

SEZIONE TEMATICA

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## Antiziganisms

Ethnographic engagements in Europe

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**ABSTRACT:** Parallel to the interest in Roma at the social and political level, Antiziganism has rapidly gained the interest of social sciences since 2000. A copious literature has contributed to decisive breakthroughs in defining the concept and identifying its roots in the history of Europe. However, the debate has mostly developed with “Antiziganism” in singular declension, with the frequent merging together of cases originating in different contexts. After a speedy evolution, theorization shows signs of entering conceptualization redundancy. This thematic section wishes to move beyond the currently prevailing top-down reflection on Antiziganism. It offers the results of public anthropology and interdisciplinary research-actions, carried on in local contexts, in spaces of interaction between the Roma and the non-Roma, and by ethnographers intervening to promote a change. Ethnography of “Antiziganisms” and of the practices which counteract them offer opportunities for revealing the link between antiziganism and other forms of racism, the cognitive and emotional experience of the subjects at play in the specific field and the fuzziness of the dividing lines between their agency. It is finally a chance to experiment with the applicability, adaptability and transferability of disciplinary knowledge.

**KEYWORDS:** RACISM, ROMANI STUDIES, PUBLIC ANTHROPOLOGY, CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY, INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH.

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*Antiziganism: Ethnographic engagements in Europe*

2017 | ANUAC. VOL. 6, N° 1, GIUGNO 2017: 99-117.

ISSN: 2239-625X – DOI: 10.7340/anuac2239-625X-2927

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*From Antiziganism to Antiziganisms: the reason for this publications*<sup>1</sup>

The concept of antiziganism<sup>2</sup> was introduced into the field of social sciences in the second half of the 1980s. The aim was to describe and define the representations and phenomenologies of symbolic, political, structural and institutional violence which, in the Western world, characterize the relationships between majority societies and the social groups known as *gypsies* (see Hancock 1987; Margalit 1996; Nicolae 2007; Tosi Cambini 2012; Piasere 2015; Wipperman 2015; Selling *et al.* 2015) in different ways according to the historical and territorial contexts.

As a general definition, scholars do agree that antiziganism can be understood as a specific form of racism which underlies both the ideologies of racial superiority and the processes of de-humanization. It can also be seen in forms of structural and institutional discrimination against *gypsy otherness*. All these processes are based on stereotyping and prejudice, with their historical roots in Europe. It affects those who call themselves Roma and Sinti and other groups who are constructed locally as *gypsies* (see below).

Despite its emergence as a new concept, antiziganism rapidly gained the interest of anthropologists, sociologists, political as well as legal scientists (though hardly any historians), so much so that since 2000, a constant and quantitatively notable increase in publications on this subject was recorded all over Europe. This was paralleled by widespread general interest in the Roma issue at social and political levels. In the public arena, as it has been

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1. The editors wish to dedicate this thematic section to the memory of Lorenzo Bargellini and Nicola Solimano. The authors wish to thank the editorial board of *Anuac* for their interest in our original proposal and the support provided during the preparation of this themed section. The research leading to the present publication results from *MIGROM, The immigration of Romanian Roma to Western Europe: Causes, effects and future engagement strategies*, a project funded by the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme under the call on «Dealing with diversity and cohesion: the case of the Roma in the European Union» (GA319901), 2013–2017. The first and second paragraphs are written by Sabrina Tosi Cambini, the third paragraph is written by Giuseppe Beluschi Fabeni.

2. In the current English version of the text we have chosen Antiziganism and not Antigypsyism. According to Marko D. Knudsen (2004) «the commonly used English term [Antigypsyism]... only refers to the Roma (“Gypsies”) in English-speaking territories like Great Britain and Ireland, while the rest of Europe uses closely related terms like “Zigeuner”, “Cigan”, “Cingany”, “Tsigange” etc. Thus, the linguistic root “Zigan” is better suited for usage in a terminological definition for the entirety of Europe, the term “Antiziganism” allowing an identification of the problem on a national as well as international level [...] The term “Antigypsyism” therefore only makes sense in the context of the special, national Antiziganism in the English-speaking territories of Europe». See also Piasere 2015; Selling *et al.* 2015; Wipperman 2015.

well documented, the focus on Roma has been used by political parties and their leaders as a form of scapegoating. It has featured in many electoral campaigns and in the actions of national and local governments: examples have been seen in all European countries. Among those which clearly stand out, in terms of scope and reach, are the discourses, legislative acts and repressive practices carried out (and continuing) in Italy and France – in Western Europe – and – in the East – Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic<sup>3</sup>.

It seems that the only way for groups who come under the “Roma” umbrella – aside from those who do not identify themselves as “Roma” – to enter Europe (as a political and economic territory) with full social and legal entitlement, is to be accorded an inflexible *gypsy identity*. Thus they represent a *minority* – who have to “integrate” with the (*white*<sup>4</sup>) majority, but from whom the majority should be kept safe. Such a dichotomy is currently the object of debate within social and legal sciences, as well as within the political arena.

Michael Stewart (2012) shows in detail how political persecution of the Roma in Central Europe is based on planned socio-ethnic compartmentalisation which classifies them, and treats them, as a foreign body within the nations to which they belong.

In fact, the absence of the historicisation of gypsies as an ethno-essentialist construction, on which Lucassen’s research sheds light, was widely shown<sup>5</sup> to be instrumental in excluding individuals with a travelling living style – linking the ideas on travelling groups to the structural economic developments from the Middle Ages onwards (1998), and at present, through what the author defined «Gypsy Policy» (2007).

A key element in the current focus on the Roma by such a wide variety of social bodies is the Council of Europe, which identified the Roma minority as a privileged object of its own inclusion policies. It created ad hoc pro-

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3. At international level, the websites of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, European Roma Rights Center and the European Roma Policy Coalition are rich in reports about different aspects of discrimination against Roma people, including violent attacks against them.

4. See the great work by Du Bois (*The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line*, 1903: 19), especially the concept of the *color line* and the role of race and racism in history and society. On the construction of *whiteness* as a feature that belongs to the power-holding majority, for the Italian case see Giuliani 2015. On the issue of the *color line* and the Roma: Piasere 2015: 42-55; Fassin *et al.* 2014. These works also show the symbolic value of that issue and the volume of Leonardo Piasere proposes an analysis of the theoretical relations between anti-ziganism and racism; the latter has been extensively discussed in anthropology (see at least the well-known essay by Verena Stolcke 1995).

5. In particular, see the studies by Aresu and Asséo, especially issue number 2/2014 of *Quaderni Storici, Zingari: una storia sociale*, and the further references in the next paragraph.

grammes and set out tenders for organisations within the civil society and public institutions (NGOs, local and national institutions, research centres, universities, etc.)<sup>6</sup>.

Due to its territorial vastness, its breakneck growth in relation to its historical roots and the diversity of the agents involved antiziganism – as a phenomenon and as a category – requires an accurate, multifocal and interdisciplinary process of reflection. This has to be capable of scanning the seabed as well as holding in view the various creatures, including the plankton, that move from the bottom to the surface of this *bad present*<sup>7</sup>. In the scientific panorama, it is not by chance that we record the contributions of nearly all the best-known Romalogs<sup>8</sup>, as well as those of scholars from later generations, covering more than one disciplinary field<sup>9</sup>.

This speedy evolution seems, however, to bring along the risk of scientific rhetoric that produces refined and scrupulous analyses, which at times are redundant in view of the proposed conceptualisations.

We do not mean to say that we have reached analytical saturation of antiziganism, but its declension in the singular, from the viewpoint of potential theoretical thinking, seems to harness us scholars within the paradigms and concepts that circulate in scientific communities and which we ourselves have embodied: from the wider ones like the biopolitics of Foucault, to the concepts linked to processes of securitization, to that of the right to the city, to name but a few.

But danger still exists, in our opinion, even where its declension in the plural remains enmeshed in a *disembodied* theorisation. The goal we are setting ourselves in this work, therefore, is to link the concept of antiziganism to the actual contexts where it operates, and to the practices which counteract it. We see its use in the plural as necessary because not only does it shed light on the polythetic character of the category (Piasere 2015: 16), but it gives us the possibility of *re-embodiment*, making its own constitutive dimension empirical. Antiziganism is something that *you think* and *you do*. Therefore the plural declension of the category localises and historicises it at the same time, preventing us from running the risk of generalising and/or straining the concept in epistemological as well as interpretative terms.

6. To get a summary, see Liégeois 2010.

7. A well-known expression by Ernesto De Martino, see *The Land of Remorse: A Study of Southern Italian Tarantism*, 2005, translated and annotated by Dorothy Louise Zinn [first Italian edition 1961].

8. Among these: Stewart 2012; Asséo, Aresu 2014; Hancock 2015; Piasere 2015; Marushiakova, Popov 2016.

9. See Sigona, Trehan 2009; Clough Marinaro, Sigona 2011; Olivera 2011, 2015; Sigona 2011; Agarín 2014 and the authors writing in the volume edited by Selling *et al.* 2015.

### *Ethnography and the possibilities of understanding antiziganisms*

Ethnographic research in the public arena, the study of individual context and the successive comparison of *antiziganisms* – historically, socially and culturally – can give us a variety of opportunities.

The first opportunity is that of dealing with cognitive experiences located in *living* contexts, in which the different players move around with direction, logic, strategy and purpose, as well as with emotions and feelings, values and wishes, against which the “anti” definitions have leverage and weight of their own. In the same way, this applies as much to those who are the object of these “anti” definitions as to those who are set to fight against them, whether community or individual, private or public. The dividing line between all these subjects is rather blurred, fuzzy and ambiguous. A public institution official can in all good conscience be working to support the Roma, but actually be carrying out actions or setting up practices which end up being hijacked by ignorant, unquestioning antiziganism, (see the materials produced within the project *Wor(l)ds Which Exclude* and Leggio *infra*). Therefore, well-intentioned deeds end up creating an opposite effect to that which they were conceived to accomplish.

On the other hand, the individuals and groups subjected to antiziganism are not so simply identifiable. The definition of the term *gypsy* as a social, legal and political idea, and its historical significance, is a fundamental aspect of the issue: its multi-faceted and plural construction has been tackled in many works (cf. Lucassen 1998, 2007; Aresu, Piasere 2008; Asséo, Aresu 2014). The same term “Roma”, with a *politically correct* undertone, adopted in official statements, documents and deeds of European institutions, ended up contributing to the essentialisation of a personological category, flattening the process of ethnicisation. Due to the standardisation of this term, as generated by local institutions, there is the risk – amongst other ones – of losing the fluidity of the borders between the socio-cultural groups defined as such. This is more visible in Eastern Europe, and in more obvious labelling in Western Europe. In some contexts, the overlapping of the category of “Roma” with that of “gypsy” blurs that grey zone formed between the hetero- and self-ascription of a group to both categories, or to only one of the two. And this is evident for some groups like the *Rudari* in Romania (and under other names in the Balkans generally), the Sicilian *Caminanti*, and the Spanish *Mercheros*. Research carried out among the Rudari – *Țigani* but not *Rromi* – who emigrated to Italy and Spain (see Tosi Cambini 2016; Slavkova 2008), has highlighted the fact that in being able to escape the stereotypical image of the Romanian Roma (in particular that which corresponds to *platoși*) they have presented themselves publicly (to social services, schools, workplaces, etc.) as Romanians. They have thus managed to elude the categorisation of

*gypsy* and what this would entail in terms of further discrimination. At the same time there is a paradox in their home regions in Romania: they exist as *Țigani* in everything that outlines their relationship with the neighbouring Romanians, with local institutions and, generally, with Romanian society (for instance, discrimination in access to work and in employment conditions), but they disappear from statistics because they do not define themselves as *Rromi*. This means they are not regarded as such.

As to the context of the country of immigration, we have opposing examples about what has happened in other situations generated at the local level, in the social and political treatment of a group identified as “gypsy”. There is the case, for instance, of the *Ashkali* who arrived in Florence in the 90s seen as Roma by parts of Italian society, and who were therefore forced to settle in “nomadic camps”<sup>10</sup>.

Certainly, the Italian term *zingari*, as well as *zigeuner* in German, carries a decidedly negative meaning (in Germany its use is banned unless it is in quotation marks), and the term “Roma” was adopted by European Roma intellectuals, especially the Romanians<sup>11</sup>. In Romania itself, particularly following press reports in Western European countries, many political representatives and members of the civil society had requested the reintroduction of the term *Țigani* at the public level, and in official documents, because the similarity between the words “Roma” and “Romanian” in the countries to where Roma and non-Roma emigrated (some having Romanian nationality), created some confusion which might have damaged the image of Romania itself. Nonetheless, and Lucassen and his research group (Lucassen, Lucassen 1997; Lucassen 1998, 2007) explain it well, the battle of the names, in overshadowing the nature of their construction, ends up contributing to the essentialisation and reification of the groups in question. We might add that this results in the dazzling but empty formality of legislature.

The empirical dimension of field research, combined with theoretical and comparative research leads us out of the shadows into which a too sectorial perspective on the Roma can push us. This is the third opportunity that the ethnographical approach to antiziganisms offers. In order to establish that

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10. Claudia Lichnofsky writes: «Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians are three separate recognised ethnicities in Kosovo. Ashkali and Egyptians refer to a Muslim, Albanian-speaking though non-Albanian population, and distance themselves from the Roma. [...] I argue here that the choice of the ethnonym depends not on cultural differences but rather on exclusion from the majority; regional loyalties; and different strategies for survival in post-war Kosovo» (2013: 29).

11. Recommendations on the use of Rrom: Gheorghe, Hancock, Courtiade 1995; for a reconstruction of the birth and development of Roma activism see Acton 1974; Liègeois 1994; Pisasere 2004: 116-123. More recently, among others, it is interesting to note the perspective introduced by Rövid 2013.

antiziganism is actually at work we must be able to highlight the difference between the racism and discrimination to which other groups are subject<sup>12</sup>. A perspective which is blind to context risks missing the connection between the elements inherent in the categorisations and practices of modern welfare and the instances we find in the treatment of the Roma. There is therefore an echo in the approach and behaviour towards other subjects seen as being “marginal” or “potentially dangerous”. Some Roma behaviours can be considered as strategies not related to the fact that they are Roma, but to the fact that they suffer certain types of oppression, like others, which trigger similar responses in the same field of pressures. This latter point, that refers to the link between antiziganisms and other forms of racism, is highlighted in the article by Viktor Leggio, in which antiziganism itself is challenged by ethnography. Just as the idea of coming out of the type of shadows that a too-narrow perspective on the Roma could provoke, the essay by Battaglini and Hasdeu, starting with the patterns of *sociabilité* in the Romanian Roma in Geneva, establishes an intersection between antiziganism, the struggle against the poor, and the policies and practices regarding migrants. This contributes to the anthropological debate on the redefinition of citizenship and to a reflection on the limits of democracy.

Following the subtle thread between social and cultural elements and – as anthropologists – placing cultural interpretation at the core of understanding antiziganism, the comparison of ethnographies on antiziganisms and the application of social sciences, in order to counteract them, opens up a further opportunity – when seeing it at work – of treating it as a powerful, cultural, cross-cutting construct. As far back as 1973, Werner Cohn had called a short chapter in his pioneering work “The Gypsies as an Institution of Western Culture”, saying: «Why is it that despite the many pressures to assimilate to the world of non-Gypsies, the Gypsies retain so firmly their own culture? [...]. It seems to me that the Gypsies persist because they, or groups like them, are needed in our culture» (1973: 61).

If antiziganism began to take on its current form and features in 19th century Europe, and the action of institutions takes on a systematic discriminatory character, aimed at the persecution and assimilation of *gypsies* (see Pontandolfo 2013), the historical analyses show its longstanding duration<sup>13</sup>. In his volume on European Roma, Piasere identifies some stereotypical images, among which the *nomad* family appears a «powerful transcultural pattern» (2004: 10) in the «gypsy third Europe» (*ibidem*: 8), where Roma are less than 0,2% of the total population of a State. Piasere also devotes a volume to the investigation into the presence of gypsies in the writings of poets, play-

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12. Elsewhere we have heard of “discrimination squared” (Tosi Cambini 2013).

wrights and novelists (particularly Italian, but also European) from Humanism to Romanticism (2011) and speaks of them «comme les tricksters d'Europe» (see 2014: 245-251).

The Roma are part of modern and contemporary cosmology: «Like any cosmology, even the European one intersects cognitive-symbolic devices, ritual practices and the organisation of space in relation to the different humankind present. In actual fact, behind the word gypsy there is the way in which our society has constructed one or more prototypical figures of otherness» (Trevisan 2014: 1). We would say that this is a specific otherness: the anomaly – or to continue our discourse in the plural – the anomalies. If, as we know, cosmology allows us to overcome disorder, understanding the importance of regularity and the principle of order in the world, it also leaves anomalies detectable, even when they are hidden in the shadows. The «conceptual Gypsy» (Kyuchukov 2015) or the «imagined Gypsy» (Mladenova 2015) take on, one by one, the characteristics that the majority society, and its social and symbolic order, needs. Antiziganisms in their empirical dimension put us in touch with the power of the symbolic, with the embodiment of a sort of heritage: «Antiziganism can be considered as a kind of European cultural heritage» (Knudsen 2004). Maybe this is why a «reasonable Anti-Gypsyism» (Van Baar 2014) can exist.

We are finally moving towards the fifth opportunity that which the following paragraph will focus on, accounting even more precisely for the work that we want to submit to the scientific community through this monographic section. In the essays we are presenting, the anthropologist works in the context and the field of external forces, at times alongside other disciplinary figures. It is therefore a public anthropology in which we position ourselves, where researchers experiment with the applicability of some assumptions and an applicative imagination of disciplinary knowledge, taking on positions and roles in those contextual spaces rooted in the interaction between the Roma and the non-Roma: “experts”, in the case of Persico and Sarcinelli; producers of counter-narrative (Battaglini and Hasdeu, and – in a different way – Mochi Sismondi); carrying forward a counter-discourse (Leggio); and proposing a change of perspective and a new object of enquiry (Santilli).

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13. See the already mentioned works of Ilse About, Elisa Novi Chavarria, Benedetto Fasanelli, Massimo Aresu and Henriette Asséo, as well as the well-known book by Kenrick and Puxon (1972). For a brief overview, see Piasere 2004: 31-60. All these works highlight that antiziganism is a not uniform phenomenon, in both chronological and geographical perspective. It can be accordingly interesting to make a parallel reading of the Spanish case in the period from XV century to the XVIII century, during which it can be noticed at a real escalation of anti-gypsies legal measures, (see Leblon 1985; Sánchez Ortega 1991, 2005; Martínez Martínez 2003) and the case-study of the Kingdom of Naples in the same centuries, made by Novi Chavarria (2007).



### *Ethnographic counteractions*

Antiziganism manifests itself with high adaptability to the geo-historical characteristics. Each society develops local imaginaries that construct the Roma in stereotypical ways and generate practices around them, from expulsion to physical or cultural annihilation. «The history of antiziganism coincides with the history of those who are called “*zingari*” [“gypsies”]» (Piasere 2012: 126), i.e. it coincides with the history of the qualities and roles attributed to them within the ethnoscares (Appadurai 2006: 589) – the constructs around the social reality – that western societies have produced locally, imagining themselves.

However, the Europe transformation, from the fall of the communist regimes to the expansion of the European Union, has generated a transnational framework for the representation of the Roma, adopted by institutional players at different levels as well as by the third sector and Roma activism. The “Europeanisation of Roma representation”, as van Baar (2014) refers to such a process, has shifted the construction of the Roma as a “European minority” to be protected – within a paradigm of human rights, multiculturalism and in the context of Eastern Europe’s transition – towards one of the Roma as an “emergency” – as a series of local, national and transnational “European issues”, generated by the anxiety of Western European governments before international migrations of the Roma. Policies, instruments and actions have been conceived around these “issues”. New discourses sustain them, reintroducing old stereotypes under modern guises.

The history of the forming of the European Union, the Roma demographic distribution and the socioeconomic and structural differences between the states underlie two trends that make up the Europeanisation of the Roma and their “handling”, supporting a “reasonable anti-gypsyism” (van Baar 2014).

In eastern Europe, where policies towards the social inclusion of the Roma were often linked to the accession to the EU, the local societies have come to perceive the Roma as a “privileged community”, legitimised by the state to disobey laws, public order and civic duties and to live on public subsidies (Marushakova, Popov 2016). Roma have also appeared as disengaged from the post-socialist transformation and reorganisation of local relations and as a threat to the communities’ harmony (Feischmidt, Szombati 2016). The rise of nationalist discourse and extreme right-wing policies in Eastern Europe have joined the chorus of anti-gypsy and anti-European rhetoric.

In the west, within European agreements on free circulation between 2004 and 2007, it was the “regularity” of the mobility of the Roma that was questioned (van Baar 2011), through a process of “criminalising” their presence. Perceived as a menace to local society and as a “pathologic” cultural minority because of the victimisation of its weakest members (see Matras 2015), the practices put in place regarding the Roma were those of mass expulsion, of control, restriction of freedom of movement, and segregation (Cahn, Vermeersch 2000; Clough Marinaro, Daniele 2011; Clough Marinaro, Sigona 2011).

In the analysis of the Europeanisation of the Roma representation, van Baar suggests – along the lines of Foucault – to shift the attention onto the processes of “problematization” and the practices through which problematizations are formed. For example, the Italian and French governments have “problematized” the Roma in terms of nomadism, illegality, and as threat to public safety, to create states of exception and to authorise intervention at the very limit (or even beyond) of legality (van Baar 2011: 206).

It is through the analysis of how *antiziganism* materialises as different *antiziganisms* in local contexts that the ethnographic approach can contribute to overcome the impasse which the theorizations based on assembling cases from different contexts create. In this sense, even if not always explicitly within the theoretical framework of antiziganism, various researchers have concentrated their ethnographic attention on the social dynamics of a single local case. For example, they have studied the interaction of different institutional levels in producing Roma marginality in the suburbs of Paris (Nacu 2010), how the socioeconomic structuration of the modern city relegates the Roma, as precarious migrants, to the urban outposts of the *bidonvilles* (Olivera 2011; Tosi Cambini 2015a), or the negative impact of policies of dismantling camps and rehousing on the therapeutic paths and usage of public health facilities (Alunni 2011).

In a highly complex context, such as the one just described, public and private bodies, from European to local level, have started to set aside resources for initiatives aimed at fighting discrimination against the Roma, sometimes even using the term “antiziganism”. Many anthropologists working on this matter have received appropriate funding, generating multiple experiments in applied anthropology, some of which are currently underway. Others have worked independently, through projects originating within universities and/or responding to a critical reading of what was happening in the area where they were doing their research. All these projects make up a

corpus that we want to present in a way that reveals the scope of the anthropological information, interrelated with other disciplines, and applied – weighing up strengths and weaknesses – within the framework outlined above.

In the essays we present we move towards another opportunity offered by the ethnographic works on antiziganism. The anthropologist is not only on the inside as an observer, but takes on an active role in the multi-player interaction between the Roma and the non-Roma. Ethnography is not only instrumental in studying the processes and practices of problematisation, but in deconstructing – and (re)*problematizing* – the truths that the context takes as given. Dependence on the context and need for adaptability of the anthropological practices for completing of this project are a *leitmotiv* that makes the series of contributions heterogeneous and heterodox.

The contribution of Leggio, the first in this collection, is critical of the weakness that the conceptualisation of antiziganism shows, in cases in which actions towards inclusion are based on essentialising the Roma, which end up reinforcing their exclusion. We hear the warning «The road to hell is paved with good intentions» with which Marushakova and Popov (2016) closed their aforementioned recent contribution. In it the authors analyse how the policies for the integration of the Roma into Central and Eastern Europe have revived anti-Roma stereotypes, renewing the conflictual social situation for Roma minorities. In this case, Leggio reconstructs in detail the process according to which, initially, the strategies implemented by the local government in Manchester, with the intervention of third sector organisations, had the aim of preventing the phenomenon of anti-gypsy violence, but were based on a stereotypical manipulation of the Roma. He then analyses how the academy, in an initial phase, through scientific research and in the context of the MigRom project (see Matras, Leggio 2017), deconstructed and delegitimised this process. Then it mobilised, “from below”, the birth of Roma associationism and its involvement in the drafting and implementation of local political strategies, devoid however of the prejudices of “abnormality” and the processes of pathologisation regarding the Roma communities.

In the text by Santilli, the anthropologists – in this case as independent researchers – collaborate directly with members of the local police force in the city of Rome, who legitimise them as “experts on the Roma” and who invite them to collaborate on an “investigation” into sexual violence and the exploitation of minors, in which the inhabitants of the “nomad camps” are suspected to be involved. We are in Rome, the metropolis that, since 2009 particularly, has made the Roma the subject of political and media discourse.

Based on their criminalisation and representation as a threat to public safety, Rome local government reinvented the “equipped village” as a measure of control and containment (Sigona 2011; Clough Marinaro, Daniele 2011; Tosi Cambini 2009). In this context, the anthropological investigation is seen by the “client” as a control mechanism (a role that the discipline has not always denied taking in the past) and as a support for the police investigation. Santilli’s text concentrates initially on the renegotiation of the terms of the collaboration, in which the activities of recycling metals and the reuse of waste products in the “camps” are presented as a new topic for joint reflection. In the second part, she analyses how these activities are interpreted as illegal, informal or legitimate by the different actors in the field. Through an ethnographic description, mindful of the many players and accompanied by an analysis of administrative documents and research reports, the author highlights how the ambiguous and contradictory legislative framework risks exposing the “Roma in the camps” to double discrimination: both because they conduct activities that are not clearly regulated, and because they belong to a social category which already experiences discrimination.

The article by Monica Battaglini and Iulia Hasdeu takes us to Geneva, one of the five cities with the highest level of wellbeing in the world and a capital of finance, world trade and luxury goods, where, since its adoption in 2007, the law against begging has turned into repression of the poor, by means of moral violence on the part of the police. The two authors’ ethnographic analysis focuses on the conflict that arises in the visibility of public spaces. In them, “making a village” and the practice of reconstructing solidarity and familiarity by immigrant Roma, reproduce a rural otherness that is problematized, in the urban context, and becomes an issue of public order and police repression. The Roma migrants’ ability to rebuild privileged relationships through the transnational dimension of the extended family and in the local context of Geneva invites us to give critical thought to the classical concept of a “village within the city”. At the same time, the dissolution of the boundaries that separate the city from the countryside, and the moving of national borders, necessitate a critical reflection on the limits of democracy and on the dynamics of the growing perception of insecurity of daily life.

The article by Andrea Mochi Sismondi examines the role that the language of the theatre and narrative devices may have in countering the antiziganism in public opinion. The interviews with residents of the Macedonian city about the meaning of liberty, equality, happiness and rights, accompanied by participatory observation, are moulded into dramaturgical material. The works presented by the author show the potential of the artistic

production to “counter-narrate” the distance perceived as culturally unbridgeable between the Roma and the non-Roma, and the dehumanisation that Nicolae (2007) has characterised as the universal expression of antiziganism.

Finally, Persico and Sarcinelli reflect on how the anthropologic-pedagogic production may be applied within the school context. The authors intervene in a project geared towards “the inclusion of Roma and Sinti pupils” in Milan. Here too we find the pattern envisaged by the “neo-traditional” policies described by Matras (2015), and already encountered in the case of Manchester, presented by Leggio. This case, moreover, shows the space for action and the role that the anthropologists are called to take on as “Roma experts”, asked to validate projects based on a pathologisation of the “Gypsy culture”. The authors find themselves facing a paradox: their room for action is generated by the framework that they themselves propose to deconstruct, through the training and didactic planning activity that they have been given. Their legitimisation as “experts” is in their role as pedagogues, in keeping with the “applied” vision of the discipline of pedagogy in Italy, for which, as they themselves declare, “anthropology must camouflage and hybridise itself in order to leave the academy”. The text describes how their action is directed towards the deconstruction of the ethnic categories defining the project’s target, proposing “universalistic” methods (*cooperative learning*) which focus on the dynamics of the class group, putting the functioning of school institutions and the de-ziganising of “Roma pupils” at the front line.

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