Conclusion

The historical materials presented in this book about the origin and development of Roma civic emancipation in the region of Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe in the period from the 19th century to the Second World War allow us to outline, at least in general terms, a relatively complete picture of the development of this process. Of course, there are still many white spots in this picture due to the lack (still) of sufficient data, but as one can see from all the source materials, this overall picture in the region is extremely diverse and heterogeneous while at the same time uniting in its leading features, trends, and aims. The available historical data are also very heterogeneous in the different countries of the region, and their availability (or preservation, or entry into academic circulation) depends on a variety of factors. Despite all these shortcomings of modern historical knowledge, it is clear that there is a common historical process that covers almost all of these countries during the interwar period. The lack of materials only from Estonia, Lithuania, and Albania is understandable by the objective circumstances in these countries – a relatively small number of Roma in them and the lack of Roma civic elite to start and lead the processes – as well as the overall socio-political context there, which does not create appropriate conditions for the development of these processes (especially in Albania).

The unity of the process of Roma civic emancipation in the countries of Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe is conditioned by the fact that it is an integral and inseparable part of the general development of modern nationalism throughout the region. From this point of view, its development during this period fits into the separate phases in the development of modern nationalism in the already mentioned several times concept of Miroslav Hroch (2005). From the published materials it is clear how the first phase of this process was realised among the Roma (creation of their own Roma national vision, albeit with more or less different versions under conditions of separate countries) as well as the second phase (dissemination and promotion of visionary ideas among the masses).

It is hard to assess the results of this second phase, not only due to the lack of sufficient data in this direction but also since it remains virtually incomplete due to the beginning of the Second World War. After the end of the war, however, the whole socio-political context changed throughout the region, and the movement for Roma civil society was already developing in a new, very different situation, and over the years with new main actors. In parentheses, the topic of continuity in Roma activism (including to this day) is very interesting, but it in itself deserves another, independent study.

The movement for Roma civic emancipation, despite its unity as an invariant, is practically realised in different ways, which can take on not only similar but also a wide variety of forms and, in many cases, it may even have more or less different content. Therefore, each comparative study must take into account the different social and political contexts

shaping a particular country in the region. The emergence and development of the movement for Roma civic emancipation in different individual countries led to the formation of different models by which this movement developed, and which can be categorised according to different criteria.

According to their goals, which could be more specific or more general, the established civic organisations in the region could be oriented towards the protection of professional interests, to the preservation of certain cultural traditions, to the enhancement of the educational attainment of the community, to the achievement of specific political goals (most often the acquisition of equal civil rights), etc. The oldest are the professional associations on ethnic grounds, existing in South Eastern Europe since the time of the Ottoman Empire, which are transformed in various forms in the new conditions of the independent states in the region. Here belong also professional associations of Gypsy musicians nascent in the Kingdom of Hungary in frames of the dual monarchy of Austro-Hungaria. Chronologically followed the mutual aid associations (in some countries it is explicitly emphasised that they are an aid for diseases and funerals), which de facto worked within the community, which are a ubiquitous phenomenon in South-Eastern Europe, which, together with professional societies become the basis on which the new forms of civil society organisations grow and develop.

The most common organisational forms were civic associations and societies. This is not only one of the hallmarks of the modern era typical for new nation-states but also reveals the aspirations of the Roma communities to adopt new forms of social life. Adopting such organisational forms, however, was not an absolute prerequisite for the modernisation of Gypsy life and, in many cases, the old forms of community organisation could be used alongside these. In general, throughout the region, there was a strong desire on the part of the Roma to organise themselves in professional, educational, cultural, artistic, sports, etc. civic associations in an old or new model, or even (at least nominally) as structural units of religious institutions. It should be pointed out that the new and old models of community organisation were not mutually exclusive; civic organisations were in fact often intertwined with and based on traditional forms of community organisation, that were appropriated into the new socio-political context of the given country. In some cases, Gypsy associations, societies or unions would not even seek legal registration not to mention the specific case of the so-called Gypsy Kings who used quasi-traditional forms intended to have a public effect on the macro-society.

In many cases, but not necessarily in all, there was a link to external social factors (i.e. outside the community), most often political parties or religious institutions. Relations with governmental institutions in the respective countries where Roma resided could also be quite diverse. In most cases, the states' attitude to the new forms of Roma social life in the period between the two World Wars was rather dismissive. However, it could also be more or less hostile (e.g. in Bulgaria) or, on the contrary, encouraging (e.g. Hungary). An interesting case is that of the USSR, where Gypsy organisations were actually supported (but also controlled) by the state.

Moreover, in the interwar period, apart from the relations with the state, two additional models concerning the type of relations between the community and society emerged, which represented two lines in the future development, and which are especially relevant today. The first one concerned the relations of the Roma civic emancipation movement with mainstream civil organisations (the case of Czechoslovakia), or, to use present-day terminology, with the non-governmental sector (which nowadays has become a specialised and professionalised economic field). The second line is the emergence of rather rudimentary forms of relations with religious denominations and in particular the creation of 'one's own', more or less independent, religious institutions (Finland, Latvia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, etc.). This line is nowadays becoming an integral part of the Roma civic emancipation movement. In the interwar period, in some cases, this may have even lead to the creation of their own religious structures (nowadays, these are represented by the Roma evangelical churches and heterodox Islamic orders), their own forms of ritual performances on traditional holidays common to the whole society, which already perform new functions (Yugoslavia, Turkey), or at least their own religious calendar (differentiation between the two calendar styles in Bulgaria).

Viewed more generally and in the longer term, it turns out that there were no simple, homogeneous patterns of development in what concerns processes of Roma civic emancipation. In the end, all forms and patterns were interconnected with one another; complementing each other; and in all alternatives, the ambition was to achieve a comprehensive all-nation coverage of the Roma community in the particular country, and to have civic functions of representation.

For purposes of our study most important is to understand not that which divides all the variants in what concerns the development of Roma civic emancipation, but that which unites them. All forms of the social organisations of the Roma community in the Interwar period (and even today) aimed to legitimise the representation of the community in its relations with society within the relevant civic nation. This is what finally constitutes the civic emancipation movement of the community as a whole, even in cases where the ultimate goal (at least as a vision) was to create a partial (Autonomous Republic in the USSR) or even a fully independent state (Gypsy Kings in Poland). A separate question remains concerning the degree to which this goal, or vision, was realistic or not.

Generally speaking, the movement for Roma civic emancipation was an effort to achieve a fair (from the perspective of the Roma community represented by its leaders) and a mutually acceptable balance in the community-society relationship. An initial and irreplaceable condition for Roma activists was the preservation of the community with its main ethnocultural characteristics within the general public framework; without this, the whole movement for Roma civic emancipation would lose its meaning. It is no coincidence that we emphasise that, in the end, for all Roma visionaries, the ultimate aim was always one concerning the future of the whole community. Otherwise, if the process of seeking a fair relationship with the surrounding population were to take place at the

individual/family level or involved limited, relatively smaller or larger local or regional communities, the processes would inevitably lead to assimilation in the majority ethnic nation or into some other large national minority. Achieving end-to-end results from such voluntary assimilation (as well as attempts at forced assimilation, which are not considered here), was usually met with the opposition of the preferred ethnic nation or other national minority, so these processes were far from complete and irreversible (at least in the foreseeable terms), as evidenced by the various variants of their modern development (Marushiakova & Popov, 2015).

In the presented historical period, the processes of Roma civic emancipation remained restricted within individual countries, and the demand for balance in the community-society relationship was perceived in the confines of the relevant civic nations to which Roma in the countries of Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe belonged. At least on an abstract level, Roma activists were aware of the unity of their community on a transborder scale, but the presented cases of the public proclamation of the international dimension of these processes ultimately pursued "internal" goals, namely to raise the image and to emphasise the particular importance of the Roma civic emancipation among majorities in those respective countries. Therefore, it is natural that the real international dimensions of the Roma movement emerge only in the 1960s and 1970s when the movement began to break the boundaries of nation-states and to develop in the context of modern processes of globalisation and pan-European unity.

In this regard, it becomes clear why special attention is paid by Roma activists to the participation of Roma in the wars waged by the respective countries in the region. This is considered by them to be the most effective argument in their struggles for equal civil rights and for the civic emancipation of the community as a whole, so this argument, in one form or another, is found in almost all countries throughout the region. This inclusion of the Roma in the armies of the countries of the region may explain the seemingly absurd fact that the lists of prisoners of war after World War II in the Soviet Union included 383 Gypsies (Мухин, 2003, pp. 187-188), who were probably part of the military units of Romania, Hungary, and Slovakia (and perhaps other countries), fighting as allies of the German army on the Eastern Front.

When analyzing the processes of Roma civic emancipation in the countries of Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe during the interwar period, another important topic that should not be overlooked is that of the influence of communist ideology and the communist movement on these processes. However, this should not be placed under a common denominator with the influence and the state policy towards the Gypsies in the countries of the region after the Second World War, when communist regimes were established there. In this case, it is already a question of a new and completely different historical context; moreover, this policy is very diverse and sometimes even contradictory in individual countries of the so-called socialist camp (Marushiakova & Popov, 2008). In this case, too, one should not take into account the situation in the USSR, where communism is an official state ideology and, accordingly, Gypsy activists inscribe their visions in the general ideological discourse. At the same time, however, in a number

of other countries in the region (in particular Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Finland), where local communist parties are persecuted and banned by the authorities, several leading Roma activists are connected with the communist movement, and some of them are even active participants in it (this is especially clear in Turkey and Bulgaria).

All this should come as no surprise, because during the interwar period, communist ideas were especially popular on a global scale, including even among many leading intellectuals in the West. In this case, it is neither a coincidence nor a historical paradox, but rather a natural development of the movement for Roma civic emancipation. After it became clear that the authorities in the individual countries of the region completely ignored and neglected the ideas of Roma activists to achieve an equal position of their community in society and there was no prospect of this situation changing, many of them came to the idea that in order to realise their visions, the whole society must change in the first place, which will change the social position of the Gypsies as a whole. This should not be considered a renunciation of their Roma identity and the aspirations for the overall development of their community; in this case, these issues are left behind and the aspiration for a complete change of the society according to the class criteria comes to the fore. This is also a kind of manifestation of the new civic identity of Roma activists (similar to the case of the 'new' evangelical churches), so those forms of social activity may even acquire community dimensions. Thus, in the end, the participation of Roma in the communist movement (as well as in evangelical churches) fits organically into the general course of the Roma civic organisation, and this aspect should not be neglected in any case if we want to understand the overall dimensions of the process. As for the unique case of the USSR, the whole process of Roma civic emancipation there was built on the basis of communist ideology and functioned in the parameters outlined by it (and accordingly depended on the changes in it). The influence of communist ideology on the processes of Roma civic emancipation is part of a more general issue – that of the impact of “external” factors on the Roma community. This issue can also be viewed in its personified aspect – by looking at the relations between Roma and non-Roma. As is clear from the published materials, examples of non-Roma involved in the Roma civic emancipation movement are found in most of the countries in the region, e.g. Dr. Marko Markov and Pastor Petar Minkov in Bulgaria, Alexander Petrović in Yugoslavia, Oskari Jalkio in Finland, Alexander German in the USSR, the so-called Czech physicians in Czechoslovakia, etc. The influence of these individuals (as well as the social, political, or religious structures they represent in some cases) can in no way be sufficient ground to divide the Roma civic emancipation movement into “authentic” and “non-authentic” and to de facto create oppositions along these lines. Setting a divide between “authentic” (i.e. closed in frames of the community) and “non-authentic” (i.e. appearing under the influence of “external” factors) development would be equivalent to the exoticising approach of most researchers during this period, who divided Gypsies into “genuine” and not. Moreover, if this approach is adopted, all contemporary Roma activism can also be declared “inauthentic” because, despite its diversity, it overwhelmingly includes people and organisations that are in one way or another committed to various social factors

outside the community. This approach cannot be justified primarily for methodological reasons, because the Roma, as has been mentioned many times, are not only a separate ethnic community but also an integral part of the macro-society in which they live and cannot but be affected by multiple various social factors; in fact, the movement for Roma civic emancipation itself does not take place within the community but is a societal phenomenon, and the results are expected to be realised within the framework of the larger society they inhabit.

Some authors have tried in vain to discover the international dimension of the movement for Roma civic emancipation before the Second World War. Because they could not find clear support in the archival sources, they have described supposed international connections with the added stipulation “whether mythical or real” (Klímová-Alexander, 2005a, p. 195). Such verbal equilibristics are not only unfounded but also completely unnecessary. The emergence of the Roma movement on the international stage and its real (i.e. not just on the level of ideas) transformation into an international movement for Roma civic emancipation began *de facto* (notwithstanding all public declarations in this regard before and after the Second World War) only with the International Romani Congress in London in 1971, and this is, in fact, the most important feature of this historic event, regardless of all the mythology that has been created around it nowadays (Marushiakova & Popov, 2019). Only then did the ‘community – society’ relations become further complicated and started to take on a new, international dimension, which substantially (but not fundamentally) changed the content and purpose of the whole movement for Roma civic emancipation, and which, accordingly, made the achievement of a balance in these relationships even more difficult.

The search for a common denominator in the study of the past and present of the Roma has led to the formation of several basic paradigms that have arisen in the link between academic knowledge and Roma activism today. Nowadays (we emphasise that we are speaking about today’s state of the art, which is no guarantee that future developments in research will not be different), these discourses are based mostly (but not exclusively) on at least some key concepts that together or separately set the leading discourse, and mostly on the concepts of Resistance and Anti-Gypsyism.

We believe that the materials presented in this book reveal well enough the possibilities for interpretation and future research in each of these two leading discourses, as well as for their combination. Through the variety of materials presented, we have also tried to show that research in any discourse must always be placed in the relevant context. That means that the approach must be first and foremost particular, i.e. each study needs to be focused on a given country, in a given historical (or contemporary) period, without making generalisations and without applying the conclusions from a particular study beyond its boundaries. This approach does not, in any case, preclude comparisons and more general levels of research; on the contrary, it presupposes more general interpretations and conclusions, which, however, must be on a stable ground: namely, they must be based on specific studies, which in turn must be rooted in authentic historical sources and not on the author’s interpretation of secondary material, which may be more or less controversial.

The main problem that leads to the issues of overinterpretation, misunderstandings, misreading, etc., often discussed in the text, is, according to us, the aspiration of different authors to discover and impose a single, predetermined, 'correct' (i.e. all others are considered 'wrong') paradigm and, through it, to interpret and explain all facts. In this sense, the search for one "magic word" (whether Resistance, Anti-Gypsyism or any other) to explain the whole history, culture, social relations, etc. of the Roma, is doomed to failure (especially in an academic field such as Romani Studies, which unites many disciplines, each with its own methodology, terminology, etc.). Such aspiration has been proven wrong in every science, as it became obvious already in the 1920s after the seminal introduction of Niels Bohr's Principle of Complementarity in physics. In the social sciences and humanities, where the author's point of view is especially important, the principle of complementarity is of particular importance. In our case, attempts made so far to apply one leading discourse to encompass the whole historical diversity of the processes of Roma civic emancipation, often at the cost of multiple over-interpretations, have led to conclusions that are more or less doubtful, and they may even contradict specific historical realities.

Throughout his work, one of the most popular contemporary authors, an American political scientist and anthropologist, James C. Scott, regularly mentions 'Gypsies', or 'Roma and Travelers', or 'Roma and Sinti' (he uses all these designations, obviously considering them synonymous) in the discourse of Resistance, as an example of people who master "the art of resistance" and "the art of not being governed" (Scott, 1985; 1998; 2009; 2013). Without reference to any examples or discussion of concrete cases, Scott considers them a typical example of a nation capable of eternal resistance to the attempts of the state to incorporate them into its social fabric. The corpus of texts published here and authored by Roma, however, reveals a very different, often opposite picture. In almost all of them, the main message of Roma visionaries to the state can be found. They requested from the state urgent and effective actions for the accomplishment of social integration and an equal position of their ethnic community in the mainstream society.

A separate issue is that in most cases these appeals remained without consequence; and where the affirmative policy towards the Gypsies was applied (the early USSR), the outcomes remained largely incomplete. If we accept James C. Scott's thesis that the Roma are indeed a specific community that master the art of not being governed, and if their entire history is fully subordinated to the ideologeme of resistance, then it would be logical to ask why they needed to strive for civic emancipation at all. To find a way out from this logical trap we need to rephrase the famous sentence of James C. Scott and confess that Roma indeed mastered the art of being governed i.e., they were not only living for centuries in the conditions of ethnic 'foreign' states but were able to turn them (at least to some extent) into 'their own'. The main driving force of the movement for Roma civic emancipation during the interwar period was the incompleteness of these processes of social integration of the Roma in the conditions of the formation of the new nation-states in the region.

Moreover, breaking the stigmatising framework imposed by James C. Scott on the Roma, whom he perceived as an isolated and closed community opposed to the world

outside it, and taking into account the real social dimensions of their lives, allows for a much more adequate explanation of their history and present. From this point of view, it is clear that the struggle against Nazism/Fascism of the Roma during the Second World War cannot (and should not) be reduced only to the level of the community, but it is necessary to take into account its overall social dimensions. This means that it is not enough to illustrate this struggle mainly with the so-called Roma uprising in Auschwitz II – Birkenau concentration camp on May 16, 1944, the reality of which is even questioned by some historians (Kubica & Setkiewicz, 2018), but it is needed to note that this struggle has a much more impressive scale. The perception of the Roma as an integral part of the respective social structures of the civic nations in the region provides an opportunity for numerous examples of Roma participation in the partisan movement to be included as manifestations of their Resistance during WWII. This participation is not limited to the above cases from Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia (see Chapters 2 and 8, but we can note also the active participation of Roma in the communist anti-fascist resistance in Yugoslavia, the most famous examples of which are the partisan commanders Stevan Đorđević (with the partisan name Novak), who died in 1943, and declared a National Hero of Yugoslavia (Collection, 1957), and Slobodan Berberski (partisan name Lala), political commissar of a detachment in the First Šumadija Partisan Detachment (Stanković, 1983, p. 215), chairman of the First Roma Congress held in London in 1971. Special mention should also be made of the heroic participation of hundreds of Roma (men and women) in the Red Army (many of them as volunteers) and in the partisan detachments in the occupied territories of the USSR, to which the fundamental work of the late Nikolai Bessonov is dedicated (Бессонов, 2010), and which is hardly used in academia (perhaps because it is not published in English). The situation with the discourse of Anti-Gypsyism is similar. However, while the ideologeme of Resistance *de facto* transfers responsibility for their social non-integration to the Roma themselves, the concept of Anti-Gypsyism places this responsibility on the states in which they live. Following this logic, some authors conclude that Roma mobilisation in Czechoslovakia and Hungary in the Interwar period was hindered “owing to both to the lack of pivotal leaders and material resources and due to the anticipated resistance of local authorities” (Barany, 2002, p. 101). As the sources published in this book reveal, this statement is far from the truth, and as regards the authorities in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, they were rather supportive of Gypsy organisations and their activities (for example, in the creation and functioning of the so-called Gypsy schools in Czechoslovakia and the Gypsy music schools in Hungary, which would not have been possible without the support of central and local authorities; another question is whether this support could have been larger).

The discourse of Anti-Gypsyism is often in the backdrop of numerous academic texts, and even in cases when it is not a leading one, the presence of this discourse can lead to doubtful or wrong conclusions. The best illustration of this is the absurd final conclusion found in the works that Soviet policy assigns the Roma assimilation as a primary goal for the Theatre Romen (Lemon, 1996; 2000; 2001; 2002). It is logical to ask the question if indeed the purpose of Soviet policy towards the Gypsies was their assimilation, why

it was necessary to go through such complex and completely illogical ways – the creation of a Gypsy theater (and subsequently, since the 1960s, also dozens of music and dance groups according to its model), supervising and editing its repertoire to represent “authentic” (according to the criteria adopted at the time) Gypsy art, extensive advertising in the media, supporting tours throughout the vast country, mass circulation of gramophone records with Gypsy music, etc. – and not to follow the path of the simplest and easiest solutions, as to the example of the Latvian State Theatre *Skatuve* in Moscow (see Chapter 12), or of the Moscow Jewish State Theatre, closed in 1949. Moreover, as already mentioned, it was the Theater Romen that proved to be a factor of special importance for the preservation and development of the Gypsy/Roma identity and ethnic culture not only in the former USSR but also elsewhere.

This discourse of Anti-Gypsyism also fails to explain another important aspect of the process of Roma civic emancipation. As already mentioned, this process aims to find a harmonious balance between the Roma community and the macro-society; however, this includes not only activities in the public sphere but also within the community itself. From this point of view, of particular interest is the struggle against one's own ethnocultural traditions, which are considered harmful, inconsistent with the new social realities, and which must cease to exist. A significant example in this direction is for example the struggle of Gypsy activists against arranged marriages. Proponents of the discourse of Anti-Gypsyism could try in the case of the USSR to explain this struggle with the stamp of the “assimilation” policy of the Soviet state and even to condemn it as violence against Roma ethnocultural traditions. However, this approach cannot in any way explain the similar processes in other countries in the region (Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania), which shows the inadequacy of this approach in the interpretation of some of the historical (and also contemporary) realities.

The situation with the struggle against Roma nomadism by Roma activists during the interwar period is very similar. From the very beginning of the academic interest in Western Europe on the so-called Gypsies (this cover term also refers to Roma in Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe) has presented their nomadic way of life as their most important and essential feature, a key pillar of their community identity. Measures for their sedentarisation most often (including nowadays) were perceived as a shackle in a chain of persecutions, and any policy of sedentarisation continuously been interpreted as an example of the crimes against their human, social and cultural rights. What has been missing, however, in these interpretations is the stance on the issue of nomadism as expressed by the Roma themselves and, more specifically, by the Roma activists who initiated the process of Roma civic emancipation.

As can be seen from the materials presented here, the situation in the whole region can be summarised and presented very briefly as follows: the countries of Central and South-Eastern Europe, which in the past were part of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empire, Roma activists, in general, did not pay special attention to the problem of Gypsy nomads; while in Romania and in countries that were formerly part of the Russian Empire, local activists pleaded with the authorities (USSR, Poland, Latvia), calling on

them to sedentarise the Gypsy nomads (Marushiakova & Popov, 2020a, pp. 265-276), or agitate among their community to stop the nomadic way of life (Finland). Authorities in Romania, Poland, and Latvia ignore these calls for Roma activists while Soviet state considered sedentarisation necessity and support developments in this area through various preferences but without forcing the events and recourse to administrative and coercive measures, this is why the overall solution to the problem is postponed for the future (Ibid.). In other countries in the region, this problem was rather not given special attention, except Czechoslovakia and Hungary, where the regulation of nomadism was regulated by law and administrative acts, inherited from Austro-Hungarian times or transformed, but was not prohibited in general. This situation can be explained in a historical context. In the Ottoman Empire, as of the 15th century, the majority of Gypsies lived sedentary, and the share of nomads was steadily declining; in the Austro-Hungarian Empire after the special policy of Empress Maria Theresa and Emperor Joseph I in the late 18th and early 19th centuries also most of the Gypsies live sedentary and nomadic Roma were mostly coming from neighbouring countries.

Everything that has been said so far, confirms that the processes of emancipation of Roma in Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe begin and develop in the midst of permanently settled Gypsies, and the attitude of Roma activists towards Gypsy nomadism oscillates between neglect and the active work in order to initiate support for their sedentarisation by state authorities. And it is perfectly understandable – it is precisely the settled Roma who were able to achieve a higher degree of social integration than those who lead a nomadic way of life, and precisely in their midst were born the ideas for a Roma civic emancipation, for what the nomadic Roma are perceived as an obstacle.

Historically speaking, both ideologemes – of Resistance and Anti-Gypsyism – are not products of today, but of previous historical eras. The notion of a free Gypsy spirit, which cannot (and does not want to) live according to the norms of society, led to the era of 19th-century romanticism. If this is to be expressed in terms of a modern academic language, it can be said that the exoticisation of Gypsies/Roma through the discourse of Resistance is characteristic of the era of colonialism. As already mentioned, the concept of Anti-Gypsyism (not only on a state level but also that of structural Anti-Gypsyism) was born in the Soviet era and expressed a communist interpretation of Gypsy history. Nowadays, the main content of this discourse is preserved, and changes are mainly in the ideological background and in the terminology used and in the examples quoted.

Everything said above should in no way be interpreted as a total rejection of the discourses of Anti-Gypsyism and Resistance; on the contrary, they have been repeatedly used by us, in our previous works (Marushiakova & Popov, 2013b; 2017d) and we are convinced that they are needed. Nevertheless, as we argued above, these discourses should not be seen as absolute and the interpretation and explanation of the whole diversity and multidimensionality of Roma history should not be limited in their use. Neither Anti-Gypsyism, nor Resistance, nor their combination can be the magic key through

which the whole history of the Roma can be explained because the real history is always much more complex and diverse than preconceived ideological and/or methodological frameworks, which historical diversity constantly breaks down and refutes. Attempts to adapt historical factology to the chosen thesis through misinterpretations, overinterpretations, or pre-selected approach, lead to situations in which, in principle, correct concepts are discredited by false evidence, and this applies to any preconceived discourse that is absolute and accepted as universal. In more general terms, and from a methodological point of view, one should not work with the 'or' principle but, rather, with the 'and' principle. This broadly means that historical (and contemporary) processes and phenomena should be explored from multiple perspectives, which should not be opposed to each other but combined according to the specifics of the particular cases, studied in the general context of entangled history, in which the Roma are an integral part of society.

We sincerely hope that the material presented in this book, which offers ample opportunity for different interpretations, will contribute to a better understanding of the need for such an approach and the need for a new, critical reading of Roma history and Roma activism.

This book can also have a social significance outside the narrow academic framework and in particular for contemporary Roma activism. As can be seen from the published materials, Roma visionaries from the interwar period had outlined in their texts the main problems facing the Roma community on its way to integration into the social realities of the modern age and, accordingly, offered their views on ways of solving those problems. There is no point in summarising and systematising the whole diversity of their views in this regard. It is enough to say that they have not missed anything significant and important which does not continue to be relevant today (with the exception, perhaps, of the recently popular post-modern LGBTQI theme).

In this sense, the history of the Roma civic emancipation before the Second World War could be the basis for a critical rethinking of permanent ongoing debates within contemporary Romani activism because, as Santayana's famous aphorism stated: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it".

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