of those who became integrated into agriculture was

greater than in Wallachia. In both principalities there were large numbers of Gypsies who did not integrate into agricultural life immediately after the acquisition of their freedom, as required by the emancipation laws. Consequently, these emancipated Gypsies remained on the estate of an owner, but not as peasants. They signed contracts for houses, but they discharged their corvee obligations in cash.⁷⁹

The attempt to sedentarise the Gypsies took place at a time in which there were a whole series of factors with the potential to disrupt the process. Thus, not all landowners were interested in the settlement of Gypsies (including their former slaves) on their estates. It was in the 1850s and the first part of the following decade, up until the agrarian reform of 1864, that the transformation of feudal-type property, based on the obligations of boyars and corvee-peasants, into modern-style capitalist property took place. The rural population became much more mobile as a consequence of the implementation in the two principalities of the agrarian settlements of 1851, according to which the estates were to be divided up between lands that became the exclusive property of the landowner and lands allocated to the corvee-peasants, and the tendency of some landowners to deprive peasants of the good lands on their estates. In the latter case, some landowners allocated to the peasants lands that were infertile or even lands that had not been cleared of scrub, even seeking to rid themselves of the peasants in order to obtain a larger surface area of land that belonged exclusively to them. In the context of the aforementioned abuses perpetrated by landowners and at the same time the often sizeable incentives offered to colonists by landowners interested in the valorisation of sparsely populated estates, a significant proportion of the rural population was on the move during this period. The refusal of many Gypsies to actually settle in villages to which they were bound by law, their tendency to move away and the rejection of sedentarisation should also be considered in this wider social context.

Equally, the policy with regard to the Gypsies lacked consistency. Sometimes the authorities acted in hesitant fashion, thereby encouraging emancipated slaves to abandon the villages and estates where they had been settled by law. The agrarian law of 1851 in Wallachia restricted the movement of former state and monastery Gypsies settled at the time on different estates. The final emancipation law of 1856 did the same with regard to the former slaves of the boyars. They had the right to move to another estate or to the town only after the completion of two five-year tax periods from the time of the promulgation of the law. In 1857, however, the Ministry of Interior mistakenly ordered that they be given the right to move after the completion of two tax periods from the time of their emancipation (which took place as a result of the laws of 1843 and 1847) not from the appearance of the law in question.⁸⁰ The result was that almost all of the Gypsies requested permis-

sion to move away from the estates where they were living. Following the intervention of the landowners, Wallachia's ruling council (*Căimăcămia*) specified that the two tax periods were to be calculated from 1851 and refused all the requests to move made by the Gypsies.⁸¹ In consequence, the only way for the Gypsies to escape the corvee and tax was to flee. In 1858 and the years that immediately followed, many Gypsies abandoned the estates where they had been settled in the 1840s, causing a great deal of inconvenience to landowners and the central and local authorities. There were only relatively few cases in which they were returned to their former places of settlement, the authorities eventually being forced to register them in the places where they settled.⁸²

Unlike in Wallachia, in Moldavia the law of December 1855 did not tie the Gypsies to the place where they had been living at the moment of emancipation, instead tolerating their movement to other estates. On the other hand, the Moldavian authorities showed more consistency in their policy to sedentarise the Gypsies and tie them to agriculture. The authorities undertook measures designed to disperse Gypsy communities among the rural Romanian population. The outcome was that in Moldavia the Gypsies actually moved over more quickly to a sedentary way of life and in a greater proportion than in Wallachia. Even the process of ethnic and linguistic assimilation was more substantial.

In the conditions of the territorial resettlement of the emancipated slaves that took place in the years following the adoption of the final emancipation law, the Gypsies began to establish themselves in Wallachian and Moldavian towns. It appears that the authorities approved of this phenomenon and actually encouraged the settlement of a number of Gypsies in towns. This was a means of reducing the pressure created by the presence of the Gypsies in rural areas, at a time when the reorganisation of rural property, of village communities and of the tax system in the villages was one of the main priorities of political actors. From this point of view, the movement of many Gypsies to the towns seemed like a solution. In 1858 in Wallachia the authorities approved requests to settle in the towns on a large scale. Gypsies who began to own property through the purchase of parcels of land in the towns and who were also craftsmen did not fall under the law of 1851, which forbade the movement of Gypsies within the two five-year periods.⁸³ Consequently, from that very year there appeared a wave of Gypsies who settled on the margins of towns, the majority of them being craftsmen. In Moldavia a similar phenomenon took place, though on a much smaller scale. Muntenia has remained until the present day the region of the country with the largest urban Gypsy population. At that time, i.e. at the end of the 1850s and the beginning of the 1860s, Gypsies became inhabitants of

Romanian towns. The suburbs of Bucharest and of the larger towns received this influx of new town-dwellers.

The Gypsies who settled in the villages earned a living through their traditional crafts. Tradesmen adapted relatively quickly to the new conditions. They were registered as craftsmen, paying tax accordingly. However, not all of them were craftsmen. Gypsies who had no profession gained employment as servants, usually in villages other than the one in which they were registered as taxpayers. Gypsies belonging to this category were led by a *vătaf*, who dealt with the landowner or leaseholder, undertaking to ensure that the Gypsies under his authority presented themselves for work, in exchange for certain sums of money and the upkeep of his men. When an estate no longer required their services, the Gypsies moved on to another place.⁸⁴

Some categories of Gypsies continued to lead an itinerant way of life. Formally speaking, according to the laws of emancipation, they were settled in villages. They acquitted themselves of corvee obligations by the payment of a sum of money (between thirty and sixty lei per family per year), without having a single furrow of cultivated land. The land they did have was used for pasture during the time they spent there. They continued to lead a nomadic way of life, living in tents and moving from place to place in summer, before withdrawing to the mountains during winter, where they erected huts. At the first sign of spring, they would return to the villages where they were registered in order to pay tax and corvee, before setting off again to wander the land.⁸⁵

For many years, emancipated slaves constituted a serious problem for the authorities, the police and the population, due to their vagrancy and the thefts and crimes that they committed. The police took action against many individuals and some groups of Gypsies. As these problems were created mostly by large groups of Gypsies who lived in certain areas, attempts were made to disperse them. As soon as the Ministry of Interior left the solution of these problems up to the county authorities, the measures taken against the Gypsies took on a much more local character. In some places, systematic measures were taken with regard to the groups of Gypsies causing the problems. The prefecture in the county of Neamț, for example, dispersed the groups of *lăieși* Gypsies living in the county. In a report compiled by the sub-prefect of Piatra Neamț, dating from 30 May 1863, we find a justification of these measures, as well as a plan to disperse the Gypsies among the villages of the county: “as long as these individuals, who are beyond any sense of morality and band together in groups, do not disappear from the villages, or will not be distributed one or two [Gypsies] per village in order to split them up, public order will not be re-established”.⁸⁶ The prefect went on to propose the dispersal of the Gypsies among the villages, with one eman-

cipated Gypsy being allocated for every twenty houses of Romanians. The Ministry of Interior approved these measures.⁸⁷ In some areas, Gypsies were settled in villages in small numbers and placed under the supervision of the local police. The Gypsies' former practise of seasonal migration was stopped and the movement of individuals from place to place in order to practise their crafts was strictly regulated, being carried out on the basis of a permit to travel valid for a fixed period of time.

The rural law of 1864, which brought about the establishment of capitalist-type property in Romania, was introduced at a time when only a part of the emancipated slaves had adopted *de facto* the condition of corvee-peasant. The law transformed the latter category into landowners, either of the parcels of land that they were using at the time or, in the case of those who had moved, on State land (in fact, estates that had belonged to the monasteries dedicated to the Holy Places, which had been secularised in 1863). The text of the law made no reference to the Gypsies. The special situation in which the majority of emancipated slaves were living (i.e., living on private estates on the basis of an understanding with the owner, without working the land) was not regulated by law. Consequently, the resolution of their situation was left up to the discretion of the local authorities and the estate owners. Some landowners refused to accept emancipated slaves who did not perform corvee within the category of corvee-peasants. The government intervened via a journal of the Cabinet, which ordered that Gypsies settled on estates in a house but without any agricultural land were to be granted ownership of just the land where their house was located and its garden. If the Gypsies wished to receive agricultural land, they would have to settle on State land. On the other hand, those Gypsies who were working a portion of land of fifty *prăjini* (one square *prăjină* = 17.70 square metres) or more, and who were therefore living as corvee-peasants, would benefit from the property law.⁸⁸

As a result of the implementation of the rural law, some emancipated slaves became peasant smallholders. The category most affected in this respect were the *vătrași*, namely former slaves who had long since become accustomed to agricultural labour, but other categories of Gypsies who had embraced this way of life in the years between emancipation and 1864, also benefited in this way. In the years that immediately followed 1864, a part of the Gypsies were moved onto State lands, where they became smallholders. On the former monastic estates, as well as on certain underpopulated private estates, villages were established inhabited chiefly, and sometimes exclusively, by Gypsies.

The agrarian reform of 1864 was important for the Gypsies, not only as a result of the new social condition that it ensured for many of them, but also because it put an end to the population movements that had characterised

the previous decade. In this way, life in rural areas stabilised. For a long time, most former slaves would continue to live in settlements established for them during the era of Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza.

Thus, a process that had lasted between ten and twenty years depending on the moment of emancipation of the different categories of Gypsies came to an end. By this time, there was virtually not a single settlement in Romania, either rural or urban, that was not home to at least one or more families of Gypsies. The Gypsies were almost always settled at the edge of a village or, in cases where there were larger numbers of them, on a separate street or in a separate neighbourhood. There were also villages inhabited entirely by former Gypsy slaves, especially in the vicinity of monasteries.

This is only one aspect of the way in which the problem of emancipated slaves was solved in the social conditions of the time. The 1840s–60s were a time of transition for the Gypsy population as a whole. By the end of the period, a part of the Gypsies had become peasants, integrating themselves into the Romanian society in the process of modernisation. Another part of the population, however, even if it had settled in one place, was still living by its traditional occupations. The Romanian village, backward and with limited material possibilities, continued to call upon the Gypsy craftsmen and their goods. However, in respect of their social position, this category of Gypsies had a different status compared to that of the slave craftsmen had had on the estate of their feudal master. If under the ancien régime the Gypsies were considered part of an economic and social system, with a specific function and status, in the new system the Gypsies and their traditional professions became a completely marginal element in Romanian society, which had already begun on the path to capitalist-style modernisation. Practically speaking, the position of the Gypsy craftsmen in the country's economy was insignificant, while their social position was peripheral. The fact that the Gypsies lived at the edge of the village, and that they buried their dead at the edge of the cemetery is indicative of the position they occupied in the respective community and in society as a whole. It was at this time that the marginalisation of the Gypsies in Romania from a social point of view took place. Romania entered the modern era with this social component present as a relic of its past.

The manner in which the problem of the Gypsies was solved in the Romanian principalities in the mid-nineteenth century was of a nature to influence the future development of this population. The dispersal of most Gypsy communities led to the rapid assimilation in the case of isolated families into the Romanian rural population. The adoption of an agricultural occupation led to the disappearance of Gypsies' distinctiveness in comparison to Romanian peasants. The former slaves assimilated into the Romanian masses, considering themselves to be Romanians and being registered as

such in statistics and censuses. Even some former monastic villages inhabited exclusively or largely by Gypsies, granted land under the agrarian reform of 1864, lost their ethnic character over the course of two to three generations. Generally speaking, however, large communities of Gypsies maintained their linguistic and cultural specificity independent of the social and occupation transformations that the members of such communities underwent. We can estimate the process of linguistic and cultural assimilation experienced by the Gypsy population in Romania to have taken place on a large scale, with substantial regional and local differences. Assimilation was most intense in Moldavia. The consequence of this process was that the number of Gypsies in the Old Kingdom of Romania grew at an extremely modest rate, while their proportion of the total population of the country was in continual decline. If at the time of the emancipation laws approximately 200,000 to 250,000 Gypsies were recorded in Romania, by 1876 (in other words, twenty years after the emancipation of the last group of the Gypsies) their number was estimated at 200,000.⁸⁹ In the final decade of the nineteenth century, Guido Cora estimated the number of Gypsies in Romania at between 250,000 and 300,000,⁹⁰ while a Romanian author estimated their number to be around 300,000.⁹¹ If we compare these figures to Romania's total population of 6 million at that time, we find that the Gypsies accounted for 4–5 per cent of the total population, compared to approximately 7 per cent during the period of emancipation.

However, the emigration of a large number of Romanian Gypsies in the 1850s and '60s, which was one of the main consequences of emancipation, also contributed to this state of affairs.

5. THE EMANCIPATION OF THE GYPSIES IN THE ROMANIAN PRINCIPALITIES AND THE SECOND GREAT MIGRATION OF THE GYPSIES (FROM THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY TO THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY)

The emancipation laws of the mid-nineteenth century gave rise to great mobility among the Gypsies. We have already seen that the objectives set by the country's political forces, namely to settle this mass of 200,000 to 250,000 people and transform them into peasants by tying them to a parcel of land, were only partially successful. At least to begin with, for the majority of the former slaves, the liberty they had obtained meant the possibility to abandon their former master. In the period following their emancipation, a large part of the Gypsies entered into a territorial movement that far exceeded the seasonal peregrinations that had previously been characteristic of the *lăieși* and the other groups of nomadic Gypsies. In former times, those groups

had traveled the country in the practice of their traditional crafts, returning at certain specific dates to their master's estate, where they would spend the winter. Now almost all former state slaves and a part of former monastery and boyars' slaves set off on a territorial movement that no longer followed the traditional routes and the ancient calendar. Formally speaking, the Gypsies were legally tied them to a particular place, registered among the taxpayers of the village and obliged to pay tax in that place. Such measures, coupled with the prohibition of "vagrancy", were not, however, sufficient to prevent this large-scale movement of the Gypsies, which constituted one of the most serious problems faced by the authorities. The years that followed immediately after 1858 constituted the period when the territorial mobility of the Gypsies was at its height. In this period, most of the Gypsies involved in the population movement abandoned the settlements established as their fixed abode and moved to other settlements on other estates, settled in towns or resumed a nomadic existence. Old groups of Gypsies, as well as new groups constituted on an ad hoc basis, wandered the country practising their traditional crafts or the marginal and seasonal occupations practised by the *rudari*, *lingurari* etc. Police documents recorded this phenomenon, especially from the point of view of the criminal offences committed under its aegis.

We have seen how at the end of this period of great territorial mobility for the Gypsies, the key reference point being the year 1864, many of them were already established on the edges of villages and towns, where they constituted a separate social and professional category (craftsmen in the case of some Gypsies and day labourers of others). There they had entered into a gradual process of linguistic, cultural and also ethnic assimilation, particularly in the case of small groups of Gypsies, especially those living in a rural environment. Other Gypsies, who had not adapted to a sedentary way of life, the majority of whom were former state slaves, continued to lead a nomadic existence. They caused a great deal of trouble to the authorities and the population. This category of the population was also subject to a continuing tendency towards sedentarisation. Still another group of Gypsies went into exile outside Romania.

Documentary archives of the period from the 1830s to the 1860s record instances of individual and groups of Gypsies crossing the borders of the country.⁹² Of course, in such cases we are not dealing with a new phenomenon: this population was always very mobile. We have seen that for centuries there was a migratory tendency from Wallachia and Moldavia into Transylvania and Hungary. This can be seen in the eighteenth century, when the Habsburg authorities took measures to stop the Gypsies from entering the Empire through the strict control of their borders and when they proceeded with the expulsion of groups of Gypsies from the Empire. Similarly,

there were significant numbers of Gypsies who crossed to the south of the Danube. Indicative of this demographic phenomenon is the fact that a large number of the Gypsies living today in Hungary and Slovakia are known as “Vlach Gypsies” (*oláh cigányok*, *valašski Cigáni*). The groups of Gypsies from this category (*lovari*, *căldărari*, *ciurari*) speak a language with numerous Romanian elements.⁹³ In addition to these groups, in southern Hungary there are groups of Romanian-speaking Gypsies known as *beás*, a term derived from the Romanian *băieși*, meaning gold-washers. This group, as demonstrated by the language that they speak, came from the Banat and western Transylvania.⁹⁴ The settlement of Gypsies from these two categories in Hungary took place in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The flight of the Gypsies over the border was not, however, a widespread phenomenon. The Gypsies from the principalities were the possession of their masters and they were of value to them. As soon as their absence was discovered, they were tracked down and brought back to the master as quickly as possible. Consequently, at no time were there any border crossings by Gypsies en masse. To a certain extent, the mobility of the Gypsies reflected the demographic movements of the time, when for political and military reasons it would happen that people came to settle in neighbouring countries.

After emancipation, with the Gypsies no longer the property of a master, there was no one to pursue them over the state border. Even the movements of the Gypsies within the country were normally supposed to be restricted and controlled by the practice of issuing permits to travel. Without these permits, which also specified the destination of the journey and its duration, the Gypsies were not allowed to leave the locality where they were registered as taxpayers. However, the Gypsies paid no attention to this measure. They would also cross the border without any official documents. When border crossings of this type are recorded, they appear to be regarded as something quite usual. The possibility that the Romanian authorities actually encouraged this state of affairs cannot be ruled out. At a time when tens of thousands of emancipated Gypsies who refused to settle in villages and become ploughmen were creating a serious social problem for the authorities, we may suppose that the emigration of these Gypsies was not regarded as a loss for the country.

We can observe how even during the period of emancipation, Gypsies originating from Romania pass into neighbouring countries, with the latter sometimes taking measures to expel these illegal immigrants. In Transylvania (which at the time was part of the Habsburg Empire), border guards were given express orders to act in this manner, demonstrating that the phenomenon was relatively large in scale.⁹⁵ In Bukovina, a large number of the Gypsies, who still practised a nomadic way of life following the measures

taken to sedentarise the population at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, originated from Romania.⁹⁶ Gypsies from Moldavia crossed into Bessarabia, which was then under Tsarist occupation, and from there journeyed on into Ukraine and Russia.⁹⁷ In Galicia and on the territory that today forms part of southern Poland, a wave of Gypsies arrived in the 1860s that was made up of individuals who differed in many respects from the Gypsies who had been living in these areas for several centuries. The new arrivals came in small groups and belonged to the clan of *căldărași*, who originated from Romania and Hungary, as well as the clan of *lovari* from Transylvania. Many of these groups stayed only for a short period of time in Poland before moving on. Other groups stayed longer, only heading west decades later.⁹⁸ During the period of emancipation, groups of Gypsies originating from Romania arrived in Hungary, the Balkan Peninsula and the Russian Empire. Documents from Serbian archives dating from the first half of the nineteenth century record numerous cases of Gypsies from Wallachia settling in Serbia. These newcomers, who were different from Serbian Gypsies, were known as “Romanian Gypsies” or *karavlaški*; some of them spoke Romanian only.⁹⁹ In Bulgaria, in the northern foothills of the Balkans, we find villages where alongside the Bulgarians lived *rudari*, Gypsies whose native language was Romanian.¹⁰⁰ Gypsies originating from Romania were also to be found in other parts of the Balkan Peninsula. In Bosnia they were known as *Karavlasli* (Black Romanians), while in Slavonia *Koritari*. These were Romanian-speaking Gypsies who had come from Wallachia during the period of emancipation or perhaps even earlier.¹⁰¹

The departure of Gypsies from Romania was a demographic process of an indeterminate period of time, spontaneous in nature, involving relatively small groups of people acting independently. Contemporary sources noted this phenomenon, without, however, paying any particular attention. Archive material is inevitably scarce, while no study of the phenomenon has ever been carried out in Romanian historiography.

The emigration of countless groups of Gypsies from Romania during the period of emancipation is one part of a large-scale demographic process. In the countries of Central and Western Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, groups of Gypsies came to settle who bore different linguistic, cultural etc. characteristics from those Gypsies whose ancestors had settled there centuries earlier.¹⁰² These new arrivals referred to themselves as *Rom* (plural: *Roma*). The dialects that they spoke were different from those of the local Gypsies, being characterised by a strong influence from Romanian. The most important groups among these Gypsies were those who belonged to the clans of the *căldărași*, *lovari* and *ciurari*. During the same period, Gypsies who no

longer spoke their ancestral language, speaking instead only Romanian, arrived in Central and Western Europe. These were *rudari*, *ursari* and *Boyás* (*băieși* or *aurari*).¹⁰³ This migration was relatively large in scale, with the newcomers overwhelming in terms of numbers the indigenous Gypsies.¹⁰⁴ At this time, the tableau of the Gypsy population in Western Europe, as well as in North and Latin America, underwent important changes. In Romology, it is considered that the second great Gypsy migration took place at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. The first great migration took place in the Middle Ages, when the Gypsies reached the entire European continent. At the start of the twentieth century, in the conditions of this important transformation in the tableau of the Gypsy population, scholars produced a new classification of the population, a classification that remains valid today. According to whether Romanian elements are present or absent from the Gypsy dialects, we are dealing with Gypsies speaking so-called Vlax dialects or Gypsies speaking non-Vlax dialects. The *lovari* (*Lovara*), *căldărași* (*Kalderaš*) and *ciurari* (*Čurara*) among others all belong to the first group.¹⁰⁵ Today, the vast majority of the Gypsies from Western Europe, North and Latin America, Australia, South Africa etc. speak Vlax dialects.

Thus, between the middle of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, a substantial migration of Gypsies took place from Eastern Europe towards Central and Western Europe and onwards to America. This second migration meant an exclusively urban form of nomadism in which the Gypsies settled on the edges of large towns, where they formed communities sometimes permanent in nature and sometimes ephemeral. The stability of these communities was, however, relative, as the families that made up the community were in perpetual renewal.¹⁰⁶

The most active Gypsies in this migration were the *Kalderaš*. In all countries, they were the richest and most prestigious group of Gypsies. They did not mix with other Gypsies and managed to preserve their specificity. When they arrived in Central and Western Europe, they wore their hair long and travelled in primitive carts. They had a distinctive costume, richly ornamented and in strident colours, which were different from that of other groups of Gypsies. At the beginning of the 1860s, the *Kalderaš* were recorded in Poland. From Poland they travelled into Russia and Scandinavia. In Germany, the first bands of the so-called "Hungarian" Gypsies (from their description, it is clear that these were *Kalderaš*) appeared in 1865, 1866 and 1867. Some bands totalled a hundred people. In 1866 in France appeared a band made up of 150 people, carrying Austrian passports. Smaller groups arrived in 1868, 1870, 1872 and 1874, coming from Germany and Italy. In 1868, some of these *Kalderaš* made an incursion onto English soil. In 1886 "Greek" Gypsies (i.e., from Greece and European Turkey), as well as Serbia,

Bulgaria and Romania, arrived in England. The first mention of the presence of *ursari* in the West is contemporaneous with that of the *Kalderaš*: the *ursari* are recorded in Germany in 1867 and in the Netherlands in 1868. In 1872, the *ursari* arrived in France. The first to arrive came from Serbia and Bosnia and carried Turkish passports.¹⁰⁷ In 1884, Paul Bataillard noted the presence of bands of *Kalderaš* and *ursari* in Spain and Algeria.¹⁰⁸

The migration took place in stages, with the groups of Gypsies following different routes and stopping off for longer or shorter periods along the way. In some cases, the migration was resumed after the group had remained in one place for an entire generation.

The second major stage in the migration of the Gypsies to the West was the migration of the *Kalderaš* to France, England and America in the years 1905–13. In 1906 the migration reached particularly feverish levels. In 1911 they arrived in England, where the groups of *Kalderaš* came to the attention of journalists and scholars. The destinies of some of the individuals taking part in these migrations are indicative of the routes followed by the *Kalderaš*. There is data pertaining to families, with names such as Tsonon, Kirpats, Todor, Demeter and Maximoff, who arrived in the West together with this migratory wave. Milos Tsonon declared that he was born in 1858 in Krakow and that he left the city around 1890. He travelled for two years in Russia, through the major cities, before returning to Krakow. He did not remain there for long, instead setting off through Silesia to Prague, Vienna and Budapest. He also visited Transylvania and Croatia. Three of his sons married Hungarian Gypsy women, while the fourth one married an Italian Gypsy woman. Years later, after passing through Austria, Italy, France and Germany, he arrived in England.¹⁰⁹ The migration of the Tsonon family is typical for the *Kalderaš*. The generation of these *Kalderaš* living at the beginning of the twentieth century was born in Poland, the Russian Empire (in Bessarabia or in the vicinity of this province) and Germany.

Starting in the 1880s and continuing until the First World War, Gypsies from this clan arrived in the United States. The majority of them came from Austria–Hungary, Russia and Serbia, as well as from Italy, Greece, Romania and Turkey. The arrival of the *Kalderaš*, *rudari* and the other groups of Gypsies at this time more or less wiped out the Gypsies who had arrived there in the colonial period. Their arrival in America coincided with the major wave of immigration from Eastern Europe.¹¹⁰ The Gypsies who left Eastern Europe also arrived in Latin America at this time.¹¹¹

In the countries of Western Europe, these immigrants were as a rule known as “Hungarian”, “Serbian”, “Russian” or “Greek” Gypsies according to their country or origin and their nationality (passport). Indicative of the place from where they set off for the West in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century are the elements

of Hungarian, Serbian, Russian etc. that can be found in their dialects. The dialects spoken by the *Kalderaš* and *Lovara*, for example, are very similar, although not identical. The latter use many Hungarian words, demonstrating that they stayed for some time in Hungary prior to their arrival in Poland or Germany (and onwards from there). However, the influence from Romanian is much more pronounced and is characteristic of all the groups of Gypsies who took part in this migration, demonstrating that their sojourn in Romanian-speaking lands was much longer in duration.

An important question is: what is the place of Wallachia and Moldavia in this demographic process? In other words, to what extent were the Romanian principalities the point of departure for the second wave of Gypsy migration? Clearly, until such time as this topic of study receives special attention, any answer to this question will largely be an approximation. It has been stated that there is no connection between the emancipation of the Gypsies in the Romanian principalities and the migration of the Gypsies. The Romanian elements present in Romany dialects have been explained by the fact that the Gypsies set off from the Romanian linguistic space, although not necessarily from Wallachia and Moldavia.¹¹² It is true that the Gypsies who took part in the migration originated from an area much larger than that of the two Romanian principalities. The Romanian linguistic space at that time meant in addition to Wallachia and Moldavia (after 1859, Romania), Transylvania, the Banat, Bukovina, Bessarabia, as well as other territories in the Balkan Peninsula and Hungary. It should be recognised that groups of Gypsies from other Romanian speaking lands and territories took part in the migration. The difficult economic conditions and in particular the crisis in the traditional Gypsy crafts, as well as the implementation of sedentarisation policies throughout the region, were of a nature to determine the emigration of some Gypsies.

It is our belief that most of the Gypsies who set off for the West did so from the Romanian principalities during the period of emancipation. The principalities were the countries with the largest number of Gypsies, while the legal and social transformations that took place there were unique in their scale. The Gypsies living in the principalities therefore went through an experience that was unparalleled elsewhere at the time. As a result of the way in which emancipation was conceived, the actual form that it took and the restrictions it placed on the former slaves meant that a large number of Gypsies did not fit into the social structures put in place by the emancipation laws; therefore they preferred to go into exile. Of course, in the period of emancipation only the emigration of Gypsies into neighbouring countries was documented. The arrival of Gypsies speaking Vlax dialects in Western countries took place somewhat later, several decades after the emancipation of the Gypsies in the principalities. Between the time of their departure

from the principalities and their arrival in the West, one to two generations had passed. During this period, the groups of migrating Gypsies sojourned in neighbouring countries. This sojourn explains the elements of Hungarian, Serbo-Croat and others in their respective dialects. The movement of the groups of Gypsies from the east to the west of the continent took place at a slow pace, sometimes over the course of several generations. We find it plausible that Romania was the place from which the majority of these Gypsies originated. Thus, the first major stage in the second Gypsy migration was the departure of groups of Gypsies from the Romanian principalities actually during the period of their emancipation and their settling in neighbouring countries.

Romania in the mid-nineteenth century was a point of departure for migratory waves comparable in terms of scale and importance with what it had been at the beginning of the fifteenth century and the impact it had was lasting. It is true that the migratory trend towards the West in the nineteenth century included not only Gypsies from Romania freshly released from slavery, but also Gypsies from Transylvania and Hungary, from Poland and from the Balkans. In these places also, the failure of some Gypsies to adapt to a sedentary way of life triggered their flight. However, the vast majority of the Gypsies involved in this migratory wave were liberated Gypsy slaves from the Romanian principalities. A legal and social process that took place on Romanian territory formed the basis of an important demographical and ethnic process.

This migratory tide continued after the First World War. In Germany, especially in Bavaria, we come across groups of Gypsies carrying Romanian passports. These groups hailed chiefly from Transylvania, where they had learned German. They were engaged in small-scale peddling (in carpets etc.). This category of Gypsies could also be found at the time in France, Austria, Czechia and Serbia.¹¹³

6. THE GYPSIES IN BUKOVINA UNDER AUSTRIAN RULE (1775–1918)

In Bukovina, the northern portion of the medieval Moldavian state, which in 1775 following a territorial arrangement between Austria and Turkey with regard to Moldavia was incorporated into the Habsburg Empire, the new Austrian rulers inherited the social reality of the Gypsy slavery.¹¹⁴ All three categories of slaves in the Romanian principalities could be found there. The number of slaves was large, particularly as a result of the numerous monasteries located in this part of the country. In 1775 Moldovița monastery alone had 80 families of slaves, amounting to 294 people.¹¹⁵ It is

estimated that the number of sedentary Gypsies present in 1775 totalled at least 500 families, while the total number of Gypsies was 800 families, equivalent to 4.6 per cent of the total population of the province (which at the time stood at 17,000 families). In 1780, 242 families of nomadic Gypsies were recorded and 534 families of sedentary Gypsies, giving a total of 776 families of Gypsies.¹¹⁶ In the census of 1800 there were 627 families of sedentary Gypsies in Bukovina, a total of 2500 people. They accounted for 1.26 per cent of the province's total population of 198,000 people.¹¹⁷

During the first years of Austrian rule in Bukovina, the Gypsies continued to live as slaves. The new authorities' intervention in the situation was initially limited to the settlement of the tax status of the slaves.¹¹⁸ The abolition of the tax exemptions from which they benefited was necessary also because the monasteries sometimes declared as "Gypsies" some peasants who ordinarily were required to pay tax. The Gypsies were also forced to pay tax and to fulfil the other customary obligations to the State.

Within the framework of the reforms introduced in Bukovina in the 1780s during the reign of Emperor Joseph II, reforms that provided the province with a social and administrative system that was largely identical to that of the other provinces of the Empire, the slavery of the Gypsies was abolished. On 19 June 1783 in Czernowitz, Emperor Joseph II issued an order abolishing slavery.¹¹⁹ The implementation of this order was, however, extremely weak, due to the opposition of the Moldavian boyars and the monasteries. The opposition of the monasteries could be defeated more easily, in an era when measures were being taken throughout the Empire against institutions of this kind. The opposition of the Moldavian boyars was, however, quite fierce. Over a number of years, they sent protests and reports to the civilian and military authorities of Bukovina and Galicia (to which Bukovina belonged after 1786), in which they presented the imperial order as a violation of the autonomy and the tradition of the country, "arguing" the necessity of maintaining the institution of slavery on the grounds that it was the most appropriate state for the Gypsies. According to the boyars, this form of dependency was also to the advantage of the Gypsies. The application of the order was dragged out, while concessions were made to the boyars so that they did not lose the workforce that the slaves provided them with. Only at the end of the decade can it be said that slavery had actually disappeared in Bukovina. The personal dependence of the monastery and boyars' slaves was abolished. Formally, they entered the ranks of the peasantry, being required to pay the same taxes and fulfil the same obligations to the State as the latter. Most of them remained on the estate where they had lived as slaves. However, they were landless peasants, meaning that their economic position and their way of life did not change a great deal. These "new peasants", as they were sometimes named in contemporary docu-

ments, received their new status as a worsening of their situation. Some of them joined the ranks of the nomadic Gypsies.

Nomadic Gypsies in Bukovina (*lingurari, ursari, aurari* or *rudari*) were forced by the authorities to pay certain special taxes. Each family of nomadic Gypsies paid taxes equivalent to three florins and fifty-seven kreuzers on an annual basis, to which were added other obligations to the village as well as two days of labour for the "captain of the Gypsies".¹²⁰ The latter's obligation was to collect taxes from the Gypsies, and through the intermediary of the Gypsy families' heads, he exercised his authority over the Gypsies living in the country. He was himself a Gypsy. Already in 1780s, repeated measures were taken to sedentarise the nomadic Gypsies and turn them into agricultural workers and craftsmen. In 1802, via a gubernatorial order, foreign Gypsies were forbidden from entering the country, while families of Gypsies living in Bukovina were given a deadline in which they were required to settle in one place. After the expiration of the deadline, families still practising a nomadic way of life would be expelled from the country. In 1803, the position of the captain of the Gypsies was abolished, along with the special taxes for Gypsies. From that time onwards, the Gypsies were required to pay taxes together with the other inhabitants of the country. The Gypsies were completely assimilated into the peasantry.¹²¹

Measures to sedentarise nomadic Gypsies were taken still later by the province of Galicia, to which Bukovina belonged. This problem became acute for the authorities once again around the year 1850. At this time, the judiciary, the police and the gendarmerie took energetic measures against nomadic Gypsies.¹²² In the 1870s, the Ministry of Interior in Vienna attempted to find a means of eradicating this social phenomenon and of regulating the situation of the Gypsies in general. In this context, in the summer of 1878, a locality-by-locality investigation was launched into the situation of the Gypsies in Bukovina. The total number of sedentary Gypsies living at that time in Bukovina was 5295, equivalent to 1.32 per cent of the population of the province. The distribution of the Gypsy population was, however, extremely uneven. In some districts, the Gypsies accounted for 2–3 per cent of the population (in Gura Humorului 3.68 per cent, Solca 2.23 per cent, Storojineț 2.18 per cent), while in others the number of Gypsies was insignificant (for example, in the district of Sadagura Gypsies accounted for just 0.20 per cent of the population). The Gypsies were concentrated in the southern part of the province, where they made up 1.9 per cent of the population. A total of 3900 Gypsies lived in completely Romanian localities, 740 in completely Ruthenian or Russian localities and 600 in mixed Romanian-Ruthenian localities. Four-fifths of the Gypsies of Bukovina lived among the Romanians, where they accounted for 2.12 per cent, while Gypsies living among the Ruthenians represented just 0.57 per cent of the respective

population. (At that time, there were approximately equal numbers of Romanians and Ruthenians or Ukrainians living in Bukovina). The majority of the Gypsies of Bukovina spoke Romanian as their mother tongue.¹²³

In the census of 1878, no nomadic Gypsies were recorded. At that time, the Gypsies of Bukovina had all been sedentarised. The handful of nomadic Gypsies present in the province at the end of the nineteenth century had come mostly from northern Transylvania, with passports issued by the Hungarian authorities, while a few came from Romania. They appeared sporadically and wandered only in the south-east of the province, in the districts of Rădăuți, Storojineț and Vijița.¹²⁴

7. THE GYPSIES IN BESSARABIA UNDER TSARIST RULE (1812–1918)

When the Russian Empire in 1812 annexed the half of Moldavia located between the Prut and Dniester rivers as a result of the Russian–Ottoman peace treaty of Bucharest, the Gypsies had the social and legal status of slaves in this new province, which from then on would be known as Bessarabia.¹²⁵ This situation was maintained under Tsarist rule. The Gypsies there constituted a separate social category. In the “Establishment of the organisation of the province of Bessarabia” of 1818, which divided the population of the province into nine categories, the Gypsies made up the eighth category, with the ninth being made up by the Jews.¹²⁶ Within this division, the Gypsies were themselves divided into two categories: those “under the direct rule of the Treasury and who are ruled by the provincial authorities themselves”—in other words, state slaves—and others who “are slaves of the clergy, of boyars, of country squires, of minor boyars and of merchants and who depend completely upon the aforementioned”—in other words, privately owned slaves. The state Gypsies paid tax known as the *dajdie* after the former regime, while privately owned Gypsies were exempt from any obligation to the State.¹²⁷

In Tsarist Bessarabia, the Gypsies continued their old way of life for several decades. Most of them were nomadic. Organised in bands, they wandered the country practising their traditional crafts, working particularly as blacksmiths, coppersmiths and woodworkers.

The authorities were preoccupied with the situation of the state Gypsies, who were also known as Gypsies of the Crown. In 1812, when under the governorship of Scarlat Sturdza the first census of the Gypsies was held, there were found to be 340 families of Gypsies in this category. State Gypsies were divided into three classes, paying the authorities an annual tax of forty and twenty lei respectively for the first and second classes, with Gyp-

sies from the third class (the elderly, widows and orphans) being exempt from any obligation.¹²⁸ For many years the authorities attempted via different methods to put a stop to the “vagrancy” of the Gypsies and to convert them to a sedentary way of life.¹²⁹ From 1829, they were forcibly settled in the counties of Bender and Akkerman, where they were provided with parcels of land, a cash loan and wheat for sowing and were exempt from the payment of taxes for four years. The aim was to transform them into peasants, state-owned serfs. Ultimately, this method failed due to the resistance of the Gypsies. Nonetheless, in the county of Akkerman, two villages populated with Gypsies were founded, Cair and Faraonovca. In these villages, 752 families were settled, who were allocated 9202 *desetina* of land (one *desetina* = 1.09 ha). However, the state of these villages sank to deplorable levels, while the new state serfs created problems for the authorities by refusing to pay their taxes and to fulfil their obligatory service.¹³⁰ Later on, in 1839, when the Danube Cossack army was established, the Russian government attempted to incorporate the Gypsies of the Crown living in southern Bessarabia into the ranks of the Cossacks. However, a small number of Gypsies remained under the aegis of the Cossack army.¹³¹

For all the measures taken by the authorities, the majority of the Gypsies of the Crown continued to lead their traditional way of life, travelling with their tents through Bessarabia and the neighbouring provinces in Ukraine. The number of Gypsies of the Crown rose from 221 families in 1813 to 1135 families in 1839. To their number were added Gypsies liberated by private owners, as well as Gypsies who had fled from the half of Moldavia lying to the west of the river Prut and who were unclaimed by anyone. In the census of 1858 in Bessarabia, there were recorded 5615 state Gypsies and 5459 boyars’ Gypsies; from the latter category, 2978 were household Gypsies and 2481 were nomads.¹³²

The authorities intervened in respect of the situation of the boyars’ Gypsies only in 1861, when the slavery of boyars’ Gypsies in Bessarabia was abolished together with the law that abolished serfdom and accorded the peasantry their personal freedom throughout the Russian Empire. In fact, many of these slaves had already been liberated. Slave owners who had learned in advance of the plan for emancipation freed their slaves out of their own volition and chased them from their estates so that they would not be obliged to provide them with land. Some of the former slaves of the boyars were given property as a result of the direct intervention of the gubernatorial authorities, particularly on the lands around the monasteries. In this way, they became peasants. Others continued to work as domestic servants to their former masters. Another group, unable to adapt to agricultural work, joined the ranks of nomadic Gypsies, craftsmen and musicians.¹³³

The number of Gypsies in Bessarabia fell continuously as a result of

the Romanianisation of the sedentary Gypsies and the migration of Bessarabian nomadic Gypsies (or of those who had come from the west bank of the river Prut) into Ukraine and Russia. The proportion of the Gypsies in the total population reached insignificant levels. If in 1835 the 13,000 Gypsies living in Bessarabia represented 1.8 per cent of the population of the province, by 1859, 11,000 Gypsies meant 1.0 per cent of the population. According to official statistics of 1897, in Bessarabia there were 8636 Gypsies, representing 0.5 per cent of the province's population of 1,935,412.¹³⁴ In the Russian Empire taken as a whole (in 1897 a total of 45,000 Gypsies were recorded in the entire Empire), Bessarabia was the province with the highest concentration of Gypsies. However, after its entry into Greater Romania in 1918, Bessarabia was the province with the fewest Gypsies.

8. THE GYPSIES IN TRANSYLVANIA IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In the nineteenth century, the vast majority of the Gypsies in Transylvania (in the broader sense of the term) had settled into a sedentary way of life. They had settled in rural and urban localities, living alongside Romanians, Hungarians, Szeklers and Saxons. The process of sedentarisation was, on the one hand, the result of a natural evolution: in the Transylvanian society engaged in a vigorous process of modernisation, there was less and less space to lead a nomadic way of life. On the other hand, sedentarisation was the result of the policy adopted by the Habsburg authorities to "civilise" the Gypsies. In Transylvania, the sedentarisation of the Gypsies had a controlled character. The government of the principality had a clear concept of how the settlement of the Gypsies should take place. The imposition of a fixed dwelling was to be followed by the tying of the Gypsies to an agricultural occupation, the acquisition of a lifestyle identical to the population of the locality in which they were settled, the acquisition of the language of the local population, the abandonment of Romanes as a language and finally the elimination of their Gypsy identity and their complete assimilation.

The report compiled in 1794 by the commission charged with studying the situation of the Gypsies and discovering the most suitable means of securing their integration proposed that the provincial government prevent the Gypsies from settling in a large number in one place, isolated and distant from the rest of the population. The Gypsies should mix with the other inhabitants, as living in proximity to the population would result in the Gypsies' adoption of the costume, customs and language of the respective population. There were also other reasons that led the authorities to forbid the settlement of Gypsies together in one place. The 1794 report points out that

Gypsy blacksmiths and farriers, and Gypsy craftsmen in general, tended to gather together in one place, making it difficult for them to earn a living, while in other places there was a shortage of these kinds of craftsmen. Hence, the concentration of Gypsies in one place was forbidden, and, where necessary, orders were given for them to be moved elsewhere. However, it was proposed that Gypsies dispersed in this manner in the villages in small groups should be settled on the very edge of the villages, due to the villagers' dissatisfaction at the presence of the Gypsies which in turn was due to the thefts and fires caused by them.¹³⁵

Beginning at the end of the eighteenth century and especially in the first decades of the nineteenth century, formerly nomadic Gypsies settled in the villages and towns of Transylvania, the Banat, Crişana and Maramureş. Prior to this period, the Gypsies were settled in relatively few settlements. At this time, however, they became a component of the human tableau of Transylvanian settlements. The Gypsies became distributed throughout the entire country, in every region and in virtually every locality, regardless of the predominating ethnic group. The number of Gypsies living in each village was small, as a rule around two to three families. The Gypsies worked as the blacksmiths and farriers of the village, although some Gypsies were engaged in other occupations.

In the first part of the nineteenth century, the Gypsy policy in Transylvania and Hungary was no longer followed with the same rigour that had previously been the case. The sedentarisation of a large number of Gypsies took place in the absence of the measures that had been taken during the reigns of Maria Theresa and Joseph II. In the Transylvanian principality, only in the first part of the 1840s did the problem of (nomadic) Gypsies return to the agenda. In the years 1841–44, the Diet dealt on a number of occasions with the question of the Gypsies and attempted to find a solution to their situation. At this time, a new project of this kind was launched which in many respects was in fact a revival of the measures proposed by the 1794 commission.¹³⁶ Between 1850 and 1860, during the period of centralised rule from Vienna, certain police powers introduced under the reigns of Maria Theresa and Joseph II against nomadic Gypsies were revived in Transylvania and Hungary. At the same time, private and local initiatives linked to the “civilisation” of the Gypsies were launched. János Hám, the Bishop of Satu Mare, opened in 1857 in Satu Mare a school for Gypsy children in a house built by himself, which he entrusted to Franciscan friars. The school, however, functioned only for a very short period of time.¹³⁷

During the period of Austro-Hungarian dualism (1867–1918), the authorities in Budapest introduced a series of legislative measures and police powers that affected the Gypsies, whether directly or indirectly: measures against vagrancy and the restriction of the movements of Gypsy bands, the forcible

return of Gypsies who abandoned their place of residence, the prohibition of begging and the upholding of public order in respect of the various offences committed in general by the Gypsies etc. The Hungarian parliament returned to the question of the Gypsy population on a number of occasions. The period 1906–14 was particularly active in this respect, with the introduction of measures reminiscent of the decrees of the reigns of Maria Theresa and Joseph II. The policy in respect of the Gypsies was one of repression, both at county and national level the Gypsies being regarded as a “plague”.¹³⁸ The measures were introduced at a time when in the final decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century the socio-economic situation of the Gypsies was worsening. Competition from industrial goods in particular had a serious effect on the Gypsies’ market position, restricting and in some cases eliminating the use of their traditional crafts, resulting in the pauperisation of the vast majority of this population.¹³⁹

In the census of 1851, in the Kingdom of Hungary there were a total of 30,304 Gypsies, of which 11,440 were living in the Voivodina and the Banat (which at the time comprised a single province) and 18,864 in Hungary proper (which at the time included the western part of the present-day Romania). In the Transylvanian principality, there were 52,665 Gypsies. Another 800 Gypsies were at the time enrolled in the Austrian army.¹⁴⁰ According to statistics from Elek Fényes from 1867, after the creation of Austrian–Hungarian Empire, in the whole of Hungary there were 95,000 Gypsies, of which 33,000 lived in Hungary proper, 58,000 in Transylvania and 4500 in Croatia, Slavonia and the military frontier zone (which included part of the Banat).¹⁴¹ In the census of the population from 1880, in Hungary and Transylvania were recorded 75,911 Gypsies, in Croatia–Dalmatia 1499 and in the military border 1983, giving a total of 79,393. In Transylvania proper there were 56,006 Gypsies. The statistics are, however, partial in nature, as only those persons who spoke Romanes as their native language were recorded as Gypsies.¹⁴² Even so, numerically speaking, the Gypsies constituted the fourth largest community in Transylvania after Romanians, Hungarians and Germans.

The census of 1893 provides us with an exact picture of the Gypsies in Hungary during the period of the Austrian–Hungarian Monarchy. The census was carried out by the Ministry of Interior, and unlike the general population census, recorded all persons considered by public opinion to be Gypsies. The declared aim of the census was to achieve a precise and detailed knowledge of this population, in order to regulate the vagrancy and sedentarisation of nomadic Gypsies, a preoccupation of the Hungarian political powers. The census recorded a particularly complex set of data with regard to this population: the categories of Gypsies, the type of dwelling in which

they lived, their age, civil status, religion, native language, occupation, literacy etc.¹⁴³

In the Kingdom of Hungary as a whole, there were 274,940 Gypsies, representing 1.80 per cent of the population, according to the census of 1890. Gypsies were recorded as living in 7962 out of the 12,693 communes that existed in Hungary at the time. The largest concentration was in Transylvania proper: 105,034 Gypsies, representing 4.67 per cent of the total population. The largest proportions were to be found in the counties of Târnava Mare (9.97 per cent) and Târnava Mică (6.74 per cent), while the smallest proportions were to be found in the counties of Solnoc-Dăbâca (2.37 per cent) and Ciuc (2.05 per cent). The towns with the largest proportions of Gypsies were Vințu de Sus (12.7 per cent), Hațeg (10.5 per cent) and Dumbrăveni (10.3 per cent)¹⁴⁴. In the territories that in 1918 would join with Romania taken as a whole, there were 151,711 Gypsies in 1893. They were settled everywhere, regardless of the predominant ethnic group in the respective locality or area.

Out of the total number of Gypsies recorded in 1893, 243,432 were sedentary (stable), 22,570 were semi-sedentary (i.e., living for varying parts of the year in a single locality, to which they would return after their seasonal movements) and 8938 were nomads or tent-dwellers. The latter category travelled the country living in tents. In total, 1026 tents of Gypsies were recorded, giving an average of eight persons per tent. The highest numbers of nomadic Gypsies were recorded in the counties of Caraș-Severin (1969 persons, or 22.0 per cent of the total number of Gypsies living in the county), Hunedoara (428 persons) and Timiș (426 persons).¹⁴⁵ Indicative of the way in which the sedentarisation of the Gypsies was carried out is the fact that in almost 52 per cent of the 7220 communes in which sedentary Gypsies were registered, the Gypsies lived separately from the rest of the population in their own neighbourhoods; in almost 40 per cent of the communes, the Gypsies were mixed with the rest of the population; while in 8 per cent of communes, there were Gypsies living both among and separately from the local population. In Transylvania proper, the situation was markedly different. Here, in 1095 localities (55.9 per cent of the total number containing Gypsies), Gypsies lived alongside the other villagers, while in 218 settlements (11.1 per cent), the houses of the Gypsies were located both on the edge of the settlement and among the dwellings of the majority population. The settlement of Gypsies in the interior of villages took place in most cases only during the second half of the nineteenth century.¹⁴⁶

With regard to their mother tongue, 104,750 Gypsies (38.1 per cent of the total) spoke Hungarian, 82,405 (29.97 per cent) spoke Romani, 67,046 (24.39 per cent) spoke Romanian, 9857 (3.59 per cent) Slovak, 5861 (2.13 per cent) Serbian, 2396 (0.87 per cent) German, 2008 (0.73 per cent) Ruthe-

nian, 306 (0.11 per cent) Croat and 311 (0.11 per cent) other languages. In Transylvania, 40.58 per cent of Gypsies spoke Romanes as their mother tongue, 39.6 per cent spoke Romanian, 19.58 per cent spoke Hungarian and 0.2 per cent spoke German. (According to the official census, Romanians made up 56.72 per cent of the population of the province, Hungarians 31.0 per cent, Germans 9.67 per cent and others 2.6 per cent.) In the Kingdom of Hungary taken as a whole, 52.16 per cent of Gypsies no longer spoke Romanes, more specifically 53.82 per cent of sedentary Gypsies, 51.06 per cent of semi-sedentary Gypsies and 13.01 per cent of nomadic Gypsies.¹⁴⁷ With regard to the Gypsies' religion, 39.26 per cent were Roman Catholic, 26.81 per cent were Orthodox, 20.28 per cent were Greek Catholic, 11.82 per cent were Protestant, 0.93 per cent were Unitarians and 0.76 per cent were Lutherans.¹⁴⁸

Although the Gypsies were preponderantly a rural population, the number of those actually engaged in agriculture was extremely low. The majority of the Gypsies worked as craftsmen for the agricultural population. 50,506 people had this as their profession (33,930 men and 16,576 women). The most widespread categories of craftsmen were blacksmiths—who totalled 12,749 people (meaning that 25 per cent of Gypsy craftsmen were blacksmiths). At that time, 22.5 per cent of the country's blacksmiths were Gypsies. Also, there were 2077 coppersmiths, 1660 nail-makers, 1976 spoon-makers, 2968 manufacturers of wooden vessels, 3948 brick-makers, 5667 makers of unfired bricks, 1998 string-makers, 1720 brush-makers etc. Some 16,784 Gypsies were musicians.¹⁴⁹ Among Gypsy children over the age of six, 92.39 per cent were illiterate, and among those of school age, 69.15 per cent did not go to school at all, compared with 19.35 per cent of the population of school age in the country as a whole.¹⁵⁰ (In the entire country the rate of illiteracy was 37.89 per cent among men and 46.89 per cent among women.) The range of data comprised within the 1893 census was, however, much broader than the one we have presented here.

From the statistics of the 1893 census, we can see the scale of the process of sedentarisation of the Gypsies in Transylvania in the second half of the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century. The nomadic Gypsies ended up a minority of virtually insignificant proportions. The vast majority of the Gypsies settled in rural and urban localities and adopted an occupation that was able to support them. A few Gypsies (in fact, a very small number) became minor property owners. The 1893 statistics demonstrate that at that time in the province the process of the integration of the Gypsies into the way of life of the majority population was in full swing. It is true that the social position of most of the Gypsies was of marginal nature. However, it is clear that at the end of the nineteenth century more than at any time in the past, the Gypsies moved closer to the social con-

dition and occupation of the majority population. The Gypsies had lost much of their socio-occupational and cultural specificity.

Nevertheless, this does not necessarily mean that the linguistic and cultural assimilation of the Gypsies, as intended by the policies of the Austrian–Hungarian authorities, had taken place. If we consider the case of Transylvania in isolation, there is no doubt that in some localities the Gypsies had become fully assimilated in rural communities of Romanians, Hungarians, Szeklers and even Saxons. However, generally speaking, even in localities where contacts between the Gypsies and the other inhabitants appear closer—as shown by the topographical distribution of the dwellings of the Gypsies—the ethnic distinction continued to exist. In Transylvania, the preservation of the ethnic identity of the Gypsies was more evident than in Hungary. In this province, where ethnic distinctions and the ethnic awareness of Romanians, Hungarians and Saxons was quite strong, especially during the “century of nationalities”, the Gypsies settled on the margins of settlements, even if they adopted the language of the local people and abandoned their own ancestral language, continued to constitute a separate community throughout the century. The process of “denationalisation” of the Gypsies in Transylvania took place on a smaller scale than in Hungary or in the Old Kingdom of Romania.

NOTES

- ¹ For the situation of the Gypsies in the final period of slavery, see: M. Kogălniceanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 569–584; G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni*, pp. 107–118; N. Djuvara, *Între Orient și Occident. Țările române la începutul epocii moderne (1800–1848)*, translated by Maria Carpov, Bucharest, 1995, pp. 265–278. See also A. Poissonnier, *Notice historique sur les Tsiganes ou esclaves Zingares de Moldavie et de Valachie*, Bucharest, 1854, pp. 39–67 (reproduced in *Les esclaves tsiganes dans les Principautés Danubiennes*, Paris, 1855, pp. 45–64); E. Regnault, *Histoire politique et sociale des Principautés Danubiennes*, Paris, 1855, pp. 329–346.
- ² For this subject see G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni*, pp. 96–106.
- ³ Contemporary sources on the categories of Gypsies: D. Fotino, *Istoria generală a Daciei...*, translated by G. Sion, vol. III, Bucharest, 1859, pp. 238–239, 341; Vl. Georgescu, *Mémoires et projets de réforme dans les Principautés Roumaines 1831–1848. Répertoire et textes. Avec un supplément pour les années 1769–1830*, Bucharest, 1972, pp. 268–273 (text from 1828, probably belonging to the Moldavian boyar Iordache Rosetti-Rosnovanu); *Analele parlamentare ale României*, vol. I/1, Bucharest, 1890, pp. 511–516 (Regulations for the improvement of the conditions of state Gypsies, from the year 1831, in Wallachia); M. Kogălniceanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 572–578. See also G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni*, pp. 31–35.

- ⁴ M. Kogălniceanu, *op. cit.*, p. 575.
- ⁵ Gh. Platon, *Domeniul feudal din Moldova în preajma Revoluției de la 1848*, Iași, 1973, pp. 140–141.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 120.
- ⁷ See M. Kogălniceanu, *op. cit.*, p. 584.
- ⁸ See I. Cojocaru, Z. Ornea, *Falansterul de la Scăeni*, Bucharest, 1966.
- ⁹ T. Diamant, *Scrieri economice*, ed. Gr. Mladenatz, Bucharest, 1958, pp. 107–121; see also I. Cojocaru, Z. Ornea, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
- ¹⁰ See T. G. Bulat, “Țigani domnești”.
- ¹¹ E. Regnault, *op. cit.*, pp. 341–342.
- ¹² In Wallachia, for example, in the statistics of 1848 that record taxpayers who have paid their taxes to the State are recorded by categories, with numbers that differ from one quarter to another: 5760–5820 families of taxpayers which have been under the administration of the Prison Authority (in other words, former state slaves), 10,243–10,377 families of emancipated monastery slaves who paid capitation, and 630–651 families of emancipated monastery slaves who paid tradesmen’s tax (*Analele parlamentare ale României*, XV/1, pp. 206–209, 2026–2041).
- ¹³ Thus, statistics for Wallachia for the year 1837 record 8,288 state Gypsies, 23,589 monastery Gypsies and 33,746 boyars’ slaves (*ibid.*, IX/1, pp. 1164–1165). In the census of state Gypsies carried out in the same year by the prison authorities are recorded 5,672 families (*ibid.*, IX/1, pp. 1143–1144). Clearly, the population in question is the same, but recorded using different parameters.
- ¹⁴ D. Fotino, *op. cit.*, p. 186.
- ¹⁵ M. Kogălniceanu, *loc. cit.*
- ¹⁶ F. Colson, *De l’état present et de l’avenir des principautés de Moldavie et de la Valachie*, Paris, 1839, pp. 12–15.
- ¹⁷ P. Bataillard, *Nouvelles recherches sur l’apparition et la dispersion des Bohémiens en Europe*, Paris, 1849, p. 21.
- ¹⁸ J.-A. Vaillant, *Les Rômes. Histoire vraie des vrais Bohémiens*, Paris, p. 481.
- ¹⁹ A. Ubcini, *Provinces d’origine roumaine. Valachie, Moldavie, Bukovine, Transylvanie, Bessarabie*, Paris, 1856, pp. 10–11.
- ²⁰ J. F. Neigebaur, *Beschreibung der Moldau und Walachei*, Breslau, 1854, pp. 128–129.
- ²¹ I. C. Filitti, “Populația Munteniei la 1857”, *Analele economice și statistice*, XIV (1931), nos. 9–12, p. 123.
- ²² *Analele statistice și economice*, I (1860), fasc. I, p. 27.
- ²³ *Lucrările statistice făcute în anii 1859–1860*, Iași, pp. 29ff.
- ²⁴ M. Kogălniceanu, *loc. cit.*
- ²⁵ J.-A. Vaillant, *op. cit.*, pp. 481–482 (262,000 out of Europe’s 837,000 Gypsies); G. Cora, *Die Zigeuner*, Turin, 1895, p. 97 (250,000 out of Europe’s 779,000 Gypsies).
- ²⁶ For this subject see in particular V. Șotropa, *Proiectele de constituție, programele de reforme și petițiile de drepturi din țările române în secolul al XVIII-lea și prima jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea*, Bucharest, 1976.

- ²⁷ I. C. Filitti, “Frământările politice și sociale în Principatele Române de la 1821 la 1828”, in *Opere alese*, ed. Georgeta Penelea, Bucharest, 1985, p. 126.
- ²⁸ Hurmuzaki, Supl., I/6, p. 92.
- ²⁹ E. Vîrtosu, “Réformes sociales et économiques proposées par Mitică Filipescu en 1841—Un mémoire inédit”, *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, VIII (1970), no. 1, pp. 114–115, 120.
- ³⁰ See following sub-chapter.
- ³¹ E. Poteca, *Predici și cuvântări*, ed. V. Micle, Mănăstirea Bistrița/Eparhia Râmnicului, 1993, pp. 23–24, 50–56.
- ³² C. Dem. Teodorescu, *Viața și operele lui Eufrosin Poteca (cu câteva din scrierile'i inedite)*, Bucharest, 1883, pp. 68–69.
- ³³ For example, in Moldavia in 1852 the abbots of the monasteries dedicated to the Holy Places protested against the law forbidding the clergy to use emancipated slaves as *slujbași volnici* (the *slujbași volnici* were a tax category; part of the tax that they paid to the State was handed over to the owner of the estate). *Analele parlamentare ale României*, XVII/2, pp. 173–174.
- ³⁴ Cf. G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni*, p. 102.
- ³⁵ F. Colson, *op. cit.*, pp. 149–150.
- ³⁶ List of subscribers in vol. II, pp. 389–396.
- ³⁷ M. Kogălniceanu, *op. cit.*, p. 560.
- ³⁸ *Foaie pentru minte, inimă și literatură*, no. 40, 2 October 1844, pp. 315–316.
- ³⁹ *Foaia științifică și literară (Propășirea)*, I, no. 5, 6 February 1844, Suplement extraordinar, pp. 1–2; Cornelia Bodea, *1848 la români. O istorie în date și mărturii*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1982, pp. 235–236.
- ⁴⁰ *Steaua Dunării*, I, 1855, no. 28, 3 December 1855, pp. 109–110; no. 30, 8 December 1855, pp. 118–119; also in A. Russo, *Scrieri*, ed. P. V. Haneș, Bucharest, 1908, pp. 155–160.
- ⁴¹ *Curierul Românesc*, XVI, no. 13, 14 February 1844, pp. 51–52.
- ⁴² G. Sion, *Suvenire contimpurane*, ed. R. Albala, Bucharest, 1856, p. 69; O. G. Lecca, *Istoria țiganilor...*, Caransebeș, 1898, pp. 80–81.
- ⁴³ “Chestiea robilor”, *Zimbrul*, III, no. 264, 12 December 1855, pp. 1054–1055.
- ⁴⁴ *România literară*, I, no. 47, 3 December 1855, p. 540.
- ⁴⁵ In connection with the process of emancipation, see G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni*, pp. 108–117; I. C. Filitti, *Domniile române sub Regulamentul organic 1834–1848*, Bucharest, Leipzig, Vienna, 1915, pp. 28–29, 86–87, 94, 287–288, 349–350, 536–537. Some contemporary testimonies: Gh. Bibescu, *Domnia lui Bibescu*, vol. II, Bucharest, 1894, pp. 27–36, 293–298; M. Kogălniceanu, *Desrobirea țiganilor. Ștergerea privilegiilor. Emanciparea țiganilor*. Discurs rostit în Academia Română. Sedința solemnă din 1(13) Aprilie 1891, Bucharest, 1891, pp. 14–18; J.-A. Vaillant, *op. cit.*, pp. 328–353, 431–458.
- For legislation pertaining to the emancipation of the Gypsies we shall refer to the collection *Analele parlamentare ale României*, 25 vols., Bucharest, 1890–1915 (hereafter *APR*) and in the case of measures not included in this collection, to the official publications of the principalities and collections of documents.

- ⁴⁶ See *Regulamentele Organice ale Valahiei și Moldovei*, Bucharest, 1944, especially pp. 19, 26, 191, 194.
- ⁴⁷ *APR*, I/1, pp. 511–516.
- ⁴⁸ *Regulamentele Organice*, pp. 257–260.
- ⁴⁹ *APR*, IX/1, pp. 1143–1144.
- ⁵⁰ *APR*, III/1, pp. 126–132.
- ⁵¹ *APR*, IX/1, pp. 645–647.
- ⁵² *Buletin. Gazetă oficială*, no. 33, 11 May 1838, pp. 130–131; no. 62, 16 September 1838, pp. 250–251.
- ⁵³ F. Colson, *op. cit.*, pp. 147–148.
- ⁵⁴ *APR*, IX/1, pp. 654–656.
- ⁵⁵ *Manualul administrativ al Principatului Moldovei*, vol. II, Iași, 1856, pp. 56–57, nos. 547 and 548.
- ⁵⁶ *APR*, IX/2, pp. 475–479.
- ⁵⁷ *APR*, XII/2, pp. 419–424.
- ⁵⁸ *APR*, XII/1, pp. 301–304; Gh. Bibescu, *op. cit.*, pp. 32–34.
- ⁵⁹ *Buletin. Gazetă oficială*, no. 80, 30 September 1843, p. 317.
- ⁶⁰ *APR*, XII/2, pp. 424–426.
- ⁶¹ *APR*, XII/2, pp. 521–523.
- ⁶² *Manualul administrativ*, II, pp. 53–54, nos. 542 and 543.
- ⁶³ *APR*, XIV/1, pp. 116–118; Gh. Bibescu, *op. cit.*, pp. 293–297.
- ⁶⁴ *Anul 1848 în Principatele Române. Acte și documente*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1902, pp. 495–496; C. Bodea, *op. cit.*, pp. 536–537.
- ⁶⁵ *Anul 1848*, II, pp. 105–106.
- ⁶⁶ See the decree of 28 September/10 October 1848 (*Anul 1848*, IV, p. 572).
- ⁶⁷ C. Bodea, *op. cit.*, p. 661.
- ⁶⁸ *Buletin oficial al Prințipatului Țării Românești*, no. 102, 27 November 1850, p. 405.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 24, 19 March 1851, pp. 93–94.
- ⁷⁰ *Correspondența lui Știrbei-Vodă*, ed. N. Iorga, Bucharest, 1904, p. 295.
- ⁷¹ *Buletinul oficial*, no. 13, 13 February 1856, p. 49.
- ⁷² *Buletin*, no. 95, 1 December 1855, p. 377.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, no. 100, 18 December 1855, pp. 397–398.
- ⁷⁴ *Buletin*, suppl., no. 49, 14 June 1856, p. 97.
- ⁷⁵ Arhivele Statului București, fond Ministerul de Interne. Administrative, dossier 116/1847.
- ⁷⁶ *Buletin*, no. 37, 6 May 1856, p. 145.
- ⁷⁷ Ecaterina Negruți-Munteanu, “Dezvoltarea agriculturii în Moldova între anii 1848 și 1864”, in *Dezvoltarea Moldovei între anii 1848 și 1864. Contribuții*, Bucharest, 1963, p. 22.
- ⁷⁸ Gh. Platon, “Cu privire la evoluția rezervei feudale în Moldova de la sfârșitul secolului al XVIII-lea până la legea rurală din 1864”, *Studii și articole de istorie*, V (1963), p. 226; I. Corfus, *Agricultura în Țările Române. 1848–1864. Istorie agrară comparată*, Bucharest, 1982, p. 179.

- 79 I. Corfus, *L'Agriculture en Valachie depuis la Révolution de 1848 jusqu'à la Réforme de 1864*, Bucharest, 1976, pp. 94–95; *idem*, *Agricultura*, pp. 178–179.
- 80 *Buletinul oficial*, no. 98, 9 December 1857, p. 389.
- 81 *Ibid.*, no. 22, 17 March 1858, p. 85.
- 82 I. Corfus, *L'Agriculture*, pp. 172–173; *idem*, *Agricultura*, pp. 284–285.
- 83 *Idem*, *L'Agriculture*, p. 173; *idem*, *Agricultura*, p. 285.
- 84 G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni*, p. 119.
- 85 I. Corfus, *L'Agriculture*, p. 95; *idem*, *Agricultura*, p. 179.
- 86 Arhivele Statului București, fond Ministerul de Interne. Diviziunea rurală-comunală, dossier 539/1863, pp. 2, 5.
- 87 *Ibid.*, f. 3.
- 88 *Colecție de toate instrucțiunile și deslegările ce s-au dat în aplicația noiei legi rurale*, Bucharest, 1864, pp. 30–33.
- 89 Em. Cretzulescu, “România considerată sub punctual de vedere fisic, administrativ și economic”, *Buletinul Societății Geografice Române*, I (1876), no. 1, p. 53.
- 90 G. Cora, *op. cit.*, pp. 93, 97.
- 91 O. G. Lecca, *op. cit.*, p. 26.
- 92 An example can be found in Arhivele Statului București, fond Diviziunea rurală-comunală, dossier 28/1866.
- 93 K. Erdős, *op. cit.*, pp. 449–454.
- 94 See Gy. Papp, *A beás cigányok román nyelvjárása: Beás-magyar szótár*, Pécs, 1982 (especially pp. 4–5).
- 95 B. Mezey et al., *op. cit.*, p. 110.
- 96 A. Ficker, “Die Zigeuner in der Bukowina”, *Statische Monatschrift*, V (1879), p. 261.
- 97 V. S. Zelenčuk, *Naselenie Bessarabii i Podnestrov'ja v XIX v. (Ethničeskie i socialno-demografičeskie processy)*, Kishinev, 1970, p. 215.
- 98 See J. Ficowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 49–61.
- 99 T. R. Gjorgjević, “Rumanian Gypsies in Serbia”, *JGLS* (3), 8 (1929), pp. 7–25.
- 100 Gh. Rațiu, “Ceva despre rudarii din Bulgaria”, *Timocul*, VII, 1940, nos. 3–6, pp. 9–10.
- 101 See I. Ieșan, “Românii din Bosnia și Herțegovina în trecut și în prezent”, Bucharest, 1905, pp. 5ff. (extract from *Analele Academiei Române*, Memoriile Secțiunii Istorice, s. II, t. XXVII, 1905); T. Filipescu, *Coloniile române din Bosnia. Studiu etnografic și antropo-geografic*, Bucharest, 1906, pp. 199–293.
- 102 A pertinent treatment of this Gypsy migration can be found in A. Fraser, *op. cit.*, pp. 226–238.
- 103 *Ibid.*, p. 228.
- 104 *Ibid.*, p. 232.
- 105 See B. Golliat-Smith, “Report on the Gypsy Tribes of North-East Bulgaria”, *JGLS* (2), 9 (1915–1916), pp. 1ff; K. Kochanowski, *Gypsy Studies*, vol. I, New Delhi, 1963, pp. 52ff; M. F. Heinschink, “E Romani Čhib—Die Sprache der Roma”, in *Roma. Das unbekanntes Volk, Schicksal und Kultur*, eds. M. F. Heinschink, Ursula Hemetek, Vienna, Cologne, 1994, pp. 115–116.

- ¹⁰⁶ J-P. Liégeois, *Tsiganes et Voyageurs. Données socio-culturelles. Données socio-politiques*, Strasbourg, 1985, p. 27.
- ¹⁰⁷ For figures pertaining to the routes followed by these groups of Gypsies see H. Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 85; A. Fraser, *op. cit.*, pp. 229–230.
- ¹⁰⁸ P. Bataillard, “Les Gitanos d’Espagne et les Ciganos de Portugal à propos de la question de l’importation des métaux en Europe par les Tsiganes”, Lisbon, 1884 (extract from *Compte Rendu de la 9e Session du Congrès International d’Anthropologie et d’Archéologie Préhistorique*), p. 517.
- ¹⁰⁹ See E. O. Winstedt, “The Gypsy Coppersmiths’ Invasion of 1911–1913”, *JGLS* (2), 6 (1912–1913), pp. 244–303; A. E. John, “Russian Gypsies at Marseilles and Milan”, *JGLS* (2), 4 (1910–1911), pp. 217–235.
- ¹¹⁰ A. Fraser, *op. cit.*, p. 236.
- ¹¹¹ See Fr. W. Brepohl, “Nicolaus Mihajlo der Kleine”, *JGLS* (2), 4 (1910–1911), pp. 47–49; *idem*, *Bei den brasilianischen Zigeunern. Volkskundliche Fragmente*, s. l., s.a. (extract from *Neue Heimat. Illustriertes Jahrbuch für das Deutschtum in Brasilien*).
- ¹¹² A. Fraser, *op. cit.*, pp. 237–238.
- ¹¹³ H. Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
- ¹¹⁴ For the Gypsies in Bukovina during the period of Habsburg rule, see A. Ficker, “Die Zigeuner in der Bukowina”, *Statistische Monatschrift*, V (1879), pp. 249–265; D. Dan, *Țigani din Bucovina*, Czernowitz, 1892; R. Fr. Kaindl, *op. cit.*, p. 36–44; J. Polek, “Die Zigeuner in der Bukowina”, *Jahrbuch des Bukowiner Landes-Museums*, XIII–XIV (1905–1906), pp. 45–63.
- ¹¹⁵ R. Fr. Kaindl, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
- ¹¹⁶ J. Polek, *op. cit.*, p. 47, with note 3.
- ¹¹⁷ A. Ficker, *op. cit.*, pp. 250–251.
- ¹¹⁸ For a list of measures taken by the Austrian authorities in Bukovina with regard to the Gypsies, see R. Fr. Kaindl, *op. cit.*, pp. 36–44; J. Polek, *op. cit.*, p. 47ff.
- ¹¹⁹ J. Polek, *op. cit.*, p. 49. For the problem of the implementation of emancipation measures, see *ibid.*, pp. 49–60.
- ¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 60.
- ¹²¹ For measures taken to sedentarise nomadic Gypsies see R. Fr. Kaindl, *op. cit.*, pp. 42–44; J. Polek, *op. cit.*, pp. 60–62.
- ¹²² A. Ficker, *op. cit.*, p. 251.
- ¹²³ For this census see *ibid.*, pp. 251–257.
- ¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 261–262.
- ¹²⁵ For details on the Gypsies in Bessarabia in the nineteenth century, see K. H[annatski], “Tsygane”, Kishinev, 1866, pp. 90–105 (extract from *Bessarabskih Oblastnyh Vjadomstei*); V. S. Zelenčuk, *op. cit.*, pp. 213–219; Z. C. Arbore, *Basarabia în secolul XIX*, Bucharest, 1899, pp. 113–117; I. Nistor, *Istoria Basarabiei*, ed. S. Neagoe, Bucharest, 1991, pp. 204–205.
- ¹²⁶ P. Mihail, Z. Mihail, *Acte în limba română tipărite în Basarabia (1812–1830)*, vol. I, Bucharest, 1993, p. 35.
- ¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- ¹²⁸ Z. C. Arbore, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

- ¹²⁹ For the policy of the Tsarist authorities in Bessarabia with regard to the Gypsies, see V. S. Zelenčuk, *loc. cit.*
- ¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 214.
- ¹³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 214–215.
- ¹³² *Ibid.*, pp. 215–217.
- ¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 217.
- ¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 158, 219; P. Cazacu, *Moldova dintre Prut și Nistru (1812–1918)*, Chișinău, 1992, pp. 107–109.
- ¹³⁵ A. Gebora, *op. cit.*, pp. 57, 60.
- ¹³⁶ These documents of the Transylvanian Diet published by A. H[errmann], “A cigányok megtelepítéséről”, *Ethnographia*, 1893, nos. 1–3, pp. 94–107; reproduced in B. Mezey et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 111–118.
- ¹³⁷ I. H. Schwicker, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
- ¹³⁸ See L. Pomogyi, *Cigánykérdés és rendezési kísérletek a dualistakori Magyarországon*, Budapest, 1982; B. Mezey et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 26–30; Gy. Szabó, *op. cit.*, pp. 76–81.
- ¹³⁹ Gy. Szabó, *op. cit.*, p. 76.
- ¹⁴⁰ I. H. Schwicker, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
- ¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴² See *ibid.*, pp. 75–89 (with countless pieces of statistical data, including separate figures for the different administrative units).
- ¹⁴³ The results of the public census has been published in *A Magyarországon 1893. január 31-én végrehajtott cigányösszeírás eredményei*, Budapest, 1895. The figures of the census have been synthesised and totaled up in Gy. Szabó, *op. cit.*, pp. 99–118. The figures from the census that affected the former principality of Transylvania only have been synthesised in I. Bolovan, “Considerațiuni demografice asupra țiganilor din Transilvania la sfârșitul veacului XIX”, *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie Cluj-Napoca*, XXXII (1993), pp. 187–193.
- ¹⁴⁴ *A Magyarországon*, pp. 19–20; I. Bolovan, *op. cit.*, pp. 187–188.
- ¹⁴⁵ *A Magyarországon*, p. 34.
- ¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 28; I. Bolovan, *op. cit.*, p. 189.
- ¹⁴⁷ *A Magyarországon*, pp. 56–57; I. Bolovan, *op. cit.*, p. 191.
- ¹⁴⁸ *A Magyarországon*, p. 51.
- ¹⁴⁹ See *ibid.*, tables on pp. 82ff.
- ¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

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CHAPTER IV

THE GYPSIES IN INTER-WAR ROMANIA

1. THE SITUATION OF THE GYPSIES IN THE INTER-WAR PERIOD. INTEGRATION AND ASSIMILATION

In 1918, when the Romanian unitary national state was created, the Gypsies of Bessarabia, Bukovina and Transylvania (together with the Banat, Crişana and Maramureş) became citizens of Greater Romania.¹ The partly differing historical experiences and the cultural specificity of the Gypsies in the new provinces meant that the tableau of the Gypsy population in Romania became rather complex in nature.

In the general population census of 1930, 262,501 persons declared themselves to be of Gypsy origin, equivalent to 1.5 per cent of the population of Romania.² At the time, Gypsies were found to be living in varying numbers in almost half of all the country's settlements. 221,726 Gypsies (or 84.5 per cent of the total) lived in villages, while 40,775 (15.5 per cent) lived in towns. In rural areas, the Gypsies accounted for 1.5 per cent of the population, while in the towns they accounted for 1.1 per cent. The distribution of the Gypsies between the country's different provinces was not even: the largest number of Gypsies was recorded in Transylvania: in the province lived 75,342 Gypsies, who represented 2.3 per cent of the population. In Muntenia there were 71,784 Gypsies (1.8 per cent of the population), in Moldavia 32,194 (1.3 per cent), in Oltenia 22,239 (1.5 per cent), in the Banat 17,919 (1.9 per cent), in Crişana-Maramureş 15,895 (1.3 per cent), in Bukovina 2164 (0.3 per cent), in Bessarabia 13,518 (0.3 per cent) and in Dobrogea 11,446 (1.4 per cent). The counties with the largest Gypsy populations were: Ilfov (which also included Bucharest) 17,230, Mureş 11,305, Dolj 8065, Cluj 7869, Târnava Mică 7573, Prahova 7348, Ialomiţa 7228. The largest proportion of Gypsies among the population as a whole was in the Transylvanian counties of Târnava Mică (5.1 per cent), Năsăud (4.1 per cent), Mureş (3.9 per cent) and Făgăraş (2.9 per cent).

The differences between the provinces also refer to the proportion of the Gypsies taken against the population of individual localities. In Transylvania, Gypsies lived in almost all settlements, but in a smaller number in each of them, while in the Old Kingdom of Romania they lived in rather more concentrated groups. In many localities in Muntenia, Oltenia and Moldavia, the proportion of Gypsies was high, with tens of villages composed exclusively or mostly by Gypsies. The largest number lived in Bucharest—

6795 persons (1.1 per cent of the population). The towns with the largest proportion of Gypsies were Urziceni (13.4 per cent), Orșova (8.5 per cent), Târgu Frumos (8.3 per cent) and Mizil (8.1 per cent).

In the census of 1930 only 101,015 people, in other words 37.2 per cent of the total Gypsy population, declared their native language to be Romanes. If the Gypsy nation accounted for 1.5 per cent of the population of the country, the proportion speaking Romanes as their mother tongue amounted to just 0.6 per cent. There were some counties with substantial numbers of Gypsies where they had almost completely lost their ancestral language: in Sibiu county only 10.3 per cent of Gypsies spoke Romanes as their mother tongue, in Făgăraș county 10.7 per cent, in Brașov county 11.5 per cent, in Gorj 13.0 per cent, in Prahova 16.0 per cent, in Vâlcea 17.7 per cent. The process of the abandonment of Romanes was very advanced in Bucovina, southern Transylvania and Muntenia. Since we have in 1930 a situation in which two-thirds of Gypsies spoke Romanian as their native language, Hungarian (in settlements with a Hungarian majority in Transylvania) or another language, it means that we are dealing with a phenomenon of assimilation that at the time was of long duration and at a very advanced stage.

There can be no doubt that the 1930 census did not reproduce exactly the number of Gypsies living in Romania at the time. It was compiled on the basis of declaration given by participants, while there were inhabitants of Gypsy origin who did not declare themselves Gypsies. This occurred either because they considered the term "Gypsy" to be demeaning or because some individuals of Gypsy origin felt themselves to belong to other nations, with whom they identified.³ The true number of Gypsies in Romania was calculated differently by those who dealt with the question of this population, with various figures being advanced: Martin Block calculated that in Romania there were 350,000 to 400,000 Gypsies.⁴ Certain Romanian specialists in bio-politics, with an interest in alerting public opinion to the "danger" represented by the Gypsies, quoted figures of 400,000⁵ or even 600,000 Gypsies.⁶ Some voices from within the Gypsy population put forward aberrant figures, including up to one million.⁷ Ion Chelcea, who deals at length with this problem,⁸ estimated the number of Gypsies in Romania to be double that of the figure given in the census of 1930, in other words, approximately 525,000 instead of 262,051. He divides the Gypsies into three categories: *a*) those who still exhibit genuine external Gypsy traits with a "consciousness" of belonging to this ethnic group; *b*) those who are on the verge of assimilation, who are still vacillating in terms of their ethnic identity; *c*) those who consider themselves to be assimilated, but who can still be recognised as Gypsies.⁹ This attempt to correct the figures of the census paid too little attention to the phenomenon of ethnic assimilation, which meant that some inhabitants of Gypsy origin became assimilated into the majority ethnic

group of the locality or area in which they lived. It has been observed that a much greater number of the Gypsies living in the provinces of Transylvania, the Banat and Crişana-Maramureş declared themselves as such than the Gypsies living in the provinces of the Old Kingdom, where the true number of Gypsies was significantly greater than that given by the census. The explanation of this difference lies in the very strong ethnic and national identifications in Transylvania and in the massive process of assimilation of the Gypsies that had taken place over time, including the inter-war period, to the south and east of the Carpathians.¹⁰ The figures provided by the census, with the aforementioned limitations, are the only credible data available on the subject and were considered as being the closest to reality when at the beginning of the 1940s the question of the introduction of racial discrimination was raised.

The figures provided by the census are lower than those from the end of the nineteenth century. The process of assimilation that took place over the decades can explain the decrease in the number of Gypsies from census to census. The 1930 census recorded a lower number of Gypsies compared to previous censuses in most settlements. In approximately 200 communes, the Gypsies had disappeared from one census to another. If we compare the figures from the census of the Gypsies for Transylvania, Crişana and the Banat carried out by the Hungarian authorities in 1893 with those of the 1930 Romanian census, we can observe a significant decrease in the number of Gypsies in the interval of thirty-seven years between the two censuses. In 1893 there were 151,711 Gypsies, while in 1930 there were just 109,156, a reduction of 42,555 people (i.e., a 28.1 per cent decrease). It is true that in certain counties, particularly as a result of socio-economic factors contributing to population movements, a significant increase in the Gypsy population was recorded: in Sălaj county, the Gypsy population rose by 44.4 per cent, in Năsăud county by 23 per cent, in Târnava Mare county by 8.8 per cent. As a rule, however, a fall in the number of Gypsies was recorded. In the 462 communes in the provinces of Transylvania, the Banat and Crişana that in 1893 were inhabited by at least fifty Gypsies, the Romanian census of 1930 finds that in 127 of the communes the number of Gypsies was stationary or growing; in 266 communes it was in decline, while in sixty-nine communes the Gypsies had disappeared altogether.¹¹ The phenomenon of assimilation was even more pronounced in the Old Kingdom of Romania. Compared to the figure of 200,000 Gypsies thought to be the minimum estimation of the population at the end of the nineteenth century, in 1930 in the provinces of the Old Kingdom there were just 137,663 Gypsies, a decrease of approximately 31 per cent.

In inter-war Romania, the Gypsies were the country's sixth largest ethnic group in terms of number, after the Romanians, Hungarians, Germans,

Jews, Ukrainians and Russians. The Gypsy population presented itself as an extremely heterogeneous conglomerate, including groups that differed according to language, occupation, social situation etc. Some Gypsies, continuing the tradition of the old clans, perpetuated in more or less modified forms the community life of previous times, living as *rudari*, *ursari*, *căldărari* etc. The majority had, however, abandoned their traditional way of life, living instead among the Romanian population or among ethnic groups, integrated to a greater or lesser extent into their respective rural or urban communities.¹² What united these very different groups and gave them a consciousness of their Gypsy identity, aside from their common origin, was their marginal social status and secondly their isolation as Gypsies by the population among whom they lived.

The decades between the two world wars were a period in which the Gypsy population in Romania went through a process of important transformations. The Gypsies were carried along by the social evolutions of the country. From an occupational point of view they continued to have a certain specificity. Some groups of Gypsies perpetuated their traditional crafts, with some crafts considered to be peculiar to the Gypsies being maintained. The profession of blacksmith was, for example, regarded even in this period in Romanian villages as an occupation reserved for Gypsies. This was also the case for the manufacture of bricks and many objects typical of the peasant homestead. It was the *rudari* who generally supplied the wooden utensils and tools necessary to the homestead, while Gypsies continued to perform as musicians almost everywhere.¹³

It was, however, increasingly evident at this time that the aforementioned professions, which were the most representative of the Gypsies, were in decline. This was due to competition of industrial goods and the material progress experienced by the peasantry, who, instead of buying rudimentary objects made by Gypsies, preferred to buy factory-produced items. Similarly, more so than in previous times, Romanian craftsmen appeared in the villages, breaking the "monopoly" formerly held by the Gypsies. Ethnographic research carried out in the 1930s highlighted the crisis facing the *rudari*. Entire settlements of *rudari* were in a state of decline from the point of view of their specific occupation. They had lost their monopoly in the supply of wooden objects to peasant households and by then were producing only small items such as brooms, spindles, rakes etc. and were being forced to find new means of making a living. In Transylvania, the *rudari* or the *băieși* in general adapted to other occupations (e.g., tilling the soil in the villages, leaving to carry out seasonal work in other parts, trading in carpets). On the other hand, the *rudari* from the Old Kingdom were unwilling to adopt other occupations. Some of them became proletarianised in the negative sense of the word. As their occupation disappeared, so the *rudari*

themselves disappeared as professional group and even their communities disintegrated.¹⁴ At this time, as a result of competition from industry, the tinsmiths disappeared, while the brush-makers and white-washers became increasingly rare in the Bucharest streetscape. Gypsy builders suffered competition from foreign master craftsmen, while horse-dealers grew increasingly rare. *Ursari* were prohibited from practising their occupation following protests by the society for the protection of animals.¹⁵ Other professional categories of the Gypsies were also subject to certain restrictions.¹⁶ Even the profession of musician went into a period of decline. Facing competition from radiophone music, gramophones and modern music orchestras, Gypsies grew fewer in numbers, while in many towns musicians' guilds disappeared.¹⁷ Furthermore, the Gypsies lost the monopoly they had for a long time held in this profession in some regions of the country, as a result of Gypsy musicianship being taught in special schools and Romanians taking up the trade.¹⁸ In these conditions, many Gypsies were forced to find a new occupation. Consequently, during the inter-war period, the practice of peddling proliferated among the Gypsies. Even in previous times, some nomadic Gypsies in the course of their wanderings through the country had traded their specific items for goods produced by peasant homesteads, which they then sold on elsewhere. At the time, this was, however, an auxiliary occupation. In the inter-war period, peddling became a profession for some Gypsies. The peddling of textile goods was practised on a particularly large scale. In Transylvania especially, there were Gypsy peddlers who practised this trade on the basis of official authorisation. However, generally speaking, Gypsies forced to abandon their traditional trades took up marginal occupations. The pauperisation of the minor craftsman did not result in the Gypsy craftsman becoming a worker. Rather, in the best cases, he became a labourer, a street-sweeper etc. The inter-war period produced a major transformation in the occupational structure of the Gypsy population.

The vast majority of the Gypsies, living in villages, were engaged in agricultural occupations or in occupations connected with agriculture. The agrarian reform carried out in Romania in the years 1918–20 transformed some of the Gypsies living at the time in villages into smallholders. Gypsies who had taken part in the war and their families, and in some places other Gypsies as well, were granted small parcels of land, together with the other villagers. Nomadic Gypsies, however, did not benefit from the reform, since they were not linked to any particular village. Similarly, the vast majority of *rudari* were not granted land, since the specificity of their occupation led them to live in forested areas outside the villages, and they were not fully sedentarised. Many Gypsies acquired the position of smallholders, resulting in the disappearance of the gulf that separated them from Romanians. The process of integration of these Gypsies into the village community—a

process that had begun much earlier with sedentarisation—thus acquired a major impetus.

However, their position in the agricultural economy was marginal. Land owned by Gypsies was insignificant at the village level. Tillage was not their favourite occupation. In the socio-economic conditions of the inter-war period and more particularly the polarisation that was taking place at the time in the Romanian village, many Gypsies lost the lands they had acquired under the agrarian reform. Ion Chelcea observes in an investigation carried out in the Olt valley in 1939 that 57.9 per cent of the lands granted to the Gypsies of the village of Șercaia had been sold, while in the village of Ucea de Jos, the percentage was 73.3 per cent.¹⁹ On the whole lacking land altogether or owning too little of it, the Gypsies took land individually or rented it. Many of them worked on a day-to-day basis in exchange for goods or money, or to pay off a debt.

Even if the Gypsies failed at this time to become a population of agricultural workers, they did, however, continue to have an important role in the repair of agricultural equipment and in the practice of other rural crafts. In some parts of the country, crafts such as that of blacksmith continued to be practised almost exclusively by Gypsies. Similarly, as a rule (and in Transylvania on an exclusive basis) the village swineherds and cowherds were recruited from among the Gypsies.

For village-dwelling Gypsies, the inter-war period was unquestionably a time of progress in many aspects. They built themselves better dwellings than they had had in the past and became more linked to agricultural occupations, while some became smallholders. In short, they became increasingly integrated into the village community. Differences between them and the Romanians persisted nonetheless. A general characteristic was that the Gypsies remained the poorest social category within the village. They constituted a labour force that was extremely cheap and available at all times. Because of their inferior social and economic position, the Gypsies effectively formed a separate social class. A study on this subject carried out in a village in Bessarabia pointed out that in the social division of the village, which still bore elements from previous centuries, the Gypsies formed a kind of fourth social class after *dvoreni* (boyars), *mazili* (petty boyars) and *țărani* (peasants).²⁰ In general, however, the barriers separating Gypsies from Romanians were increasingly disappearing. The material progress achieved by some Gypsies and their acquisition of a social and economic status close to that of other villagers facilitated their integration into the village community. These Gypsies began to forget their ancestral language, entered into relations of kinship with Romanians, were perceived by others as members of the community, expressed the desire to be considered Romanians and sent

their children to school, all of the above in fact indicating an advanced stage of assimilation.

The process of linguistic and cultural assimilation, and finally ethnic assimilation, was almost as a rule conditioned by the tying of the Gypsies to the land. The agrarian reform of the years immediately following the First World War accelerated this process, coming as it did at a moment when a large part of the Gypsy population was in a more or less advanced stage of assimilation. The local circumstances of the Gypsies, as investigated by teams of sociologists from the Romanian Social Institute, are evidence of this evolution. Research carried out in a village in Năsăud county, for example, shows that the Gypsies in the village no longer spoke Romanes, practised Gypsy traditions, sang Romanian songs and danced Romanian dances or dressed in Romanian costume, while many other elements characteristic to the Gypsy tradition had been replaced with Romanian elements. Their evolution towards the Romanians was becoming more and more pronounced. They wanted to be included in the business of the community. They considered themselves to be Romanians and wanted to be perceived as such. Mixed marriages between Romanians and Gypsies especially promoted developments in this direction. Children resulting from such marriages considered themselves to be Romanians, meaning that assimilation occurred even from the first generation.²¹ In some places, raising one's social status from that of Gypsy to that of Romanian as a result of this mixing was known as "improving one's nation".²²

This tendency towards linguistic and ethnic assimilation was characteristic of a substantial part of the Gypsy population in Romania. This author believes that this ethnic transformation affected a by no means negligible percentage of the Gypsies. However, the scale of the process is hard to quantify. Villages that a few decades earlier were inhabited by a large number of Gypsies became (almost) completely Romanian as a result of the Romanianisation of the Gypsies. In some places, only those Gypsies who had settled quite recently were considered to be "Gypsies". The village's long-established Gypsy population, who had settled there decades or even centuries earlier, had already merged into the local population. Only their names or the colour of their skin gave away the Gypsy origin of some inhabitants. The "Gypsy Lane" found in many villages proved that this part of the community had at one time been inhabited by Gypsies.²³

At all levels of Romanian society in the inter-war period, the general view was that the Gypsies were on the path to assimilation, with completion of this process only a question of time. The sociological studies of the 1930s that included the Gypsies in their area of study also came to this conclusion.

Under these external changes and occupational transformations, the traditional collective way of life of the Gypsies went into decline. Most

Gypsy communities disintegrated. By this time, nomadic Gypsies were an insignificant percentage of the population. The traditional social structures and the authority of the Gypsy leaders declined. In the course of a single generation, the Gypsies lost much of their cultural heritage and civilisation. During this period new forms of solidarity appear among the Gypsies that differ from traditional forms. Examples of these are represented by Gypsy organisations, non-traditional Gypsy leaders and a growing consciousness of belonging to a separate ethnic group.²⁴ These are all indicators of the beginnings of modernisation.²⁵

Romanian society, in spite of reservations of social nature as well as those based on image, was generally speaking open to contacts with the Gypsies. The Romanianisation (or Magyarisation in localities in Transylvania with a majority Hungarian population) of a considerable percentage of the Gypsy population occurred in conditions of a high level of acceptance being shown towards them by society. The most illustrious members of this population, in all their social manifestations, be they baptisms, marriages, missionary work, charity balls, were assisted and patronised by notable figures from Romanian public life.

The group of Gypsies left out of these transformations was that of the nomads. Tent-dwelling (*corturari*) or camp Gypsies (*lăieși*), as the nomadic Gypsies were known, were few in number and in constant decline, but their incessant movements and the attraction of the picturesque elements of their lifestyle made them seem more numerous than they actually were. They were not in any way integrated into rural or urban communities. They moved about the country on a seasonal basis, practising their traditional crafts. The administrative and military authorities found it difficult to exercise control over them. They were regarded as a relic from a previous era that did not fit in with modern society. Consequently, the authorities were preoccupied with attempting to eliminate nomadism. However, the central authorities took too small a part in this matter, leaving the responsibility to the local authorities. A sojourn by tent-dwelling Gypsies on the edge of a village was permitted only with the authorisation of the local authorities. In many cases, the Gypsies were chased away, being considered a danger and often accused of theft. In 1933, regulations were introduced according them the right to remain for up to eight days in a particular place.²⁶ From 1934, nomadic Gypsies (or craftsmen) were forbidden from travelling the country without authorisation issued by the General Inspectorate of the Gendarmerie.²⁷ It would happen frequently that villages playing host to a band of Gypsies who had set up a residence of sorts on their boundaries, would take measures to move them on to another, more secluded, location so that they were not to be found by the main highway, thereby bringing shame upon the village.

The elimination of nomadism could only take place via the tying of Gypsies to a village. There were cases in which the authorities placed land at the disposal of “local” nomadic Gypsies so that they could build houses. However, no such plan existed on a national level and even at a local level it would frequently happen that the gendarmes would chase nomadic Gypsies who owned land there out of the village. Gypsy organisations, which regarded the elimination of the “vagrancy” of camp Gypsies as part of the emancipation of the Gypsy population, called for nomadic Gypsies to be granted land to build a house, so that they could be tied to a particular place, and possibly receive agricultural land.²⁸ During the inter-war period, the idea of the “colonisation” of certain localities with available land with Gypsies was also floated. The authorities returned to this problem on a number of occasions, but without any concrete measures in this sense ever being taken. The reaction of the Gypsies to this rumour is interesting. In order to avoid colonisation, they employed the following ruse: they would buy houses in a village, thus becoming inhabitants of the respective commune by law. Their sedentarisation was, however, merely a formality. They did not completely renounce their way of life. The houses were used more as a stable for their horses, while they continued to live outdoors. Ion Chelcea describes the situation of nomadic Gypsies living in the village of Porumbacu de Jos in Făgăraş county. Gypsies bought a space in the village with houses built on it. Initially they sought to live in the house. After that they set up a tent in the house and lived in the tent. In the end, they moved the tent outside, leaving the houses empty.²⁹ The seasonal movements of the Gypsies continued even after they had become owners of land and houses. However, their movements were as a rule limited to the same county or between a handful of communes. Increasing numbers of nomads renounced their way of life and became completely sedentary. The number of tents in a caravan decreased, the community shrank and its organisational structure began to disintegrate. In 1942, when the Romanian authorities deported all the nomadic Gypsies in the country to Transnistria, they numbered 11,441.³⁰

2. “ORGANISATION”. THE EMANCIPATION MOVEMENT OF THE 1930s

The evolution of the Gypsy population in Romania in the direction of modernisation during the inter-war period is demonstrated by the appearance of Gypsy organisations and the beginnings of a movement for their emancipation.³¹ During this period, a new kind of elite appeared within the population. The social mobility characteristic of Romanian inter-war society made it possible for persons of Gypsy origin to affirm themselves in society.³² At

this time, we find intellectuals, artists, merchants etc. emerging from the ranks of the Gypsies who did not renounce their origins and who took an active role in the life of their community. This was a new phenomenon in Gypsy society. Until that time, social climbing on the part of Gypsies as a rule had led to the loss of their ethnic identity. These Gypsies, who had attained a certain position in society and who for the Gypsies represented an example of success, became the formal leaders of their respective community. The old social organisation of the Gypsies had not, however, disappeared completely. Local or regional communities of Gypsies were still led by *bulibași* and *vătafi*. Nonetheless, the new elite began to have an increasingly important role, to the detriment of the old community leaders.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Gypsies in some areas that were home to significant communities of Gypsies formed their own social and professional organisations, following the example set by their fellow citizens. These organisations brought together Gypsies with the same profession or the same interests living in the respective locality or region. This took place at a time when a rich network of organisations of this kind was developing in Romanian society. Gypsy musicians formed societies in many towns. The largest of these societies was based in Bucharest, known as “Junimea Muzicală” (Musical Youth). One of its leading figures, the well-known Grigoraș Dinicu, was a fierce campaigner for the social and cultural emancipation of the Gypsies. In Calbor in Făgăraș county, the Gypsy peasant Lazăr Naf-tanailă founded a local Gypsy association, known as the “Neo-rustic Brotherhood”, in 1926. The association functioned according to the model of Saxon associations that existed in the vicinity and was concerned with the improvement of the economic and cultural level of the Gypsies. In 1934–35, the association published a newspaper, entitled *Neamul Țigănesc* (The Gypsy Nation).³³ Gypsies from Șercaia (in the same county) also founded a “society”. In Făgăraș, Gypsies had their own funeral society.³⁴

Over time, the idea developed of gathering Gypsies from the entire country into a single ethnic organisation to represent their interests. The promoter of this idea was Archimandrite Calinic I. Popp-Șerboianu, himself of Gypsy origin and a graduate in theology. He was the author of a book about the Gypsies: *Les Tsiganes. Histoire – Ethnographie – Linguistique – Grammaire – Dictionnaire*, published in Paris in 1930. He worked as a priest and for a time entered a monastery in Oltenia, where he held a prestigious position among the Gypsies. Romanian democracy permitted such associations, and there also existed models provided by the economic, cultural, political etc. organisations created by the country’s other national minorities.

In 1933, two organisations of this kind were established. In March 1933 in Bucharest, Calinic I. Popp-Șerboianu founded the General Association of

Gypsies in Romania. The programme of the association, alongside ideas of a social and cultural nature, which were of common interest at the time and which constituted a preoccupation for the entirety of Romanian society, also featured problems specific to the Gypsy population, including the following:

- a drive to improve literacy among the Gypsies, including through evening classes for adults and travelling schools for nomadic Gypsies;
- the establishment of a popular university for Gypsies, and the establishment of a Gypsy “national museum”;
- the publication of books on the history of the Gypsies, “The collection of our traditional songs, dance schools that will teach our dances”;
- the establishment of workshops for “trades appropriate to our national character”;
- “The insistence, via all legal means, that town halls and authorities provide us with land in every town and village in the country where we can build houses for those without their own home, which would be payable over twenty to thirty year periods”;
- the organisation in guilds of all Gypsies practising a craft and their recognition as craftsmen, with corresponding rights from the General Office of Social Insurance;
- the establishment of “county councils” and of a “supreme council of elders” for the resolutions of disputes between Gypsies.³⁵

One of Șerboianu’s associates, the writer and journalist of Gypsy origin G. A. Lăzăreanu-Lăzurică, quit the association and founded the General Union of Roma in Romania. The Union’s congress, which took place on 8 October 1933 with the participation of Gypsies from the entire country, elected as executive president Lăzăreanu-Lăzurică and as honorary president the musician Grigoraș Dinicu. At the same time, Lăzurică assumed the title “voivode of the Gypsies of Romania”.

The two organisations battled each other to secure members from among the Gypsy population. The two leaders launched attacks on each other, which were published in the contemporary press. The authorities were also familiar with these disputes. However, for the time being, neither of the two managed to secure the authorisation for their organisation. Their applications for legal status were refused on various grounds.

Frictions also appeared within the Union itself. In the autumn of 1934, Lăzurică was removed from the leadership of the union by Vice-President Gheorghe Niculescu, a flower merchant from Bucharest and adviser to the Labour Ministry and the Council of Merchants, who proclaimed himself

“executive president and voivode of the Roma of Romania”. In November 1934, Niculescu secured recognition of the organisation as a legal entity. The General Association of the Gypsies in Romania, once again led by Șerboianu and Lăzurică, also managed to obtain legal recognition in 1935, but did not manage to establish itself in the community; in the end the association disappeared, giving up its place to the rival organisation. The General Union of Roma in Romania, under the leadership of Gheorghe Niculescu was undoubtedly the most important Gypsy organisation and was in fact the only one to function at a truly national level. According to figures from the association, in 1939 it had forty branches (at county level), 454 local offices and a total of 784,793 members.³⁶

The association established as its aim “the emancipation and reawakening of the Roma nation”. It intended to take action “to improve the fate of our Roma nation, so that we can live alongside our co-nationals without being ashamed”. The programme of the General Union of the Roma in Romania (UGRR) revived, point by point, the ideas of the previous association.³⁷ The association functioned on a formal level until 1941. However, following the change of regime (i.e., the imposition of a royal dictatorship in 1938), the association was subject to certain restrictions. In the few years during which it functioned, the UGRR undertook measures in line with the aims of the organisation: as a result of its persistent petitions to the authorities, nomadic Gypsies were granted land; with the direct support of the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate, the association undertook the baptism of many nomadic Gypsies³⁸ and the marriage of many couples; a solicitors’ office was founded that gave free legal advice to its members and also managed to arrange for a doctor’s surgery and a maternity clinic to provide them with free health care; it intervened to convince the authorities to grant nomadic Gypsies the right to free movement so that they could practise their trades;³⁹ many Gypsies congresses on a county and national level were organised, and the UGRR edited two publications: *O Ròm* in Craiova (two editions in September–October 1934) and *Glusul Romilor* in Bucharest (1934–41) etc.

On a regional level, it is worth mentioning the Gypsy movement in Oltenia, which functioned during the 1930s. A group of intellectuals of Gypsy origin (the journalist Aurel Manolescu-Dolj, the poet Marin I. Simion, the lawyer N. St. Ionescu and the teacher C. Ș. Nicolăescu-Plopșor) founded here a regional Gypsy organisation. They benefited from the collaboration of the traditional Gypsy leaders. In 1933, Simion, an associate of Șerboianu, founded, together with a number of prominent Gypsies (*bulibași*), the Regional Circle for Oltenia of the General Association of the Gypsies in Romania. After this organisation split in two, in Oltenia the Gypsies remained loyal to Șerboianu. Manolescu-Dolj proclaimed himself to be the “great voivode” of

the Gypsies of Oltenia. In 1934, when the UGRR obtained official recognition, the Gypsy leaders in Oltenia crossed to the latter organisation, only to resign from it in 1936, on the grounds that the centre was not interested in the fate of the Gypsies in Oltenia, and form an independent organisation with its headquarters in Craiova. The regional organisation in Oltenia was active throughout the period, regardless of its affiliation. The main leader of the organisation was Simion, who also proclaimed himself the “voivode of the Gypsies of Oltenia”. During those years, in Oltenia Gypsy assemblies were organised, while even nomadic Gypsies were incorporated into the association. The organisation intervened in situations where Gypsies became involved with the authorities. In 1933, the association founded a trade union of chimney sweeps from Craiova, which was registered at the local court.⁴⁰ The organisation in Oltenia also published its own publications. From September 1933, the Oltenian association supported the newspaper *Timpul* (Time), produced by Manolescu-Dolj. The newspaper continued to be published until 1938. In 1934, two editions of the newspaper *O Ròm*, the official publication of the UGRR were published. Under the aegis of the Association of Gypsies in Oltenia a series of books published under the banner *O Ròm* was established, where in 1934, Nicolăescu-Plopşor published two books of Gypsy folklore in Romanes, together with a Romanian translation: *Ghileà romanè (Cântece țigănești)* (Gypsy Songs) and *Paramiseà romanè (Povești țigănești)* (Gypsy Stories).

These Gypsy leaders attempted to inculcate the Gypsies with a consciousness of their ethnic identity. Gypsy organisations and their publications adopted the term “Rom”, which they attempted to establish. They rejected the term “Gypsy” as demeaning and called for official documents and school textbooks to use the name Rom. They even attempted to provide a theoretical foundation for their demands, claiming that the term Rom originated from Sanskrit, indicating the noble origins of the population, in contrast with their contemporary situation. This was another aspect of the emancipation movement initiated by the leaders of this population. In the programmes of the two Gypsy associations and in their publications, the idea of founding a Gypsy church, in which Gypsy priests would officiate in Romanes, as well as the idea of founding a Gypsy school, in which Gypsy teachers would teach from Romanes-language textbooks, can be found.⁴¹ We also come across the idea of a Gypsy “legal system”, in which Gypsy tribunals would give judgements in disputes between Gypsies. Similarly, also worth mentioning is the interest for the cultural heritage of the Gypsies, particularly history, that is apparent in the Gypsy publications. These ideas indicate the emphasis placed on the preservation of the Gypsies’ identity. However, some promoted integrationist ideas, such as the sedentarisation of nomadic Gypsies at all costs, so the Gypsy movement in Romania

in the 1930s cannot be considered a “nationalist” movement.⁴² The whole activity of the Gypsy organisations denotes a mixture of modernism and traditionalism, reflecting the actual situation of the Gypsies during the period.

This was the state of what in the language of the period was known as “the organisation” of the Gypsies. Not all Gypsies were included in the organisations established during the period. Rather, only a very small proportion of them were involved, while membership was to a certain extent a formal and forced process. The success of the action taken by the organisation depended not only on their leaders and Gypsy activists (or “inspectors”, as they were known) but also on the local Gypsy leaders (the *bulibași* and *vătafi*) and on the authorities. The mobilisation of the Gypsies at their assemblies was sometimes carried out with the assistance of the local authorities. It was difficult to gather together such disparate groups. Within the Gypsy population (declared as such or otherwise) of the country, there were major linguistic and cultural differences. Some categories of Gypsies did not even speak Romanes. Naturally, not all Gypsies responded to the appeal to become members of the society.

It is worth mentioning here that the Gypsy leaders who have been discussed were far from being in the style of the modern leader. As has been seen, they were tempted to adopt the title “voivode of the Gypsies”. It was not an old title, as in Romania the traditional leaders of the Gypsies had never used it. Instead it came from romantic literature, which created the myth of the “voivode of the Gypsies”. In the conception of the Romanian Gypsy leaders of the time, the title of voivode demonstrated that their authority was superior to that of the local *vătafi* and *bulibași* and applied to the Gypsies of the whole country or an entire region. These figures were, in general, people of mediocre calibre. They surrounded themselves with admirers; the newspapers that they led were full of articles in praise of them. The associations themselves did not have a democratic form of organisation and rather seem to have been personal organisations. Some leaders even attempted to use the organisations to their own personal use in order to make an entry into politics. This was particularly the case of the group from the Craiova-based journal *Timpul*. In Dolj county, figures from the National Liberal Party (PNL) attempted in the years 1933–34 to win the votes of the Gypsies. Manolescu-Dolj and Nicolăescu-Plopșor joined the National Liberal Party (under Gheorghe Brătianu), while the latter of the two stood as a candidate for the county council on the list of this party.⁴³ The newspaper called on Gypsies to vote for the lists of the PNL. After the elections, an appeal was made for parliamentarians from Dolj county to take action on behalf of the Gypsies. In 1937, the National Christian Party (PNC), via its president Octavian Goga, managed to gain the support of Șerboianu and Lăzurică. The PNC together with the latter two figures gained an increasing

amount of influence over Manolescu-Dolj and his newspaper *Timpul*. As the elections scheduled for the end of the year approached, *Țara Noastră* (Our Country), the official newspaper of the PNC, published a special weekly edition for the Gypsies. Gheorghe Niculescu accused Șerboianu and Lăzurică of attempting to gain the votes of the Gypsies in order to become deputies.⁴⁴

The achievements of the Gypsy movement of the 1930s were modest. To a certain extent, it succeeded in sensitising public opinion to the social problems of the Gypsies. During the inter-war period, the Gypsies were regarded as a part of society, and the press of the time reported the activities of the Gypsy organisations.

All of the above are indicators of the progress achieved in many respects by the Gypsies in Greater Romania. In many countries during the inter-war period the Gypsies went through a period of organisation and action in favour of the interests of the community.⁴⁵ Some Romologists even speak of “Gypsy nationalism” in connection with this period. Thus, the developments that took place in Romania form part of the general evolution of the Gypsy population in Europe.

The disappearance, together with the imposition of the royal dictatorship in 1938, of the democratic framework that made all these positive developments possible meant that the history of the Gypsies in the inter-war period managed to give rise only to the beginning of certain trends that were not able to consolidate themselves.

NOTES

¹ We recall the fact that an assembly of the representatives of the Gypsies of Transylvania, gathered at Ibașfalău (Dumbrăveni) on 27 April 1919, hailed the decision of the Great National Assembly in Alba Julia from 1 December 1918 to unite Transylvania with Romania and affirmed the commitment of the Gypsies to their new fatherland. (1918. *Unirea Transilvaniei cu România*, 3rd ed., Bucharest, 1978, pp. 666–667.)

² For the figures from the 1930 census of the Gypsies, see *Recensământul general al populației României din 29 decembrie 1930*, vol. II (*Neam, limbă maternă, religie*), Bucharest, 1938, pp. XXXII–LVI. See also Arhivele Statului București, fond Președinția Consiliului de Miniștri (from now on to be referred to as A.S.B., fond P.C.M.), dossier 42/1942.

³ S. Manuilă, D. C. Georgescu, *Populația României*, Bucharest, 1938, p. 59.

⁴ M. Block, *Mœurs et coutumes des Tziganes*, translated by J. Marty, Paris, 1936, p. 64; idem, *Die materielle Kultur*, p. 52.

- ⁵ I. Făcăoaru, “Amestecul rasial și etnic în România”, *Buletinul eugenic și biopolitics*, IX (1938), p. 282.
- ⁶ Gh. Făcăoaru, *Câteva date în jurul familiei și statului biopolitic*, Bucharest, [1941], p. 17 (extract from *România Eroică*).
- ⁷ The General Union of Roma in Romania claimed in 1938 that it represented the interests of a population of 784,793 Gypsies (G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni*, pp. 125–126). In the newspaper *Timpul* (Craiova, III, no. 41, 29 July 1934, p. 1) we find mention of a million Gypsies in Romania (!).
- ⁸ I. Chelcea, *op. cit.*, pp. 63–88 (chapter: “Câți țigani sunt în România?”).
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 84.
- ¹⁰ A. S. B., fond P. C. M., dossier 42/1942, pp. 5–6.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 14–16.
- ¹² For a picture of the Gypsy population during this period see I. Chelcea, *op. cit.*, pp. 22–62.
- ¹³ The occupations of the Gypsies in Romania in the first half of the twentieth century, with ethnographic aspects are dealt with in M. Block, *Die materielle Kultur*, pp. 87–125; I. Chelcea, *op. cit.*, pp. 102–149.
- ¹⁴ I. Chelcea, *op. cit.*, pp. 119–124.
- ¹⁵ Arhivele Statului București, fond Inspectoratul General al Jandarmeriei (from now on to be referred to as A. S. B., fond I. G. B), dossier 95/1940, pp. 269–276, 459–460.
- ¹⁶ *Glasul Romilor*, III, no. 11, 8 June 1938, p. 3; IV, no. 12, 5 April, p. 2 (article “Meserii care dispar”).
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, III, no. 11, p. 3; *Timpul*, III, no. 40, 18 July 1934, p. 2.
- ¹⁸ C. Bârlea, “Conservatorul de lăutari din Rociu”, *Sociologie Românească*, IV (1942), pp. 471–475.
- ¹⁹ I. Chelcea, *op. cit.*, pp. 104, 133.
- ²⁰ Domnica I. Păun, “Țigani în viața satului Cornova”, *Arhiva pentru Știința și Reforma Socială*, X (1932), nos. 1–4, p. 521.
- ²¹ See A. Boia, “Integrarea țiganilor din Șanț (Năsăud) în comunitatea românească a satului”, *Sociologie Românească*, III (1938), nos. 7–9, pp. 351–365.
- ²² Domnica I. Păun, *op. cit.*, p. 527.
- ²³ I. Chelcea, *op. cit.*, p. 97.
- ²⁴ See following sub-chapter.
- ²⁵ G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni*, p. 125.
- ²⁶ *Timpul*, II, no. 17, 14 November 1933, p. 1.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, VI, no. 66, 17 August 1937, p. 2.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, II, no. 17, 14 November 1933, p. 1 (article “Colonizarea țiganilor nomazi”).
- ²⁹ I. Chelcea, *op. cit.*, p. 164.
- ³⁰ A.S.B., fond I.G.J., dossier 126/1942, p. 204.
- ³¹ Some data in G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni*, pp. 124–126; Fr. Rimmel, *Die Roma Rumäniens. Volk ohne Hinterland*, Vienna, 1993, pp. 45–61; T. Amza, *Țigani, o lume a contrastelor*, [Bucharest], 1994, pp. 65–70.
- ³² See J. E. Gyurgyevich, “Die Romi. Zur Volkwedung der Zigeuner Rumäniens”, Sibiu-Hermannstadt, 1934, p. 8–9 (extract from *Der Spiegel*); idem, *Zigeunerro-*

mantik in den Karpathen. Vom Nomadentum zur Zivilisation – Einbruch in die Kultur, Hermannstadt, 1937, p. 5.

³³ Fr. Rimmel, *op. cit.*, pp. 46–47.

³⁴ I. Chelcea, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

³⁵ *Timpul*, II, nos. 11–12, 25 September, pp. 1–2.

³⁶ G. Potra, *Contribuțiuni*, pp. 124–125.

³⁷ *Glasul Romilor*, I, no. 1, 1–15 November 1934, pp. 1–2.

³⁸ Thus took place on 14 October 1934 the baptism of 100 nomadic Gypsies of all ages at Ploiești, in the presence of Patriarch Miron Cristea and of local officials (*O Róm*, I, no. 2, 22 October 1934, p. 2; *Glasul Romilor*, I, 1934, no. 1, p. 3).

³⁹ *Glasul Romilor*, I, 1934, no. 1, p. 3.

⁴⁰ *Timpul*, II, nos. 11–12, 25 September 1933.

⁴¹ C. Ș. Nicolăescu-Plopșor, “Casa, școala și biserica romilor”, *O Róm*, I, no. 2, 22 October 1934, p. 1.

⁴² As J-P. Liégeois does in *Tsiganes*, p. 295.

⁴³ *Timpul*, III, nos. 38–39, 10 June 1934, p. 4.

⁴⁴ Fr. Rimmel, *op. cit.*, pp. 57–58, 60.

⁴⁵ G. Puxon, “Einhundert Jahre Nationalbewegung der Zigeuner”, in *In Auschwitz vergast, bis heute verfolgt. Zur Situation der Roma in Deutschland und Europa*, ed. T. Zülch, Reinbek, 1979, pp. 291–293.

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CHAPTER V

THE POLICY OF THE ANTONESCU REGIME WITH REGARD TO THE GYPSIES

1. RACIST CONCEPTS IN 1930s AND 1940s ROMANIA AND THE GYPSIES

In the inter-war period, the Gypsies were not a particular preoccupation of Romanian society. In many respects, the Gypsies continued to lead the same way of life as they had done in the past. In general, they lived on the margins of the villages and towns. However, there is no doubt that the development of the Gypsy population was in the direction of integration and assimilation into the majority. For the country's political forces, the Gypsies did not represent an ethnic problem. Even if in censuses they were registered as a separate ethnic group with its own language, they were treated more as a social category. Consequently, the Gypsies were not included among the country's national minorities in the political actions of the successive Romanian governments. Legislation relating to minorities did not make reference to the Gypsies. Anti-Gypsy attitudes and manifestations were not to be found in the Romanian nationalism of the inter-war period. Nationalist theories made no reference to the Gypsies. Generally speaking, the attitude of the extreme right (principally the legionary movement) towards minorities was restricted to anti-Semitism. Nor did the "Romanianisation" policy and the anti-minority legislation adopted at the beginning of 1938 by the government of Octavian Goga and A. C. Cuza and during the royal dictatorship (1938–40) target the Gypsies. The introduction into the Constitution in February 1938 of the legal and political distinction between "blood Romanians" and "Romanian citizens", the harsher regime for minorities etc. were in fact targeted at the Jews and to a certain extent other minorities.¹ Up until the time of the Antonescu regime, the Gypsies were not made the object of the measures of a clearly racist tendency adopted in the years 1938–40. Significantly, the General Commissariat of Minorities established in 1938 did not deal with the Gypsies. In the political life and discourse of ideas in inter-war Romania, there was no "Gypsy problem" in the way that there was a "Jewish problem".

The special interest for the Gypsies and for the "problem" that they represented appeared first of all in the scientific field. During the 1930s, the Gypsies were included among the preoccupations of the Romanian representatives of bio-politics, adepts of racist theories originating from Germany. Until that moment, the handful of studies devoted to the Gypsies car-

ried out in Romania focused on the history, ethnography and language of this population. A new feature of this period were the multidisciplinary research of the sociological school in Bucharest led by Dimitrie Gusti. Monographic research teams dealt with the Gypsies as a component part of the village community. On occasions when they dealt expressly with the Gypsies, they did so from the perspective of the study of the process of their integration and assimilation into the Romanian community.²

A different kind of approach began to appear from the perspective of bio-politics. Bio-politics and eugenics began to establish themselves as separate disciplines within the field of anthropology in Romania, in a development that mirrored, to a certain extent, contemporary trends in science in other countries, particularly in Germany. The foundations of bio-politics in Romania were laid by professor Iuliu Moldovan from Cluj. Studies in bio-politics and eugenics were institutionalised in 1926 with the creation of the sub-department of biopolitics and eugenics within ASTRA and the appearance of the *Buletinul eugenic și biopolitic* (Eugenics and Bio-politics Bulletin), a periodical of the Institute of Social Hygiene in Cluj.³ Research in this field was from the beginning politically committed, being subordinated to preoccupations about the fate of the nation, which was regarded as an ethnic community. In the second part of the 1930s, four Romanian specialists in bio-politics dealt specifically with ethnic minorities with the aim of providing the State with a “handbook” for minorities policy. At this time, concepts such as “ethnic purity”, “inferior ethnic groups”, “ethnic promiscuity” etc. emerged. In the view of these specialists, in Romania there were minorities that constituted a “bioethnic danger”. These were the so-called “minorities of extra-European origin” or “ballast minorities”: the Gypsies, the Jews and others, who were distinct from the historical minorities, who did not constitute a danger of this kind.⁴ These were the beginnings of a racist theory affirming the idea of the racial superiority of the Romanians. The theory, however, was not fully fledged, and none of its exponents were public personalities during the period. Generally speaking, the theory was limited to the adoption of certain concepts borrowed from the racist “science” of inter-war Germany, which played an important role in the preparations for the genocide of the Jews and the Gypsies during the Second World War.

The “problem” of the Gypsies was also discussed in this context. In fact, it was the same “scholars” who introduced the notion itself in Romania. Due to their marginal social position, poverty, high level of criminality etc., the Gypsies were regarded as a “plague” for Romanian society. For the Romanian theoreticians of racism, the “danger” came from two directions. On the one hand, there was the number and proportion of Gypsies in the population as a whole and their birth rate, which was relatively higher than

that of the Romanians. Blatantly exaggerated figures concerning the number of Gypsies in Romania were vehiculated: it was claimed that 400,000 or even 600,000 Gypsies were living in Romania at the time. Statisticians who examined the demographic situation of the Gypsies at the beginning of the 1940s, either for the State or on a confidential basis, rejected such figures. They gave credence to the official figures of the 1930 census, even if they accepted the existence of the phenomenon of under-registration of the Gypsies. Today, if we consider diachronically the evolution of the Gypsy population in Romania, it can be estimated that never in their history had the Gypsies constituted such a small proportion of the total population of the country as they did at the beginning of the 1940s. Furthermore, during the inter-war period the tendency was for greater and more complete integration and linguistic and ethnic assimilation of the Gypsy population than in the past. It is, perhaps, for this reason that the demographic argument was not the most important strand of the thesis of racists in Romania. In their opinion, the greatest danger lay, paradoxically, in the very assimilation of the Gypsies. Ioan Făcăoaru, the leading exponent of racist theories with regard to the Gypsies, considered that the assimilation of second-rank minorities would mean the “estrangement and pauperisation of our own ethnic traits.” He spoke of the danger of assimilating the Gypsies in the following terms: “the process of assimilation is activated and aggravated not only by the large number of Gypsies, but also by other factors specific to the political conditions in Romania: the tolerant disposition of the Romanian people, the distribution of the Gypsies across the entirety of the country, the Gypsies’ social promiscuity with the autochthonous population both in the towns and the villages, the existence of joint schools, the granting of land to many Gypsies, and the relaxation of sedentary living conditions, thereby facilitating their entry into the Romanian community, the absence of any legal restrictions upon the Gypsies, and finally the indulgent attitude of the government and the administrative authorities towards them.”⁵ This author expressed his dissatisfaction with the fact that in Romania, the country with the largest Gypsy population (at least 400,000, according to him), the authorities had not taken any measures against this population. He also expressed his appreciation for the policy of other countries in this respect, especially that of Germany. At the same time, Făcăoaru rejected the other policy alternative: namely “biological isolation” or “complete ethnic separation”. He argued that ethnic separation was impossible to achieve at a practical level while if it were to take place, it would lead to losses of an economic and moral order.⁶ The “Gypsy problem” was conceived as a racial problem and the solutions proposed were consequently of racial nature. The “practical solution” advanced by another author in 1941 consisted of the following: “nomadic and semi-nomadic Gypsies are to be interned in forced labour

camps. There they will be forced to change their clothes, they will be shaved, receive a haircut and be *sterilised* [emphasis in the text—note V.A.]. In order to cover the costs of their upkeep, they will be required to carry out forced labour. We would be rid of them from the first generation. Their place will be taken by national elements, capable of ordered and creative work. Sedentary Gypsies will be sterilised at home, so that place in which they reside may be cleaned of their presence in the course of a generation. In all cases, their place must be occupied by the best elements of the nation, either from within Romania or from outside its borders [...]. In this way, the margins of villages and towns will no longer be a source of shame or focus of infection for all the ills of society, but rather an ethnic wall buttressing the nation rather than harming it.”⁷ Evident in these texts is the influence of the ideas of Robert Ritter, the creator of the *Zigeunerwissenschaft* and the man who prepared the theoretical component of the genocide of the Gypsies in Nazi Germany.⁸ The works of Ritter were used as arguments in support of the necessity of a state policy with regard to the Gypsies.

Of course, such opinions did not benefit from a wide circulation in Romania. In the 1930s, discussion of racial problems was limited to specialists in bio-politics. The universities were in general reticent with regard to this kind of research. Racist ideas with regard to the Gypsies were not adopted by the press of the time or by public opinion. They were not even included in the discourse of the extreme right in Romania. However, the situation began to change together with the political events of 1940, and in the context of the abandonment of democratic values and the country's entry under the political and ideological domination of Nazi Germany. The legionary movement only came to consider the need for a racist policy with regard to the Gypsies after their arrival in power. From that time on, the Gypsies were associated with the Jews. An article published in the official publication of the Iron Guard on 18 January 1941 (therefore, a few days before the Legionaries were chased from power), declared “the Gypsy problem” to be a priority among the many problems facing the National-Legionary State and indicated the necessity of prohibiting marriages between Romanians and Gypsies, to be followed by the gradual isolation of the Gypsies in a kind of ghetto.⁹ However, no measures of this kind were taken against the Gypsy population during the Legionary government. At the beginning of the 1940s, in some scientific papers relating to the Gypsies, we suddenly come across racist ideas and concepts never before expressed, either in Romanian science or in the works of the scientists who were then vehiculating them. Top-ranking scientists suddenly began to consider from a theoretical point of view the “problem” constituted by the Gypsies. In the scientific monograph devoted to the Gypsies, the solutions proposed (in the conditions of the era) include the colonisation of the Gypsies in a remote

part of the country, their deportation to Transnistria and even their sterilisation.¹⁰ This can be accounted for with reference to political pressures, as well as the xenophobic atmosphere with racist elements pervading part of Romanian society at the time. Opinions of a racist character expressed in Romania in the 1930s by certain exponents of eugenics, even though they were isolated in nature, undoubtedly played a role in the preparation of the policy that would be adopted by the Antonescu government with regard to the Jews and the Gypsies.

2. THE “GYPSY PROBLEM” DURING THE ANTONESCU REGIME

The sudden appearance of the so-called “Gypsy problem” at the beginning of the 1940s had nothing to do with the traditional attitude of the Romanian authorities towards this population. From the time of their emancipation from slavery in the middle of the nineteenth century until the time of the Antonescu regime, the Gypsies never received any special attention from any government. The appearance of the “Gypsy problem” depended, on the one hand, on the evolution of Romanian nationalism and, on the other hand, on the change in political regime in the context of the political situation of the year 1940. The drama of the summer of 1940, with the territorial losses suffered by the country and the collapse of old values, including the last vestiges of the democratic system that was held responsible for the state to which the country had sunk, led to the degeneration of national feelings into xenophobia. The political regime established with the coming to power of General Antonescu and the country’s entry into the political and ideological orbit of Hitler’s Germany resulted in the transformation of measures against the non-Romanian population into state policy. While the fascist component of the Antonescu regime was principally confined to the Iron Guard and the period in which the Legionaries were present in the government (6 September 1940–21 January 1941), measures of a nationalist character were one of the essential components of the internal policy of the Antonescu regime. The policy of “Romanianisation”, that is, the promotion of Romanian elements in all aspects of the economic and social life of the country and the restriction, even the exclusion, of “foreigners”, chiefly the Jews, was a defining aspect of the Antonescu regime. There are even some indications that Antonescu’s ultimate goal was the ethnic cleansing of the country. At a cabinet meeting on 16 November 1943, Antonescu declared: “If circumstances help us to win this war, rest assured that there is no other solution than the movement of the minorities, by a reform that we will have to enact, and to eliminate them out of Romanian society.”¹¹ The partial deportation of the Jews and the Gypsies may be regarded as the beginning of this policy.

The policy adopted with regard to the Gypsies was in the complete sense of the word the creation of Ion Antonescu. It was Antonescu himself who raised the question of measures against the Gypsies during the cabinet meeting of 7 February 1941. Following an inspection in Bucharest in which he noted the serious offences committed during the blackout, he called for the removal of all Gypsies from the city.¹² This was the beginning of the policy of the Antonescu regime with regard to the Gypsies. The decision to deport the Gypsies to Transnistria was taken by Ion Antonescu himself, as he declared at his trial in 1946.¹³ It should be recalled that none of Antonescu's orders with regard to the Gypsies bore his signature and none of them were published either in the Official Gazette or elsewhere. The orders were given verbally to ministers and transmitted to the General Inspectorate of the Gendarmeries for execution. Antonescu closely followed the way in which the measures were taken, to the extent that the policy applied in Romania with regard to the Gypsies during the Second World War can be considered the creation of Antonescu.

The views of a racist character originating from certain scientific circles played no role in the adoption of the decisions taken with regard to the Gypsies. It is true that the Presidency of the Cabinet Council showed some interest in the drawing up of a "population policy" and certain requests in this respect were made to the Central Institute of Statistics. In a document of this kind, Sabin Manuilă referred to the Gypsies as a major problem: "Romania's major racial problem is that of the Gypsies. They constitute the most numerous ethnic group after the Romanians. At the same time, they are responsible for the promiscuity and *disg nie* in our country. Nothing has been done so far to solve the Gypsy problem."¹⁴ The study undertaken to establish the number of Gypsies in the country carried out by the Central Institute of Statistics on the orders of the Presidency of the Cabinet Council¹⁵ was finalised in September 1942, i.e. when the deportation of the Gypsies had practically come to an end. From the material currently available, it can be seen that the motives of the Gypsy policy of the Antonescu government were more of a social nature, whose declared aim was the eradication of criminality and the elimination from the social landscape of the problems caused by this pauperised population, especially in the towns. No document originating from the authorities attempts to justify the measures against the Gypsies on racial grounds.

At the same time, the measures taken against the Gypsies should be considered in the context of the authoritarian policy introduced in Romania by the Antonescu government, which aimed at establishing order and strict state control over all aspects of social life in the country. The necessity of establishing order in the country was the basis of the legitimacy of the Antonescu administration and consequently, the authorities promoted a pol-

icy that was designed to eliminate anything that did not coincide with the concept of order, as it was understood at the time. It is in this context that we should place the persecution of Communists, Legionaries (from January 1941 onwards), Jews, Gypsies, minority religious groups etc. Nor should we neglect the extremely tough legislation applied during the years of the regime with regard to vagrancy, begging, prostitution, the refusal to work etc.

The most important component of Antonescu's policy with regard to the Gypsies was their deportation to Transnistria in the summer and early autumn of 1942. As we shall see, approximately 25,000 Gypsies were taken to Transnistria, including all nomadic Gypsies and part of the sedentary Gypsies. This measure was taken against "problem" Gypsies, in other words against those considered in the official parlance of the time to be "dangerous" and "undesirable". There is not any special material available that offers an explanation of these notions. However, the criteria used in the selection of Gypsies for deportation were their way of life, nomadism, previous convictions and the lack of means of supporting themselves or of a specific occupation enabling them to earn a living. All "problem" Gypsies were to be deported and it appears that Antonescu planned to deport in stages the country's entire Gypsy population to Transnistria. However, at the beginning of October 1942, all deportations were postponed until the spring of 1943, only to be completely abandoned subsequently. As a result of motives of both an internal and external nature, Antonescu's policy towards the Gypsies, as well as towards the Jews, underwent some modifications.

Gypsies who were not included in the category of those considered dangerous and undesirable, in other words the vast majority of the population, were not affected by the policy of the Antonescu regime. They did not lose their rights as citizens, as happened with the country's Jewish population, while their assets were not subject to the policy of "Romanianisation", as it was in the case of the Jews. Like other citizens, Gypsies were mobilised in the army and fought on the front during the war. Gypsy soldiers on the front and those eligible for mobilisation were, together with their families, exempted from deportation even if they figured among those destined for this fate. If some were for whatever reason deported to Transnistria, they were, at least in theory, guaranteed favourable conditions. At the same time, measures were taken to improve the conditions of certain categories of Gypsies. Here we are speaking of the colonies of Gypsies located on certain large agricultural estates in the plain counties of the south of the country, which for many years had used Gypsy labour in exchange for derisory wages without even any obligation to provide them with accommodation. These Gypsies lived in poverty. In November 1942, the General Inspectorate of the Gendarmerie and in June 1943, Marshal Antonescu himself

issued orders obliging estate owners to build stable dwellings for Gypsies working on the estates.¹⁶ However, dwellings were built for Gypsies from this category in only a handful of places. During the war, hundreds of Gypsies sought refuge from northern Transylvania, which was at the time under Hungarian occupation, settling in the counties of Cluj-Turda and Arad. Even if the local Gendarmes proposed their internment in labour camps or their deportation to Transnistria, the General Inspectorate of the Gendarmerie decided that they would remain where they were. Consequently, they were not expelled to the occupied territories.¹⁷

Thus, the measures taken against the Gypsies affected only a part of this population. The Romanian government did not deal with the Gypsies as a single unit. The government was only interested in those Gypsies who, due to their social and legal situation, were considered dangerous and undesirable. The majority of these Gypsies were indeed deported to Transnistria. The rest of the Gypsies were not targeted by the government and were not subjected to any kind of discriminatory measures. It is true that Ion Antonescu issued certain declarations proclaiming the necessity of the ethnic purification of the country, which clearly would have affected the Gypsies, but such statements remained at this level only. The idea of ethnic cleansing never reached the stage of being a political programme for the Antonescu government. Likewise, the government's policy towards the Gypsies should be judged by controllable facts. The Antonescu government did not have a programme that was targeted at all the Gypsies. Although the deportation of the Gypsies to Transnistria was a clearly defined component of the internal policy of the Antonescu regime, the "Gypsy problem" did not count among its priorities. It was a subject of only marginal interest in government policy.

3. DEPORTATION TO TRANSNISTRIA (1942–44)

The episode in which the Gypsies were deported to Transnistria is linked to the period of the Second World War and the administration of Marshal Ion Antonescu. Until now, researchers have neglected this question, together with the entire policy with regard to the Gypsies in Romania at the time. This state of affairs exists in spite of the fact that the events that took place in Romania in the years 1940–44 have received and continue to receive special attention from historians. All that is known about the deportation of the Gypsies in Transnistria is some extremely vague information invoked during the trial of Ion Antonescu and his principal collaborators in 1946,¹⁸ the testimonies of deportees recorded in certain writings¹⁹ and the story, containing factual elements, of the deportation of a community of nomadic Gypsies from the novel *Şatra* (The Gypsy Caravan), published by Zaharia

Stancu in 1968. Similarly, literature devoted to the fate of the Gypsies in Europe during the war contains some speculation as to the scale of the deportations in Romania and the number of victims.²⁰ As we shall see, however, documentary research provides us with other figures.

The German and Romanian armies occupied the territory between the Dniester and Bug rivers, which formed part of Soviet Ukraine, in the summer of 1941. Following an exchange of letters between Adolf Hitler and Ion Antonescu and the German-Romanian accord signed in Tighina on 30 August 1941, the administration of this territory was entrusted to the Romanian state. Its fate was to be decided definitively at the end of the war.²¹ The Romanian civil administration in Transnistria (as the territory between the Dniester and the Bug was from then to be known), led by governor Gheorghe Alexianu, was responsible for the normalisation of the economic and social life and the economic exploitation of the territory. The civilian administration remained in place until 29 January 1944, when as a consequence of the military situation, it was replaced with a military administration. It was to Transnistria that the Romanian authorities deported, in the years 1941–44, the Jews of Bessarabia and Bukovina and a part of the Gypsy population living in Romania.

Clearly, when at the beginning of 1941 the question of taking measures against the Gypsies was first considered, the idea of deporting them to Transnistria did not exist. In the cabinet meeting of 7 February 1941, Ion Antonescu pointed out that: “the solution would have been to wait for the draining of the marshes of the Danube in order to establish villages of Gypsies there and turn them into fishermen etc. Another solution is for us to hold talks with the leading landowners. In the Bărăgan there has always been a shortage of labour. Let’s build the villages there. They won’t be permanent villages, but we can build houses and shacks, sanitary installations, shops, drinking houses etc.”²² The initial plan was to settle the Gypsies in compact villages in the Bărăgan region. Later on, it was decided to deport them to Transnistria. The pretext for their deportation invoked by Ion Antonescu was the thefts and murders committed by the Gypsies during the blackout, which were terrorising the population of the towns.²³

Deportation was to be used against those Gypsies considered to be a “problem”. In order to achieve this, at the end of May 1942 the gendarmerie and the police carried out a census of Gypsies from this category. The census recorded, together with their families, nomadic Gypsies as well as those sedentary Gypsies who had criminal convictions, were repeat offenders, were unable to support themselves or who lacked a clear occupation on which they could make a living. Lists of Gypsies from these two categories, compiled by commune, town and county, were sent to the General Inspectorate of the Gendarmerie.²⁴ In total, 9471 nomadic Gypsies and 31,438

sedentary Gypsies who fell into the aforementioned category were registered. According to the orders issued on 17 May 1942 by the General Inspectorate of the Gendarmerie, who was responsible for the operation, after the carrying out of the census and prior to further orders, the Gypsies named in the lists were no longer permitted to leave the county in which they had been registered and were to be kept under close supervision by the police and gendarmes.²⁵ On the basis of the figures from the census of May 1942, the General Inspectorate of the Gendarmerie began to organise the operational phase of the deportation.

The deportations began with the nomadic Gypsies. Beginning on 1 June 1942, these Gypsies were rounded up by the gendarmes in the county capitals and then sent to Transnistria. The order for the evacuation of all nomadic Gypsies without exception was given by the Presidency of the Cabinet Council on 25 June 1942.²⁶ The operation came to an end on 15 August 1942. Those who at the time of the evacuation were serving on the frontline or had been mobilised within the country were by order of the General Staff of the Army removed from the military rolls, sent home and sent to follow their families to Transnistria. A total of 11,441 people in this category (2352 men, 2375 women and 6714 children) were evacuated to Transnistria.²⁷

With regard to the sedentary Gypsies registered in the census of May 1942, the authorities initially attempted to divide them into separate groups. The first group destined for evacuation were those Gypsies considered “dangerous and undesirable”, who together with their families, made up a total of 12,497 people. The remaining 18,941 were to be evacuated at a later date. The families of mobilised Gypsies and Gypsies eligible for mobilisation together with their families remained where they were, even if they were included in the category of those considered to be dangerous. The authorities did not have an action plan with regard to the sedentary Gypsies at the time when the deportation of the nomadic Gypsies began. The sedentary Gypsies were either to be evacuated to Transnistria or to be interned in camps inside Romania. Finally, Ion Antonescu chose the first option and the order was given on 22 July 1942. The operation was due to begin on 1 August.²⁸ However, the evacuation of the sedentary Gypsies only took place between 12 September and 20 September 1942.

In September 1942, 13,176 sedentary Gypsies were deported to Transnistria, more than had been decided. Furthermore, the lists of those who were evacuated did not coincide with the lists of those chosen for evacuation. An investigation into this state of affairs established that on the date of evacuation, some of the persons selected for evacuation had disappeared and had been replaced with others who wanted to be evacuated. There was a fairly substantial number of Gypsies not included on the deportation lists who

came to the stations from where the deportees were leaving and who managed to become mixed with the other Gypsies, as a consequence of the rushed nature of the embarkation and the fact that the Gypsies had no identity papers on them. Others set off for Tighina in regular trains and joined different groups of Gypsies upon their arrival there.²⁹ A rumour had been circulating among the Gypsies once they arrived in Transnistria, they would be granted land. This in part explains the desire of some Gypsies to leave.

Many abuses were committed by the gendarmes and policemen charged with carrying out the operation. Some families of mobilised Gypsies were evacuated as well as some Gypsies eligible for mobilisation together with their families, 538 people in total. In one case, a soldier on leave saw his family (his wife and parents-in-law) deported by the gendarmes to Transnistria. Furthermore, the family in question even had some wealth.³⁰ Families of Romanians were rounded up by mistake, as well as families of Turks from Dobrogea. A note dated 6 December 1942 stated that among those deported to the county of Ochakov were 62 families of Romanians and 6 families of Turks.³¹ Some of those deported were married to Romanian women. People who had a profession (blacksmiths, musicians, workers etc.) and people who owned land, a house and some wealth, were also deported. A large number of petitions were filed pointing out these occurrences and calling for the abuses to be righted. There were also a large number of requests for repatriation. Gypsy soldiers on the frontline or concentrated inside Romania protested against the abuses. The Presidency of Cabinet Council and the General Staff also called for the righting of abuses. As demonstrated in an order issued by the Ministry of Interior, these abuses "have produced a justifiable sense of unrest among Gypsy soldiers, who, while carrying out their duty to their country in a role of utmost honour, have seen their families rounded up and evacuated to Transnistria." Consequently, it was ordered that measures were to be taken. Furthermore, it was ordered that special care was to be shown to the families of these people, while the notion of "family" was to be interpreted as the Gypsies did, so that exception from deportation was extended to the unmarried partners of those Gypsies who had been mobilised or who were eligible for mobilisation, as well as the children resulting from such unions.³² At the end of the investigation, 311 heads of families had received repatriation orders, together with 950 family members, giving a total of 1261 people.³³ However, not all of these people were repatriated. Deported Gypsies who had family members on the frontline or who had fought in the anti-Soviet war or the war of 1916–18 were guaranteed special treatment in comparison to other Gypsies by granting them certain material benefits.³⁴

At the same time, Gypsies were taken from their homes without being allowed to take with them the personal and household belongings necessary

for life in the places to which they were being deported. They did not have sufficient time to liquidate their assets. There were a considerable number of cases in which heads of sections of gendarmes and police took advantage of the opportunity to buy various objects from the Gypsies at derisory prices. The houses and other goods of the evacuated Gypsies were taken over by the National Centre for Romanianisation.³⁵

The deportation of the Gypsies was not a popular measure. Even from the beginning of the evacuation operations, in many places the local inhabitants called on the authorities not to deport the Gypsies, as the village needed them, the Gypsies usually working as the village blacksmith. Sometimes, such requests were signed by the entire village. Similarly, certain democratic political figures protested against the measures. Constantin I. C. Brătianu, the president of the National Liberal Party described the expulsion of the Gypsies in a letter addressed to Ion Antonescu dated 16 September 1942 as an unjustified and cruel act, and called for an end to such persecutions, which “turn back the clock on several centuries of history.”³⁶

The deportation of sedentary Gypsies considered dangerous was to be followed by the evacuation of the other Gypsies registered in the census of May 1942. To be affected were the other 18,941 (the number recorded initially for this purpose) or 18,262 Gypsies (those left after the deportation from September).³⁷ When the sedentary Gypsies were divided into separate groups, the idea was considered of interning Gypsies who had been mobilised or who were eligible for mobilisation in camps inside Romania.³⁸ In the end, the authorities opted for deportation. This did not take place because at the beginning of October 1942, the deportation of the Gypsies and the Jews to Transnistria was halted. On 2 October, the Ministry of Interior suspended all further evacuations until the spring of the following year,³⁹ while on 14 October the ministry ordered that no category of Gypsies was to be sent to Transnistria, even if those remaining were nomads or Gypsies with a criminal record; only those Gypsies “whose presence constitutes a danger to public order”⁴⁰ were still to be deported. The decision to withdraw any further deportations was taken by the cabinet on 13 October 1942.⁴¹ After this date, only a small number of those Gypsies who had avoided the deportations in the summer were deported to Transnistria.

The exact number of Gypsies deported to Transnistria during the period 1942–44 is not easy to establish. Even from the autumn of 1942, there was a permanent tide of people moving between Romania and Transnistria in both directions, as a result of the repatriations and the deportations of isolated individuals. At the beginning of October 1942, after the deportation of the two categories of Gypsies had come to an end, in Transnistria there were 24,686 Gypsies: 11,441 nomadic Gypsies, 13,176 non-nomadic (settled) Gypsies and a further 69 who were evacuated with special authorisation

after their release from prison.⁴² If we add to this figure the several hundred Gypsies deported at a later stage, the total number of Gypsies deported to Transnistria can be estimated at approximately 25,000. The Inspectorate and legions of gendarmes in Transnistria kept records of the Gypsies evacuated there. The number of Gypsies listed in the records differed from one month to another according to the movements of people from and to Transnistria. From late autumn 1942, the number of deportees was in continual decline, partly due to the repatriations taking place but also due to the extremely high level of mortality among the deportees, caused by hunger, cold, disease and all manner of shortages.

In Transnistria the Gypsies were settled at the boundary or in the centre of villages located on the bank of the river Bug and belonging to the counties of Golta, Ochakov, Balta and Berezovka. Most nomadic Gypsies were settled in Golta county, while sedentary Gypsies were almost all settled in Ochakov county; 13,850 people belonging to this category were placed in this area.⁴³ Some Gypsies were accommodated in huts dug into the earth, while others received houses. As a rule, half of the village was evacuated, with the local Ukrainians being moved into the houses of fellow villagers who did not suffer evacuation, while the Gypsies were put into the vacated houses. Some entire villages on the Bug were evacuated for this purpose, with the Ukrainian population moved back into the interior of the respective county.

The regime imposed on the Gypsies evacuated to Transnistria was established by a decision of the Government of Transnistria from 18 December 1942. This included the following:

- The settlement of the Gypsies in villages, in groups of 150–350, according to local labour needs and potential, under the leadership of one of their number, with the obligation that they carried out the work required of them and with wages equivalent to local workers.
- Qualified workers were to be used according to their profession in existing workshops as well as workshops that were to be established.
- The rest of the Gypsies were to be organised in work teams under the supervision of one of their number. The teams were to be used in agricultural work, in lumbering, in the production of objects made from unprocessed wood, the collection of animal skins, sinews and hair, the collection of metals, waste products, rags etc.
- All Gypsies aged between twelve and sixty of either sex were obliged to work in workshops or in work teams.
- Gypsies who generated a higher than average output were to receive a bonus equivalent to 30 per cent of the surplus of labour provided.
- The leaders of a group of Gypsies in a village were to be responsible

- for the Gypsies' presence in the village, while the supervisors of the work teams were to be responsible for their presence at work.
- Gypsies who abandoned the locality in which they had been settled without authorisation or who were absent without reason from work were to be interned in punishment camps to be established in each county.⁴⁴

The proposed measures were supposed to guarantee deportees the chance to earn a living under conditions of a regime of forced domicile. However, these measures only ever existed on paper. The situation of the Gypsies in Transnistria was from the beginning extremely harsh. Gypsies were only to a very small extent provided with the opportunity to work and earn a living. Only some of them were used on farms and collectives (former kolkhozes). The farms and collectives only ever required the labour of a small number of the Gypsies and as a rule on a seasonal basis, preferring to use the local Ukrainians instead. Workshops were not set up, and machinery was not acquired for qualified Gypsies.

The harsh conditions in which the Gypsies found themselves were in part due to their concentration in large groups. The so-called colonies were as a rule large, made up of hundreds of people. In the county of Ochakov, initially the almost 14,000 Gypsies were all settled in three areas: in the communes of Kovaliovka, Bolshaya-Karanika and in the barracks at Aleksandrudar. The mass settlement of the Gypsies in such large numbers created an extreme situation in which the local authorities—on whom implementation of the measures decided for the Gypsies depended in the final analysis—were unable to guarantee them accommodation, food, clothing and work opportunities. A note dated 5 December 1942 from an agent carrying out intelligence work in the region of Ochakov, described the dramatic situation of the Gypsies as follows:

While they were living in the barracks at Aleksandrudar, the Gypsies lived in conditions of indescribable squalor. There was insufficient food. They were given 400g of bread for those fit for work and 200g for children and the elderly. They were also given a few potatoes and on very rare occasions salted fish, but then only in very small quantities.

As a result of the lack of nourishment provided, some Gypsies, and these formed the majority, lost so much weight that they were skeletal in appearance. Every day, recently especially, ten to fifteen Gypsies would die. They were covered in parasites. There were no doctors available and they had no medicine. They are naked, having no clothing upon them, and completely lack clean clothing and footwear. There are women whose bodies (the lower half) are naked in the proper sense

of the word. They have received no soap since they arrived and so consequently they have not washed and have not been able to wash the shirts that they wear.

Generally speaking, the conditions in which the Gypsies are living are terrible, almost unimaginable. Due to the squalor, many of them have been reduced to virtually savage shadows of human beings. This situation is due to the poor accommodation and food, as well as the cold. Due to the hunger to which they are subjected, they have spread far among the Ukrainians with their stealing. If in Romania some Gypsies stole, they did so out of habit, whereas in Aleksandrudar, even the Gypsy who in Romania was honest has taken to stealing because hunger have driven him to such shameful gestures.

Due to their poor treatment, by 25 November this year 309 Gypsies died. Corpses were found on the Ochakov–Aleksandrudar road. The people had died of hunger and cold.

Although the Gypsies from the barracks at Aleksandrudar have been housed in more humane conditions in the villages mentioned above, the Gypsy problem in Ochakov county has not yet been solved. Only their conditions have improved to a certain extent: they are less exposed to the cold and have been deloused. However, if they do not receive wood or some other fuel, the Gypsies will manage to do the same to the houses they have been given as they did in the barracks, that is, render them uninhabitable. They will be brought to this by the cold, without them thinking that they are making things worse and that the danger of dying of cold is greater by doing so. Similarly, if they do not receive more human food, medical assistance and medicines, as well as clothing for some of them, the death rate of the Gypsies will not fall, but will rise for every day that the frost gets worse. Also, they will steal even more from the Russians. In any case, the local population is up in arms and their morale is very low as a result of their being evacuated from their houses in winter so that the Gypsies whom they cannot bear could be moved into them.⁴⁵

The units of gendarmes took up the matter with the county administrators so that the Gypsies would be provided with means of surviving. In many cases, the units of gendarmes proposed the Gypsy colonies be broken up and the Gypsies be distributed among the villages, with a maximum of twenty families per village so that it was easier for them to survive and to be put to work. On a local scale, solutions were sought to guarantee them a source of food. In Balta county in 1943, the Gypsies were moved from houses into huts; they were given land to farm and to feed themselves. In other areas, the colonies were disbanded and the Gypsies were farmed out

among the Ukrainian villages, thus making it easier to feed them and to use them as labour.

Living conditions in Transnistria were very harsh. Monthly reports compiled by the gendarmes reflected this situation and the lack of concern on the part of the civilian authorities (town halls, county heads, the Government of Transnistria) for ensuring the survival of the Gypsies. The food rations established by the government were not respected. Sufficient food provisions were not distributed to the Gypsies. Sometimes they received nothing for weeks on end. In some places, only those Gypsies who worked on the collectives were given food provisions. At the same time, they were not provided with wood to be used for food preparation and heating, while only a small proportion of the deportees received work. Clothing was a particularly serious problem, all the more so since the Gypsies were not allowed to take with them a change of clothing or other personal effects when they were deported. They lacked the most basic items, including vessels for the preparation of food. Health care was effectively non-existent and there was a lack of medicines. Funerals were carried out without a priest. Those who had gold, Romanian money or other objects sold them to the locals in order to survive.

At the same time, it should be mentioned that the authorities frequently accused the Gypsies of dodging work when it was offered to them or of producing very low outputs. The documents show that they preferred to travel the surrounding villages, begging or thieving, which angered the local Ukrainians and caused a great deal of trouble to the authorities.⁴⁶ At the same time, there was a general tendency among the Gypsies to flee the colonies set up along the Bug. By all means possible, either individually or in groups, they tried to return to Romania. In most cases, the fugitives were caught and returned to the colonies. The authorities in Transnistria found it impossible to control these movements. The punishment camps intended for such situations were never established. Only in the autumn of 1943, at a time when the exodus of the Gypsies had reached a considerable scale and the number of fugitives who had been caught exceeded 2000, were steps taken to improvise a camp of this kind at Golta, where 475 Gypsies were interned.⁴⁷

In the conditions described, a large part of the Gypsy deportees in Transnistria died of hunger, cold, disease and poverty. We learn from reports compiled in mid-December 1942 (in other words, three to four months after deportation) with regard to the Gypsy deportees in Ochakov county, in the area of Bolshaya-Karanika out of 3881 Gypsies over 150 had died, equivalent to 3.8 per cent,⁴⁸ while in the area of Aleksandrovka out of 3585 Gypsies 388 had died (10.8 per cent).⁴⁹ A news report from September 1943 presenting the dramatic conditions of the Gypsies indicated that: "as a result

of this state of affairs, in winter [Gypsies] will die of cold and malnutrition, as they died last winter, and their disappearance next spring will make the problem of the Gypsies in Transnistria disappear altogether.”⁵⁰

The precise number of Gypsies who died in Transnistria is not known. In the 1946 trial, the prosecution stated that “tens of thousands of men, women and children died of hunger, cold and disease.”⁵¹ The Romania Commission for the victims of war gave the figure of 36,000 Gypsies who died in Transnistria. The figure is, of course, exaggerated, since the total number of deportees totalled approximately 25,000 people. In May 1944, shortly after the evacuation of Transnistria and the Gypsies’ abandonment of the places to which they had been deported, the Gendarmerie carried out a nominal registration of the Gypsies who had returned to Romania. In their figures, only around 6000 people returned.⁵² However, it is clear that the number of those who survived deportation was higher. The registration was carried out in conditions in which parts of the country were already under the occupation of the Soviet army or at least located on the frontline. At that time some Gypsies were in the process of travelling home, and so consequently a by no means insignificant number of Gypsies would have been missed by the registration. It should also be added that some Gypsies remained where they were after the withdrawal of the army and the Romanian authorities and later scattered throughout the USSR. As an estimate, it can be stated that approximately half of the 25,000 Gypsies from Romania deported to Transnistria died there.

Since it is deportation being dealt with here, and knowing what the policy of the Nazis with regard to the Gypsies was, the question must be asked whether the Romanian authorities were deliberately aiming for the death of the Gypsy deportees. There are not, however, any signs that lead to the conclusion that the aim of the deportation was the physical elimination of the deportees. From the archive data, we have examined, it does not emerge that the civilian and military authorities in Transnistria organised executions among the Gypsies. It is not known, however, whether that there were cases in which German soldiers in the region carried out such acts.⁵³ The harsh conditions in which the Gypsies found themselves in Transnistria, which led to the deaths of many of them, were due to the fact that once they reached the river Bug, they were practically abandoned by the authorities and left to the care of the local communities, who had no need of them and for whom they were a burden. The “colonisation” of the Gypsies in Transnistria—which should have meant not only the removal from Romania of elements considered to be dangerous, but also the use of such elements in the economic exploitation of the territory in question—was clearly not only a tragedy, but also a failure on the part of the Romanian civilian administration there.

The Gypsies who survived deportation to Transnistria returned to Romania in the spring of 1944 together with the retreat of the army and the Romanian authorities in the face of the Soviet offensive. Already in the autumn of 1943, the unauthorised abandonment of the places of deportation was taking place en masse, with those who were caught sent back to Transnistria. In March–April 1944, however, without waiting for any particular repatriation measures, the Gypsies withdrew back across the Dniester and from there into the interior of the country. In some cases, the withdrawal of the Gypsies was carried out with the direct assistance of retreating Romanian and German army units and workers from the Romanian railway. On 19 April 1944, the General Inspectorate of the Gendarmerie issued an order that the Gypsies who had fled from Transnistria were to be stopped on the spot and put to work.⁵⁴ The order was repeated on 17 May.⁵⁵ These Gypsies were given a temporary home and were forbidden from travelling. They were then to be allocated to an estate where they would be put to work. However, as a result of the life they had led in Transnistria, most were unfit for work. The others were placed with different landowners to carry out agricultural work and were to receive the same wages as the other workers.⁵⁶ There were, however, frequent instances of Gypsies refusing to work on the grounds that they did not know how to do the tasks, which exasperated the local authorities.⁵⁷ The Gypsies consequently remained in a situation in which they were in danger of dying of hunger. In such conditions, some groups of Gypsies were granted permission to return to their native villages. With the overthrow of the Antonescu regime on 23 August 1944, and the abrogation of fascist legislation, the regime's policy with regard to the Gypsies was brought to an end. On 13 September 1944, the State Under-Secretariat for the Police issued an order that all Gypsies who had returned from Transnistria were to be "left to their occupations, while measures are to be taken to induce them into different types of work."⁵⁸

4. THE POLICY OF THE ANTONESCU REGIME WITH REGARD TO THE GYPSIES AND THE FATE OF THE GYPSIES IN EUROPE DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The history of the Gypsies in Romania during the Antonescu regime is just one chapter in the fate of the European Gypsies during the Second World War. The war years were a time of dramatic collective experience for the Gypsies living in the countries under the occupation or the political influence of Nazi Germany. Almost everywhere, measures were taken against them, affecting larger or smaller numbers of them, ranging from the restriction of certain of their civil rights to the extermination of entire communi-

ties. There is no doubt that in Germany and other countries, a policy of genocide was practised against the Gypsies. The Gypsies were the victims of Nazi racial policy. For a long time, the fate of the Gypsies was omitted from the history of the Nazi regime. Recently, however, the Gypsies have begun to become associated with the notion of Holocaust, alongside the Jews.

Even if the fate of the Gypsies during the war has only quite recently come to the attention of the historians, there is already in existence a body of literature on this subject. Within this literature, valuable contributions can be found, but generally speaking it is far from the standards of contemporary research. One of the characteristics of this literature is that it makes reference more to oral sources and memoirs than it does to archive material. Studies of more or less elaborate nature have been carried out that attempt to offer a picture of this problem in one country or another or to synthesise the information available for an entire area of Europe that was under Nazi hegemony. Study has been made of the so-called *Zigeunerwissenschaft*, which actually prepared from an ideological perspective the policy of the German authorities with regard to the Gypsies (the *Zigeunerpolitik*), as well as the administrative, legal and other measures that were implemented against this population during the years of the Second World War in Germany and other countries.⁵⁹ Estimates of the total number of Gypsies who were systematically murdered at Auschwitz–Birkenau and other Nazi camps, shot by SS troops, the Gestapo, the gendarmes and fascist militias, or who died in the labour camps set up at the time in many countries or died of disease etc, range from 250,000 to 500,000. Some authors and Gypsy political activists have advanced even higher numbers.⁶⁰ (The number of Gypsies estimated to be living in Europe in 1939 was approximately 900,000.) In some countries, the losses suffered by the Gypsy population were enormous. From the 16,275 Gypsies recorded in Germany before 1938, 14,325 were killed, with only 1950 (12 per cent) surviving. Almost all the Gypsies in Croatia (where only 1 per cent survived), from the occupied territories of Serbia, as well as from Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Estonia and Lithuania were murdered. Similarly, the majority of the Gypsies from occupied France, Latvia, Austria, the Czechia and Poland suffered the same fate. Many Gypsies in the territories of the USSR occupied by the German armies were killed. It is estimated that from 70–80 per cent of the Gypsies who lived in countries occupied by Nazi Germany fell victim to the programme of extermination.⁶¹

However, these figures differ greatly from author to author and should be regarded with caution in the absence of clear archive data. In writings produced in recent years, there is a clear tendency to inflate the number of victims of Nazism among the Gypsies without, however, bringing any fur-

ther arguments in this respect. It is probable that the majority of these figures are closer to reality than those circulating in the Gypsy Holocaust literature in connection with Romania. Here, Romania figures with the largest number of victims: 36,000 Gypsies killed in Transnistria. This figure is clearly erroneous as the documents from the Romanian archives show a different situation: if the number of those who died in Transnistria is hard to establish, it is known that the number of Gypsies deported to Transnistria was approximately 25,000. When more detailed studies were carried out with regard to the situation in a particular country, these figures were found to be exaggerated and were corrected. For example, in connection with the situation of the Gypsies in Hungary during the war, it is generally stated that all Gypsies that did not have regular work were interned in forced labour camps, while in 1944, during the German occupation 31,000 Gypsies from Hungary were deported to the death camps, of which only 3000 survived.⁶² Recent research has come to the conclusion that during the German occupation of Hungary from March to October 1944, when the Hungarian Jews were deported to the death camps in Poland, neither the German occupation forces nor the Hungarian authorities took any measures against the Gypsies. In the autumn of 1944, in the areas under their control, the Hungarian military and civilian authorities began to organise forced labour detachments made up of Gypsies. Similarly, in certain counties deportations of Gypsies took place. The number of Gypsies from Hungary who were interned, deported or enrolled in forced labour detachments is estimated at approximately 5000, while the number of Gypsies who died is estimated at a few hundred.⁶³

It is necessary to ask to what extent the Gypsy policy of the Antonescu government fits in with what is known as the Nazi Holocaust policy. In Nazi Germany, measures against the Gypsies were introduced gradually, from the prohibition of civil rights to deportation, then to internment in camps and the systematic killing of the Gypsy population. It was an elaborate plan, with decades of *Zigeunerforschung* and *Zigeunerpolitik* behind it. In Romania, the situation was different in this respect as there was no tradition of a special policy there with regard to the Gypsies. We have seen that in Romania, measures taken against the Gypsies during the war were limited to the deportation of certain Gypsies to Transnistria. In Romania, neither ghettos nor labour camps were ever set up for the Gypsies. As for deportation, this was imposed on nomadic Gypsies and a part of the sedentary Gypsy population, totalling approximately 25,000 people, equivalent to around 10 per cent of the Gypsy population. The scale of the anti-Gypsy policy in Romania was thus different to that imposed in Germany and German-occupied countries. In Romania, no measures were taken to place the Gypsies outside the law. The majority of the Gypsies were not affected by deportation, instead remaining citizens with full civic rights. It is indicative in this

sense that unlike in Germany, where the authorities deported indiscriminately to the camps even the handful of Gypsies who had served as army officers and treated them the same as other prisoners,⁶⁴ in Romania Gypsies were mobilised on the frontline in the same way as other citizens. The families of Gypsies listed on military rolls, even those included on deportation lists, stayed where they were, whilst in the case of the families of Gypsies who had been mobilised or who were eligible for mobilisation that had been wrongly deported to Transnistria, the military authorities took steps for their repatriation or at least for them to be guaranteed a better regime than the other deportees.

The deportation of undesirable ethnic groups is, however, a characteristic of Nazi policy. As occupied Poland was for the Germans a “dumping ground” to where the Jews and the Gypsies from the Reich were deported, so Transnistria was for the Romanian authorities the place to where a part of the country’s Jewish and Gypsy populations were evacuated. It is very likely that the deportation to Transnistria had as its model the German deportations.

Another issue is whether the decision to deport the Romanian Gypsies to Transnistria was taken at the recommendation of or under pressure from Germany or not. Once it began to implement radical measures with regard to the Gypsies, Germany had an interest in “solving” the Gypsy problems of its allies. An article entitled “Die Zigeunerfrage im Südosten” that appeared in 1942 in the magazine *Volkstum im Südosten* and which reflected the opinion of German official circles, had as its aim to request that the countries of south-eastern Europe take measures of racial nature against the Gypsies. Making special reference to Romania, where in the view of the author Fritz Ruland the “Gypsy problem” was even greater than elsewhere due to the large number of Gypsies there, the article pointed out that there were no voices in Romanian public opinion to attract attention to the danger represented by the Gypsies and expressed the hope that Marshal Antonescu would take vigorous measures of racial nature against them.⁶⁵ At the current stage of research, it cannot be established for certain whether there was any political and diplomatic pressure from Germany for the implementation of certain measures against the Gypsies. We are inclined to believe that in spite of certain similarities, the policy of the Antonescu regime with regard to the Gypsies was independent of what was going on in Germany and in the countries occupied by the Reich. Evidence of this comes from the fact that the Romanian government halted the deportation of the Gypsies (in October 1942) at a moment when in Germany Himmler was ordering (in December 1942) the deportation of Gypsies to Auschwitz. In the case of the policy on the Jews, where the German pressure is clear, it has been possible to establish that the measures taken by the Antonescu government in most

cases were not co-ordinated with Germany. The German influence consisted rather of elements of the xenophobic and racist ideology that at least on a political level could also be found in the policy of the Romanian regime from 1940–44.

Why was Transnistria chosen as the place of deportation? The answer, in our opinion, lies in the plans that the Romanian government had in connection with this territory. The German–Romanian accord of August 1941 produced a provisional settlement with regard to the status of the territory between the Dniester and the Bug rivers, with a permanent status to follow only after the end of the war. In 1941, Transnistria was placed under the administration of the Romanian government. It was not annexed by Romania and it was not included within the Romanian customs regime. The only currency permitted was the German currency (RKKS). It remained in all respects a foreign territory, subject to Romanian military occupation and economic exploitation by the Romanian government. Even if the Germans suggested to Antonescu that Romania should expand to the east in compensation for the loss of Northern Transylvania, which Hitler had given to Hungary in 1940, the Romanian authorities did not intend to annex Transnistria. From the point of view of the Romanian authorities, at the end of the war Transnistria was to revert to Germany. Precisely because Transnistria was not a Romanian territory and was not to become one, it was the most suitable place for the deportation of the Jews, the Gypsies and other elements in the country who were considered to be undesirable. In the vision of the Romanian authorities, deportation to Transnistria was equivalent to expelling them from the country. When the status of this territory was to be settled, together with the withdrawal of the Romanian authorities, the deportees would remain outside the borders of Romania.

In the autumn of 1942, when in Germany preparations were being made to launch the “final solution” with regard to the Gypsies, the Romanian authorities halted deportations to Transnistria. Aside from certain motives of an internal nature linked to the protests of certain democratic parties over this policy, it would appear that the intervention of the Foreign Minister of the Reich played an important role in the halting of the deportations. In August and September 1942, when the deportation of the Gypsies to Transnistria was in full flow, the Reichskommissar for Ukraine made an address to the minister for the occupied territories in the east, who in turn addressed himself to the Foreign Minister in Berlin, warning about the danger represented by the colonisation of the Gypsies along the river Bug. In their opinion, the danger lay both in the possibility that the Gypsies would settle on the east bank of the Bug as well as in the damaging influence that the Gypsies would outnumber the local population in an area that also had a German population. The German authorities in Ukraine called on Berlin

to intervene with the Romanian government to halt the deportations.⁶⁶ It is worth recalling that in the autumn of 1942, not only the deportations of the Gypsies were halted but also those of the Jews. It is clear that Antonescu's policy with regard to deportation underwent a change at that time. However, we are a long way from discerning the motives for this decision. It is probable, as has been supposed, that possible question marks over the conclusion of the war also played a role. Research into the deportation of the Jews to Transnistria has not provided a clear explanation to this change in policy. It is, however, certain that much more than giving up on the planned deportation of the Jews from the Old Kingdom, in 1943 and 1944 certain categories of Jews were actually repatriated, while their emigration to Palestine was made easier.

It can be estimated that the policy of the Romanian government with regard to the Gypsies differed in many respects from what happened in Germany and in German-occupied countries, through its being limited to certain segments of the Gypsy population, through its motivation and through the measures that were actually taken. Even if numerous victims were recorded among those deported to Transnistria, there are no arguments that would justify considering the deportation as a measure designed to achieve the physical elimination of the deportees. It is indicative that in the conditions of the retreat of the army and the Romanian administration from Transnistria at the beginning of 1944, the Gypsies who had survived the deportation regime returned to Romania with the assistance of military units. We believe that in spite of certain similarities, a sign of equality should not be drawn between the deportation to Transnistria and the Nazi death camps or the mass executions that took place in Poland and on other occupied territories where a large number of Gypsies perished. Furthermore, at the time Romania was not perceived as a country where radical measures against the Gypsies were being taken. The proof of this lies in the case of Gypsies who fled Northern Transylvania during the years of Hungarian occupation to Romania.

Even allowing for the particular features of the policy with regard to the Gypsies promoted by the Antonescu government, the deportation of the Gypsies, like that of the Jews, remains a racially-motivated measure. It forms part of the logic of the Holocaust policy introduced by Nazi Germany and applied in one form or another in all the countries occupied by or allied to Germany. It is the Romanian part of the tragic history of the Gypsies during the Second World War.

NOTES

- ¹ See E. V. Popa, *Minoritățile etnice în statul național român*, Bucharest, 1944, pp. 76–77; I. Stanciu, “Statutul juridic al populației evreiești din România în perioada 1878 – septembrie 1940”, *Revista istorică*, III (1992), nos. 3–4, p. 329ff.
- ² See A. Boia, *op. cit.*; Domnica I. Păun, *op. cit.*
- ³ Cf. I. Făcăoaru, *Antropologia în stat ca știință și obiect de învățământ*, [Cluj], s. a., pp. 14–16.
- ⁴ See *idem*, *Amestecul rasial și etnic în România*, pp. 276ff.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 283.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 282–286.
- ⁷ Gh. Făcăoaru, *op. cit.*, pp. 17–18.
- ⁸ See J. S. Hohmann, *Vervolgte ohne Heimat. Geschichte der Zigeuner in Deutschland*, Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York, Paris, 1990, pp. 107–123.
- ⁹ L. Stan, “Rasism față de țigani”, *Cuvântul*, N. S., XVIII, no. 53, 18 January 1941, pp. 1, 9.
- ¹⁰ I. Chelcea, *op. cit.*, pp. 100–101.
- ¹¹ Cf. *Evreii din România între anii 1940–1944*, vol. I, *Legislația antievreiască*, compiled by Lya Benjamin, Bucharest, 1993, p. XL.
- ¹² I. Dan, “Procesul” *mareșalului Ion Antonescu*, Bucharest, 1993, p. 161.
- ¹³ *Procesul mării trădări naționale; stenograma desbaterilor de la Tribunalul Poporului asupra Guvernului Antonescu* [Bucharest], 1946, p. 66.
- ¹⁴ A. S. B., fond Sabin Manuilă, XIII/209.
- ¹⁵ A. S. B., fond P. C. M., dossier 42/1942.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, dossier 1275/1943, pp. 4–12. Arhivele Statului Timișoara, fond Inspectoratul de Jandarmi Timișoara, dossier 156/1943, pp. 8–10.
- ¹⁷ A. S. B., fond I. G. J., dossier 130/1942, pp. 607, 609, 611.
- ¹⁸ *Procesul mării trădări naționale*, pp. 42, 65–66, 104, 108, 305.
- ¹⁹ See I. Cioabă, “Il genocido in Romania: una testimonianza”, *Lacio Drom*, 20 (1984), nos. 2–3, pp. 54–56; Fr. Rimmel, *op. cit.*, pp. 66–72.
- ²⁰ For example, D. Kenrick, G. Puxon, *Sinti und Roma—die Vernichtung eines Volkes im NS-Staat*, translated by Astrid Stegelmann, Göttingen, Vienna, 1981, pp. 95–96, 135.
- ²¹ O. Verenca, *Administrația civilă română în Transnistria*, Chișinău, 1993, pp. 34–37.
- ²² I. Dan, *loc. cit.*
- ²³ *Procesul mării trădări naționale*, p. 66; I. Dan, *op. cit.*, p. 264.
- ²⁴ A. S. B., fond I. G. J., dossier 201/1942, dossier 202/1942, dossier 203/1942.
- ²⁵ Arhivele Statului Arad, fond Legiunea de Jandarmi a județului Arad, dossier 13/1942, p. 141.
- ²⁶ A.S.B., fond I.G.J., dossier 130/1942, p. 1.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, dossier 126/1942, p. 204.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, dossier 130/1942, p. 7–10.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, dossier 126/1942, pp. 208–211.
- ³⁰ A. S. B., fond P. C. M., dossier 202/1941–1944, pp. 274–277.

- ³¹ A. S. B., fond I. G. J., dossier 120/1942, p. 126.
- ³² *Ibid.*, dossier 43/1943, pp. 450–451.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 313–314.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, dossier 77/1943, p. 47; dossier 43/1943, p. 286.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, dossier 126/1942, pp. 10–11.
- ³⁶ *Documents Concerning the Fate of Romanian Jewry During the Holocaust*, ed. J. Ancel, vol. IV, Jerusalem, 1985, p. 225.
- ³⁷ A. S. B., fond I. G. J., dossier 126/1942, p. 205.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 205.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, dossier 203/1942, p. 337.
- ⁴¹ *Timputul*, VI, no. 1954, 16 October 1942, p. 3.
- ⁴² A. S. B., fond I. G. J., dossier 126/1942, p. 203.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, dossier 43/1942, p. 321.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, dossier 130/1942, pp. 118–119.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 129–130.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, dossier 166/1942, pp. 171–172; dossier 140/1943, pp. 9–11.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 533–538.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, dossier 43/1943, pp. 363–364.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, dossier 84/1943, pp. 237–238.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 176.
- ⁵¹ *Procesul mării trădări naționale*, p. 42.
- ⁵² A. S. B. fond I. G. J., dossier 86/1944, pp. 149–217; dossier 97/1944.
- ⁵³ A case is cited *ibid.*, dossier 43/1943, p. 260.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, dossier 86/1944, p. 76.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 91.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 220, 225–227, 290.
- ⁵⁷ The Inspectorate of Gendarmes from Galați pointed out in a report that “nor are the landowners satisfied with those fit for work, because aside from the fact that they do not know what they are doing, they are also ill-willed, while some have actually engaged in the stealing of birds, items of clothing etc, for which reason they are being discharged.” (*Ibid.*, p. 97.)
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 295.
- ⁵⁹ From literature dealing with this issue: H-J. Döring, *Die Zigeuner im NS-Staat*, Hamburg, 1964; Miriam Novitch, *Le Génocide des Tsiganes sous le régime Nazi*, Paris, 1968; C. Bernadac, *L'Holocaust oublié. Le massacre des Tsiganes*, Paris, 1974; D. Kenrick, G. Puxon, *op. cit.*, pp. 53–136; H. R. Huttenbach, “The Romani Pořajmos: The Nazi Genocide of Gypsies in Germany and Eastern Europe”, in *The Gypsies of Eastern Europe*, ed. D. Crowe and J. Kolsti, Armonk/New York, London, 1991, pp. 31–49; Sybil Milton, “Nazi Policies Towards Gypsies and Sinti, 1933–1945”, *JGLS* (5), 2 (1992), no. 1, pp. 1–18; A. Fraser, *op. cit.*, pp. 257–270; Selma Steinmetz, *Österreiches Zigeuner im NS-Staat*, Vienna, 1966; Erika Thurner, *Nationalsozialismus und Zigeuner in Österreich*, Vienna, 1983; J. Gotovitch, “Quelques données relatives à l’extermination des Tsiganes de Belgique”, *Cahiers d’Histoire de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale*, 4 (1976), pp.

161–180; B. A. Sijes, *Vervolging van Zigeuners in Nederland 1940–1945*, The Hague, 1979; Bogumila Michalewicz, “L’Holocauste des Tsiganes en Pologne”, in *Tsiganes: identité, évolution*. Actes du Colloque pour le trentième anniversaire des Etudes Tsiganes, Paris, 1989, pp. 129–130.

⁶⁰ For example, I. Hancock, *The Pariah Syndrome. An Account of Gypsy Slavery and Persecution*, Ann Arbor, 1987, p. 81 speaks of 600,000 victims among the Gypsies.

⁶¹ Cf. H. R. Huttenbach, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁶² D. Kenrick, G. Puxon, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

⁶³ L. Karsai, *A cigánykérdés Magyarországon 1919–1945. Út a cigány Holocausthoz*, Budapest, 1992, pp. 85–135, 144.

⁶⁴ B. Michalewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

⁶⁵ F. Ruland, “Die Zigeunerfrage im Südosten”, *Volkstum im Südosten*, Vienna, October 1942, pp. 163–169.

⁶⁶ Cf. D. Kenrick, G. Puxon, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

CHAPTER VI

THE GYPSIES DURING THE COMMUNIST REGIME. A FEW POINTS OF REFERENCE

Paradoxically, reconstructing the history of the Gypsies in Romania during the period of the Communist regime is even more difficult than for the years of the Second World War. For a long time in Romania, there was no special policy directed at the Gypsies. Furthermore, when at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s the authorities did decide to find a solution to the problematic social situation of the Gypsies and to a certain extent took action in this direction, the policy was not made public. The relevant materials (statistics, decisions reached by political and administrative forums, even some sociological studies etc.) have not been made public even today, and historians shall have to wait for many years until the archives that house them are opened up to researchers. Consequently, official information regarding the Gypsies that is accessible to researchers is thin on the ground and not always significant, whilst the appeal to oral histories presupposes carrying out a kind of research that this work did not intend to undertake. In these conditions, until major research can take place that will make a priority of the archive material currently unavailable to us, this book is limited to offering a sketch of the post-war history of the Gypsies.¹

After the ending of the Transnistrian episode, the Gypsies who survived deportation returned to their villages, while some of the nomads settled on the edges of Bucharest. The General Union of Roma in Romania resumed its activity under the leadership of Gheorghe Niculescu, without, however, producing any publications. In 1949, the Union was disbanded by the Communist authorities together with all other organisations that did not fit in with the totalitarian system. In the 1946 electoral campaign, the Bloc of Democratic Parties (the electoral alliance headed by the Communist Party) sent out special manifestos to the Gypsies, addressing them as "Brothers and Sisters Roma!"² In reality, however, as with the repatriation of deported persons, for many years the authorities paid no attention whatever to the fate of the Gypsies.

From the year 1948, when Communism established itself fully in Romania, the Gypsies no longer appear in official documents of political nature. The motion of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers Party regarding the national problem from December 1948,

which laid the foundations for the policy of the new regime with regard to the ethnic minorities, ignored the existence of the Gypsies. They were not included in the list of “co-inhabiting nationalities”. Until 1989, the Gypsies were refused this status in Socialist Romania. Consequently, the Gypsies were not represented as an ethnic group at the level of the Party and state administration; there were no institutions to promote their collective interests and to deal specifically with the problems of this minority, within the limits of the totalitarian Communist State, of course. At the end of the 1960s, when a new form of representation for minorities was introduced, no national council of workers of Gypsy nationality was created, as was the case for the Hungarians, Germans and other minorities. For three decades, until the middle of the 1970s, the Communist regime did not pay any attention to the fate of this population as a whole, and there was no special policy dedicated to the Gypsies. On the part of the authorities there was an attempt to conjure away the serious problems faced by this population.

In the first years of the Communist regime, a previously unimaginable phenomenon in relation to the Gypsies showed itself: a relatively large number of Gypsies were employed in the Party apparatus, the militia, army and the security apparatus. This promotion of some Gypsies occurred not so much under the aegis of the policy of promoting national minorities practised by the regime in the first years of its existence, but rather in the conditions of the Communist regime’s social policy, which aimed at fostering the development of the poor classes and at destroying the old social structure that was unwilling to accept the new order. This explains why in a considerable number of villages, a Gypsy was appointed as mayor. This overturning of the social hierarchy was for the new regime a simple and certain means of securing loyal followers. In the same way, Gypsies without land or with only small parcels of land were among the first to join the collectives. Communist ideology favoured the ascension of the poor, while citizens of Gypsy origin were among those who benefited from this new state of affairs. However, after a few years when there began to be a need for people with a certain level of education and competence, the Party quickly rid itself of such elements. Nonetheless, in the 1950s and 1960s, due to their “healthy social origins”, it was possible for Gypsies to progress further, becoming minor activists, militiamen, army cadres etc. Some made a career in politics, reaching the higher echelons of the Party apparatus. Their social ascension was of course not due to their ethnic origin, which in any case many denied, but rather because they came from a poor social background.

The economic and social transformations that took place in Romania during the years of Communism also affected the Gypsies. The nationalisation of the economy, the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation, the transformation of the village as a result of the collectivisation of agriculture,

the policy of social “homogenisation”, the transformations affecting the rural and particularly the urban environment, the occupational changes that took place—all of these naturally could not fail to affect the Gypsies. Citizens of Gypsy origin experienced both the positive and negative effects of these transformations. As a part of the country’s population, the Gypsies felt the effects of the benefits and disasters brought by the new order. The social history of the Gypsies during the years of Communism is directly linked to the social history of the country as a whole. In the absence of any sociological studies we are far from knowing in detail the impact that the transformations taking place in Romania during those decades had on the Gypsy population. We can, nevertheless, observe that in certain respects, the Gypsies were affected as least as much as the vast majority of the country’s inhabitants. It is, however, beyond doubt that the specificities of this population—i.e., the Gypsies’ occupational and social situation at the start of Communism, as well as the psycho-social traits typical of the Gypsy population as a whole or to its various components—made their mark on the evolutions experienced by the Gypsies during those years.

One transformation that affected this population alone was the sedentarisation of the Gypsies who still practised nomadism in one form or another. At the beginning of the 1960s, the authorities went about settling the nomadic Gypsies in fixed settlements.³ The results were not, however, those expected. Even if they were provided with houses, the Gypsies continued to live for a time in a tent pitched in the yard, with the house used as a stable for the horses. In summer they continued to wander the country practising their traditional crafts or peddling their wares. In 1977, the authorities estimated the number of nomadic and semi-nomadic Gypsies to be around 65,000 persons. The sedentarisation of these Gypsies took place at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, when all of them were settled in fixed settlements and houses. Local authorities were obliged to provide them with dwellings and to guarantee them jobs. Some families were moved from counties with many nomads (Mureş, Alba and others) into other counties, resulting in a certain movement of Gypsies to other areas. The majority of these were settled in large towns. The operation was directed from the centre and implemented by the local authorities and the militia. Consequently, the Gypsy caravans that had previously travelled from village to village disappeared from the landscape of the country. It can be stated that today the nomadic way of life has virtually ceased to exist. The way in which sedentarisation was carried out has had the effect of dispersing certain groups of Gypsies. Historians do not, however, believe that this should be regarded as an ethnically motivated measure. The sedentarisation of nomadic Gypsies was a measure of social nature.

The changes to the urban landscape and especially the “systematisation” programme of the final decade of the Communist regime affected the Gypsies in the same way that it affected the other inhabitants of the country. Systematisation began as a rule with the removal of insalubrious neighbourhoods located on the edge of towns. In the 1960s and 1970s, the so-called Gypsy neighbourhoods, with their squalid appearance, inhabited by many people with serious social problems, some of them without any identity papers, could no longer be tolerated within the modern urban environment and were erased from the landscape of Bucharest and other towns. From a town planning point of view, the destruction of these neighbourhoods was not much of a loss. The people whose houses and shacks were demolished were, as a rule, provided with better living conditions than those they had previously owned. In the case of the Gypsies, the systematisation of the towns certainly had positive consequences with regard their living conditions. Many Gypsies were housed in blocks of flats with a level of comfort higher than that of their former dwellings.

However, it must be observed that the demolition of the Gypsy neighbourhoods meant the end for the respective Gypsy communities. Together with the construction of a modern neighbourhood with its large population on the site of the old Gypsy neighbourhood and the moving of the Gypsies into blocks of flats, the local Gypsy community, which in some places had been there for several centuries although in most cases it had been created in the inter-war period, to all intents and purposes ceased to exist. As a rule, the Gypsies became a minority in their new environments, living dispersed among the other inhabitants. This does not mean that one of the aims of the systematisation of the towns was to disperse the Gypsies. Urban modernisation and the policy of systematisation covered the entire country, while in the 1980s the policy managed to affect such aberrations as the destruction of old residential neighbourhoods of historical and architectural value in some towns, including Bucharest. It would appear, however, that on the level of their community life, the Gypsies have suffered acutely as a result of the disappearance of their traditional neighbourhoods.

From the point of view of living conditions, the Gypsies experienced undeniable progress during the years of communism. The shacks that until the 1960s characterised the habitat of the Gypsies did not disappear, but did make up a much smaller proportion of their dwellings. For the Gypsies mentioned above, moving into a block of flats meant gaining a minimum level of comfort. Also in large towns, a large number of Gypsies were housed in nationalised houses. Consequently, today a significant Gypsy population lives in the centre of many large towns. This situation is the consequence of events in the 1970s and 1980s, when in the conditions of their demographic explosion, the Gypsies became a problem for municipal authorities. They

were provided with dwellings in nationalised houses in urban areas that had become poor and which were possibly earmarked for demolition. It can be stated that with regard to housing, urban Gypsies benefited fully from the social benefits offered by the Communist regime. The State provided them with accommodation without applying any discriminatory measures in this respect. In the villages, the Gypsies built houses in the style of the majority population in the last decades of the regime. In villages in Transylvania and the Banat that were abandoned by the ethnic Germans, many of the houses of those who had emigrated were allocated to the Gypsies of the respective locality or to Gypsies from elsewhere. Almost everywhere in the country, the Gypsies, who as a rule had previously been housed at the edge of the locality, began to penetrate the centre of the villages. More affluent Gypsies either purchased or built houses there so that to a certain extent the old topographical marginalisation of the Gypsy population disappeared.

The economic transformations that took place in Romania in the post-war period resulted in the gradual disappearance of the traditional crafts and specific occupations of the Gypsies. In the new economic and social context, Gypsies who still practised their old crafts were forced to take up modern professions and occupations. The different groups of the Gypsies adapted to these demands in specific ways. For example, blacksmiths found a new role in heavy industry and construction; the Gypsies of the villages around Bucharest found work in large numbers as builders etc. In towns, Gypsies were able to find work in factories. Street-cleaning became an area in which Gypsies held a virtual monopoly. In the villages, where in some places the Gypsies have preserved their occupational specificity even up until the present day, they worked in agriculture to a greater extent than in the past. In the final decade of the Communist regime, even the agricultural co-operatives sometimes summoned the Gypsies to work, even though they were not members of the respective co-operative. The state farms, however, which faced an almost permanent shortage of labour, would offer work to Gypsies. Gypsies were employed particularly as day or seasonal workers. Sometimes, the Gypsies organised themselves into their own work teams and gained employment on a seasonal basis on state farms located far from their homes, in areas with a labour deficit. This seasonal activity, in which entire families would sometimes take part, enabled them to earn a living. The phenomenon of seasonal work migration in Romania was, however, fairly widespread and the employment of Gypsies on state farms represents a minor aspect of the phenomenon.

To a certain extent, some of the Gypsies' traditional occupations nonetheless survived. In some areas of the country, the bricks required in the villages were supplied by Gypsies specialised in this craft. They would bargain over the price of the work at the start of the hot season, when they

would install themselves together with their entire family on the boundary of the respective village, where they would work until the delivery of the bricks. If they received an order from another village, they would move on to the other village. This was, however, a seasonal occupation. Similarly, in villages of *rudari* that had not completely given up their old occupation, the manufacture of wooden objects played a wholly minor role in the household economy. The *căldărari* began to manufacture copper goods for the distilling of brandy, as there was no longer any demand for their traditional wares. In the villages, as well as in some towns, they worked as tinsmiths. The local population made use of their services, as they were cheaper than those offered by a specialised co-operative, and some of them were appreciated as skilled craftsmen. Since they filled a gap that the state economy could not cover, the authorities in general tolerated them.

Other categories of the Gypsies, who did not possess any kind of craft that could have eased their transition to a modern occupation, nonetheless found a place for themselves in the economy. They took up a new occupation, which became specific to them and which enabled them to survive as a distinct group. The collection of recyclable materials or the acquisition of feathers and down in exchange for money or objects (pots, plates, glassware etc.) procured from various factories and cooperatives were occupations that were practically reserved for the Gypsies. In the final decades of the regime, commercial occupations proliferated among the Gypsies. Peddling was practised by certain categories of Gypsies either on the basis of official authorisation or on an illicit basis. Gypsies living in large towns were the main protagonists on the black market that became a large-scale phenomenon in the final years of the Communist regime. This occupation, which was tolerated by the authorities, favoured the enrichment of the most entrepreneurial elements among the Gypsies and led to the appearance of a category of rich Gypsies in the towns.

As a general characterisation, we can judge that during the years of Communism, the Gypsy population in Romania underwent significant occupational transformations. Most of them were forced to abandon the occupations that had for a long time been characteristic of them and to find their place in the communist-type economy. However, the Gypsies' adaptation to the existing social-economic system took specific forms, which distinguished them from the population at large. As a rule, due to the precarious nature of their qualifications, the Gypsies were forced to perform unskilled and poorly paid work. At the end of the process of wide-ranging social and occupational transformation that took place in Romania during the years of Communism, the Gypsies found themselves on the lowest rung in society. Sociological research carried in recent years shows that, as we shall see,⁴ most Gypsies employed in industry or in other branches of the

economy practised unskilled or semi-skilled professions. The old occupational distinction between the Gypsies and the rest of the population disappeared, but a paucity or absence of professional training were characteristic of a large part of the Gypsy population, with all the consequences that follow from this (poverty, unemployment etc.).

However, many Gypsies did not find a place in the new economic and social structure of the country. This was not so much the case for those who practised a traditional profession that was no longer needed in the new conditions, but rather for those Gypsies who had no profession, who had always existed and who for a long time lived on the edges of settlements, living off marginal resources. In the first place, these Gypsies were those who did not adapt to the new conditions. The policy of the Communist State to provide everyone with a job, with all the social benefits that this entailed, within the limits of the system, of course, did not work out in the case of the Gypsies. The Gypsies in general regarded employment in a regular job as an imposition and gave the authorities a great deal of trouble in their attempts to tie Gypsies to jobs. At the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, the authorities dealt specially with the "integration into work" of the "problem" Gypsies. However, they were forced to observe the partial failure of these attempts. A report from 1983, which recorded the measures taken to integrate the Gypsies into work, notes the fact that after receiving a job, many Gypsies abandoned their place of work.

The transformations experienced by the Gypsy population in the post-war decades are not the result of a special policy that was applied to them. In Romania, for a long time no attempt was made to solve the specific problems faced by this population. In the 1950s and 1960s, there was no social integration for the Gypsies in Romania, as was the case in other communist countries such as Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.⁵ The Gypsies were not treated as a separate group, with a specificity that normally would have required different action from that taken with regard to the rest of the population. Professional reorientation, finding employment and other issues were treated as individual problems, which did not depend on the specificity of one ethnic group or another, and still less on the specificity of one or another group of Gypsies. Even if the measures taken affected certain groups of Gypsies, they were not conceived as ethnic measures.

Only at the end of the 1970s, when in Romanian society important changes had already taken place, did the authorities understand the special situation in which the Gypsy population was living, a situation that in many respects was in clear contrast to the realities of the country as a whole. Political forces observed that the Gypsies constituted a particular social problem and consequently initiated a programme of social integration for them.⁶

In 1977, the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party

carried out an analysis of the situation of the Gypsies and initiated a special programme designed to integrate them into society. There is very little available information about this programme and about the Gypsy policy applied at the end of the 1970s and during the 1980s. The programme was never made public and historians and researchers do not even have access to the archives of the period. Until now, only the report compiled in 1983 by the Propaganda Section of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, in which an assessment of the results achieved until that point, has been published.⁷ This material is revealing about the policy with regard to the Gypsies that was being promoted during those years. The report contains interesting data of social, demographic etc. nature with regard to the Gypsy population, carries out an evaluation of the real situation of this population, refers to the activity of the commissions for the social integration of the Gypsies created at the time on a local level, synthesises the most significant achievements accomplished in the years since 1977 etc.

The report refers to the measures undertaken during those years in an attempt to sedentarise the Gypsies, when the authorities made land available to them and assisted them in the procurement of building materials for houses. Many Gypsies were given jobs. Gypsies lacking official identification were registered at the civil status office, measures were taken to legalise marriages between Gypsies, to send Gypsy children to school, to enlist Gypsies for military services and to supervise their hygiene. The report noted that many of the Gypsies who had been subjected to these policies abandoned their "parasitic" way of life and that a broad segment of the Gypsy population made progress in many respects.

At the same time, the report indicates that the measures taken to integrate the Gypsies had not produced the expected results. In 1977, 32.7 per cent of the Gypsy population fit for work was unemployed: in the case of women the percentage was 48 per cent. In 1983, the situation was even more serious. It is estimated that in 1977 there were around 65,000 nomadic and semi-nomadic Gypsies, of which only 5600 carried out useful activity for society: the majority of these had temporary work, while only 900 were qualified. After gaining employment, many Gypsies abandoned their places of work as a result of their inability to adapt and of their lack of the necessary qualifications, to which should be added the hostile attitude of the Gypsies who were not employed. Among the Gypsies, the level of delinquency was fairly high. Many families were living in inadequate living conditions. In Bucharest and in other towns, Gypsies had received dwellings that were state property but had destroyed many of them, rendering them uninhabitable. In many cases, they had not paid their rent, electricity bills etc. Many of these families had returned to their old way of life, moving back to tents

and huts. Similarly, the state of the Gypsy population's hygiene and sanitation was alarming. There were numerous dysfunctional families. The number of Gypsy children who did not go to school was large. Among the Gypsies, there were frequent cases of children being abandoned in hospitals and given to orphanages. The conclusion of the report was that the Gypsies were not integrated into society, that they possessed a retrograde mentality and a negative attitude with regard to work and life in society.

The report contains a "Platform of measures pertaining to the incorporation into work and the social integration of the Gypsies". Measures were listed in separate chapters with the following targets: the registration and the sedentarisation of the Gypsy population, employment, living conditions, health and social assistance, culture and education and problems of organisation.

Even if there had undeniably been some successes, in reality not even at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s had a great deal been done with regard to the integration of the Gypsies. The programme of social integration of the Gypsies was only partially implemented and for too short a time. Serious economic problems appeared in the mid-1980s, when the policy was practically speaking shelved. The 1980s, and especially the last years of Communism in Romania, resulted in a sharper deterioration of the situation of the Gypsies amidst the conditions of the economic and social debacle of the Ceaușescu regime. Being the most under-qualified social class and the least integrated into the modern economy, the Gypsies as a whole were seriously affected by the economic crisis and the reduction in social spending.

An assessment of the transformations experienced by the Gypsy population in Romania in the post-war years will of course only be possible after rigorous research is carried out into the topic. Overall, there is no doubt that the situation of the Gypsies improved in many respects: housing, employment, incomes, level of education and training etc. The years of Communism had a considerable contribution to the modernisation of the personal life of the Gypsies. Some Gypsies have developed in the direction of modernisation and integration, attaining a different social and material condition. A category of Gypsy industrial workers has appeared, as well as a category of Gypsy intellectuals. However, this is only one aspect of the reality. The Gypsies we have just mentioned make up an insignificant minority. During Communism, the Gypsies underwent a process of polarisation that previously had not existed to such a degree. The Gypsies (or a large proportion of them) are the category of the population with the most acute economic, social etc. problems. In the social structure moulded by four decades of Communism in Romania, the Gypsies have come out on the bottom rung of the social ladder. The majority of them are engaged in activities that, as a

result of their casual nature, are only sufficient to ensure their subsistence. They have remained among the poorest in society, despite encouraging social progress. At the same time, on a statistical level of course, the gap between the Gypsies and the rest of the population has increased. For example, if in the villages the Gypsies have built houses of a better quality than those they built in the past, the peasants have improved their dwellings to an even greater degree, to the extent that the difference in comfort between Romanians and the Gypsies is greater than ever; illiteracy, which has been virtually eradicated from the Romanian population, is now found only among the Gypsies etc. The dynamic of the transformations that have taken place in Romania in recent decades have caused the social and economic distance between Romanians and the Gypsies to grow even wider. The marginalisation that has characterised the Gypsies throughout their history was accentuated during Communism. To the problems of the past have been added new problems, generated by the Gypsies' failure to adapt to the new conditions.

The extremely limited progress experienced by the Gypsy population during Communism can be explained in part by the absence of a special policy on the part of the Romanian state with regard to the problems of the Gypsies. Even at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, when a programme of this nature did exist, the authorities did not deal with the Gypsies in a serious way. The financial effort of the State did not match the intentions of the programme. The failure of the policy to integrate the Gypsies was due not only to the way in which it was conceived and applied in Romania. In the other communist countries, where a much more consistent, long-lasting and coherent policy existed and where much more radical measures were undertaken presupposing substantial financial efforts on the part of the State, as was the case in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, the results were the same. In these countries also, the authorities managed only the partial integration of the Gypsies. In any case, everywhere in the world, including in Western countries, the Gypsies are regarded as a problem from the point of view of their integration into modern society. We do not believe that it is incorrect to state that the failure of integration policies depends also on the particular characteristics of this population.

The social problems faced by the Gypsies have become acute against the backdrop of the demographic growth of this population. From a population of approximately 300,000 Gypsies in the 1930s and 1940s, their actual number (not that which results from declarations made in censuses)⁸ had by 1977 reached 540,000 (according to the report mentioned earlier). For 1992, the most plausible study evaluates the size of the Gypsies population identified as such by others according to their way of life between a minimum figure of 819,446 persons (3.6 per cent of the population of the coun-

try) and a maximum figure of 1,010,646 persons (4.6 per cent of the total).⁹ Today the Gypsies are the second largest national minority after the Hungarians, who make up 7.1 per cent of the total population. This explosive demographic growth has taken place in the conditions of the policy of the Ceaușescu regime to increase the birth rate, which stimulated by all means possible the creation of families with large numbers of children. A situation was produced in which child benefits and social allowances for mothers were enough to ensure, on a basic level, the existence of a large number of families of Gypsies. This system of allowances enabled many Gypsies to make a living without being forced to gain employment. However, the main explanation lies in the demographic behaviour of the Gypsies, which differs from that of the Romanian population, including the rural population, which for a number of decades has followed a modern demographic model. This is another aspect of the civilisation gap between the Gypsies and the majority population. The high numerical growth has aggravated the situation of this population as regards living standards; it has damaged the family and increased the number of maladjusted people and orphans. In the 1980s, the demographic situation became a burden on the Gypsy population. It constituted a further obstacle on the road to social development and the process of integration. At the beginning of the 1980s, the authorities observed the drawback of its demographic policy in the case of the Gypsies. The 1983 report proposed that in the case of families with five or more children, the provision of allowances should be conditional on the work record of one of the parents and the children's attendance at school.

With regard to the Gypsies' relations with the authorities during the years of the Communist regime, it should be said that state policy, as with the attitude of society in general, was based on the cultural and ethnic assimilation of the Gypsies, considering that they can only be "civilised" if they give up their cultural heritage and become "Romanians" or "Hungarians". There is no doubt that a large number of Gypsies integrated into non-Gypsy society. It was not only Gypsies who were cut off from their traditional communities and who had been "absorbed" by the majority population through education and occupation who were affected; some larger groups of Gypsies integrated, too. Especially in towns, many Gypsies lost their ethnic identity. This transformation was often the result of a generation's evolution. Some neighbourhoods of Bucharest and other towns have a relatively large population that is the result of these social and ethnic transformations. A similar process also took place in some villages, where the number of Gypsy families was small. Generally speaking, in places where the Gypsies were obliged to completely abandon their traditional occupations, their way of life, the social behaviour, their birth rate etc., they have aligned themselves with those of non-Gypsies, although with a certain gap between the

two groups persisting. The adoption of Romanian (or Hungarian) as native language—in places where the loss of Romanes had not taken place much earlier—took place almost of its own accord. Social integration and ethnic integration went hand in hand. Today a by no means small proportion of the population known as “Gypsy” is at a more or less advanced stage of ethnic assimilation. Even if these people are sometimes identified by others as being Gypsies or former Gypsies, they consider themselves to be Romanians, or in localities with a Hungarian population, Hungarians.¹⁰ The process of ethnic assimilation suffered by a part of the Gypsy population in Communist Romania cannot be denied. If on a global level this is hard to quantify, on the level of the many rural communities it is evident.

The Gypsy assimilation policy promoted in Romania was not elaborate in nature and was not characterised by the excesses of certain neighbouring countries, where Gypsy children were taken away from their families and educated in state institutions and Gypsy villages were destroyed (Hungary), or where the sterilisation of Gypsy women who had more than a certain number of children was encouraged (Czechoslovakia) etc. In the final years of the Ceaușescu regime, there were some voices that accused the Romanian political regime of promoting an anti-Gypsy policy and even of anti-Gypsy racism. It is true that Ceaușescu made use of the nationalist diversion, but we take the opinion that such an accusation cannot be supported. In Romania, no measures of racial nature were taken and there were no special laws for the Gypsies. The Gypsies were treated as a social minority that was to be integrated in some form or another into the new economic and social organisation of the country. The Communist regime should rather be reproached for neglecting the problems of the Gypsies, for the fact that it did not pay close attention to improving the social and cultural conditions of this population and that when measures were taken in this respect they did not take into account the specificities of the different groups of Gypsies. It is worth mentioning that at the time when such accusations were made against the regime in Romania, many Romanians felt that the Gypsies were under the protection of Ceaușescu. The pronatalist policy, which caused the number of Gypsies to increase, and the toleration within certain limits during the 1980s of speculation, practised mostly by the Gypsies, were interpreted as being evidence of a policy that favoured the Gypsies. We do not believe that this argument can be supported. During the Ceaușescu era, minorities were no longer used, as they had been at the beginning of the 1950s, as a means of putting pressure on the majority population. On the contrary, it can be stated that certain forms of Ceaușescu’s nationalism did affect the minorities to a certain extent. The Gypsies’ place in the national policy of the Ceaușescu regime remains to be studied in the future.

The Gypsies often came into conflict with the militia and the local authorities. The high level of criminality among this population was not the only cause for this. Either because they were “not incorporated into work” or because they practised their occupation without authorisation, the Gypsies suffered the strictures of the laws in force at the time, being considered “social parasites” and sent to work on construction sites or on the Danube–Black Sea Canal. It is understood that the respective laws did not only affect the Gypsies. One measure that directly affected the Gypsies was the confiscation of gold from private owners, according to decrees no. 210/1960 and 244/1978. For the Gypsies, particularly tent-dwelling Gypsies, who kept their wealth in the form of gold, this measure led to the loss of their principle source of wealth. For the Gypsies, this measure represented what the collectivisation of agriculture and the nationalisation of industry had done to the rest of the population in the early years of Communism. The authorities controlled the different groups of Gypsies through the intermediaries of their traditional leaders. Some of these leaders were even allowed to travel outside the country to international Gypsy conferences, where they were regarded as the representatives of their ethnic group in Romania.

NOTES

¹ References to the situation of the Gypsies in the post-war period can be found in: M. Merfea, *Integrarea socială a romilor*, Braşov, 1991; *Țiganiii între ignorare și îngrijorare*, coord. Elena Zamfir and C. Zamfir, [Bucharest], 1993; V. Burtea, “Neamurile de romi și modul lor de viață”, *Sociologie Românească*, N. S., V (1994), nos. 2–3, pp. 257–273; M. Băcanu, *Țiganiii – minoritate națională sau majoritate infracțională?*, [Bucharest], 1996, pp. 42–45; S. Beck, “Ethnicity, Class and Public Policy: Tsigani–Gypsies in Socialist Romania”, *Giessener Hefte für Tsiganologie*, 3 (1986), nos. 1–4, pp. 109–127; *Destroying Ethnic Identity. The Persecution of Gypsies in Romania*. A Helsinki Watch Report, New York, Washington DC, 1991, pp. 16–35; Fr. Remmel, *op. cit.*, pp. 74–83; Emmanuelle Pons, *Les Tsiganes en Roumanie: des citoyens à part entière?*, Paris, 1995, pp. 31–54 etc.

² Cf. L. Cherata, *Istoria țiganilor. Origine, specific, limbă*, s.l., [1992], p. 48.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ See the following chapter.

⁵ For the situation of the Gypsies in these countries, as well as in other European countries in the post-war period, see (among others): G. Puxon, “Roma heute – Zur Situation der europäischen Zigeuner”, In *Auschwitz vergast, bis heute verfolgt*, ed. Zülch, Reinbek, 1979, pp. 29–63; *The Gypsies of Eastern Europe*, ed. D. Crowe and J. Kolsti, Armonk/New York, London, 1991; Jacqueline Charlemagne, “Les Tsiganes d’Europe de l’Est”, *Etudes*, January 1992, pp. 5–14; A.

Fraser, *op. cit.*, p. 271ff; J.-P. Liégeois, *op. cit.*, *passim*; idem, *Roma, Tsiganes, Voyageurs*, Strasbourg, 1994, *passim*; Gy. Szabó, *op. cit.*, pp. 82–95, 126–147; “Cigánykérdés a 20. század végi Magyarországon”, *Regió. Kisebbségi Szemle*, 1993, no. 1, pp. 84–101; G. Seewann, “Zigeuner in Ungarn 1945–1990. Ethnische Minderheit oder soziale Randgruppe?”, *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie Cluj-Napoca*, XXXII (1993), pp. 283–290; Anna Jurová, *Vývoj rómskej problematiky na Slovenska po roku 1945*, Bratislava, 1993.

⁶ It is significant that the first sociological investigation of the Communist period into the Gypsy population was undertaken only in 1974. Its conclusions were passed on to decision-makers, who nonetheless underestimated the work carried out. Cf. M. Merfea, “Despre integrarea socială a romilor. Participare și nu asimilare”, *Sociologie Românească*, N. S., V (1994), nos. 2–3, p. 291.

⁷ In *Destroying Ethnic Identity*, pp. 108–116 (translation; the annexes of the report have not been published).

⁸ The number of Gypsies recorded in censuses, on the basis of those taking part in the censuses, was: in 1948—53,425 (0.3 per cent of the population) (A. Golopenția, D. C. Georgescu, “Populația Republicii Populare Române la 25 ianuarie 1948. Rezultatele provizorii ale recensământului”, *Probleme economice*, 1948, no. 2, pp. 28, 30); in 1956—104,216 (0.6 per cent) (*Recensământul populației din 21 februarie 1956*, vol. III, *Structura populației după naționalitate și limba maternă*, Bucharest, 1959, p. 556); in 1966—64, 197 (0.3 per cent) (*Recensământul populației și locuințelor din 15 martie 1966*, vol. I, part 1, Bucharest, 1969, pp. 113, 153, 154 and 158); in 1977—229,986 (1.067 per cent) (“Comunicat privind rezultatele recensământului populației și locuințelor din 5 ianuarie 1977”, *Scântea*, XLVI, no. 10,829, 14 June 1977, p. 3); in 1992—401,087 (1.8 per cent) (*Recensământul populației și locuințelor din 7 ianuarie 1992*, vol. I, *Populație – Structura demografică*, Bucharest, 1994, pp. 708, 714).

⁹ *Țigani și între ignorare și îngrijorare*, pp. 59–63.

¹⁰ The problem of ethnic self-identification/hetero-identification in the case of the Gypsies is discussed *ibid.*, p. 52ff.

CHAPTER VII

THE CURRENT SITUATION OF THE GYPSIES (ROMA) IN ROMANIA

1. THE SOCIAL SITUATION

In recent years the social situation of the Gypsies (Roma) has formed the subject of several studies. The most wide-ranging and rigorous of these was the study undertaken in 1992 by a team of researchers from the University of Bucharest and the Research Institute for Quality of Life. The results of the study were published in the volume *Țiganiii între ignorare și îngrijorare* (The Gypsies between Ignorance and Concern).¹ The study included a range of subjects that the authors considered representative of the Roma population in Romania. The work does not exclude those “modernised” Gypsies (Roma) who had changed their way of life in the sense that they had become modernised and who tended to no longer identify themselves as Roma. Nevertheless, it deals especially with the population whose members identify themselves as Gypsies or Roma—either in all contexts (both in informal and official contexts) or only informally—and who were identified as Gypsies by the majority population. Such people, together with limited categories representing Roma activists and the new Roma businessmen who have affirmed their membership of the Roma community, make up the actual ethnic Roma population in Romania, which the authors of the study estimate at between 819,446 and 1,000,000 (in other words, between 3.6 and 4.3 per cent of the entire population of the country).² The figures generated by the study are therefore significant for virtually the entire Roma population. There is, thus, a complex picture of the social situation of the Roma population in Romania at the beginning of the 1990s. It highlights the specificity of this population, the place it occupies in Romanian contemporary society, as well as the problems that it presents to political forces and to society as a whole.

The study shows that the situation of the Roma with regard to their professional status is alarming.³ The vast majority of the Roma—79.4 per cent—have no profession (50.8 per cent of men, 88.8 per cent of women); only 16.1 per cent are qualified in a modern profession, while 3.9 per cent are qualified in traditional professions. Among Roma employees, the level of qualifications is extremely low, with the vast majority occupying unqualified positions (59.4 per cent). Skilled workers account for 38.8 per cent. Only 1.8 per cent of them have medium and higher qualifications. However,

significant differences can be found between the different categories of Roma with regard to their professional status. Thus, 56 per cent of “Romanian” Roma have modern-type professions; among *vătrași*, the rate is 42 per cent, while for those who declare themselves to be “Roma”, the rate is 35.9 per cent; 25.7 per cent of Roma who identify themselves with a particular clan and 25.4 per cent of “Hungarian” Roma practise modern professions. The practice of traditional professions is most widespread among Roma who identify with a clan (12.4 per cent of them), followed by “Roma” (7.6 per cent) etc. The group with the largest proportion of members without any profession is the “Hungarian” Roma (71.8 per cent), followed by those with a clan identity (61.9 per cent) etc. Similarly, it has been observed that those who practise a modern profession, unlike those who practise traditional professions, live according to a more scattered pattern within the mass of the community. Those without any profession occupy an intermediate position in this respect. These figures demonstrate that when it comes to professional status, the Roma have a distinct position in the population as a whole, where the vast majority of people have a qualification.

The occupational situation of the Roma population also presents a distinct situation.⁴ Among the population over the age of sixteen, only 22.1 per cent were employees (on the level of the entire country, employees accounted for 58.6 per cent of the total active population in 1992), 0.8 per cent were managers, 16.9 per cent were self-employed, while 51.2 per cent were unemployed (of these, 2.8 per cent were receiving unemployment benefit, 5.1 per cent were pensioners, 0.8 per cent were outside of the country, 1.2 per cent were in prison, 0.7 per cent were in the army, 0.4 per cent were pupils or students). As these figures show, levels of unemployment are extremely high among the Roma. Among male heads of families, 20.1 per cent are unemployed, not even having the right to unemployment benefit, while 4.3 per cent are unemployed and receiving benefits. This means that in total, a quarter of male heads of families are unemployed. In the case of women, the percentage of those without work reaches 70 per cent. On average, a Roma family has 0.7 employed persons, compared to 1.7 employed persons for the entire population. However, in more than half of families there is not one employed person.

As regards the question of living standards,⁵ there is a large difference between the Roma and the majority population. With regard to earnings, generally speaking, Roma families have mixed sources of income, some with a regular character, and others of sporadic nature.⁶ The 1992 study established on the basis of the declarations of those making up the sample that the average monthly income for a Roma family was 26,920 lei (5113 lei per person). Roma families living in urban areas had a total average monthly income of 28,422 lei (5364 lei per person), while those living in

rural areas the figure was 18,635 lei (3579 per person). If we compare the figures for the average monthly income of a Roma family with figures from the National Commission for Statistics regarding the incomes of employed persons, we find that the figures are quite similar. (In the first half of 1992, nominal money incomes amounted to 33,735 lei per month for a family of employed persons and 32,063 lei per month for families of workers, with the earnings from salaries according to a monthly average of 27,690 lei.) However, if we take into account the fact that a Roma family is on average made up of 6.6 people, in other words, more than double the average figure for the country (which is 3.1 persons per family), it emerges that there is a significant gap between the Roma and the rest of the population with regard to incomes. According to the figures advanced by the authors of the 1992 study, 80.9 per cent of the Roma population was living below the minimum level considered necessary for a decent living, compared to 42.0 per cent for the population as whole, while 62.9 per cent were living below subsistence level (compared to 16.0 per cent for the population as a whole).

The majority of the Roma live well below the standards of civilisation common to the rural or urban locality in which they reside. Their dwellings, the amount of durable consumer's goods in their homes, their clothing, food etc. indicate living standards that are in most cases low or very low. With regard to dwellings,⁷ even if the dimensions are not significantly different from that of the majority population, due to the large size of Roma families, they have an average of 6.6 persons per dwelling and 3.03 persons per room, a figure more than double the country-wide average (which stands at 3.05 persons per dwelling and 1.29 persons per room). Generally speaking, Roma dwellings are sparsely furnished, poorly equipped with goods supplying comfort and are poorly maintained. Only between approximately one tenth and one third of Roma dwellings match up to the standards of the majority population. The state of dwellings can be explained not only by their lower incomes, but also by the lesser importance traditionally attached to living conditions. Roma living on a more scattered basis among the majority population generally have a higher standard of living than Roma who live in homogeneous communities. Similarly, Roma who live in large towns have a better standard of living, generally speaking, due to greater earning possibilities, unlike in villages and small towns.

The same characteristics can be found in other aspects of the situation of the Roma population. The level of schooling among the population is extremely weak:⁸ 22 per cent of Roma has no schooling whatever, 5.3 per cent have failed to complete primary school, giving a level of illiteracy of 27.3 per cent. Only 3.9 per cent have completed secondary school and only 0.7 per cent have studied at the level of higher or further education. Around half of adult Roma (56 per cent of men and 41 per cent of women) accord-

ing to their own declaration know how to read well. The other half either do not know how to read at all or can read only with difficulty, which in fact means that they are illiterate. The level of school attendance on the part of the Roma is very low in comparison with the majority population. After 1989, the situation worsened, with the incipient new generation characterised by a much lower level of education than that of its parents. Almost half of children aged eight have not been to school at all or have interrupted their studies. The limited interest in school is largely due to a lack of understanding of the purpose of school on the part of the Roma. This is understandable in the conditions of Romania in the post-Communist transition, as well as the final decade of the Communist regime, as there is no significant connection between the level of education, one's profession and one's income. The authors of 1992 a study point out that "a *căldărar* without any education earns more than a lathe operator; the same is true for the driver of a cart compared to a chemical engineer, or a huckster (*bişniţar*) in comparison with an engineer".⁹ The low level of education is a handicap when it comes to finding employment, even unskilled employment. At the same time, level of education is an important factor affecting the standard of living.¹⁰

As regards health, the Roma face problems of truly catastrophic nature. The Roma have the lowest average life expectancy and the highest percentage of infant mortality (63.1 per cent) etc.¹¹

There is no doubt that the level of criminality among the Roma population is much higher than among the level for the country as a whole. The 1992 study noted that 1.2 per cent of mature Roma individuals were in prison, more than double the proportion for the population as a whole (0.5 per cent).

The organisation of the family is very distinctive among the Roma.¹² Characteristic of Roma families is the extended type family, in which several generations live together. The average number of persons in a family is 6.6, in other words more than double the size of the average family on a national level (3.1). The Roma marry extremely early, especially in the case of girls (the average age for a Roma woman's first marriage is 17, compared to 22.25 in the case of the population of Romania as a whole), but also in the case of boys. The tradition of non-legalised marriages continues to a large extent, which tends to play an important role in reducing the cohesion and durability of the family, as well as responsibility for children resulting from the union. The number of children born into Roma families is at least double the number born into families belonging to the majority population. The aforementioned study found that the average number of children born to women over the age of thirty is 4.98, while for the reference generation the average number of children per woman is 4.35, compared to 1.79 children per woman for the entire population, according to the

1992 census.¹³ This means that the proportion of children under the age of sixteen within the Roma population as a whole is 43.5 per cent. The more traditional the Roma family is, the greater the number of children born into it. The large number of children aggravates the material conditions of the family. Cases of abandonment of children in maternity wards or in children's hospitals, or their internment in orphanages are relatively frequent among the Roma. The high birth rate is one of the most acute problems faced by the Roma population.

Thus appears, in broad lines, the social tableau of the Roma population in Romania in the 1990s. The Roma give, in many respects, different data to the rest of the population of the country. They form a population with a strong specificity. Of course, this specificity comes from their past, but it is also to a considerable extent the result of the overall social regression suffered by Romania in the 1980s. The 1992 study captures the fact that during those years not only were the positive changes that had begun in the 1960s and 1970s on the road to the modernisation of the Roma way of life halted but also an actual regression towards a traditional way of life took place. Since 1989, this process has become even more accentuated. The study shows that in this way, due to the current economic difficulties, young people tend to remain within their communities, together with their family, more so than in the past, while the number of non-legalised marriages is larger among the young than it is among older people.¹⁴ The marginality and inferior economic and social situation of the Roma was perpetuated under the Communist regime and in recent years, in the conditions of the transition to a market economy, the situation has worsened substantially. The trend for the immediate future, noted by the 1992 study as well as by other studies, is that of a worsening of the situation of the Roma population at a more rapid pace than that of the country's population as a whole.

In recent years, new phenomena have appeared with regard to the Roma population. The liberalisation of the economy after 1989 has made it possible for many Roma to enter business. The Roma were among the first entrepreneurs to appear after the Revolution. In general, we are dealing with small-scale commercial operations, many carried out at the limits of legality or even beyond. The infamous "huckstering" (*bişniţă*) practised by the Roma before the Revolution has become a legal occupation. Sometimes, however, we are dealing with large-scale business operations. A by no means small portion of the Roma population adapted quickly to the new economic conditions. Generally speaking, the Roma have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate remarkable entrepreneurial spirit and economic flexibility, with many of them managing to "get by" in the new climate. It would appear that they have very rapidly learnt the rules of "social self-protection". The Roma benefited from their experience as merchants and from

the dense family networks that enabled them to find business opportunities. At the same time, they had no hang-ups with regard to an activity that in general the Romanian population viewed with circumspection. In this way, some Roma obtained advantage from the liberalisation of the regime. In recent years, a category of rich Roma has appeared that has made its fortune through business of varying degrees of legality. The phenomenon of the enrichment of certain groups of the Roma has occurred particularly among those who were active on the black market in the final years of Communism. However, we do not believe that it is possible to speak of a phenomenon of the enrichment of the ethnic group as a whole. The success of a number of Roma in both legal and illicit business and the fabulous wealth accumulated by certain of them stand in contrast with the poverty of the vast majority of the Roma population, a fact attested to by field research. The appearance, in the context of the transition to a market economy, of a rich social class is, of course, valuable also to the rest of the population of the country, including in respect of the not always totally legal means of enrichment. However, more so than in the case of the *nouvelle riches* originating from the majority population, the wealth of some Roma stands out due to the way in which it is used. As a general characteristic, rich Roma show off their wealth in ostentatious fashion and spend it on luxury goods (also into this category falls, for example, the phenomenon of “Gypsy palaces”). Consequently, these persons have always found themselves to be the attention of the press. There is no doubt that the gap between rich and poor and the social polarisation are much stronger within the Roma population than in the case of the rest of the population of the country. There is a very large contrast between the rich Roma and the vast majority of this population. Recent years have seen an aggravation of the economic situation of the majority of the Roma. This phenomenon is set against the general crisis in Romania and the way in which economic reform is taking place there, which have led to the pauperisation of the vast majority of the population. It is certain that the Roma have lost out following the collapse of the Communist regime. The absence of job security, the reduction of state social allowances, the effective disappearance of state support for large and poor families etc. have all seriously affected this population.

The fragility of the social integration of the Roma has become accentuated during the economic crisis. In industry, the Roma were among the first to be made redundant due to their poor qualifications. As has been shown, unemployment has reached incredible levels among the Roma. Together with the dissolution of the agricultural co-operatives, many Roma living in villages have been left without any means of earning a living. As a result of the manner in which the land reform law (no. 112/1991) was applied, the majority of them were excluded from allocation of land, as they had never

owned any land prior to collectivisation. Some of these Roma have been forced to leave the villages in order to find other means of making a living, either in the cities or even abroad.

As has been demonstrated by social studies, the Roma population has experienced an unquestionable social and economic regression. Romania has witnessed an aggravation of social problems as a result of the evolutions in the country as a whole, of the transition to a market economy, as well as the modifications to the state welfare programme. It is to be expected that the situation of this population will worsen in the future, in any case to a greater extent than the rest of the population. It is certain that the sporadic means of making a living, of varying degrees of legality, that are currently ensuring the survival of a large number of Roma will be restricted as the level of organisation of the new social and economic system increases. The Roma, lacking the qualifications, education and capital required by the market, will be more and more marginalised, becoming the most vulnerable section of the population in the forthcoming years. The exaggerated demographic growth of this population is also contributing to the worsening of the situation. In the conditions of the elimination or reduction of all state social allowances, the demographic situation is already proving to be an immense burden.

As we have seen, Romania's Roma population is facing serious social problems. Of course, this process affects not all Roma, but the segment of the population that finds itself in this situation is increasing, to the extent that we can speak of the aggravation of the social and economic situation of this population as a whole. Due to the worsening social and economic problems, the obstruction of the process of modernisation of the Roma population, and among many of them even a return to traditional living strategies, is occurring. New phenomena of marginalisation are appearing. The Roma population is tending to isolate itself even more, making its social integration all the more problematic.

At the same time, the segment of the Roma population that finds itself in a desperate economic situation is generating all manner of problems for society. More and more Roma are choosing the path of anomie and social deviancy. All manner of crimes and other offences committed by members of the Roma population are becoming more and more numerous. Even if there are no official figures in this respect, it is clear that the rate of criminality among this population is high and is tending to worsen, especially among homogeneous communities of Roma. There are worrying signs of an increase in violence among the Roma population. There has been media coverage of the existence of organised crime networks made up of people belonging to this Roma ethnic group (the so-called "Gypsy Mafia") and the danger of rich Roma making use of their poorer fellow Roma in illegal

activities. In general, the social behaviour of the Roma population creates problems within Romanian society at large. A lack of respect for the law as well as the unwritten rules of civilised social behaviour have been widely observed in society.

The rise in criminality and violence among the Roma, their social behaviour and the ostentatious attitude of rich Roma—against the backdrop of all kinds of social problems, which can easily be transformed into ethnic problems—all contribute to a deterioration in relations between the Roma and the rest of the population. It is clear that tensions are growing between the Roma and the majority population, especially in rural communities where the number of Roma is relatively high. An attitude of rejection with regard to the Roma is almost universal in Romanian society and in recent years this feeling has accentuated. A survey into ethnic relations in Romania reached the conclusion that 40 per cent of the population has very negative feelings with regard to the Roma, 34 per cent has unfavourable feelings, while only 19 per cent have favourable feelings and 2 per cent very favourable feelings. Rejection is due to the lifestyle of the Roma.¹⁵ It cannot be denied that among Romanians, including educated circles, there is a duplicitous attitude towards the Roma and even a diffuse racism, as illustrated by, for example, allusions in the press to the (supposed) Gypsy origin of certain political figures. It is evident that Romania is witnessing a rising intolerance of the Roma and of racist attitudes on the part of the majority population. In recent years, there have been acts of violence perpetrated against groups of Roma in certain localities, in conditions of accumulated tensions between the Roma community and the rest of the population. The majority population has reacted to a murder or other serious offences committed by a member of the Roma community with collective reprisals against the entire Roma community or part of the community, including the burning down of houses, the expulsion of the Roma from the locality and other actions. The violent reaction against the Roma was the consequence of the discontent of the population with regard to certain individuals or families of Roma who were terrorising the locality. While it is not appropriate to describe events of this nature that took place in localities such as Mihail Kogălniceanu (Constanța county), Bolintin (Giurgiu county) and Hădăreni (Mureș county), to name the most famous cases, as pogroms, as was reported in the foreign press and some reports of international organisations,¹⁶ the experience of recent years demonstrates that there is a real danger that the tensions existing on a local level between the Roma and the majority population could degenerate into inter-ethnic conflicts.

The Roma, through the poverty and marginality that characterises the majority of them as well as the size of their population, constitute one of the most serious social problems in Romania today. Researchers and analysts

are sounding the alarm with regard to the gravity of the situation and argue the need for a rapid and determined intervention.¹⁷ Intervention is all the more necessary as the problems become more acute with passing time. Already, large concentrations of Roma are causing problems. The process of migration to the towns experienced by the Roma population in the last two decades and their high birth rate have led to the expansion of existing Roma communities in urban areas or the creation of new communities. There is a risk that in a short period of time “pockets” of poverty could appear in Romania’s cities, pockets of an increasingly ethnically homogeneous character, characterised by high levels of unemployment, a lack of housing and chronic delinquency.¹⁸ The problem is all the more alarming as the proportion of Roma within the population is set to rise substantially.¹⁹

It is in the interest of Romanian society that the problems of the Roma are solved now. The Roma are one of the component parts of Romanian society, and the solution of their problems would contribute to the overall improvement of the Romanian society. Similarly, the current situation of the Roma has a negative influence on the general perceptions on Romania from outside the country. A social and educational policy for the Roma, which will contribute to their modernisation and integration and that will be implemented with the participation of this population, is a necessity. There is a need for economic, social, cultural and educational measures, both at the macrosocial and microsocal level, for social action programmes that will support the modernisation of local communities of Roma and of the Roma community in general. This means that it is necessary to see the emergence of an increasingly large class of Roma who lead a modern lifestyle, as well as the eradication of those components of the way of life of the Roma that are responsible for the disadvantageous situation in which they find themselves today. Romanian society, however, has a tradition of a *laissez-faire* attitude when it comes to the Roma, leaving their problems to resolve themselves. As long as it was a question of small communities living at the edges of settlements, this attitude was normal. However, the serious problems facing this population today and especially the larger number of Roma make it necessary for the State and society as a whole to become involved in this issue. In examining social policy with regard to the Roma, it is necessary to take into account the particularities of the different clans and communities of Roma, while at the same time the ethnic component of the social problem of the Roma should not be neglected.

2. TOWARDS A MODERN ROMA ETHNICITY

When we speak about the Roma, we are not in fact dealing with a homogeneous population. The generic name of “Gypsies” or “Roma” covers a diverse number of groups, with major differences between each other. In Romania, these groups, which run well into double figures, are known as *neamuri* (“clans”) (*căldărari*, *rudari*, *ursari*, *gabori*, *țigani de mătase*, *cocalari*, etc). Each group has its own socio-professional, linguistic, cultural and lifestyle specificities.²⁰ Until quite recently, the Gypsy clans were entities whose characteristics were more or less rigidly demarcated, and which were easy to observe and identify. Each clan had a specific occupation that was different from other clans. Virtually every clan had certain particularities in its way of life. Similarly, there are differences regarding language and religion. By language, there are Roma who speak Romanes—which includes several dialects—and those who speak Romanian, Hungarian, Turkish etc. By religion, there are Roma who are Orthodox, Protestant, Catholic, Neo-protestant and Muslim. Even if the clans lost much of their specificity in the last century and a half that has passed since emancipation, and especially in the post-war period, consciousness of belonging to a clan is still powerful. A large part of the Roma population still identifies itself today with a particular clan. However, the current trend is for clan identity to be left behind. Approximately one third of Roma can no longer indicate the clan to which they belong; they no longer have any consciousness of belonging to any particular clan, declaring themselves simply to be “Gypsies” or “Roma”.²¹ For a part of the Roma population, the clans no longer constitute a living part of their identity.

The study carried out in 1992 deals with the existing distinctions within the Roma population by applying the criteria of ethnic self-identification and hetero-identification (in other words, the way in which people identify themselves, whether as Roma or otherwise, as well as the way in which others identify them, once again, as Roma or otherwise). Thus, there are a number of ethnic layers within the Roma population:

a) Roma who display all the traditional ethnic characteristics and who identify themselves as Roma in all contexts;

b) Roma who display all the traditional ethnic characteristics, and whom others identify as Roma, but who identify themselves as such only in an informal context, not in official-administrative contexts;

c) “Modernised” Roma, who thus no longer display the visible indicators of the traditional way of life, but who identify themselves as Roma, both in formal and informal contexts;

d) “Modernised” Roma, who tend no longer to identify themselves as

Roma, or who do so on an intermittent basis, and whom others may or may not identify as Roma;

e) "Former Roma" who are completely integrated into the majority population and who no longer identify themselves as Roma.²²

The authors of the study reached the conclusion that the real number of those who identify themselves as Roma ought to be 536,000 instead of 401,000, which was the number of Roma recorded by the 1992 population census. If we also include the Roma population identified as such by others according to way of life, the minimum figure would be 819,446, equivalent to 3.6 per cent of the population of the country. If we take into account the Roma who live scattered throughout the country, who are less visible and who did not identify themselves as Roma in the census, then the number of Roma in Romania would be around one million, equivalent to 4.3 per cent of the entire population.²³

As it can be seen, the social reality is exceedingly complex. In Romania the notion of "Gypsy" does not have a rigorous definition and is used in different meanings. On the level of collective consciousness, "Gypsies" are not only those who identify themselves in this manner, either in all contexts or only informally. In fact, all those who are identified as such by others are included within the category of "Gypsies". However, many of these people do not identify themselves as Gypsies. They consider themselves to be Romanians (in certain parts of the country Hungarians or Turks), but, for one motive or another, they are not recognised as such by others. They are in fact "obligatory Gypsies". "Gypsy" identification is not always a desired identity; it can be one that is imposed by others. In everyday language, the term tends to carry a social value. Gypsies who have completely detached themselves from the traditional way of life no longer consider themselves to be Gypsies and are no longer considered to be so by others. This multiplicity of terms obliges those studying the Gypsy (Roma) population in Romania to establish the necessary ethnic demarcations. Research carried out in recent years has studied, as a rule, the entire segment of the population that others set apart as "Gypsies".

As a result of this situation, establishing the number of Roma in Romania is difficult. We have already seen the number of Roma recorded by the 1992 census (401,087), as well as the figures used by the authors of the 1992 study (around one million). One author who has written about the Roma established on a sociological basis that the figure of Roma living in Romania stood at over 1,180,000. Bearing in mind the margin of error, he subsequently estimated that the number of Roma living in Romania was no larger than 1,500,000, possibly less.²⁴ Figures that are even larger have

been cited, but these figures have nothing to do with reality. Some Roma leaders have stated that the population is made of 2 or even 3 million, while international Roma organisations currently use the figure of 2.5 million Roma for Romania. Even if all the descendants of the Gypsies from the inter-war period were accepted, such figures would never be reached. The substantial difference between the birth rates of Gypsies and Romanians has existed for only two generations. At the same time, the social and ethnic evolutions that have taken place during this time have meant that numerous individuals of Gypsy ethnic origin have abandoned their original community and integrated completely into the majority population.

Regardless of the controversy surrounding their numbers, we are dealing with a distinctive population that has numerous specificities, which makes the hetero-identification discussed earlier possible.

It is not, however, easy to determine what ensures the “Gypsy” identity of this population, to identify the criteria that make others identify a particular individual as being a “Gypsy”. It is certain that the unifying element is not language. In the 1992 census, only 163,897 people declared Romanes to be their mother tongue, equivalent to 40.9 per cent of those who declared themselves to be Roma (Gypsies). The rest declared their mother tongue to be Romanian (54.3 per cent), Hungarian (4.7 per cent) and so on.²⁵ If we accept one million as the real number of Roma in Romania, it means that approximately just 16 per cent of them use Romanes as their mother tongue. However, it is probably that the percentage is somewhat higher, since the census does not record instances of bilingualism. From the point of view of language, it is clear that the Roma population is in an advanced stage of assimilation. Similarly, it cannot be said that the Roma have their own ethnic cultural tradition, since they have no cultivated language or written culture of their own. Consciousness of ethnic identity manifests itself strongly among some categories of Roma, but is very flexible or even absent in others. There is, however, a clear sense of group belonging at the level of natural communities. Group solidarity exists at the level of Roma clans, but not for the Roma population as a whole. Relations between the different categories of Roma are characterised by co-operation in some cases, by rivalry in others, but very often there is a clear separation between the different clans. What unites Roma and confers their identity upon them is in fact their way of life, which is different from that of the other ethnic communities, and here particularly the traditional life strategy, which even in modernised forms, persists today. We are dealing with a life strategy specific to a community that suffers discrimination and marginalisation, and that lives by the exploitation of marginal resources. As we have seen, this is completely valid only for the traditional communities. It is, however, perceived as being the defining characteristic of the Roma population as a whole. In this respect, it is

possible to agree with those who consider the Roma to be a marginal social category rather than an ethnic group.

After 1989, we have witnessed the emergence of a new phenomenon within the Roma population in Romania. In the conditions of the democratisation of the political regime, the Roma have begun to make their presence felt in public life, affirming their specific interests and their right to a decent life, as well as respect from the other citizens of the country. They have formulated specific social and ethnic demands. A series of leaders have emerged, some are of a traditional type, others are modern leaders, represented by Roma intellectuals, who speak on behalf of this population. The Roma have formed civic and political organisations, including a few political parties. Clearly, we are witnessing a movement of ethnic affirmation on the part of the Roma. We are facing a population that is manifesting itself as a distinct ethnic group. Apart from their social distinctiveness compared to the rest of the population, the Roma are beginning to manifest solidarity that is ethnic in nature. The existence of ethnic consciousness is making its presence felt among the Roma population. Today, Roma are affirming their ethnic identity in larger numbers than in the past. The manifestations of recent years lead to the conclusion that there is a tendency towards the crystallisation of a collective consciousness and the formation of solidarity at the level of the entire Roma population, over and above the existing divisions between groups and the older "clan" solidarity. It is clear that we are witnessing a process of ethnic redefinition.

This is not only happening in Romania. In the 1990s, the Roma were tending to express themselves publicly as an ethnic group in the other countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe with substantial Roma populations and where for five decades they have had a similar experience to that in Romania. Meanwhile, a Roma movement of political and cultural emancipation has been underway in Western countries for the last two to three decades. The process of redefinition experienced by this population cannot be understood if we limit ourselves strictly to the realities of the Roma population in a single country. This population, highly differentiated from many points of view, is seeking to construct a collective identity for itself that transcends state boundaries. Since the beginning of the 1970s, Roma organisations, whether at a national or international level, have been campaigning for national authorities and European bodies to adopt a social policy with regard to the Roma population and to accord them political and cultural rights. There have been manifestations of Roma "nationalism". The most important achievements of the Roma movement have been the imposition of the name "Roma", which is increasingly used in international documents in place of "Gypsy", the association of the Roma with the notion of Holocaust as victims of the Nazis, the inclusion of the problems of the

Roma in international documents, the monitoring of the situation of the Roma in certain countries (i.e., former Communist countries) by international organisations and others. Some analysts speak of the construction of a new ethnic identity of a modern character, or of a process of Roma ethnogenesis.²⁶

The current circumstances in the countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe facilitate the process of Roma ethnogenesis. The fall of Communism has meant the abandonment of assimilationist policies with regard to the Roma and their recognition as a national minority. Today the Roma have civic and political rights identical to those of the other citizens. To this is added international support for the Roma in these countries.

Returning to the Roma living in Romania, after 1989 they were recognised by law as a national minority and the State treats them as such. Bearing in mind the manifestations that have taken place in recent years, it must be accepted that the Roma have also begun to express themselves *de facto* as a modern national minority. Even if the Roma are not a homogeneous population as some of their leaders present them, and are in an incipient stage in their political awakening, we believe that it is already possible to speak of the existence of a Roma nationality in Romania today. We are witnessing a process of ethnic transformation of this population, in which the Roma are throwing off their position as a marginal community, in which they are stigmatised as “Gypsies”, and acquiring certain modern ethnic characteristics. The Roma from Romania are tending to become transformed into a modern national minority.

It remains to be seen what the foundation for the construction of a (modern) national Roma consciousness will be. It would appear that nothing unites the Roma apart from their isolation in the view of public opinion. They do not possess the unifying elements through which the modern nations of Europe were forged in previous centuries (i.e., community of language, culture, historical tradition, economic interests, territory). In the case of the Roma, we are dealing with an ethnogenesis of a different kind. Hence, it has been stated that the concept of national minority is not suitable for the Roma. The Roma would be rather a “transnational minority”, or—in case of those living in Europe—a “European minority”, in the sense that national minorities have formed through their relations with the structures of the national state, so the Roma could constitute themselves as a minority through their relation to the emerging international structures such as the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe, the European Union. The Roma would thus constitute a transnational, non-territorial, European minority.²⁷

Very important in this evolution is the political dimension. Of course, we are not speaking here of the State. It is not expected that the State will

support the development of a Roma nationality. Any national State—and the Romanian State also defines itself as such—has assimilationist tendencies. After 1989, the State has recognised the Roma as a national minority and guarantees them equality in rights alongside the other citizens of the country. Via the Constitution, the Roma are represented by a deputy in parliament. Problems specific to the Roma are dealt with by the Department for the Protection of National Minorities within the Romanian government, and in particular by the Office for the Roma. The evolution of ethnic consciousness and cohesion of the Roma and the general process of the construction of a modern Roma ethnicity depends almost exclusively on figures within the Roma community, namely the leaders of the Roma community. Roma leaders will have a determining role in the construction of a new Roma ethnicity. As demonstrated by the experience of the European nations, national identity does not affirm itself of its own accord, being to a large extent a construct. The modern nations are, to a large extent, the work of intellectuals. Roma intellectuals in Romania are already manifesting themselves in this manner. Their project regarding the modernisation of the Roma population—a project that is not of a single voice, but which is present in materials published by Roma intellectuals engaged in this movement of renewal, in their action and public declarations, in the programmes of the different Roma parties and organisations, in articles in the press etc.—is not limited only to the social aspects of the problems of the Roma. The project does not only aim to promote the socio-economic modernisation of the Roma population through professional training, education, modernisation of way of life etc. We also find in equal measure objectives of ethnic nature: the promotion without any complexes of a sense of ethnic consciousness; promotion of Romanes and its transformation into a written language; the establishment of Romanes-language education; the valorisation of the folkloric traditions of the Roma and the promotion of cultural activity that will modernise these traditions; the establishment of a research programme covering multiple aspects of the Roma population and others. Some more “nationalist” leaders go so far as to propose the reactivation of certain elements of the traditional organisation of the Gypsies. These efforts are designed to transform the Roma into a cohesive national community and a modern national minority.

There is a social condition to the process of ethnic redefinition of the Roma population. Ethnic modernisation is not possible without the Roma ridding themselves of the social legacy of the past, without their overcoming of the social backwardness and their sense of marginality, and without their social integration. Until now, modernisation for the Roma has largely meant leaving the ethnic community and assimilating into the majority population. Now for the first time, a new horizon is opening up, namely the

modernisation of the ethnic group itself from a social, cultural etc. perspective without the loss of its ethnic identity.

Of course, the process of ethnic modernisation of the Roma population is a difficult one. The outlook in the short term is not very promising. Paradoxically, today in Romania we are witnessing a phenomenon of the reactivation of the traditional organisation of the Roma. The phenomenon is probably linked to the social regression that has been experienced by the Roma population in recent years. Certainly, this does not augur well for the goal of modernisation. The traditional leaders of the Roma (the *bulibași*) seem to have a greater authority than that of the modern leaders. There is a tendency for traditional forms of organisational structure, both on a regional and a national level, something that has in fact never existed in the past. In this way, it has been possible for a “king” and an “emperor” of the Roma to emerge. In some places, the practice of traditional courts (the so-called *kris*), which pass judgement on the transgressions of those who break the moral code of the Roma, has been revived. It is necessary to ask whether the Roma population is moving towards modern life or moving back towards tradition.

The process of cohesion of a new Roma identity is barely at the beginning. It will take a long time and the course that it will take depends on a multitude of factors. To what extent the new Roma identity will include the groups of people who declare themselves (or who are seen by the rest of population) as “Roma” or “Gypsies” is a question that will only be answered in the future. The new Roma identity that is in the process of formation is not obliged to include all segments of the Roma population that exists today. It is supposed that these segments will evolve in different ways. Probably, only some of the present day Roma will become modernised “Roma” from a social and ethnic perspective. It is hard to believe that Roma who are virtually Romanianised (or Magyarised) at the present time will return to their language and partly to the traditions that they have forgotten. The process of ethnic assimilation is a natural one. It is probable that in the future the term “Roma” will also be a convention. The future of this population remains open, including with regard to its place in Romanian society.

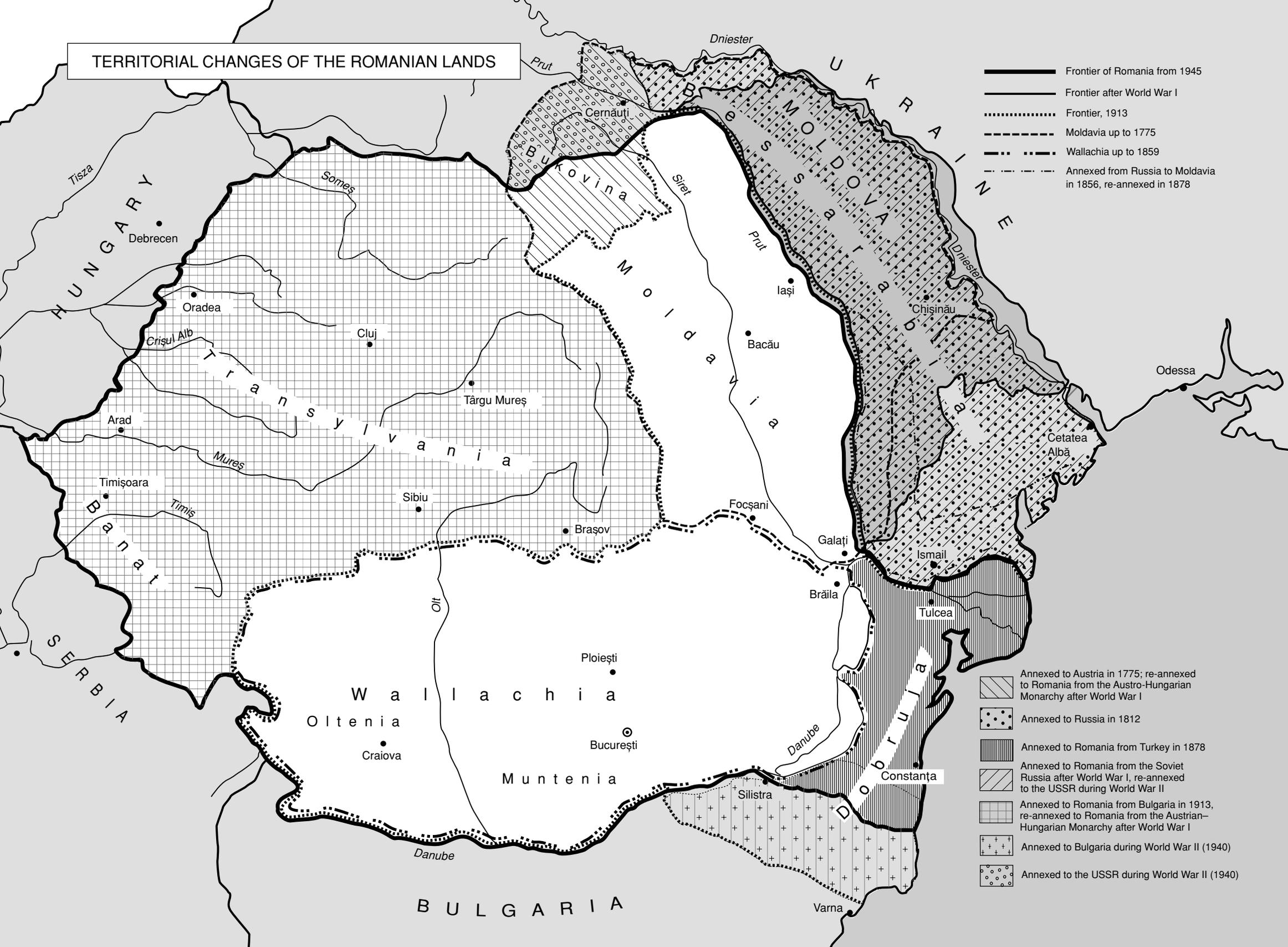
NOTES

- ¹ *Țiganiii între ignorare și îngrijorare*, coord. Elena Zamfir and Cătălin Zamfir, [Bucharest], 1993, p. 254. For the social situation of the Roma in Romania, see also M. Merfea, *Integrarea socială a romilor*, Brașov, 1991; *idem*, “Despre integrarea socială a romilor. Participare și nu asimilare”, *Sociologie Românească*, N. S., V (1994), nos. 2–3, pp. 291–299; Em. Pons, *op. cit.*, p. 55ff.
- ² *Țiganiii între ignorare și îngrijorare*, pp. 52–63 (chapter: “Estimarea populației de romi”).
- ³ *Ibid.*, pp. 101–107.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 107–114.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 115ff.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 115–130.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 138–144.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 92–100.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 120.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 151–154.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 66–91.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 79–80.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 71.
- ¹⁵ D. Abraham, I. Bădescu, “Conlocuirea etnică în România. Rezultate ale cercetărilor de teren”, *Sociologie Românească*, N. S., V (1994), nos. 2–3, pp. 185–187.
- ¹⁶ For example, *Destroying Ethnic Identity*, p. 36ff.
- ¹⁷ For this matter, see *Țiganiii între ignorare și îngrijorare*, pp. 155–174.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 170.
- ¹⁹ The demographic prognosis for the years 1992–2025, constructed on the continuation of the current general characteristics of mortality and fertility, shows that during this period the population of Romania will decrease by 10 per cent. This overall global decrease will conceal the different demographic evolutions of different nationalities. The number of Romanians is expected to decrease by 13 per cent, the number of Hungarians will decrease by 23 per cent and “other nationalities” by 24 per cent, while the Roma population will increase by 57 per cent. The prognosis operates on the basis of two variants for the current size of the Roma population. The Roma will go from 1 million (4.4 per cent of the population) in 1992 to 1,564,000 (7.7 per cent) in 2025, or respectively from 1.5 million (6.6 per cent) in 1992 to 2,346,000 (11.4 per cent) in 2025. Consequently, the proportion of the Roma will grow substantially, eventually overtaking the Hungarians in terms of numbers. (V. Ghețău, “O proiectare condițională a populației României pe principalele naționalități (1992–2025)”, *Revista de Cercetări Sociale*, 3 (1996), no. 1, pp. 75–105, especially p. 103.)
- ²⁰ See V. Burtea, “Neamurile de romi și modul lor de viață”, *Sociologie Românească*, N. S., V (1994), nos. 2–3, pp. 257–273.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 258.

- ²² *Țiganiii între ignorare și îngrijorare*, pp. 56–58.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 52–63.
- ²⁴ M. Merfea, *Despre integrarea socială a romilor*, p. 292.
- ²⁵ *Recensământul populației și locuințelor din 7 ianuarie 1992. Structura etnică și confesională a populației*, Bucharest, 1995, pp. 38–39.
- ²⁶ N. Gheorghe, “Roma–Gypsy Ethnicity in Eastern Europe”, *Social Research*, 58 (1991), no. 4, pp. 829–844; *idem*, “L’Ethnicité des Tsiganes Roma et le processus de transition en Europe de l’Est”, *Études Tsiganes*, no. 2/1991, pp. 36–41; S. Kapralski, “Identity Building and the Holocaust: Roma Political Nationalism”, *Nationalities Papers*, 25 (1997), no. 2, pp. 269–283.
- ²⁷ See the interview with Nicolae Gheorghe in the magazine 22, no. 15, 12–18 April 1995, pp. 8–9.

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TERRITORIAL CHANGES OF THE ROMANIAN LANDS



- Frontier of Romania from 1945
- Frontier after World War I
- ⋯** Frontier, 1913
- - -** Moldavia up to 1775
- · - · -** Wallachia up to 1859
- · - · -** Annexed from Russia to Moldavia in 1856, re-annexed in 1878

- Annexed to Austria in 1775; re-annexed to Romania from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy after World War I
- Annexed to Russia in 1812
- Annexed to Romania from Turkey in 1878
- Annexed to Romania from the Soviet Russia after World War I, re-annexed to the USSR during World War II
- Annexed to Romania from Bulgaria in 1913, re-annexed to Romania from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy after World War I
- Annexed to Bulgaria during World War II (1940)
- Annexed to the USSR during World War II (1940)

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