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SLOVENSKÝ NÁRODOPIS SLOVAK ETHNOLOGY 4 65 • 2017

SHARING MIGRATION EXPERIENCE

Editorial

Since migratory activities are part of human existence and movement of people is a part of the movement of nature, migration is a phenomenon so complex that it is manifested in various forms not only in all branches of humanities and social sciences but also in the sciences of living and inanimate nature in general. We we can hardly treat complex phenomena, such as migration, in an irrefutable, or undeniable way. Even the question of movement and immobility is a matter of the viewer's point of view. Particularly in the field of anthropology and ethnology, we can best share more or less well-informed judgments, ideas and experiences, which represent their bearers and predominantly make a message about them. Apart from the data presented on migration, there are interesting indications in the texts that suggest why the person who talked about migrations has decided to testify in some way how individual people present themselves by force of the migration, where they try to find their social position and why.

European sociability is currently extremely messy and unpredictable for professionals and even more for people who do not want to study it but need to know a little about it to be part of it. It is full of uncertainties and moral challenges, some of which result from everyday interactions of individuals, but perhaps, even more, are mediated by the Internet and other communication channels that are part of everyday communication with the world as well as face-to-face interactions.

Diversified and unpredictable European sociability is a source of uncertainty, groping, and doubts about the way to follow. Clear polarization and radical attitudes simplify the situation, giving the feeling of something being done. They seemed to clean the air for some time and show who is "really" who. The current discussions about migration seemed to allow this clear polarization, and this is probably one of the reasons why migration cases have been so widely commented. They are an effective tool for the self-representation of people involved in discourse allowing incorporation into clearly defined groups and articulation of collectively shared interests. Networking and coalitions through migratory discourse have proven to be more effective in the past few years than through at least significant ecological issues, healthcare issues, social care, and other important issues that would unify and

polarize the population of Europe in a different way. The discussion on migration has been much more effective in representing different views of the single European coalitions on a whole range of more or less pragmatically established agendas that have been tackled over the long term in Europe. As Saskia Sassen shows, the themes, like migration, can emerge and become invisible again, depending on the context.[1]

The submitted contributions respond to this polarizing discourse only vicariously. Their goal is not to bring any "objective judgments". Anthropologists or ethnologists will never dispose of them. The aim is not even to support some pro-migration or anti-immigration ideas. Most texts, in particular, show that migration is changing actors who are moving and who remain in place. It changes at the same time the messages that these actors give us about themselves and about the world in which they live their lives, and it is fascinating to discover what they wanted to say with these messages and what they did not want to say about themselves.

The opening text of Markéta Hajská *Economic strategies and migratory trajectories of Vlax Roma from Eastern Slovakia to Leicester, UK* is a comprehensive study of the pre-migration, migration and post-migration activities of the Vlax Romani originating in Slovakia. It shows how migration can be spontaneous, impulsive, and difficult to predict. Markéta Hajská perceives here the full range of possibilities how migration can change the social situation in source and target areas. In particular, it correctly describes that the migration group in new environments needs information and functional literacy for its survival. The newly created status of "intermediary", which is made up of Romani from longer residency experience in the UK, is a good example of the flexibility of Romani families. Another such example is the accommodation of some Vlax Romani to the new situation by partially or completely covering their costs by earning regular jobs. Markéta Hajská shows us a discourse about it in the Romani community. The text shows the diversity of response to changing conditions. Similarly, the study by Jan Červenka *Language Consequences of Migration of Romani Speakers from Slovakia to Great Britain and Back: the Change of Paradigm of Town Names in Two Romani Dialects* shows this diversity manifested in the language where the Romani adapt new toponyms, names of newly visited cities in the UK.

The refugee fleeing to Europe were particularly discussed in the last decade of the 21st century. Given that these types of migration are dynamically changing due to the social situation in the world, I am wondering if at this point we have a sufficiently good conceptual apparatus to describe these types of migrations. From this situation, the path leads only through intense study and discussion of individual cases and work with the empirical material. We should realise that the testimonies of the academicians on these migrations are of various quality and are written with numerous intentions. Attentive reading and study of the context, however, will bring us closer to understanding these phenomena. We are glad that we can contribute by three texts to this discussion: that of Myrto Tsilimpounidi and Anna Carasthatis *The 'Refugee Crisis' from Athens to Lesvos and Back: A Dialogical Account* the Greek

1 http://kingsreview.co.uk/articles/interview-saskia-sassen/. Visited: December 17th, 2017.

migration environment; and that of Stylianos Kostas *Irregular vs. Illegal Immigration: Setting the Definitions. An Overview of European Practice* discusses meanings of terms irregular migration and migrants. The following text by Boris Divinský *Soros' Migration Plan – A Myth or Reality?* scrutinizes the catastrophic plot scenarios that accompany current migration to Europe.

There are also some news from international conferences and book reviews concerning main theme of this issue at the end of the volume. We hope the reader will find the contents of this special issue interesting and enriching.

ZDENĚK UHEREK,
Charles University, Prague

SLOVENSKÝ NÁRODOPIS SLOVAK ETHNOLOGY
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ARTICLES

ECONOMIC STRATEGIES AND MIGRATORY TRAJECTORIES OF VLAX ROMA FROM EASTERN SLOVAKIA TO LEICESTER, UK[1]

MARKÉTA HAJSKÁ

DOI 10.26363/SN.2017.4.01 © 2017, Institute of Ethnology SAS

Mgr. Markéta Hajská, Department of Central European Studies – Seminar of Romani Studies (Charles University, Faculty of Arts), nám. Jana Palacha 2, 116 38, Praha 1, Czech Republic; e-mail: marketa.hajska@ff.cuni.cz

The article is based on long term field research and focuses on a community of family-related Vlax Roma from the Prešov, Sabinov and Košice regions who created a large community in Leicester, UK. The massive wave of labour migration to UK started in 2004, in the year of Slovakia's accession to the European Union. The migration to Great Britain has been based on family networks and represents an example of chain migration based on the reciprocal help of family networks. Besides their own relatives other different non-related Roma intermediaries had an important influence on their arrival to Britain. The article focuses on the changing economic strategies of new migrants from the group in focus after their replacement to UK. In the years following Slovak accession to the EU, the prospective Romani migrants explored many illegal paths to arrive to Britain in their struggle for a better life. Approximately after a decade since their arrival, we can find this community as fully integrated into the local British working class, spending their time between *my work* and *my house*.

Key words: migrations, migration trajectories, migration narratives, economic strategies, grey economy practices, life strategies, Vlax Roma

How to cite: Hajská, M. (2017). Economic strategies and migratory trajectories of Vlax Roma from Eastern Slovakia to Leicester, UK.
Slovenský národopis, 65(4), 357–382 doi: 10.26363/SN.2017.4.01

Methodology

The migration of Roma into Western Europe has been a frequently researched and described topic in recent years (see, for example, Castle-Kanerova, 2003; Dobruská, 2016; Grill, 2008, 2013, 2015, 2016; Guy, Uherek & Weinerová, 2004; Janků, 2004; Matras, 2000; Uherek, 2007; Vašečka & Vašečka, 2003; Vidra, 2013). My contribution takes into

1 Research for this article was supported by the Czech Science Foundation (GACR) within the project "The Migration of the Roma from the Czech and the Slovak Republics to the United Kingdom and Canada" (grant registration No 15-02702S).

account the findings of these researchers and complements them with new perspectives. This is a qualitative study based on long-term research in which I was able to observe the members of the studied community before their migration[2], during migration, and also in the decade following migration. Due to the good knowledge of the community members and mutual trust, I managed to collect rich material showing migratory processes and economic strategies from the point of view of the actors themselves.

In 2015, 2016 and 2017, I had three three-week stays in Leicester where I conducted informal and structured interviews focused on migration topics with the Roma. My communication partners in the UK were a branched family of about twenty adults whose younger generation I knew in their youth while in Slovakia; nowadays they all have partners and their own children. I also conducted research based on structured interviews with several individuals from outside of this family group. I was interested in the overall structure of the migration process, including motivation as well as the gradual involvement in the life of the target country up to the current (post-migration) situation. In my contribution I also use my field notes and recordings from Slovakia from 2003 – 2007 and my other related recordings. Most of the recordings were conducted in Vlax Romany, some in Czech and Slovak.

The presented findings are based on my field observations. In the text, I combine my conclusions with similar findings of other researchers in the area of Roma migration from Slovakia to Great Britain. I am aware of the distortion that can occur by comparing phenomena originating from two different communities and, therefore, I make an effort to clearly distinguish between these findings.

Structure of the paper

In the introduction, I will discuss the pre-migration period (until 2004) during which the Roma lived permanently settled in towns and villages in Eastern Slovakia with minimal migratory movements. Looking for experiences that could have affected future migration, I will focus mainly on members of this group migrating to Sweden during communism and subsequently to Belgium at the end of the 1990s. Next, I will describe migratory trajectories that brought the studied group to Leicester, UK, and the functions of the family networks in these trajectories. I will focus especially on the economic strategies that Vlax Roma used in this city at the beginning of migration and their transformation in the course of the last decade. I will pay special attention to Roma intermediaries who have influenced both the form of these strategies and, to a large extent, encouraged migratory movements of certain social strata of (not only) Roma from Slovakia. At the end of this article, I will focus on the process of the gradually changing approach to work in the culture of Vlax Roma living in Leicester.

PART ONE: UNANTICIPATED MIGRATION

In the spring of 2004, as part of annual research for the International Organization for Migration, I arrived in Prešov at a settlement inhabited by Vlax Roma. Our aim was to

2 The community of Vlax Roma living in Prešov and the surrounding area, which I am discussing in this paper, has been the subject of my observations during my research activities conducted since 2000 up to the present. So far, I have mainly focused on the analysis of their historical migration trajectories (Hajská, 2016) and the various aspects of language use from a sociolinguistic perspective (Hajská, 2014; Hajská, 2015).

identify the potential of Slovak Roma to migrate to Western Europe, particularly Great Britain, after Slovakia's accession to the European Union. On the basis of interviews with the representatives of institutions and with the Vlax Roma themselves, my colleagues and I came to the conclusion that *"there is no threat of a migration wave"* (IOM, 2004: 38). In the structured interviews, the Roma declared their low motivation to leave Slovakia and little interest in Great Britain. This was associated with the unaffordability of the trip to this destination and with their fears due to the language barrier. Nonetheless, a massive wave of migration to Great Britain arose that same year. Over the course of the next few years, the greater part of the Vlax Roma from Prešov and the surrounding villages and towns, amounting to several hundred people, left for Britain. In our research, we completely underestimated the high spontaneity of Roma migration as well as their ability to quickly react and organize the whole process at the level of family networks. We also underestimated the role of the so-called "intermediaries" who were willing to cover the travel costs of migrating Roma.

Static period: 1990s and the turn of the millennium

I will pause briefly at the year 2004 and attempt a retrospective look from that perspective. That year represents a turning point, not only in the modern history of Slovakia (accession to the EU), but also in the migratory behaviour of this particular Roma group. The preceding period after the fall of communism in 1989 until 2004 appears to be a very static period in this group with a minimal amount of migration. The only exceptions are moves to Belgium by several families at the end of the millennium. Most of the Vlax Roma in Eastern Slovakia had a permanently settled life. Most of them occupied apartments in "Roma neighbourhoods", i.e. places which later started to be referred to as socially excluded localities. In these localities they occupied substandard apartments and lived in decreasingly favourable conditions. Other Vlax Roma lived on the outskirts of Prešov or in houses in the surrounding villages whose size and quality reflected their owner's abilities and skills to build housing under the previous regime, ranging from spacious houses from the period of socialist construction in one village to illegal huts made of clay and logs in another village.

In the memories of the Roma across the territory of former Czechoslovakia, the arrival of democracy is generally associated with the loss of employment among those who had spent the previous decades working in various state-owned enterprises such as construction and agriculture as well as with rising poverty (Ringold, Orenstein, Wilkens, 2005: 63). After 1990, the situation of the Roma in Slovakia deteriorated significantly due to the collapse of the socialist economy and the rise of unemployment from zero to 10% (Gallová Kriglerová, Chudžiková, 2013: 169–170). Eastern Slovakia especially became a structurally disadvantaged region where Roma are the most endangered group due to ethnic-racial discrimination in the labour market (Grill, 2015: 161). For the Roma population this period, therefore, meant a collective transition to a system of welfare benefits which most of those who still live in Slovakia continue to be dependent upon today.

Also from the perspective of Vlax Roma in Prešov, which I had the opportunity to record in 2004, the 1990s appeared to be a decade of gradual decline which culminated in a drastic reduction of welfare benefits in 2003 – 2004[3]. This was often followed

3 The far-reaching reform of social policy resulting in a sharp reduction of social benefits triggered a wave of riots on the side of the Roma which consequently raised a panic among the non-Roma

by an incremental worsening of the socio-economic status of many Roma families. This reality reinforced the conviction of many Roma that life in Slovakia was becoming unbearable.

In the spring of 2004, when I arrived in Prešov to conduct the above-mentioned research into migration potential, most of the Roma were trying to cope with the worsening economic situation. My field notes point to a great lethargy in the studied community and to the people's passive surrender to a quite hopeless situation in the labour market as well as a growing discriminatory atmosphere in society. At that time many of the Romanies faced an imminent loss of housing (or suffered from it)[4] stemming from their inability to pay rent and energy bills.

PART TWO: PO DROM (ON THE ROAD)

Migration history and journeys to the Czech Republic

Despite the minimal migration potential displayed by this Roma group in 2004, it is interesting to note that this state was quite transient since in the past these Roma were, on the contrary, highly migratory. Parents and grandparents of middle-age typically had engaged in various forms of livelihood on their nomadic routes (which I discuss in detail in my paper for Romano Džaniben 2/2016), and many older Roma still remember the nomadic times from their childhoods[5]. In this respect, the studied community is different from most Slovak Roma whose current migration from Slovakia, as shown by Vašečka and Vašečka (2003: 35), is not a reflection of the nomadic Roma past. The potential impact of the nomadic life experience must be taken into account in the studied community.

Migratory movements of the Roma population continued in the communist era when migrations from the countryside to the region's bigger cities in search of work and a better life were common; also to the Czech Republic where many families consequently settled down permanently. These families' mutual contacts with Slovakia gradually ceased until most of them became entirely interrupted in the 1990s due to the last direct relatives in the source locality either passing away or moving away. Even the studied group displays the societal trend of labour migration to the Czech Republic in the 1990s[6]. At that time, the Czech Republic was the most frequent migration destination for the citizens of Slovakia (Gallová Kriglerová, Chudžiková, 2013: 16). This was also the case for many eastern Slovak Roma who were leaving the region affected by an economic crisis in order to escape the trap of unemployment. The most frequent was a cyclic migration with longer periods in the Czech Republic and shorter

inhabitants and turned public opinion against the Roma (Marušák and Singer, 2009). According to some authors, it seems that the reform of Ľudovít Kaník in 2003 - 2004 was aimed at punishing the long-term unemployed rather than helping them overcome their poverty (Gallová Kriglerová, Chudžiková, 2013: 167).

4 At that time I noticed a few cases where the inability to pay rent forced large families to move "back" to the Romany settlements that they had abandoned many years ago in search of a better life in a city. After housing market liberalization and rent deregulation, similar cases are not exceptional in Slovakia. (See, for example, Radičová, 2001).

5 Although a large part of the Vlax Roma stopped carrying on their nomadic livelihoods in the 1950s, some families kept their horses and carriages up to the early 1970s.

6 In the monitored community the trend of leaving for work in the Czech Republic cannot be observed until the first decade of the new millennium.

visits home (Grill, 2015: 161). This trend can also be observed in the studied group where a number of Roma tried to find work in the Czech Republic with only a few succeeding. At that time, most of the contacts with relatives in the Czech Republic were already interrupted and the Roma from the studied group, therefore, had no choice but to rely on (often insecure or even illegal) networks of employment agents. This predominantly male migration was, and still is, characterized by its lack of organization. Most often, jobs were randomly found through other Roma (mostly *Rumungri*[7]) or through random tips provided by employment offices and various employers and agents. Labour migration to the Czech Republic was often short-term and frequently unsuccessful. I recorded dozens of stories similar to the following one:

> *(1) „Kerasas po Čecho. Andi Plzňa. De o podnikateľi , Rumungro sas… haj našlas tar le lóvenca, vaj dopaš miliono čordas haj ame khote mukhlas. Vi khote jive kerdam. Mek nás ame sar te žal khere"* ("We worked in Bohemia, in Pilsen. But the businessman, he was Rumungro … and he ran away with the money. He stole about half a million and left us there. We worked there for free. We did not even have a way to get home.")

Migration to the West

Leaving aside the domestic migration of Roma to the Czech Republic, the Vlax Roma from the studied group also followed other experiences regarding migration to Western Europe. In the times of communism, several large families left for Sweden between the 1960s – 1980s.

The pre-1989 Roma migration to western European countries is generally a very under-researched topic[8]. There is no data about the number of Romani migrants from Communist Czechoslovakia. Entire Romani families nonetheless occasionally fled to the West[9]. Although the strategies they used were similar to those of other emigrants we can state, on the basis of narratives, that Roma migration already had its specific features at that time. These included the escapes of large families including children, often as part of a chain migration to join other family members. Roma people often left without knowing any foreign languages, without contacts, or even without having any knowledge about the geography and political context of the destination country. Stories of (Vlax) Romani migrants often feature other (Vlax) Roma, whom they contacted in the foreign country and who did not refuse to help them, for example providing contacts, translation, and – not exceptionally – accommodation at home, sometimes for extended periods of time. The Vlax Romany language plays a crucial role in these stories as it allows the Roma to communicate with each other in an envi-

7 A term that Vlax Roma use when talking about non-Vlax Roma, in Vlax language sing. Rumungro, plur. Rumungri.

8 The only exception is information about important personalities with Romany origin, who emigrated abroad, e.g. Dr. Ján Cibula, the Romany activist who was elected as a first president of IRU (International Romani Union), who emigrated to Switzerland in 1968. The emigration of Roma to Western Europe is otherwise absent in Czech Romani studies literature although some authors confirm its existence through random references, e.g. Nina Pavelčíková (Pavelčíková, 2004: 85) mentions that the Vlax Roma in Opava organized the sale of used western cars in cooperation with their foreign relatives.

9 I managed to collect narratives concerning these forms of migration not only in the monitored locality but also in other communities of Vlax Roma, for example those living in Ostrava, Prostějov and Levice. The following generalization is also based on the narratives of these respondents.

ronment which they are completely unfamiliar with. As soon as some members of the family managed to establish themselves in the new country, a migratory bridge was created. This allowed other relatives to follow.

In a similar way, a migratory bridge was created to far-away Sweden. It was built not only on family networks but also on contacts with intermediaries in individual countries. According to memories, the Vlax Roma leaving Eastern Slovakia used the route which was also typical for other Czechoslovak emigrants but was little described in connection to the Roma – across Hungary and Yugoslavia.

(2) *"I came in 1982 to join my brother who had already been here for twenty years. …We all had fake documents. …In Yugoslavia, someone reported us because we wanted to flee. We were really lucky they didn't put us in jail. They just took us to Hungary across the border. …We spent one year with foreign gypsies in Budapest. …When our papers were done, we went across Yugoslavia and Austria to Germany, from Germany to Denmark and from Denmark we came here. And we had no problem. Nobody stopped us. I had a document like a diplomat, because I was political."*

The community of Vlax Roma lives in southwestern Sweden till now. They still maintain contacts especially with the closest family in Slovakia which they partly use as a marital circle. The Swedish branch of the studied group of Vlax Roma is perceived as one with a high social status. Legends about the wealth of these Roma circulate through the Roma across different localities and certainly might have been a factor in supporting migration to the West in search of a better life in the years following. Stories of successful migrants bring an idea that life "in the West" (*po západo*) is better and easier than in Slovakia.

Belgium

The period which I described at the beginning of this study as static in terms of migration was interrupted in the late 1990s by journeys to Belgium. At that time, it was one of the most common destinations of Roma from Slovakia (along with Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Denmark and Finland, see Uherek, 2007). According to Divinský, between 1998 – 2002 Belgium recorded the highest number of asylum applications by Slovak citizens: a total of 5,044 (Divinský, 2004: 35). As was also the case with other Slovak Roma, the studied group featured asylum migration where seeking political asylum[10] was mainly motivated by the financial means allocated by the Belgian state to the applicants. These were much higher than the social benefits in Slovakia and represented an escape from their frustrating socio-economic situation as well as a promise of a better life for the applicants. As shown by Zdeněk Uherek, the pocket money for asylum seekers, along with other provided services, represented an improvement of life status among the Roma asylum seekers (Uherek, 2007: 763). As shown by my own field observations, these benefits also constituted the main motivation for asylum migration among the most socially vulnerable families. In addition to receiving these financial means, some asylum seekers also managed to find in-

10 Asylum migration in western European countries represented a continual process of arrivals and departures of new asylum seekers. A majority of the asylum applications, with only a few exceptions, were declined (Vidra, 2013: 6).

formal employment (Grill, 2016: 98) and thus had the opportunity to gain extra income in addition to the regular benefits received from the state.

At the end of the 1990s, dozens of Vlax Roma families from Eastern Slovakia were also gradually aiming towards Belgium. Most of them arrived to refugee camps which they started to refer to as *lágro* and applied for political asylum. Some of them settled down with their relatives that had already managed to get their own housing.

One respondent who came to Belgium in 2000 described his enthusiasm for life there in the following way:

> *(3) „Bomba sas, igen mišto khote sas, denas tu te chas, lóve jive astarasas. Naj kadé dine ame po kher, haj khote sas amenge bezva! Žanes keči lóve denas ame? Me astarós korkóri le šánvenca seďemdesáť ťisíc. Kinasas peske, so pe amáre jákha dikhasas. Mekh andi Amerika kade či avilinó. Káde čáčes sar khote sas, vúbec šoha či avla khači.“* ("It was amazing, it was great there, they fed you, you got money for free. And then they gave us money for a house. We had a perfect time there. Do you know how much money they gave us? Just me with the children, I was getting seventy thousand! We were buying everything we saw. Not even in America could it be like this. Seriously, it was so good there that it can never be like this anywhere again".)

Legends about a better life in Belgium were a pull factor for other migrants from the studied group. However, many people did not succeed in the asylum process and after months in the so-called *lágro*, where they lived with children in very cramped conditions, went back to Slovakia. Some of them sold all their belongings in order to afford their trip to Belgium and, therefore, returned home penniless.

> *(4) „Gelam andi Belgia. Sa bikindam t' avel ame po drom. Sedemnáť tisíc počindam o taxíko. .... Ašadine ame pi hranica haj khére bišadine ame. Č' ašilas amenge khanči.“* ("We went to Belgium and sold everything to be able to pay for the trip. We spent seventeen thousand for a taxi. ...They stopped us at the border and sent us home. We had nothing left.")

Smaller groups of Roma managed to establish themselves in Belgium[11]. After the accession to the EU, asylum procedures for citizens of Slovakia were stopped (Uherek, 2007: 767) and most of the Roma from the studied group moved elsewhere. Some of them joined their other relatives in different European countries (such as France, Germany, and the aforementioned Sweden), some of them went back to Slovakia, and other families moved from Belgium to Great Britain. These families later became the basis for the ensuing massive migration from the localities in Eastern Slovakia to this country.

PART THREE: UPRE ANDI ANGLIA (IN ENGLAND)

Following the accession to the European Union, Great Britain became the most popular destination for Roma from Eastern Slovakia (Grill, 2008: 2). In line with this trend, Vlax Roma from the areas around Sabinov, Prešov and Košice gradually started to move there.

11 Often by combining legal and illegal activities, for example by finding ways of becoming part of the social system or by a combination of illegal work, marriages with a Belgian citizen or other illegal activity.

In the beginning, Great Britain represented just another place where the Roma tried to succeed after fruitless attempts to migrate to Belgium and other western countries. The first members of the studied group arrived in Britain at the turn of the millennium. However, more frequent departures of Vlax Roma from Eastern Slovakia were recorded shortly after Slovakia's accession to the EU in 2004 and 2005. Massive migration waves followed between 2006 and 2008. Roma were also arriving during the following years but to a lesser extent. Most of the Vlax Roma from Eastern Slovakia settled down in Britain's most multicultural city, Leicester, which has a foreign population of more than 50%[12]. In the northern parts of the city especially, more than 70% of the population is of Asian descent. It is in these neighbourhoods where Vlax Roma settled down and formed another of the many minority enclaves in the city. According to some respondents, their community in Leicester has more than a thousand which is probably an exaggerated estimate. The exact number cannot be determined.

Vlax Gypsies in Leicester – image of the community

Leicester is the destination not only for Vlax Roma from the towns and villages of Eastern Slovakia but also for those coming from other countries in Western Europe, especially from Belgium and Sweden. This allowed for an interesting re-integration of some of the often extinct social contacts between very distantly related families which belong to the *jekh nípo*, one broad family.

The whole community is nowadays multi-directionally interconnected by various family ties. As regards to their settlement patterns, the Vlax Roma do not form a spatially concentrated community in Leicester; they are dispersed mainly in the northwest part of the city. This is due to the fact that most Roma search for housing in a way that is primarily driven by affordable offers on the housing market. Spatial de-concentration associated with the maintenance of mutual contacts requires mobility of community members; most of them soon get a car. In some places in the city the incidence of Vlax Roma is higher. Those who live isolated from the community often come to these places whether it is for a visit, to do shopping, and so on. Vlax Roma with roots in Eastern Slovakia meet in different places: at work, in their favourite shops, at schools, at parties and celebrations, at church, and on social networks. In addition to other aspects, the community is distinguished by its language; together they speak Vlax Romany which has some distinctive dialectical elements that distinguish members of the community from other Vlax Roma. As far as language is concerned, it is important to mention that even at the beginning of the second decade of their stay in England, English is frequently not spoken by the first generation of migrants, or its knowledge is only passive.

> *"Intrégo Perješi khate le. Mejg vi le Rumugri."* ("All Prešov is here, even the Rumungri.")

Given that some Vlax Roma people lived in Slovakia in exogamous partnerships with non-Vlax partners, some of the Romungro families came to Leicester through the help of family networks. These families helped other relatives (again, mostly Romungros) to get to Britain. Some of the families came here thanks to the Vlax networks of inter-

12 According to the Commission for Racial Equality, since 2011 Leicester has been the first British city where white British people represent a minority.

mediaries who I will discuss in more detail below. As a result, we can also find a relatively large group of non-Vlax Roma from Eastern Slovakia in Leicester. We can assume that another part of the non-Vlax Roma came to the city completely independently. In comparison with the Vlax community, communities of the Roma-speaking North Central Romany are less numerous and far more fragmented.

Aside from Vlax Roma from the East, Vlax also from Western Slovakia (especially from around Nitra, Lučenec and Levice) settled in Leicester. They are in contact with the studied group but for various reasons, some of which I will discuss below, they distance themselves from each other. According to one Vlax woman from Levice, the Vlax people from Eastern Slovakia have gained control over the city: *"Intrégo fouro fere lengo"* ("The whole city is theirs"). By this, she means that they represent the most numerous group of Roma[13].

Reasons for migration to England

(5) „Kana avilam, igen lošós, hoj podarindas pe amenge, hoj astardam pe ande búča. Hoj ávla ma maj lášo trajo. Maj feder cítijas ma. Žanós hoj kerasa vareso. Avla ma. Mange khate si maj feder. Po Slovensko nas ma khanči." ("When we came, I was very happy that we had good luck, that we managed to get a job, that we were going to have a better life. I felt much better. I knew that I would be doing something, that I would have something. I am better here. In Slovakia I had nothing.")

The main causes and motivations of the Roma for their migration to Great Britain and other destination countries in Western Europe have been described by many researchers (Grill, 2015; Grill, 2016; Kováts et al., 2002; Uherek, 2007; Vašečka and Vašečka, 2003; Vidra, 2013 and others). The migration of Roma to Britain is often referred to as labour migration or economic migration (Uherek, 2007: 748). Of course not only Roma leave Slovakia for Great Britain as non-Roma do as well[14]. The migration of non-Roma however has a different dynamic than that of the Roma; typically it involves young people who migrate for work and economic opportunities (Grill, 2015: 161). In the case of Roma, entire families are migrating and use family networks which I will discuss further. Unlike non-Roma, who mainly rely on institutionalized networks (intermediary offices and agencies, advertisements, etc.), the Roma use the help of their own family network during their migration (Uherek, 2007: 769–770).

According to Vašečka and Vašečka, emigration is one of the ways that the Roma from different local communities employ in order to cope with their low status in society (Vašečka and Vašečka, 2003: 35). The Roma leave Slovakia for reasons which are a combination of social deprivation on the one hand and general discrimination of the Roma in society on the other (Vidra, 2013: 6–7). These factors also motivated the departures of the studied group. My respondents consistently state that they left for England (*upre andi Anglia*) for a better life. They left Slovakia where they had minimal opportunity to find a job and where social benefits were repeatedly reduced,

13 According to the respondents, there are also numerous communities of Hungarian Vlax Roma and also Roma from Romania, Lithuania and other countries.

14 In 2004, 13,020 applications were submitted to the UK's Working Registration Scheme (WRS) by Slovak citizens. In 2007, there were 22,425 applications. High numbers of migrants arrived in the UK after the enlargement of the EU also from Poland, the Czech Republic and Lithuania (Gallová Kriglerová, Chudžiková, 2013: 175).

leading to many families becoming increasingly poorer. As respondents recount, in Slovakia many of them had undignified housing and faced a multitude of discrimination (at schools, in the labour market, in services, and even during their simple presence in public). In addition, new emigrants depicted life in Britain in superlatives: hourly wages seemed to be breath-taking when converted to the Slovak crown, work seemed to be "easy" (*lóki búči*) in comparison with the jobs that were offered to the Roma in Slovakia or the Czech Republic (such as digging or auxiliary construction jobs). Leaving for Britain was also motivated by a generous system of social care[15]. In the later stages of the migration process, migration was undoubtedly also caused by the very existence of (very dense in some places) family networks through which England could be easily reached (see also Drbohlav and Uherek, 2007: 8–9).

Changes in the social structure of migrants

During the time of the Vlax Roma migration from Eastern Slovakia to Great Britain, the social structure of the migrants was gradually changing. Testimonies of the witnesses, as well as my own findings from the field, are in line with the findings of Vašečka and Vašečka, according to whom middle class Roma were the first migrants (Vašečka and Vašečka, 2003: 37). The first families arriving in Leicester were from economically secure families with a high status. As mentioned earlier, families first often came to Leicester from other Western European countries where they had often lived in emigration for several years. There were also Roma coming straight from Slovakia but also in their case the first wave tended to be economically secured individuals. The wave following after 2004 included mainly Roma from Prešov, Sabinov and Košice, and inhabitants of family houses in the surrounding villages, i.e. Roma who were also economically better-off or moderately better-off (at least in the past, before the rapid reduction of social benefits). Gradually the poorer strata, which lived in Slovakia without their own rental housing either with relatives in flats, or huts in Romany settlements, were also becoming involved. The involvement of the poorer strata occurred in two ways. For one, they constituted a natural overlap of family networks even into economically weaker groups. Aside from that, however, they were also clients of migration intermediaries. I will discuss both of these phenomena further.

Migration within family networks

From the very beginning, the characteristic of the migration to Leicester was that of a chain migration where family networks were frequently used for the arrival of new migrants. As soon as they became domesticated, new arrivals would help other relatives with their migration to the new country. Again, they first established themselves with their own relatives. With their help they found work, schools, the necessary documents and social security, and eventually their own housing. It is possible to see cases where the father of the family arrives first to arrange everything necessary for his wife and children who in the meantime wait in Slovakia. In other cases, whole large families arrive all at once to stay with their relatives.

The studied migration is characterized by the use of the migrant's family ties on different sides of their family network. In graphic representation this network takes the shape of a spider web. According to Zdeněk Uherek, this type of migration is un-

15 When describing asylum migration, Zdeněk Uherek also mentions that popular destinations were richer countries with better social care than that provided in Slovakia (Uherek, 2007: 274).

settled due to its dense networking (Uherek, 2007: 770). It is characterised by movement in different directions, not only to Britain and back, but also to other destinations depending on current needs or offers. Migrations of the studied group can hardly be separated from the migratory movements of other members linked to their family networks who settled in other western European countries in previous decades or, conversely, from (often temporary) migration to other destinations or returns. As Uherek notes, target migration can quickly and spontaneously change with changing migratory conditions. This statement holds true in the studied community to a large extent. It has also been repeatedly shown that the choice of a target country is a rather random decision in the case of a strong determination to leave Slovakia. It is important whether these countries are interconnected with a family network and how easily and quickly one can establish himself.

(6) A typical example of the spontaneity of migratory movements is the family of R. In 2015, R. attempted to leave for Great Britain where he had aunts and uncles. For more than a month he lived with his relatives and was looking for a job. Two days before starting a new job he got a phone call from a social worker[16]*, who threatened that unless he returned immediately, his whole family in Slovakia would be removed from the employment agency rolls and his four children would be taken to an orphanage. On the same day, R. bought an airplane ticket from money from his relatives and spent the following month in an intensive search for work and housing in the Czech Republic where he wanted to move with his children and join his father. The next month he suddenly changed plans from one day to the next and instead of going to the Czech Republic, travelled with his wife and children to Southern France, which is where his mother and his brother's family have lived for several years. In the meantime he finally managed to find money for his family's journey. A few months after settling in France, R. paid for the journey of his brother and his children, and a year later also for another brother and his large family. They were later joined by their father-in-law and one of the brothers' son-in-law. The entire "chain" is certainly not finished. Had there not been the intervention of the social worker, the whole family would have probably ended up in Britain.*

Function of the family network

(7) „O nípo le nípos žutij. Azír kade phenav, te žala jekh ando Bratford, dujto ando Londýn, aba či žutisa len. Khote o manuš si te žal, káj si les nípo, te žutij pre les. Vi me potom žutindem lake níposke. Me žutindem len kade, hoj na te kamav lendar – me žutindem jive! De mandar majinti lenas lóve. Aba o šavo žanelas anglicki, aba so-j kodo te skirij anglicki le formulára. Khanči." ("Family helps family. I say that because if someone goes to Bradford, the other one to London, you don't help them anymore. One has to go where their family is to be able to help them. Later even I helped her family. I helped them not in the way that I would ask them for something – I helped them for free! But before they were taking money from me. But my son can now speak English, now it's nothing, to fill in those forms in English. Nothing.")

16 I was a direct witness to this interview in a group conversation on Skype, therefore I can confirm that this relatively bizarre story is true.

During the actual migratory movements, Roma people in Leicester most often use the help of their close relatives, i.e. their siblings, children, aunts, uncles, cousins, brothers-in-law or sisters-in-law. It is less common to use the help of more distant relatives (in cases of close relations, e.g. cousin of a cousin, or godfather and godmother, etc.). In general, the closer the relative, the greater the chance of successful migration can be expected. It is often the relatives in Great Britain themselves who motivate new migrants to leave and join them. Depending on the social status of both parties, the family in England not only arranges but also pays for the journey for the new arrivals. This situation was not common for migrants in the first waves who had to find the means to buy their tickets to Britain in a complicated way. Moreover, they had to spend considerable amounts of money to pay for intermediaries. We can illustrate this different migration experience in the case of Tibor (born in 1965) from Prešov.

(8) Tibor first came to Leicester in 2005 to join his brother-in-law. However, his brother-in-law was busy and did not have time to help him find work and obtain all the necessary forms. A few other Roma offered to help him but for a fee which Tibor did not have the money to pay. After a month of an unsuccessful endeavour, he returned to Slovakia. He came back again in 2008, this time with money which he had saved up to pay for various intermediaries. This time he was lucky as during the meantime his son-in-law Láďo had established himself in Leicester with his family. Láďo introduced Tibor to Ahmed, an employee of Pakistani origin of a large job agency. Ahmed found a job for Tibor for an informal fee of 150 GBP. Láďo also helped Tibor with some of the formalities but he also had to arrange some of them through a Romany "interpreter" who charged 100-200 GBP to fill in a form. After two months Tibor rented a flat and paid for his wife and children's journey to Britain. He paid another 450 GBP to Ahmed to arrange a job for his wife and his two adult daughters who were able to start their jobs as soon as they arrived in Britain. Tibor later gradually helped to find work and flats for his three sisters-in-law and their large families, and also to his other nephews and nieces who stayed with him for several weeks upon their arrival until they found work and their own housing. He always helped all his relatives, as he emphasizes, for free.

Help from relatives is essential for navigation in a new environment where feelings of fear and helplessness tend to be enhanced by a language barrier. Immigrants are stressed by an unfamiliar currency and the associated confusion with local prices of goods and services. It is also hard to become acquainted with the different assortment of food and to find shops with good deals (see also Janků, 2004: 207). A fundamental problem is represented by a language barrier which, if not overcome, can isolate new arrivals from the job market and also from the social system. Tibor from illustrative case No. 8, like the vast majority of Roma in the studied group, arrived in Great Britain without any knowledge of English. As I will soon show, various intermediaries take advantage of this initial disorientation.

A family network represents a functional migration network which reduces the social, economic and emotional investment into the migration act itself. It also represents a system of social relations which also influence post migratory behaviour (Light et al., 1989 in Drbohlav, Uherek, 2007: 7). These networks can therefore be relied on not only upon one's arrival to the new country but afterwards as well.

Based on research among the Roma in Leicester, I came to the conclusion that most

of the economic activities are organized on the family principle. In particular, working groups are organized by this principle. Relatives not only work together but also travel together to work. It is not uncommon that Roma work tens of kilometres away from Leicester and therefore commute daily by car to work. The family group shares the cost of fuel, helping everyone to reduce expenses. Relatives help each other with children, bring them to school and pick them up, which can otherwise be a big problem for a family where both parents have to work. Family networks often replicate social networks of individuals and their children in all activities. Given the language barrier, contact with the non-Roma world is minimal for many Roma.

It is especially essential to help relatives in case of the loss of their housing. A family that loses its housing due to the inability to pay rent can find a temporary refuge with their relatives. If a family is large it is temporarily divided into different family segments. Due to the existence of functional family networks, the loss of employment, which is one of the main reasons for the subsequent loss of housing, is not considered a fatal problem. Those who have lost their housing can gradually find new housing or a new job at first. Staying with relatives usually does not last long especially because life in Britain is very complicated without a residence address and homeowners do not give consent to overcrowded dwellings. Relying on the help of family in the case of losing housing is a typical example of family networks' rescue and support mechanisms.

In England today and tomorrow

„Akanak mišto-j mange andi Anglia. De, ži kana, kodo či žanav." ("Now I am good in England. But I don't know how long it will last.")

Research in other Romany localities in Slovakia has led to conclusions that a large proportion of Roma leave for Great Britain in order to accumulate finances and other capital which they subsequently invest into housing and overall improvement of living standards back home in Slovakia (e.g. Grill, 2015; Dobruská, 2016). Migration is understood by Roma from these localities as a means of improving their lives at home, not as an objective. The main objective is in fact to return to Slovakia (see also Uherek, 2007: 771). This phenomenon can be observed in the studied community of Eastern Slovak Vlax Roma rather marginally. Until 2016 and the Brexit-induced panic, Roma returning to Slovakia were more or less limited to those who had not succeeded in Britain, whether they had failed to get or keep a job, had been unable to get initial help from the family network, and newcomers unable to establish themselves. The situation has worsened in the past four years during which the conditions of the social system have become stricter and some families were no longer able to obtain social benefits and were therefore forced to live in England only off their income from work. However, this income is often swallowed up by housing costs and other payments. In this context, some families lost their housing and therefore had to leave England.

Vlax families who return to Slovakia or invest their finances in Slovakia, so that they can come back, constitute a minority. Such families are most often those that owned a house in rural localities or families who bought a flat in the city. Such housing is kept by some families as a back-up in case the conditions in the destination country become worse. The majority of Vlax Roma do not have any property to which they could return to in Slovakia. Some respondents even declared their intention to stay in Britain.

After the Brexit vote, many Roma started to panic and considered leaving England. Several families from the studied community, according to information which my respondents shared via social networks, have moved to Belgium, Ireland or the Czech Republic while other families are planning a possible return to Slovakia. Most, however, are waiting to see whether the prognosis of a rapid deterioration of the status of immigrants in Britain will be fulfilled.

PART FOUR: ECONOMIC STRATEGIES

As has been said, the vast majority of my respondents came to work in Britain encouraged by the success stories of their close relatives who managed to have a better life in Britain thanks to their work. Their endeavour was first to find any job that would ensure regular weekly income to pay for housing and a basic livelihood. At the beginning, a number of Roma worked through agencies where work was rather precarious; such work tended to be uncertain and unstable. As my respondents stated consistently, their goal was to obtain a contract (*o kontrakto*) which would provide them with stable work, paid holidays, and above all, a higher hourly wage than that paid by job agencies.

Changes in migration strategies

Many Roma were motivated to travel to Britain because of the social system which was perceived to be much more generous than the Slovak one. This incentive has been also described by other researchers focusing on Roma migration to the UK and other Western countries. According to Kateřina Janků, for many Roma the social security system in England represents a way of preventing the basic existential uncertainty in a foreign country and a way of satisfying their basic needs (Janků, 2004: 205). At the time of her research, a number of Roma (like the other tens of thousands of other emigrants) had a combined income from work and the British social system. The conclusions of Janků fully apply to the studied group as well. As we will see below, the system of social benefits was an incentive not only for migrants but also for various intermediaries. Motivated by commissions from the entire transaction, intermediaries were tempting the Roma by simply obtained money.

Providers

The British system of social benefits, which includes mainly various child and housing allowances, was seen in the first decade of the 21st century not only as generous but also as considerably benevolent. Information about the possibility of drawing benefits which some families would not be normally entitled to has spread quickly among the Roma coming to Leicester and in the source localities[17]. However, only those who knew the British system and its limits were able to secure such income. This gave rise to the creation of various economic activities for many people who gradually became intermediaries "helping" other Roma for a fairly high reward. These persons performed a combination of various activities aimed at profiting finan-

17 The use of social benefits is also the theme of other researchers (e.g. Janků, 2004; Uherek, 2007; Grill, 2015). The authors agree that the income from benefits made it possible to ensure a sufficient income from which some money could even be saved (e.g. Uherek, 2007: 765).

cially from the new arrivals from Slovakia. These intermediaries were not part of any organized group or mafia; most of them were Vlax Roma from the community of well-established families. In some cases they were former usurers (the same phenomenon is also described by Vašečka and Vašečka 2003: 35), or simply people who were able to take advantage of the opportunities arising from the new migration situation. The model that arose in Leicester can certainly be observed in other cities as well. It can certainly be a model that Roma people learned from members of other minority enclaves in Britain as was revealed by Jan Grill in his research (Grill, 2016: 101). However, I was not able to verify such information.

As evidenced by my communication partners' narratives and my field observations, the golden era of intermediaries was the early phase of migration to Leicester in the years before and after the EU accession during which the citizens of Slovakia were also allowed to draw benefits from the British social system. The first clients of the intermediaries were Vlax Roma and typically their acquaintances or distant relatives who came to Leicester to join their families but did not have anyone who could arrange all the necessities. These intermediaries took advantage of the newcomers' language barrier and disorientation in their new environment and built their services around it. In this way various "translators" as well as certain quasi "social workers" or "job counsellors" recruited among these self-appointed intermediaries who recommended to their "clients" procedures which often verged on illegality. They provided them with services ranging from finding employment, housing, filling out forms for insurance (*inšuránc*), child allowance, housing allowance, disability benefits and other forms of social benefits. All this was done for highly inflated prices.

(9) *„So mange jekh šávo anda Perješi skirindas le formi, pa tax credit, mangelas mandar pa kodo trin šela libri. Von varekana khate strašně but lóve kidenas le Romendar. Pa jekh papiroši pa doktori sto, dva sto libre. Pa akharsosko dilimáto lóve. Kodo naj mišto. Avilas kaso manuš opre, so nás les lóve, khate nas les šanca, mangenas lendar lóve."* ("One Vlax Roma from Prešov filled out my forms for me for a tax credit and asked me for three hundred pounds. They used to rip off the Roma. One or two hundred pounds for one paper from the doctor, money for every silly thing. That is not good. If someone who did not have money came here, he had no chance. They wanted money from him.")

Intermediaries were taking advantage not only of their language skills but also of their knowledge of the system of social services provided by state institutions and NGOs.

(10) „Sas po Evington charita. De ame či žanasas kodola charitatar. Kasi muslimka tuke skirijas avri le formi, sa jive, de ame pa kodo či žanasas. Von viužívinas le manušen haj kidenas pa kado lóve. Haj kodi charita sikhadas mange muro bratranco. Aba potom phírous khote, či počindem lóve lenge kana khote kernas amenge jive. Fere stačijas te phenes ando telefono 'interpret, please!', haj dine tuke les. De ame kodo či žanasas haj počinasas lenge pa jekh vorba sto libri!" ("There was a charity in Evington but we didn't know about it. This Muslim woman filled in your forms, everything for free, but we had to pay for it. They were using people and were ripping them off. It was my cousin who showed me this charity. Then I went there and I did not pay them anymore since they did that for us for free there.

All you had to do was say on the phone: 'interpreter please', and they gave you one. But we did not know about the charity, and we paid them one hundred pounds for one translation!")

Intermediaries often carried out various scams which they performed not only on the British social system but also on their own clients, most often Vlax Roma disadvantaged by a language barrier. They often experienced being cheated and robbed by intermediaries under the guise of providing various services.

Respondent GT described a situation when an intermediary arranged two cards at a bank for her right in front of her eyes and stole her money.

(11) „Ande banki žanas haj kerdine pe amende kase... sar kodo kerdas duj biznisova karči. Haj amenge trobujas te žan le lóve po amaro účto, de leske žanas le lóve po lesko účto. Ame kodolestar či žanasas. Haj vorbijas andi banka anglicki de me les či hačarós." ("We went to a bank and they made those... like that, made two business cards. And we needed money to be deposited in our account, but the money was deposited to his account and we didn't know about it. They spoke English in the bank and I did not understand him at all.")

Also, it was very common for intermediaries to steal money that their clients received through social benefits.

(12) „Sas len šavora maj but haj dohodnijas pe lesa po dopaš. Anda kodo tax credit so astarla hoj dela les dopaš. Sas kase manuš so lepindas pe pe kodo leske. Man šavora cine nas, de vi kade cera astardam. Kade kerdine. Dopaš lóve vi amendar line. Igen cerra astardam. Kade žalas, no." ("They had kids and they made a half and half deal that he would get half of the tax credit that they were going to get. There were such people who fell for it. I didn't have small children but we still got very little. They did the same with us. They also took half of our money. We got very little.")

This practice was also described by other Roma. Some intermediaries did not want just a one-time fee for arranging social benefits and demanded that their clients pay them a certain percentage of their social benefits either as a lump-sum payment, or as a regular levy from the social benefits received to their bank accounts. This was also the case in example No. 11 when the intermediary went to the bank with his clients and without their knowledge managed to fraudulently create two accounts. Intermediaries have often kept cards from accounts or kept access to internet banking which clients did not even know existed.

Another frequent fraudulent activity of intermediaries was to arrange social benefits for families who did not even live in England. These clients were often recruited in Slovakia among the poorest strata, whether from the Vlax Roma, Rumungri or even among the socially weakest non-Roma. These activities were often associated on the verge of human trafficking.

(13) „Avilas khate opre le níposa vaj avilas fere o murš, i romňi le šavoreca khére. Haj avilas o Rom, žalas andi búči haj vibavijas opre le lóve pe šavora pi romňi haj

žalas tar khere haj le love žanas lenge. Po Slovensko. Kade sas. Avenas sako dopaš berš, lenas peske le love avri anda banka haj žanas tar. But Rom kade kerenas. De le Angličanura či žanenas, gindonas hoj khate-j le. Von khate kernas kase ťahi pe kova… Napríklad das varekaske le rodna lila sar te avlinó les panž šavora. Von lenas, šudenas ande formi haj von gindonas hoj čáčes, pe sociálka, hoj le šavora-j lende. Varekana kodo či overujinas. Akanak fere, vaj 2013 vaj 2012, aba sa kontrolujin". ("He came here with his family, or the man came alone, his wife and children stayed home. The man went to work and arranged to get money for his family and went back home and money got sent to them in Slovakia. That is the way it was. They came every half a year, took money from the bank and went away. Many Roma were doing it like this. But the English did not know about it, they thought that they were here. They were pulling these kinds of scams here… For example they gave birth certificates to someone for five children. They took them with the forms and the social services thought that they really had the children. Back then, they did not use to verify. Since about 2012 or 2013, they have been checking everything.")

The practice of drawing double social benefits in Britain and in the home country was practiced successfully by some immigrants (and not only by Roma and not only by those from Slovakia) for several years. Some immigrants manage to secure a similar income through their close family which once again shows the help of the family network solidarity system. In addition, a very common practice was to secure such income through intermediaries. They often kept part of their clients' money either with their permission or sometimes without their knowledge.

In 2008, I met a few outraged Roma (Vlax as well as non-Vlax) in Slovakia, all with a low socio-economic status who told me the following story:

(14) One Vlax Roma from a nearby town tempted several Roma to go to England with the promise of employment. Upon their arrival they were asked to give him their passports and children's birth certificates, allegedly to arrange for their insurance. A few weeks later, a group of Roma men went back home with a few tens of pounds earned by brigade work. The intermediary, however, managed to include the very large families of these men into the social system and to keep their bank cards which allowed him to receive significant sums of money assigned to these men's large families. His "clients" did not know about it until they learned about it from their relatives in England who consequently helped them to terminate this practice. When they were able to receive a banking report from the British bank, the figures that intermediaries had stolen from them and from the British social system were four-figures (in pounds) in all cases.

Similar stories were not exceptional. It was a common practice of intermediaries to arrange money for someone whom they could subsequently steal it from. In the case of clients from the socially weakest environment, examples of classic human trafficking could also be observed. Intermediaries sometimes found the so-called "horse" (*grast*) who essentially worked for them for free, lived in their homes, often in undignified conditions. During this time intermediaries were able to arrange under their names various bank loans or mobile phone contracts which included the latest and most expensive types of mobile phones from the telephone company. Again, these

"horses" were often recruited from the socially weakest non-Roma or *Rumungri* (often homeless).

Some intermediaries literally became wealthy from one day to the next and began to show off their wealth by, for example, frequently acquiring new luxury cars, wearing large gold chains, and so on. It turns out that these intermediaries have influenced the form and character of migration. They certainly stimulated migration among the poorest strata which otherwise would not have enough funds to travel to England[18]. On the other hand, members of the socially weakest strata, without a functional family network, rarely stayed in England for a long time while finances stemming from their social benefits were for a long time (often without their knowledge) drawn by someone else.

The case of intermediaries and their "clients" again shows the importance of family networks: a person or a family with a well-functioning solidarity network was able to get support in Britain and thereby avoid being abused by intermediaries. In case of problems, support from relatives would prevent the necessity to leave the country.

In addition to these intermediaries, a strata of what we may call small intermediaries was also created. These occasionally provided similar services to other Roma (especially translations and arranging social welfare) for a much cheaper fee. Of course the boundary between these intermediaries is not entirely clear. It might be just a matter of time or opportunities for these small intermediaries to also become engaged in other activities. Aside from that, some Roma have learned tricks from intermediaries when arranging their personal matters, especially those related to the social benefits system, and continued to practise them when helping their relatives (mostly free of charge). We can therefore say that a wider group of people has been involved in the practises which Grill calls "fixing up money" (*vibavimen love*).

"Akanak aba či del pe." ("It is not possible today").

Nowadays, according to what respondents say, the activities of intermediaries are very insignificant and can be considered nearly dead. According to my research there are several reasons for this.

The main reason is the change in the social system. The use of the social benefits system for the most part ended along with the large socio-economic changes associated with the influx of new migrants from new EU countries into the UK. State institutions increased their control and became more suspicious (Grill, 2016: 102–103). Most practices linked to the use of this system therefore had to be terminated.

Another reason that diminished the need for intermediaries' services – "*interpret*" – is family members acquiring of linguistic competencies. English is most often learned by young people who came to Britain at school age and within a short time learned the language well enough to be able to arrange everything for their family[19]. Intermediaries who built their overpriced services around the language barrier of their clients have become redundant in other services as well. Members of dense family networks of this community have become familiar with the English environment and have been able to navigate through the services of non-profit organizations whose services they can use, much of which is available to clients free

18 For the intermediaries themselves, paying for someone's trip was a well-calculated investment to make a profit.

19 This fact is reflected by case No. 7.

20 This fact is also reflected by case No. 10.

of charge[20]. Roma from the study group are also discouraged from illegal practices by examples of several individuals whose criminal activity was punished by penalties that the Roma consider high. Among the Roma, stories of cruel conditions in British prisons are spreading rapidly. According to these stories, the Roma are often imprisoned among dangerous ethnic minority criminals or, on the contrary, among racist white Englishmen. Many Roma have also had to return their unjustly made money (see case No. 15) and perform public works.

PART FIVE: THE WORLD OF WORK

„Akanak amenge mišto andi Anglija-j, keras búča... Kana o manuš kerel búči, mišto-j leske andi Anglija, de te na keres, inke maj násul-i sar khére!" (**"We are doing fine in England now, we are working... If one works, he can do fine in England but if you don't work, it is even worse than home."**)

When I arrived in 2015 to visit Roma from Prešov whom I had been in touch with only through social networks during their stay in England, I was very surprised by the demanding everyday physical work behind their flamboyant Facebook statuses where they were showing off photos of their brand-name clothes at tables over-filled with food and drinks, or in front of typical red-brick semi-detached houses, and in cars which they could only dream about in Slovakia. When I last met my Romany acquaintances in Slovakia, they had depended on social benefits for many years. However, in Britain they were all commuting to work on a daily basis, coming back home to have an early night and going back to work again the next morning.

My respondents were employed around Leicester in sandwich and baguette shops, at the post office, and at a mobile phone production line, to name a few examples. As I mentioned, relatives typically work together, sometimes even dozens of Vlax Roma from Eastern Slovakia worked in the same job for one particular company. The reason for this was the disappearing language barrier and also the fact that at the very beginning the Roma were getting their jobs through the same agency. All my respondents initially found work through Ahmed (see case No. 8), an intermediary of Pakistani origin, who arranged work for the Roma for a fee for contract work through a job agency. In most cases the Roma stayed in the same positions for several years with their aim being to get a job as the company's senior employees.

Regarding the language barrier, a generally successful migration strategy and in particular in employment, has proven to be staying close to Polish immigrants. The Poles in Leicester are a very large community that settled in the city in the post-war period and multiplied after the fall of communism, and especially after the enlargement of the EU. In 2007, there were more than 20 Polish restaurants and shops in Leicester as well as a number of consulting and job-finding offices (Vershinina, Barrett, Meyer, 2009). Due to the linguistic and cultural proximity, the Roma used Polish immigrant networks for various reasons. Numerous Polish shops sold *amáro chábe* (our food, i.e. the same food as in Slovakia), which, according to the respondents, made life in England more acceptable for many Roma.

As many communication partners describe, before they discovered the so-called Polish shops in their neighbourhood, it was very difficult for them to cook their favourite dishes such as *halušky* (Slovak gnocchi) without the necessary coarse flour,

sour cabbage and Slovak cottage cheese which differs from the English one, or their popular chicken soup without *Magi* and *Vegeta* (soup seasoning products). In terms of food, my respondents' families stayed very conservative and every day kept cooking the same meals which they normally ate in Slovakia with only minimal variations. Polish shops offering products that are not normally available in Britain were therefore essential. Not to mention the under the table sale of Polish cigarettes for a much more acceptable price than those with a British stamp offered in standard shops. As far as employment is concerned, to date many Roma continue to work beside Polish colleagues or under their leadership[21].

Roma from Eastern Slovakia who had been long-term unemployed in Slovakia (some of them since the early 1990s) succeeded in joining the workforce in England despite their language barrier as well as minimal practice and absent work habits resulting from their previous long-term unemployment. Moreover, they work in positions which they would never have had a chance to get in Slovakia. This fact also affects the change in the value of work in the eyes of the Roma, as will be shown below.

Value of work

In his article on the economic strategies of Roma people from the East Slovakian commune of Tarkovce, Jan Grill describes the work of his respondents in Great Britain as hard (*phári buťi*), involving a great deal of suffering in order to get money. He also describes other circumstances of their life rhythm as difficult including the complicated maintenance of social relations. The Roma cannot spend as much time with their children as they would like, and their mutual contacts with extended family are weakened (Grill, 2015: 99–100). According to Grill, the economic activities of Roma from Tarkovce in Great Britain are a combination of unskilled wage labour (*phári buťi*) and other practices (*vibavimen love* / fixing up money) through which Roma try to improve their financial position. According to Grill, this successful combination helped them to cope with changing socioeconomic conditions.

In his classic work *The Time of the Gypsies,* which describes (not only) the economic activities of Hungarian Vlax Roma at the end of communism, Michael Stewart pointed out the distinction between wage labour (the classic working relationship) in the non-Roma environment which has a very low value for Roma, and "Romany work" (*romani butji*) which is money obtained by non-production, i.e. in a way different from usual work (involving ways of getting money or goods which are different from *the ways of the gadjo*)[22]. According to Stewart, *Romani butji*, whose aim is to take advantage of the non-Roma and to show the craftiness and intelligence of the Roma (by showing they can conjure wealth up out of nothing) reinforces the Roma identity and their feeling of superiority over the non-Roma (Stewart, 1997)[23]. However, according to Grill, Stewart's concept of *romani butji* does not correspond with the discourse and the local use in Tarkovce. Even though the Roma in Tarkovce combine

21 Working in the same company with non-Roma from Slovakia, or under their leadership, is also not uncommon.

22 Stewart describes a community of Hungarian Vlax Roma who work in socialist factories during the week, but aside from that, the Roma are also involved in a number of informal practises that allow them to keep their Romany identity. Among these he lists a number of practises ranging from collecting metal and other waste and reselling it to Gadjos for profit, to begging and horse-trading (Stewart, 1997).

23 Money earned through work (Gadjo money) must be cleaned (by playing cards, horse-trading) (Stewart, 1997). A similar distinction of economic activities is also used by other authors in the field.

different ways of making money, no relationship between idiosyncratic independent Romany work and identity formation can be observed, according to Grill (2016: 91).

What is the case in my studied community? Can we observe economic activities corresponding to Stewart's concept of *romani butji* in this group, especially given its members' Vlax Romany identity? As I have shown in the previous text, Grill's conclusions about combining employment with different ways of making money corresponding with Grill's concept of *vibavimen love* are fully applicable for the studied community. The transformation of the social services system in England as well as the criminalization of a number of intermediaries and other persons involved in various kinds of fraudulent abuse of the system have in recent years turned extra money coming from social benefits into an irreversible past. Most Roma from the studied group who were previously involved in a number of illegal activities – mostly through the intermediaries, and involving in particular various social-welfare tricks – are currently working only a full time jobs. Grey economy practices and other small scams are avoided, mostly out of fear.

> *(15) „Akanak aba maj prísnones, sa kontrolujin. Vaj ko love astarel, vaj phíren le šavora ande školi. Vaj khate le. Naj kodolenge le lóve ašaven haj papale mangen peske lóve. Inke duvar kadžiki. Sa so den, vi pa tax kredit, vi po kher so den lóve, vi pa semeto, sa. Akanak khate náštik chochaves. Maj feder kana keres khate i búči, počis le daňe sar patrij pe. De ko či kerel búči, naj les šanca. Pháres. Varekana háj, delas pe, de akanak na."* ("Nowadays it's stricter. They control everything whether it's who gets the money, if the kids go to school or if they are here. And to those, they stop the money and ask for everything to be returned. Even twice as much. Everything that they get on credit, for housing, for garbage, everything. Now you can't lie anymore. The best is if you work here and pay taxes the way you are supposed to but those who don't work, they have no chance. Hardly. Before they did, before it was possible, but not anymore").

Vlax Roma from Eastern Slovakia are now massively involved in the labour process. This is all the more interesting since Vlax Roma have been traditionally said to consider physical work inferior and unclean and have traditionally avoided it (e.g. Pavelčíková, 2015: 308). While this claim can be rejected as a stereotype, it is interesting to see if the avoidance of physical work is also the case in this group. My own field findings in this community over the last seventeen years do not entirely confirm their perception of work as shameful (*lažavo*)[24], however, it testifies to their valuation of individuals who have somehow managed to outflank the system. This claim can be evidenced in particular by an analysis of the discourse used by some Vlax Roma when talking about economic activities.

For example, I have repeatedly noticed admiration for a Vlax Roma who was employed for two months as a labourer at a construction site but went to work in a white tracksuit which he never got dirty. The man was walking around and advising other workers (*Rumungri* or *Gadjo*) how to do their job. These workers mistakenly considered him to be a supervisor. Another Roma boasted of being given a job as a spokesman who monitored other workers and advised them what to do. Both examples

24 Of course some types of work are perceived as *lažavo*. For example typically female work for men, or dirty work, e.g. with faeces. I will come back to this below and subject it to a critical perspective.

point to the values of Vlax Roma: the biggest appreciation is for those who manage to outflank others – *Rumungri* and *Gadjo* – without "getting dirty" by working themselves.

In this respect, it may seem at first sight that the values of the Vlax Roma have changed. Roma seem to have adapted to the values of the surrounding society and are fully engaged in working life. The Roma nonetheless do not see this as a loss or forced adaptation to "hard work" (see Grill, 2016) or "work for Gadjo" (see Stewart, 1997). Even in the studied group we can confirm the conclusions of Zdeněk Uherek, according to whom Roma perceive work in England as a social satisfaction. It is a confirmation of their own value and is perceived as a confirmation of Romany skills: Roma in England perform work that they would not be able to do in Slovakia (Uherek, 2007: 768). The Roma in Leicester speak about work in England as light and clean. For them this work represents social upward movement, 'going up', which Jan Grill describes in his study *'Going up to England': Exploring Mobilities among Roma from Eastern Slovakia* (Grill, 2012). This work allows them to lead a better life than they could ever have in Slovakia; it promises a possibility to make good money (*láše lóve*) and to live in one's own house and to buy a good car, nice clothes and (once in a while) golden jewellery. Thanks to the income from work, the quality of life of Vlax Roma from the studied group increased and status symbols became more accessible. In this respect, work itself is therefore perceived as forming one's status.

This change correlates with the change in various areas of socio-cultural life of the Roma. The rhythm of life has changed and become determined by work and children attending pre-school from the age of two or three. Individual families are gradually becoming more nuclear and individualized which is also due to difficulties associated with maintaining social ties with their loved ones. Mutual contact with their extended family is weakening and becoming limited to celebrations which are difficult to organize in rented flats for a lot of people (which leads to invitations being limited to the closest family). In comparison with Slovakia, Roma cannot spend as much time with their children as they would like as they spend a much bigger part of their day at school[25]. This also affects their language behaviour: children begin to speak English among themselves which is also a big change; so far, no non-Romany language (*gažikani šib*) has been used in inter-Roma communication.

While Vlax Roma from Eastern Slovakia living in Leicester now consider work to be an unproblematic way of livelihood, other Vlax Roma coming to England from a different part of Slovakia, according to the Vlax in Leicester, do not undergo such transformations. In the following example, the respondent describes a value conflict in the different perception of the social status of work in different groups of Vlax Roma:

(16) *„Si khate vi le Rom anda Nitra, haj me inke či dikhlem mejg jekhes te kerel búči. Rumungri, pe amen! No! Von-i igen zurále. Von phenena tuke, „Vlašiko šávo sal" atunči, kana le lóve khére phiraves. Vaj kodi šej. Kana trajis búčatar, kado trajo sar trobuj, von phenena tuke Rumungro sal. „Aj sar trajis? Sar Rumungro!" Hačares? Von búča či keren, von čoren haj keren le šefti. Žan tar avri le motorenca, milaj žan avri haj jivende aven khere, te chan te pen, fere. Fere chan haj pen. Von búča kadal či kamen, čáčes.*" ("There are also Roma from Nitra here and so far I have not seen any of them work. They call us Rumungri! Well! They are real Vlax.

25 Jan Grill comes to similar conclusions (Grill, 2016: 99–100).

They will tell you: 'You are Vlax Roma' when you bring money home or your girlfriend. But if you live from work, the way life is supposed to be, they will say that you are Rumungro. How do you live? Like a Rumungro! You understand? They don't work, they steal and traffic. They go away in the summer and in the winter they come back, they eat and drink, nothing else. Just eat and drink. They don't want work, seriously.")

The example shows that while the studied group approaches employment as a normal life strategy, another group, specifically Vlax Roma from southwestern Slovakia, perceives making a living through employment as incompatible with the status of Vlax Roma. According to the respondent, these Roma do not perceive a person who works as a Vlax, to them it is a *Rumungro*. At the same time, as we can see, the respondent looks up to these values even if he also distances himself from them. He refers to these Roma as *zurále*, i.e. strong and powerful, meaning Vlax *as they should be*. We can also take this as an example of confirming one's own group identity and distancing from another group on the basis of different cultural preferences and performed economic activities.

Working with an employment contract turns out to be the most important strategy. Nevertheless, Roma are often also involved in other activities in the sense of Stewart's *romani butji*[26]. These include, for example, the buying and selling of cars[27], which is a hobby that some Roma do to such an extent that it might be more apt to talk about car trading (some of them are even referred to by the Romany term *kerel šefti le motorenca:* he is trading cars). Another activity, also described by Stewart, is gambling. Already in Slovakia several of my respondents were indulging in slot machines and betting. In England, these activities have been replaced by going to casinos and playing roulette. If it was not for work and the associated lack of time, some of them would spend a lot more money in this way. A common activity is gold buying, which on one hand represents one of the highest status symbols, and on the other hand the best commodity which one can invest saved money in.

CONCLUSION

The Vlax Roma, who lived in the 1990s for generations in Eastern Slovakia, moved to Leicester in Great Britain shortly after joining the European Union. In Leicester they formed a large community living in different parts of the city. The rapid movement was enabled by functional family networks which allowed newcomers to leave Slovakia and find housing and work in England. Aside from their own relatives, the process was also driven by Romani mediators who used the British social system which was generous and insufficiently protected from abuse, the disorientation of Roma in the

26 At this point, however, I agree with Grill who points out that this term has a different connotation in the Slovak environment. The Slovak equivalent of the term *cigánská robota (*gypsy labour) refers to poor quality work traditionally associated with Roma (Grill, 2015: 92). Even Roma from the studied group do not refer to these activities as *romani búťi*.

27 Cars are either purchased on the internet through which good bargains in nearby localities can be identified or they look for them right in the street (often they have a price tag). In both cases they haggle with the owners and often manage to beat the price down. In an ideal case when selling a car to an interested person, they usually sell it for a higher price despite its previous use (even a relatively long one).

British system and in the overall environment, and their inability to speak English. This group of Romani immigrants employed illegal practices which were later learned by other Roma in order to help themselves and their relatives when they arrived in England.

For most of the Vlax Roma living in the studied community in Britain, the practises of the grey economy are over. They represented temporary strategies that helped them to succeed in a new country which they employed since they represented the fastest way to a better life. From the perspective of macrosociology, the vast majority of the Roma from this community are nowadays becoming part of the British labour force and live a life between *my work* and *my house* in England. However, stories about the use of illegal economic strategies still have a strong place in the narratives of the Vlax Roma in Leicester. Stories about intermediaries and their victims as well as about accumulated wealth and ways of spending it, and about the possibilities of fraud offered by the British system in the last decade, are a frequent topic among the Vlax Roma. This fact can be illustrated by the above-mentioned conclusions: although the value of work for the Roma has seemingly changed (in the sense that going to work is not perceived as something disgraceful), work is perceived mainly as a means of status upward mobility rather than as a value in and of itself that would be worthy of a special valuation. Other paths including various ways of "fixing up money", which lead to a better life continue (at least at the declarative level) to be valued, despite the fact that most of the Vlax Roma living in Leicester currently avoid them. The stories about the wit of Vlax Roma who with their current better lives outwitted the poor position of the Roma in Slovakia strengthen the self-representation of this group and help them to cope with the fact that the economic practises they perform (i.e. wage employment) do not correspond to Stewart's notions of *romani butji*.

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Used narrative quotes - with quote examples

AM, male, born 1945, recorded 2016, Leicester, UK, 2016-07-23-001. Archive of recordings of Seminar on Romani studies, Charles university, Prague, example 3.

BM, female, born 1948, recorded in Sweden 2009, Archive of recordings of the author. Example 2.

EB, female, born 1971, recorded 2016, Leicester, UK, 2016-07-15-002 Archive of recordings of Seminar on Romani studies, Charles university, Prague, example 10 and 15.

GT, female, born 1969, recorded 2016, Leicester, UK, 2016-07-16-001 Archive of recordings of Seminar on Romani studies, Charles university, Prague, example 5, 11, 12 and 16.

LT, male, born 1965, recorded 2016, Leicester, UK, 2016-07-16-002. Archive of recordings of Seminar on Romani studies, Charles university, Prague, example 7, 9, 12, 15 and 17.

RM, male, born 1962, recorded 2015, Prešov, Slovakia. 2015-10-31-001. Archive of recordings of Seminar on Romani studies, Charles university, Prague, example 1 and 4.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MARKÉTA HAJSKÁ – is a PhD candidate (PhD title: June 2017) at the Institute of Ethnology, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague. The name of her dissertation thesis is "Language Borders as Borders of Ethnic Identity". She graduated in 2003 from the Charles University in Prague, and holds a Master degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology. Her research concerns the topic of Vlach Roma in the Czech and Slovak Republics. She focuses mainly on the Vlach language and sociolinguistic situation, their historical and contemporary migration and on the social position of this group. She works full-time at the Department of Central European Studies – Seminar of Romani Studies (Charles University, Faculty of Art). There she teaches Vlax Romani courses, Anthropological approaches in Romani Studies and Vlach Roma.

SLOVENSKÝ NÁRODOPIS SLOVAK ETHNOLOGY
4 65 • 2017
ARTICLES

LANGUAGE CONSEQUENCES OF MIGRATION OF ROMANI SPEAKERS FROM SLOVAKIA TO GREAT BRITAIN AND BACK: THE CHANGE OF PARADIGM OF TOWN NAMES IN TWO ROMANI DIALECTS[1]

JAN ČERVENKA

DOI 10.26363/SN.2017.4.02 © 2017, Institute of Ethnology SAS

PhDr. Jan Červenka, Ph.D., Department of Central European Studies – Seminar of Romani Studies (Charles University, Faculty of Arts), nám. Jana Palacha 2, 116 38, Praha 1, Czech Republic; e-mail: jan.cervenka@ff.cuni.cz

The article focuses on language changes in Romani spoken by Slovak emigrants to England and re-emigrants to Slovakia or by people residing alternately in both the countries as the case may be. The changes are monitored separately in two Romani groups: the so called Slovak Roma (speakers of the Northern-Central dialect of Romani) and the Vlax Roma (speakers of the Slovak variety of the Lovari dialect). I address the way the language is influenced both by the changes of the environment and lifestyle and the changes of the contact language. I mostly focus on adult respondents whose contact language has really changed during their life. I concentrate on one striking and unexpected change: the change of the system according to which toponyms, specifically town names, are created in Romani. First I submit the survey of the system in the pre-emigration situation that has not been systematically published for either of the examined dialects. Further on I introduce the changes the described system has gone through in both the dialects due to the influence of migration to Western Europe and I cautiously attempt to suggest interpretation of the examined phenomenon.

Key words: migration, Roma, Romani, toponyms

How to cite: Červenka, J. (2017). Language Consequences of Migration of Romani Speakers from Slovakia to Great Britain and Back: the Change of Paradigm of Town Names in Two Romani Dialects
Slovenský národopis, 65(4), 383–403 doi: 10.26363/SN.2017.4.02

0. INTRODUCTION

Romani is a language in which language contact always plays a very important role[2]. There even exists an opinion that there are no (adult) monolingual Romani speakers

1 Preparation of this article was supported by the Czech Science Foundation (GACR) within the project "The Migration of the Roma from the Czech and the Slovak Republics to the United Kingdom and Canada" (grant registration No 15-02702S).

2 Compare e.g. Matras 1995, Pintér and Menyhárt (2005), specifically for the dialects addressed in my article then Kubaník, Sadílková, and Červenka (2013) and Hajská (2015).

in the world, while on the other hand the knowledge of Romani among members of majorities is rare. Matras (2002: 191), for example, writes: "With the exception of very young children, there are no monolingual speakers of Romani." And he adds (Matras, 2002: 238): "All adult speakers of Romani are fully bilingual or even multilingual."

The process of Romani re/e/migration from Slovakia (and the Czech Republic) to Western countries has been in progress especially since the 2nd half of the 1990s and takes on many different forms[3]. This brings a great number of changes on all linguistic levels into Romani. Just to address them briefly would mean to exceed the limits of one article, therefore from the very beginning I will concentrate on one selected phenomenon and its realization in Romani spoken by two different communities. The topic is formation and usage of toponyms, specifically names of villages and towns. There are several reasons that led to my choice of this subject: The change in the above mentioned sphere was the least expected before the beginning of the research and at the same time I consider the phenomenon interesting from the anthropological point of view. Moreover, my article may be the first systematic reconstruction of its realization in both the Romani dialects in the pre-emigration era.

0.1. Communities

The language material obtained separately in two communities was chosen for the purposes of this text. One is the community of so called "Slovak Roma", the Northern-Central Romani dialect speakers. The other is the community of Vlax Roma, the speakers of the Eastern-Slovak variety of the Lovari (Northern-Vlax) Romani dialect. Each of the two communities has a different language background and different original and target language situation, therefore on each investigated linguistic level I am trying to analyse the language material separately for each community and compare them. For the purposes of this text I take into account especially the language of adult Romani migrants, i.e. people whose contact language has demonstrably changed and who have not socialized into the Romani-English language environment[4].

a) Community of Northern-Central Romani speakers

The source of data for Northern-Central Romani is the related community coming from a large settlement in East Slovakia. The community is partly interrelated with Roma in a larger Czech town where a group of Roma moved from Slovakia after World War II. Migration from both the communities (the Czech and Slovak branches) to Western Europe began on a greater scale in about 2005. Some people migrate between Slovakia and Britain repeatedly, some returned after a longer time[5]. The analysed conversations were realized also with persons who had not migrated. The migration destinations in Great Britain are towns in Northern England, especially Sheffield and Peterborough[6].

3 From the existing wide literature I have chosen a text referring exactly to one of the communities I investigate: Dobruská 2017.

4 I mention this fact as I do not have enough data available from younger respondents for the investigated phenomenon – not because there are signals of remarkably different realization of the given phenomenon in Roma who have socialized in Britain on the language level.

5 For more details about migration of this group see a very useful text: Dobruská 2017.

6 For ethical reasons it would be possible to make also the destinations anonymous, but there are several arguments against: 1) The towns are big enough and the Roma living there are of different origins. 2) According to many narratives and their behaviour in social networks the Roma in these towns do not feel stigmatized as Roma. 3) The very names of these localities are the main subject of this article.

b) Community of Vlax Romani speakers

The investigated Vlax Roma community originally came from the area of Prešov and Košice, nowadays these Roma have settled in British Leicester. According to some respondents there are more than one thousand of them there. The first larger departures of Vlax Roma living in the Prešov housing estate were observed around 2005 – 2006. Massive migration waves of Roma from the investigated group across different localities, however, followed later, in 2007 – 2010, and it was Leicester where most of these Roma settled. The whole community is more or less interconnected by various family relations. Although they live in very dispersed places and are not concentrated, the members of the community meet at different venues: at balls, celebrations, favourite shops, church, etc.

0.2. Source, methodology, acknowledgement

Direct thematizing in targeted conversations is not very practical for most topics I investigate. E.g. Červenka (2006: 17) analyses "in the vast majority (...) natural speech, i.e. little structured conversations on topics other than language itself." The reason is that they bring (op. cit.: 16) "little influence by the language of questions, both in Romani and in the majority language. This is a very important advantage for the Romani studies as I have already mentioned the helpfulness of communicative respondents that may be to the detriment of research. (...) Natural language structures get noticed as they are really produced by the speakers without their thinking on the meta-language level."

Recordings of conversations on topics other than language, following of communication in social media, etc. turn out to be suitable sources for my current subject. For the purposes of this text I even sometimes deliberately watched the recordings with the migration themes from another point of view than the interviewers who made them, which led me to the main topic of this article, I compared recordings from different periods and localities and interviewed the interviewers who had made the recordings with the theme of migration. I would like to thank especially our Romani respondents, but also the investigators without whose recordings and valuable consultations my text would never have been realized. These are especially Petra Dobruská, Markéta Hajská, Zuzana Znamenáčková, and Jan Ort, and also I would like to thank Františka Dvorská.

1. TOPONYMS: NAMES OF VILLAGES AND TOWNS

1.1. "Conventional" form of toponyms

a) Situation in Northern-Central Romani

The traditional form of toponyms in Northern-Central Romani has been well known among Czech Romani scholars since the founder of the Czech Romani Studies Milena Hübschmannová (1933 – 2005) described them. The whole system, however, must be reconstructed from partial references of her students. For example Červenka (1996: 109–110) gives a clear but brief characteristic of the morphosyntactic behaviour of village names also rendering the hübschmannian distance between the village names in the area of former Czechoslovakia and the behaviour of village names in other countries:

"In the case of Czech and Slovak villages the meanings *to the village of XY* and *in*

the village of XY are conventionally expressed in the locative and *from the village of XY* in the ablative, in foreign places, however, the same happens in the prepositional nominative (...)

Established Romani names, however, exist for the villages where Roma have lived. (...) Traditional names, often originating from Hungarian[7] village names (*e Bartva* – "Bardejov"[8]), are slowly disappearing and new ones are being formed (*o Bardejovos*). Readers may not always understand the traditional name."

The origin and form of these toponyms (and the behaviour of toponyms for Czech and Slovak villages) are best rendered by Šebková and Žlnayová (1999[9]: 194–195):

" (...) even in Romani there exist the original – Romani names of towns and villages.

Romani names of towns and villages in Bohemia and Moravia are similar to Czech names:

Praha – *Prague* **Prahate** – *in Prague; to Prague,* **Brna/Brnos** – *Brno* **Brnate/Brnoste** – *in Brno; to Brno,* **Mosti** – *Most* **Mostende** – *in Most; to Most,* **Usti** – *Ústí nad Labem* **Ustende** – *in Ústí; to Ústí* (...)

Pardubica/Pardubici – *Pardubice* **Pardubicate/Pardubicende** – *in Pardubice; to Pardubice* (...)

Names of many Slovak towns, however, are different in Romani as they originate in Hungarian or German historical names. These names have been preserved especially in the vicinity of the given place. Roma from more remote areas then usually use the contemporary Slovak names. Therefore we would like to familiarize you with a few names of some more important Slovak towns sounding different in Romani!

Požoma – *Bratislava,* **Požomate** – *in Bratislava,* **Požomu** – *to Bratislava,* **Sombata** – *Trnava,* **Sombatate** – *in Trnava,* **Sombatu** – *to Trnava,* **Uheľa** – *Nové Mesto nad Váhom,* **Uheľate** – *in Nové Mesto nad Váhom,* **Uheľu** – *to Nové Mesto nad Váhom,* (...) **Kaša** – *Košice,* **Kašate** – *in Košice; to Košice,* **Perješis** – *Prešov,* **Perješiste** – *in Prešov; to Prešov* (...)

Dialectologic note:
While in the *Western-Slovak* and *Central-Slovak* varieties the names of towns and villages are solely feminine, in the *Eastern-Slovak* variety they can also be masculine."

Regional varieties of morphosyntactic alignments of toponyms, a theme also closely related to my subject, are addressed by the authors elsewhere (op. cit.: 192): "In the area of Košice, in Spiš, and elsewhere prepositional cases (often alternatively besides the locative) occur when a place is specified with the use of a name of a town or village: **ke Kaša, ke Praha** – *to Košice, to Prague"*.

Description of the origin, form, and behaviour of toponyms is further described by Červenka (2006: 23):

"In the Northern-Central Romani we have both cases[10]: both the 'standard' adaptation of the form of the local proprium differing from the contemporary (...) name of

7 The then text needs to be amended by adding also the German origin (Note 2017). Another source of the Romani form of a name is mentioned by Červenka (2006: 90) – the Romani form *Ceplička* ("Liptovská Teplička") is borrowed neither from the official form of the name nor from other languages but from the local Slovak dialect.

8 In accordance with the linguistic convention I use quotation marks to mark a translation or meaning of expressions I mention.

9 See also a much briefer similar extract by Šebková, Žlnayová 1998: 91, 103.

10 The claim refers to the title of the section "Adaptation from different forms of local propria vs adaptation from the standard form with the gender or number conversion." (Note 2017).

the place by gender or number and the adaptation with a gender or number conversion. Thus for example, I place the contrast of the expressions for the meaning "from Košice": *Kašatar* x *Košicendar* into lexicon, as Romani adopts different forms of the town name – Hungarian *Kaša* and Slovak *Košice*[11] in each of the cases. On the other hand I place a seemingly similar phenomenon – the expression for the meaning "in Sučany": *Sučaňate* – into morphology – specifically adaptation – as Romani adopts the name of the village as the feminine singular. This of course applies supposing *Sučaňa* in this traditional territory of the Slovak nationals was not an ingrained Hungarian name and not even a common local form of a Slovak name; otherwise it would be an analogy to the first case."

As for the gender of the adopted toponyms Červenka (2006: 37) unlike Šebková and Žlnayová discovers also masculine name forms in central Slovakia: "Specifically in Liptov, where there is no doubt about the Central-Slovak variety still being spoken, the inhabitants of some towns, both younger and the older generations, use masculine forms when using the names of their towns: *Ružomberkos* – Ružomberok, *Mikulašis* – Liptovský Mikuláš. The authors probably worked with data from the Southwest part of Central Slovakia. It is also true that the tendency to adopt a name of a village as the feminine singular is strong even in the regions I investigate, both in the West (*Kysuca* – Kysucké Nové Mesto, *Sučaňa* – Sučany) and in the easternmost part of the area: (*Važca* – Važec)."

From among the examples mentioned in the quotations below (op. cit.: 37) especially the expression *Pozamkos Sklabinsko* (Sklabinský Podzámok) is interesting. It has been captured not only for its masculine gender but also for its atypical multiword form probably caused by the context as Romani toponyms are usually oneword. This proves also another example of a toponym (op. cit.): *o Revuci* ("Liptovské Revúce").[12]

Very valuable examples then are the two forms of the name Auschwitz: *Švenčina, Onšvenčina*, captured in the World War II memories of one person. They represent quite a rare proof of spontaneous naming of towns in foreign countries. Both forms have the proper form of a Romani feminine. At the same time they are interesting for the fluctuation of their form. Upon closer examination of the whole conversation (op. cit: 131), however, it is clear that the narrator, who knows the place only by (distant) report, is gradually correcting the name. The form *Onšvenčina* is then repeated. This is another example allowing us to hypothesize here that toponyms within the given locality (community), and especially the ones denominating villages somehow connected with the life of the local Roma, usually have absolutely stabilized forms. In Northern-Central Romani the names of a specific locality may vary – both in their lexical form (by borrowing from the Slovak, Hungarian, or German name) and the grammatical categories (gender, number) – this fact, however, cannot hinder the above mentioned hypothesis as it seems that such varieties mostly differ only from community to community – they do not vary within a community or even within the idiolect of an individual.

11 *Kaša* is naturally adopted as feminine and singular, the ending -e in *Košice* suitably mergeswith the plural morpheme of the indirect root *-en-* although the nominative of the proper plural loanword would be *Košici*. The nominative of these words, however, is more rare and can be even replaced by a quotational word (my own term) *Košice* (so called Code switch).

12 And at the same time proves that there exists a toponym in plural even in Central Slovakia (Note 2017).

Using the example of the eastern subdialect of the Northern-Central Romani Beníšek (2017: 146) describes the form of toponyms as follows:

The locality names do not have plural forms and, besides the nominative, they normally occur only in the locative (e.g. *xudľovste* 'in Khudlovo', *kijevste* 'in Kyiv'), the ablative (*xudľovstar* 'from Khudlovo'), and the genitive (as in the noun phrase *xudľovskere roma* 'the Roma of Khudlovo').

However, if we want to construct the "traditional" or "pre-emigration" state of using toponyms, it is also necessary to mention a phenomenon which has been only sparsely described in literature for spoken Romani, i.e. leaving out the adaptive morphemes in the nominative and accusative cases or even their non-syntactic usage. As Červenka (1996: 102) shows on the example of personal names:

"In the accusative – unlike the other cases – there still exists the tendency not to use the ending (I have noticed *le Janos Daroci, le Josel*). However, in the other cases (except the vocative) which in fact adds a preposition to the accusative ending the writers are 'forced' to add this ending to the loanword to be able to form the case (e.g. *le Janošistar, le Joselistar, Emiliha Ščukaha*)".

The above mentioned tendency in a close subdialect, although also in personal names only, is confirmed and even considered obligatory by Beníšek (2017: 46-47): "Furthermore, personal names that end in a consonant are invariably inflected as nonintegrated xenoclitic masculine forms, such as *ruslan-Ø* 'Ruslan', in the oblique, before Layer II suffixes, *ruslan-o-s-* (e.g. DAT *ruslanoske* 'to Ruslan'). Examples with the personal names also provide evidence that such loanwords remain non-integrated even in the accusative, i.e. in those contexts in which the oblique marking independent of the Layer II suffixes would otherwise be expected."

b) Situation in Vlax Romani

Even for the Vlax (Lovari) Romani there exists no systematic description of the form and behaviour of toponyms for simple reference and certain reconstruction is necessary: for the situation of the Vlax Romani before migration to Western Europe there are the following characteristics resulting from the data by Elšík, Hajská, and Ort 2016[13]:

Toponyms have a noticeable tendency to adapt with the help of adaptive morphemes. E.g. masculine forms usually end in -o and feminine forms in -a[14]. As is the case with the Northern-Central Romani, the gender and number of Romani toponyms are often different from both Czech and Slovak but there are also noticeable differences between the Vlax and Northern-Central Romani in gender and number.

In the Vlax Romani there is also an apparent tendency for the feminine singular to be used when toponyms are formed. Unlike in the Northern-Central Romani the plural hardly even exists in the Vlax Romani adapted toponyms[15]. E.g. Most, the name of a Czech town, (masculine, singular) sounds *o Mosti* (plural, probably masculine) in the Northern-Central Romani but *o Mosto* (masculine, singular) in the Vlax Romani.

13 + information by Hajská, 2017.

14 In this case, however, the adaptive morpheme corresponds to the Slovak ending in feminine forms so the adapted version is not so obvious.

15 The topic, however, will need more thorough analysis in the future: in the recently obtained recording from Ostrava the respondent uses surprising and elsewhere unknown plural forms of names of big Czech towns which have a singular form in the language of origin: *andaj Prahi* – "from Prague" and *andaj Libercura* – "from Liberec" (recording from March 30, 2017).

The toponym *o Požono* – "Bratislava" is an example which is interesting from several points of view. Besides that there exists a variant *i Braťislava* in the Vlax dialects in Eastern Slovakia, the local Roma, however, know the expression *Požono* as an archaism. Also the masculine form of the name *Požono* contrasting with the feminine *e Požoma* in Northern-Central Romani[16] is interesting[17].

Other interesting examples of traditional toponyms are[18] *i Prága* – „Prague"[19], *i Viedňa* – „Vienna"[20], *i Sombata* – „Trnava"[21], *i Topolčáňa* – „Topolčany"[22], *o Krížo* – „Žiar nad Hronom"[23], *i Pišťaňa* or *Péšťaňa* – „Piešťany"[24], *i Senca* – „Senec"[25], *i Ohaja* – „Dolný Ohaj"[26], *i Ujvára* – „Nové Zámky"[27], *i Berna* – „Brno"[28], *i Karša* – „Košice"[29].

I have addressed the "tendency" in the pre-emigration Lovari Romani to adapt toponyms, but also cases of mere switching of the code in naming localities have been noticed, i.e. absence of adaptation. However, this model – which is very important for our topic – is reserved only for the localities that are geographically or socio-culturally remote for speakers, i.e. for localities whose names are not normally used in the given subdialect of Vlax Romani. Therefore we then encounter different varieties of names of some Slovak towns: e.g. the expression for "Partizánske"[30] is *i Partizána*[31] but the Vlax Romani without closer contact with the town use the variant *le Partizánske* which is a very non-typical plural, moreover without the adaptive ending, i.e., strictly speaking, code switching. The name of the town "Zlaté Moravce" is a similar case. The primary name in Vlax Romani is *o Marouto*[32] but the Vlax Roma without closer contact with the town use the variant *le Zlaté Moravce* which is also unadapted, plural, but also non-typically two-word.

Unlike Northern-Central Romani, in Vlax Romani the toponyms denominating towns outside the area of former Czechoslovakia are not distinguished by fundamentally different morphosyntactic behaviour than the local names. E.g. to express the

16 As I have mentioned, it also has the variant *Braťislava*, especially in localities that are more remote from Bratislava.

17 For detailed information about Romani toponymy for "Bratislava", see Elšík 2017.

18 As a precautionary reminder I would like to mention that I still follow the data by Elšík, Hajská, and Ort (op. cit.)

19 In this case also the name of the Czech town is adopted from the Hungarian form which does not happen in Northern-Central Romani.

20 The name of the Austrian city formed from the Slovak form – Vienna, however, is often called *o Bejči* (which at the same time is an expression for Austria).

21 Formed from the same origin (Hungarian name) and the same gender and number (feminine singular) as in Northern-Central Romani.

22 The plural of the Slovak name is again adapted as the feminine singular.

23 Conservation of the historical state: until 1955 the name of the town was Svätý Kríž nad Hronom.

24 Feminine singular, also the regional variants are interesting.

25 Gender conversion into a feminine.

26 A feminine adapted from a masculine and a one-word name instead of a two-word name.

27 Three phenomena are worth mentioning here: adaptation from a Hungarian name, feminine form, and tendency to form one-word names.

28 The name of the Czech town which is a neuter in the original and its gender varies in Northern-Central Romani is solely feminine in Vlax Romani.

29 Unlike in Northern-Central Romani the adaptation from the Hungarian and Slovak forms does not vary and also the form is extended by the phone "r". Also e.g. unlike in Northern-Central Romani there does not exist the variant **Prešovo* for "Prešov", always the more traditional variant *Perješi* has been attested.

30 Neuter, singular.

31 Feminine, singular.

32 Masculine, singular.

meaning "in a locality/from a locality" the prepositions *ende/anda* are used in both. Also, as has been shown on the example of both names for Vienna, they usually are singular as well and fully adapted. This, however, applies to names of localities abroad where the contact had been traditional until about the 1960s.

The mere question-form data, however, suggest the emergence of a new paradigm which is going to be one of the main topics of my article and concerns both the investigated Romani communities: the towns that have become the object of migration since the 1970s, especially in Western Europe, may already have an unadapted form: *o Malmé*[33] – "Malmö", *o Brusel*[34] – "Brussels", etc.

c) Summary

Summing up the above mentioned sources of the traditional form of toponyms in both the dialects (and adding my own intensive experience with the Northern-Central dialect of Romani[35] and a similar experience Markéta Hajská had with the Lovari dialect[36]) I get several important characteristics:

1. Both Northern-Central and Vlax Romani have specific locality names for villages in the Czech or Slovak territory. They do differ from the official name in the majority language but at the same time they are always adapted from the contact language never originating directly from Romani.[37] However, different source languages may be used for adaptation of names:

a) The source is the official contemporary form from standard Czech or Slovak. In Northern-Central Romani in Czech localities the source is always the Czech language and adaptation of Czech names is also distinctly prevalent in Vlax Romani where also names of Czech localities loaned from other languages can be observed. For names of localities in Slovakia in both the investigated dialects borrowing from standard Slovak is only one of several possibilities, although this possibility is prevalent. Example: *Ružomberkos* ("Ružomberok")

b) a much rarer source is a demonstrably dialectal form of the contemporary official language: In Northern-Central Romani there is an attested form *Cepličkа* ("Liptovská Teplička"), for Vlax Romani no such data are available.

c) For both the investigated dialects the Hungarian language is a relatively frequent source of toponyms for Slovak villages (from areas with Hungarian settlement or from the era of Hungarian state administration): E.g. the expression *Sombata* – "Trnava" is the same for both dialects.

d) Also German or its local dialects from the era of German settlement in Slovakia is a frequent source for naming localities on Slovakia: e.g. *Kubacha*[38] – "Spišské Bystré". There probably also exists a local name of German origin in Vlax Romani but currently no such data are available.

2. For names of localities outside the Czech territory the toponyms also result from

33 Instead of the expected **o Malmo* or **i Malma*. Source: field journals and raw recordings by Markéta Hajská from her earlier research of the Vlax Romani, esp. in Sweden.

34 Not **o Bruselo* or **i Brusela* (recording from July 31, 2015, Leicester).

35 More than 25 years.

36 About 15 years.

37 It would of course be interesting to explain my whole topic in wider a context of borowings in Romani (e.g. Elšík, Matras, 2006: 41-43 and many others), but this would make my article too extensive.

38 Historically Kubach, Kubachy (from German Kuhbach "Cow Stream"). Until 1948 the form Kubachy was the official name of the village.

adaptation into Romani. The source then is either the original (e.g. *Berlina* – "Berlin" where, however, the Czech and Slovak forms are the same as the German one) or the Czech or Slovak form of these names (e.g. *Pariža* – "Paris", Slovak Paríž). In Vlax Romani, however, the names of foreign towns in Western Europe where the Roma have migrated roughly since the 1970s are not necessarily fully adapted (e.g. *o Brusel* – "Brussels" instead of the expected adapted **o Bruselo*[39]. It even turns out that this "non-adaptive" model worked in local subdialects of Lovari Romani even before the beginning of the modern migrations also for towns in Slovakia the given speakers had no contact with.

3. Adaptations are absolutely prevalent in the morphosyntactic forms of Romani names. It means that loaned names are provided with Romani adaptive morphemes[40] and thus they enter syntactic constructions.

4. Gender and number conversion is no exception in adaptation – a name may be of a different gender and number in Romani than the source name. It is possible to observe certain tendencies within these categories: e.g. in Western Slovakia there is a much stronger tendency in Northern-Central Romani to form names in the feminine singular. In Vlax Romani the tendency to form feminine singulars seems to be clearer and is not conditioned by regions. Another trend that is interesting (and important for my topic) is forming locality names outside the Czechoslovak territory in feminine singular. This is a common trend in all the Northern-Central Romani dialects. The above mentioned tendency is present also in Vlax Romani, but it cannot be proved as deviation from the tendency to form toponyms as feminine singulars in this dialect in general. Differences between Northern-Central and Vlax Romani (e.g. the Northern-Central feminine *e Požoma* vs the Lovari masculine *o Požono* – "Bratislava") in gender or number in toponyms of the same origin are no exception either.

5. In Northern-Central Romani names of localities outside the Czechoslovak territory traditionally behave differently in syntax: while the meaning "in a locality/from a locality" is expressed for Czech and Slovak villages by locative/ablative (or dialectally by prepositional phrases *ke /khatar*), for names of localities outside the Czechoslovak territory this is always expressed by prepositional phrases *and(r)e /andal (pal)*. In Vlax Romani this contrast is non-existent, the above mentioned meanings are always expressed by the prepositions *ande /anda (pa)* corresponding to the Northern-Central *and(r)e /andal (pal)*.

6. Except for some exceptions Romani local names are one-word which applies even when the source name is multi-word (e.g. the above mentioned Northern-Central *Cepličkа* ("Liptovská Teplička") or Vlax *o Novejši* ("Pečovská Nová Ves").

7. In both investigated dialects there quite often exist two lexical forms of a name for localities in Slovakia. One is more traditional, more different from the contemporary official form of the name – it is used by the communities for whom the locality is somehow important, usually geographically closer (e.g. *Požoma*[41]/*Požono*[42] – "Bratislava"). The other is loaned from the contemporary official form of the name (*Braťislava*) and is usually used by the Roma from more distant localities with no close traditional relationship to the locality. Besides these couples we may observe

39 In accordance with the linguistic convention I use an asterisk to mark a hypothetical, unattested, or non-existent expression.

40 With the above mentioned exceptions for some more recently loaned Vlax Romani names.

41 Northern-Central Romani.

42 Lovari Romani.

also varieties in gender or number. An example from Northern-Central Romani: *o Brnos/ e Brna* – "Brno".

8. A very important characteristic of toponyms that will be addressed again later in this article is the custom – consensuality of a specific name within one local community or community of relatives. Names of localities mostly vary within Northern-Central Romani, or Czecho-Slovak Lovari Romani, as a whole, while a single consensual variant is usually the rule in one local community or community of relatives.[43]

1.2. The form of toponyms in the "post-migration" situation

a) Situation in Northern-Central Romani

In Northern-Central Romani migration causes several noticeable changes in the form and use of toponyms for new localities in Britain. It is interesting that according to the existing data it is not possible to detect dependence of these changes on the length of stay[44] or the intensity of contact with the new environment[45], on the English language competency or on the fact whether the respondent was staying in Slovakia or Great Britain at the time of the interview.[46] What follows is the survey of changes:

1. Unadapted names

The names of new localities in Britain are no longer adapted and in fact they formally become products of code switching[47]. This practice is in contradiction not only with the customary formation of toponyms for "home", i.e. Czech or Slovak localities, but also with the custom of naming localities abroad. New local names do not have Romani adaptive endings and their form rather imitates the original pronunciation of the English toponyms.

Therefore there occur the following forms of toponyms for places in north England: *Pitrboro* ("Peterborough", the adapted form would probably sound **e Pitrbora* or **o Pitrboros*)[48], *Šefild* ("Sheffield", the adapted form would sound **e Šefilda* or **o Šefildos*)[49], *Tinzli* ("Tinsley", a suburban part of Sheffield, the adapted form would sound **e Tinzla* or **o Tinzlos*)[50], *Gridlis* ("Gleadless Valley", a part of Sheffield, the adapted form would sound **e Glidlisa* in the case of a feminine, **o Glidlisos* in the

43 For accuracy's sake: it is possible that generation shift occurs in some localities where the older generation uses the more traditional name while the name originating from the contemporary Slovak one spreads among the young generation. However, not enough research has been realized dealing with this topic. In fact it even seems that Romani conserves historical names of Hungarian or German origin much more than the local custom among Slovak speakers.

44 Recordings from 2005 – 2016 have been analysed and members of different migration generations speak in them.

45 Not only utterances of men and children whose contact with the English-speaking environment is usually more intensive thanks to their going to work or school have been analysed but also utterances of women whose contact with English is limited.

46 Recordings and notes from each of both the environments represented about 50%.

47 This of course is a daring statement for the sake of clearness. It might apply if we did not take the article and proper inclusion of toponyms in a sentence into consideration (and also the above mentioned possibility to use proper names without adaptive morphemes in nominative in Northern-Central Romani). On the other hand the character of new toponyms which is closer to imitation will be shown soon herein which partly supports the hypothesis on code switching.

48 Unadapted form attested in recordings:A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I.

49 Unadapted form attested in recordings:A, I, C, D, E, I.

case of a masculine)[51], *Picmor* ("Pitsmoor", a suburban part of Sheffield, the adapted form would sound **e Picmora* or **o Picmoros*)[52], *Rotherham* ("Rotherham", the adapted form would sound **e Rotherhama* or **o Rotherhamos*)[53], *Menčester* ("Manchester", the adapted form would sound **e Menčestra* or **o Menčestros*)[54].

In most of the submitted recordings the respective names repeatedly occur in their unadapted form which is confirmed also by personal communication with researchers and the electronic communication of the respondents. In total I have noticed only 3 exceptions from the above mentioned rule each of which is of a slightly different character:

The expressions *e Londina* ("London"), *andre Londina* ("in London")[55] have been noticed repeatedly. I believe that this proof rather represents a residuum of the pre-emigration model of formation of toponyms. This is already suggested by the fact that the form is derived from the Slovak word instead of the English one (that would sound **andre Londona*), then it is suggested by the feminine form and the fact that it refers to a well-known city, and finally by the fact that the other British localities in the same recording are always denominated by toponyms that have not been adapted. The other two exceptions from the described model are in close relation with the morphosyntactic behaviour of loan words; therefore I will address them and comment on them later.

2. Masculine singular

All new toponyms are solely masculine and singular.[56] There are two reasons why it is interesting: For one thing the unadapted names have different endings and the toponym *Tinzli* would rather suggest a plural form in Romani. Moreover, the masculine unification contradicts the traditional tendency to denominate towns, especially abroad, by feminine forms.

3. Prepositional constructions

As a matter of principle new toponyms in other than nominative meaning are connected to sentences by prepositional constructions, not by the locative or ablative: e.g. *andro Picmor* ("in Pitsmoor", recording A), *ando Menčester* ("in Manchester", recording E), *andal o Petiboro* ("from Peterborough", recording I). If the information is related to the fact that the towns concerned are foreign towns, it in fact means continuation of the previous state, as Northern-Central Romani town names outside the Czechoslovak territory had behaved in this way even before the modern emigration.

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50 Unadapted form attested in recordings: A, C, E, O.

51 Unadapted form attested in recording: A. It is interesting, however, that the traditional model of a one-word toponym has been preserved. I write about name variations (here clearly audible r instead of l) below.

52 Unadapted form attested in recording:A.

53 Unadapted form attested in recordings: A, C, O.

54 Unadapted form attested in recording: E.

55 Recordings: D (a man, about 45 years old, living in England, solely and repeatedly – three times), recording A (this speaker, however, varies *andro Londýna*, *andre Londýn*, *andro Londýn*, i.e. he more often creates the unadapted form based on the Slovak name for "London", recording K (*andro Londína*), on the other hand, in the recording there is only the variant *and(r)o Londýn*, twice, (which in fact is a form according to a new model, it is an unadapted masculine, but it is interesting that it again comes from the Slovak and not the English version of the toponym).

56 Because of the absence of adaptive endings the grammatical gender is expressed by articles that may be integrated into prepositions: e.g. *andro Pitrboro* (in Peterborough) and not the hypothetical **andre Pitrboro*.

Prepositional constructions at the same time make the existence of unadapted proper names possible without them being heterogeneous elements.[57]. It is clear, however, that the new toponyms join sentences syntactically: there are always expressions of the type *andro Šefild* (with the article integrated in the preposition) and not **andre Sheffield* which would signalize a proper change of the code.

I noticed two interesting exceptions in the corpus: In one of the recordings the adapted form of the proper name *Lidsos* ("Leeds") with an unadapted variant Lids: "bo mandar jehkvar phučľas e Angličanka, Lidsos... andro Lids mandar..."[58]. In my opinion the form of the quotation does not show a real exception but rather a situation of transition: the speaker starts to say the name for "Leeds" with the traditional adaptive morpheme which at the same time forms the obliquus (and she probably intends to use the traditional locative phrase **Lidsoste*) but probably realizes how strange the traditional phrase sounds in connection with a British town, corrects herself and uses a prepositional phrase with the unadapted form. In the same recording the new form is confirmed after a while by the prepositional phrase *andro Lids* ("in Leeds" and *pal o Lids* ("from Leeds").

A real exception then is an adapted form of a toponym in the locative phrase that has been noticed: *me bešav Kardifoste* ("I live in Cardiff")[59]. This is in contradiction with the new custom, brings the model which is usual for behaviour of toponyms for Slovak or Czech villages and thus in fact leaves the tradition established for towns abroad. It is also interesting that thanks to his works this speaker (the other Roma in the recording do not use such forms or phrases) is in an intensive contact with English which is a language using prepositional phrases.

4. Non-existence of consensual variants of toponyms

One of the most distinctive features of new toponyms is their unsettled character. Names of British towns or suburbs do not remain only unadapted: despite the speakers' long stay abroad no set forms of the names are formed in Romani and their pronunciation is in fact only imitated by individual speakers.[60] This brings varieties of different forms in which it is not possible to detect dependence on the length of the migration experience, the country of current residence, and especially on family relations. Although the whole investigated community is related, its members keep social contact and of course share the same Romani subdialect, the forms of town names are very varied. They even vary within closer families (e.g. in siblings or married couples) and even within individual speeches. This was not the case at the time they lived in Slovakia.

The English names for the two places where the members of the given community most frequently stay (and thus the only ones noticed in a significant number of recordings) vary in Romani as follows:

57 To be precise, this in fact is coordination of three grammatical rules: (1) Proper names in Northern-Central Romani have articles. 2. Preposition with an article is always followed by the nominative, not only in proper names. 3. The nominative is one of the minority of cases that do not need the ending of the obliquus and therefore do not need adaptive morphemes.

58 "Because one English lady once asked, Leeds... in Leeds asked me". (Recording L)

59 Recording E.

60 It cannot be denied, however, that the way the close relatives pronounce certain toponyms in Romani may have a substantial influence on the form of a name used by a specific speaker. On the other hand distinctive differences even between the closest relatives can be observed quite frequently.

"Peterborough":
Pitrboro[61], *Peterboro*[62], *Pitiboro*[63], *Piteboro*[64], *Piterboro*[65], *Pitiborou*[66], *Pitborou*[67], *Petiboro*[68], *Piterboro* next to *Píterboro*[69], *Pitrboro* next to *Pitiboro*[70], *Pitiboro* next to *Piterboro*[71].

"Sheffield":
Šefild[72], *Šefld*[73], *Šefl*[74], *Šefeld*[75], *Šefl* next to *Šefld*[76] and even four variants *Šefl*, *Šefld*, *Šefild* and *Šefíld*[77] occurring simultaneously in a speech by a single speaker.

For "Rotherham" a locality occurring only three times in the recordings, even 2 different variants of pronunciation: *Roterdam*[78], *Rotherham*[79] have been found.

Also, one variant appeared in the name for "Tinsley". Though almost all Roma pronounce the toponym as *Tinzli*[80], there is also the variant *Tizli*[81].

The rich variety of these imitations of the original name is surprising especially in the closest relatives or within individual speeches, but it is also interesting within the whole community.

5. Conservative form of toponyms for Czech and Slovak towns

In the language of the contemporary migrants the forms and morphosyntactic behaviour of names of the source localities from the Czech or Slovak territory represent an interesting contrast to the new toponyms. Not only their lexical origins are preserved

61 This form attested in recording: E, while the wife of this respondent is consistent in her using the variant *Piteboro* in the recording.
62 This form attested in recording: B.
63 Thus attested in recordings: G, H, and also recording I, while the husband, on the contrary, clearly uses the form *Petiboro* in the same recording.
64 This form attested in recording: E, while the husband of the respondent uses the variant *Pitrboro*.
65 Thus attested in recordings: A, and also recording C: one of the sisters uses this variant as a matter of principle, the other clearly prefers the variant *Pitiboro*.
66 Thus attested in recording: F, while the other sister uses the variant *Pitrborou* there.
67 Thus attested in recording: I, while the husband, on the contrary, clearly uses the form *Petiboro* in the same recording.
68 Thus attested in recording: I, while the wife, on the contrary, clearly uses the form *Pitborou* in the same recording.
69 Thus attested in recording: D (the shorter variant occurs more frequently but even the longer variant is pronounced clearly).
70 Thus attested in recording: A.
71 Recording C: however, there is a distinct tendency to use the variant *Pitiboro*, the respondent's sister in the same recording prefers the variant *Piterboro* as a matter of principle.
72 Thus attested in recording: C, but the other sister uses the variant *Šefld* in the same recording.
73 Thus attested in recordings: C, but the other sister uses the variant *Šefild* in the same recording, I (here it is even possible that the speaker pronounces another variant *Šefl*).
74 Thus attested in recording: D.
75 Thus attested in recording: I.
76 Thus attested in recording: E.
77 Thus attested in recording: A. Here it is interesting though, that the toponym for "Peterborough" does not vary in this speaker .
78 Thus attested in recording: A. Possible contamination by the name of a better known city in the Netherlands.
79 Thus attested in recordings: C, O. The group "th" is really pronounced like the Romani aspirated th.
80 Thus attested in recordings: A, C, E.
81 Thus attested once in recording: O.

within a community (e.g. a local expression of German or Hungarian origin is not replaced by a more official Slovak variant)[82] but also the way of expressing the meaning "in a locality" and "from a locality" remains traditional, i.e. it is formed by cases, not by prepositional constructions. Traditional names for the source localities of the branched Czecho-Slovak Romani community are also preserved in the feminine singular[83] although the same names have different grammatical categories in the majority languages.

Both models of toponyms then frequently meet in the speeches of respondents (maybe even in one sentence): the traditional model for Czech or Slovak localities and the progressive model for British localities.

b) Situation in Vlax Romani

1. Unadapted names

It is remarkable that in the case of migration to Western Europe there occur some phenomena in denominating towns within the community of Lovari Romani speakers that are similar to those we can observe in speakers of the Northern-Central dialect and this happens without any intensive communication between the two communities. Similarly to Northern-Central Romani it is not possible to detect dependence of these changes on the length of the migration experience or the country of residence at the time of the interview. As I have mentioned, the seeds of the former of the phenomena – the use of unadapted forms of toponyms – may date in Lovari Romani back to the 1960s or 1970s. It lacks consistence but the denomination of the quite old migration destination *o Malmé* ("Malmö") instead of the expected **e Malma* or **o Malmo*, or e.g. the plural of Flemish origin *o Antverpen* (instead of the feminine singular **e Antverpa* or plural **o Antverpura*) and the other above mentioned examples show that this phenomenon did not start to occur until as late as in the mid-1990s as is the case with Northern-Central Romani speakers.

In the new migration since the 1990s, however, the described model becomes – like in the case of Northern-Central Romani – a rule. Let us concentrate on the form of the name Leicester, the town which was the destination for the investigated community: as the most frequent form *o Lejčestr* ("Leicester") is not adapted in Northern-Central Romani, the properly adapted form would have to be **o Lejčestro* leaving aside the traditional tendency in Vlax Romani to form feminine toponyms. In Vlax Romani, however, there already starts a new process that has not been observed in Northern-Central Romani yet: it is a secondary turning of a name into Romani using the traditional model (including the fact that it is feminine), this time using also the correct English pronunciation of the toponym: among younger Vlax Roma who are in more intensive contact with the British or Vlax Roma from communities other than Eastern-Slovak Lovara the variant **i Lestra* is spreading. Also the popular video clips in social networks thematizing

82 To have the full picture: among hundreds of examples there exists an only exception in the recording M, where a young man used an unusual variant of the name of a Slovak village which was closer to the official name. This fact may be interpreted in different ways, e.g. by his worry that despite their competency in Romani the interviewers from the Czech Republic will not understand the traditional local name.

83 In accordance with Dobruská (2017) for the sake of anonymity I do not mention the names of the source localities in Romani and it is not necessary for my topic as they do not vary.

the feeling of being Leicester Roma, for example Ame sam Rom anda Lestra ("We are Roma from Leicester")[84], certainly have an important influence here.

Like in Northern-Central Romani, also the denomination of the capital is extraordinary and interesting. Many Lovari dialecs speakers say *Londýn*[85]. It means that even in Vlax Romani this name exists without adaptation but it has been loaned from the Slovak version. And the form is not settled, like in Northern-Central Romani: some Vlax Roma say *ando London* and others *ando Landn*. A common feature of all these variants is that they are not adapted into Romany, i.e. the forms **o Londino* or **o Landno*, **o Londono*, etc. have not been observed.

2. Masculine singular

Like in Northern-Central Romani the new toponyms are always masculine which somehow contradicts the tradition[86]. Not only the example *o Lejčester* but also denominations of other places in North England prove that[87].

3. Non-existence of consensual variants of toponyms[88]

Like in Northern-Central Romani it is possible to observe a surprising instability of the form of new toponyms despite the speaker's quite long stay in the locality (often more than 10 years). This has been shown by the above mentioned contrasting variants *o Leičester* x *i Lestra* but these might suggest just certain development with gradual adaptation. In Lovari Romani, however, there also exist variants next to each other that do not mean development but just instability: on 27 May, 2017 Hajská[89] recorded a conversation via Skype where the speaker living in Leicester for a long time systematically used the variant *o Lenčestr* for this town. Hajská[90] at the same time mentions the variants *Lečester*, *Lenčester*, or *Lejcester*.

Other interesting variants are represented by the names of towns where Northern-Central Romani speakers live. In a recording from 27 May, 2017 the question where Roma live in England was deliberately asked and more variants of towns known from the varieties in Northern-Central Romani occurred: *ando Pítrsburou* ("in Petersborough"), *ando Šefíld* ("in Sheffield").

4. Conservative form of toponyms for Czech and Slovak towns

As for the names of the source localities, they remain (like in the Northern-Central Romani) the same as the pre-emigration situation. It is especially striking in the cases where the traditional name differs lexically from the official Slovak form. E.g. the town of Prešov is even by young Lovari migrants, whose experience with this locality

84 A clip demonstrably shared from YouTube in Facebook conversation within the community in May 2017, however, not found on YouTube in June.

85 E.g. recording N. The form *Londýn* is both Czech and Slovak name for "London".

86 Here of course I do not mean the mentioned most progressive model *i Lestra* which has not fully spread.

87 *O Šefíld*, *o Bradford, o Pítrsburou* – recording from May 27, 2017, Žatec district (Czech Republic).

88 For comparison I would like to add that the use of prepositional constructions I investigate in the case of Northern-Central Romani is not substantial for Lovari Romani as prepositional constructions have always been used in it for both home and foreign localities. Therefore the section on Lovari Romani is one chapter shorter.

89 Personal message.

90 Field journals 2015 and 2016 and additional analysis of the raw recordings from this period.

is much weaker, called traditionally *o Perješi* the name is not replaced by the variant closer to the contemporary name *(*o Prešovo*).

c) Summary

1. Even on migration to Western Europe, especially to Great Britain, both Northern-Central and Vlax (Lovari) Romani borrow toponyms from majority languages. These are always the local languages, in our case especially English. The only proved exception is the name of the city of London which has two variants existing next to each other, from the English (*London*) and the Slovak (*Londýn*) forms. The Slovak language even seems to prevail in the case of this city in both the Romani dialects. This can probably be explained by the tradition in denominating this city which was well known even before migration.

2. The names of the source localities (or villages and towns in the Czech and Slovak territory) remain unchanged even after a longer stay of the speakers in the West: in the given related community they are derived from the same origins (although they are different from the official name of the village), they are adopted in the same way and also their syntactic behaviour is the same: in Northern-Central Romani the meaning "in a locality" and "from a locality" is expressed by case constructions, in Lovari Romani by prepositional phrases.

3. While names of localities outside the Czechoslovak territory traditionally used to be also adapted into Romani in both dialects, by migration to the West[91] the paradigm completely changes at this point: morphological adaptations completely disappears in both dialects and the toponyms themselves, although provided with articles and included into sentences, have rather the form of code switching than loanwords. It is strange, especially because both dialects have had a long experience with adaptation of toponyms from different languages varying both genetically and typologically (Slovak, German and Hungarian). Therefore hypothetical adapted forms for new English toponyms can be easily constructed as shown above.

4. In both dialects new toponyms contradict the tradition of solely masculine gender (in both dialects with the exception of denomination of London varying in gender which – as I have mentioned – is rather a relic of tradition).

5. As new toponyms are coincidentally nominative[92] in sentence patterns in both dialects, they enter sentences unadapted with the help of prepositional constructions and at this point there is even no detectable deviation from the pre-emigration custom.

6. The tradition of one-word names of localities continues (even in the cases where the original is multi-word, e.g. *o Gridlis* – "Gleadless Valley").

7. The traditional contrast between the variants of names from Roma who know the locality closely (usually the more traditional form) and from Roma with no relationship to it (usually adaptation from the more official form) continues to exist for denominating localities in Slovakia of the Czech Republic. Toponyms for English names do vary much more but in an absolutely individual manner as will be shown in the following clause.

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91 In Lovari Romani selectively for some localities since as early as the 1960s/70s, in both dialects then fully at least since the mid 1990s.

92 In Lovari Romani the given meanings are traditionally always expressed in this manner, in Northern-Central Romani it is so only in localities abroad.

8. In the section on traditional toponyms I mentioned that one of their very important features is the consensual character of a specific name within one local or related community. At this point the situation has changed into a complete opposite, surprisingly in both dialects. Romani speakers rather imitate the original English names, everyone according to their personal competences of preferences and different variants can be found not only across a related community, but even in married couples or siblings the forms of toponyms differ, and even some individuals use different variants. Moreover, the above mentioned variability does not disappear even after many years of the speakers' stay in Britain.

9. Moreover, the whole model of new unadapted masculine toponyms for British towns is replicated also in the home community in Slovakia and used by people with no personal migration experience.

2. CONCLUSION

In my article I tried to investigate the changes occurring in two different Romani dialects due to migration of their speakers from Slovakia to Great Britain. From the very beginning it seemed to be most useful to concentrate on the most evident topic: formation and usage of toponyms, specifically names of towns. The fact is that this subject was one of the least expected language consequences of migration. Also its similar realization in both the communities living neither in Slovakian or in Great Britain in the same localities and hardly ever communicating with each other is surprising. Another reason to concentrate on a single topic is the fact that the interesting subject of toponyms has not been systematically described in either of the investigated dialects even for the pre-emigration situation, especially not in the ethnological literature. Therefore it was necessary to begin with description of the referential state as it existed before migration to the West.

As I have shown, Romani toponyms have always been the result of language contact. However, the changes investigated in my article are more the result of a new life and language situation than of a specific influence of English on the structure of Romani.

I have come to the following results:

1. On migration to Western Europe both Northern-Central and Vlax (Lovari) Romani continue the tradition of loaning of toponyms from majority languages but the paradigm changes identically in both the investigated dialects: the so far existing morphological adaptation of the source names with the help of adaptive morphemes is completely abandoned. It is strange, especially because both the dialects have a long-time experience with adaptation of toponyms from various languages differing both genetically and typologically and so names adapted from English would present no problem in either dialect.[93] Denominations of the source localities (or villages and towns in Czech and Slovak territory), however, remain perfectly unchanged even after a longer stay in the West: they get derived from the same historical origins[94] within a given related community and are still adapted in the traditional manner.

93 Also, lot of the names for traditional Slovak localities come from the languages Roma are not competent in (Hungarian, German) and even the names originating from Slovak forms differ in gender or number from Slovak and/or within the particular Romani dialect. That is why I hesitate to accept the

2. In both the dialects new toponyms are solely masculine which also rather contradicts the tradition. On the contrary the toponyms for the Czech and Slovak source localities keep the original grammatical categories. This is remarkable especially in Northern-Central Romani where they keep their traditional form of a feminine singular, although they are of different categories in their respective source languages.

3. Consensuality is a very important characteristic of traditional Romani toponyms: the name of a specific village usually does not vary within one local or related community. This consensuality completely changes due to migration to Western Europe and an unusual variety does not disappear even after a many-year stay of the whole community in one locality. For example even after ten years of stay it seems that the individual Romani speakers rather imitate the original English pronunciation of names according to their individual competences or preferences. I have described the unexpected number of variants of individual names that differ not only across a related community but also e.g. in married couples of siblings. Even some individuals use more different variants of the same name.

4. The whole described model of the opposition of new and traditional toponyms is replicated even in the home community in Slovakia; it is used even by people with no personal migration experience.

The whole change of the paradigm of Romani toponyms may generate questions and hypotheses which, however, should be only carefully suggested and subjected to further investigation in the future. Also there are differences in how much the detected individual changes are surprising or serious. Let us compare two of my most remarkable findings:

A) In my opinion the radical abandoning of adapting town names into Romani and their usage as unadapted masculine forms might be explained by the intensity of the change. As I have shown, the traditional system of adaptation of toponyms concerned genetically and typologically different languages, nevertheless, it may have stabilized also thanks to a long-time language contact with the source languages speakers and among Roma communicating with one another. On the other hand the new migration hastily threw quite large communities into contact with unknown West-European languages; some respondents had even lived in several West-European countries during the last few decades. The need to immediately handle toponyms of unknown origin and structure thus might have created the need to facilitate communication by partial code-switching without waiting for formation of adapted consensual Romani forms. This hypothesis might also correspond with the unification of new toponyms as singular masculine forms which may have been perceived as neutral and thus more suitable for incomplete adaptation of words that speakers did not consider to be properly adapted Romani words.

The fact that the above mentioned state has continued independently in both the investigated dialects even after more than ten years can also be explained within this hypothesis: the new language paradigm had come into being faster than the overall

suggestion to explain the new situation by unstable bilingualism in new language (as it was suggested by one of the peer reviews of my article).

94 I mention in the article that the choice of the source for adaptation of a toponym usually depends on the extent of the contact the speakers from the given community have with the locality – it means that the further in terms of time, social situation, or geography the community is, the more probable it is that it will adapt the current official Slovak name.

language adaptation to the new situation and begun to replicate. Thus it may have become an integral part of both the dialects to be used for denominating West-European localities which will have to be taken into account in their future grammatical descriptions. This, by the way, would also correspond with replication of the above mentioned model in the source localities in Slovakia.

B) In comparison to the above mentioned phenomenon it is more difficult to explain the high tendency of the individual new toponyms to vary. One of the reasons for this situation certainly is the low competency of the speakers in English; however, the traditional model of toponyms was not dependent on competency in the source language, either[95]. Therefore it is possible that either the need to exactly denominate a certain town or the need of this specific form of language manifestation of being insiders has just weakened. It might also suggest other ways of self-identification of a group after having moved to a large multicultural city abroad.

What development of this phenomenon may be expected in future generations?[96] If the individually motivated imitation of the original name has really become the new custom for toponyms, I think that future decline of the above described variability may be predicted. When the generation of current children grows up and is fully competent in English, the tendency to vary will be naturally weakened as names of towns will be close to their original pronunciation. Another possible alternative is suggested by the type *i Lestra* which has even now been observed as minor in Vlax Romani. It would mean additional formation of consensual traditional type toponyms even for British names. Currently this type is marginal but its expansion cannot be ruled out, because as I have shown in my article, language development often follows unexpected routes.

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95 A typical example is a still passed on name of the source locality of the respondents – Northern-Central Romani speakers (for the sake of anonymity I do not give the name of the locality). This name comes from a language the speakers certainly do not know.

96 Supposing the competence in Romani will be preserved.

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RESOURCES

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Recording A: 2005-10-24-02 (Eastern Slovakia)

Recording B: 2005-12-20-01 (Eastern Slovakia)

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Recording D: 2007-02-15-03 (Sheffield, Great Britain)

Recording E: 2007-02-17-03 (Sheffield, Great Britain)

Recording F: 2007-10-06-02 (Sheffield, Great Britain)

Recording G: 2007-10-10-03 (Sheffield, Great Britain)

Recording H: 2008-02-03-01 (Eastern Slovakia)

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Recording J: 2005-10-26-05 (Eastern Slovakia)

Recording K: 2015-07-13-01 (Eastern Slovakia)

Recording L: 2007-02-13-02 (Sheffield, Great Britain)

Recording M: 2015-07-11-01 (Eastern Slovakia)

Recording N: 2016-07-16-01 (Leicester, Great Britain)

Recording O: 2006-12-01-02 (Sheffield, Great Britain)

Raw recordings (yet not catalogued):

July 31, 2015 (Leicester, Great Britain)

March 30, 2017 (Ostrava, Czech Republic)

May 27, 2017 (Žatec district, Czech Republic)

About 10 other raw non-catalogued recordings in Vlax Romani (years 2016 – 2017)

Field journals

Interviews with Markéta Hajská, Petra Dobruská and Jan Ort (2017)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JAN ČERVENKA – began his studies at the underground Evening University of Czech Language and Literature in 1988. In 1990, after the Velvet Revolution, he followed his teachers to the Faculty of Arts at Charles University, where he studied Czech Language and Literature and Romani Language. His research and pedagogical interests include the written form of Romani, Romani art, Romani translatology and editology, and ethnology of the Roma. He is the co-author and academic supervisor of the official language rules of North-Central Romani in Slovakia. In 2005–2016, he was the Head of the Romani Studies Section. Selected publications in English: *Issues of lingustic correctness in Romani*. In Facuna J., Lužica R.: Spolu s Rómami dosiahneme viac / Together with Roma, we will achieve more. Bratislava, Štátny pedagogický ústav, 2016, p. 223–236; Kubaník P., Červenka J., Sadílková H.: *Romani language competence in an intergenerational transmission in the Czech Republic*. In Barbara Schrammel-Leber B.: Romani V. Papers from the Annual Meeting of the Gypsy Lore Society Graz 2011. Graz, treffpunkt sprachen. Plurilingualism Research Unit, 2013, p. 61–80.; *Problems in using official composed personal names in written Romani*, In: Grazer linguistische Studien 2004/61, p. 25–29.

SLOVENSKÝ NÁRODOPIS SLOVAK ETHNOLOGY
4 65 • 2017
ARTICLES

THE 'REFUGEE CRISIS' FROM ATHENS TO LESVOS AND BACK: A DIALOGICAL ACCOUNT

MYRTO TSILIMPOUNIDI, ANNA CARASTATHIS

DOI 10.26363/SN.2017.4.03 © 2017, Institute of Ethnology SAS

Dr. Myrto Tsilimpounidi, PhD., Institute for Sociology of Slovak Academy of Sciences, Klemensova 19, 813 64 Bratislava, Slovak Republic; e-mail: myrto.tsilimpounidi@savba.sk
Anna Carastathis, PhD., Critical Feminist Network on Migration and Refugees, Concordia University, 1455 Boulevard de Maisonneuve Ouest, H3G 1M8 Montreal; e-mail: acarastathis@gmail.com

Our grandparents, refugees
Our parents, immigrants
We, racists?[1]

The slogan that prefaces the paper provides the theoretical caveat for the tensions, limitations, and contradictions of academic discourses in conjuring the daily realities of the era of the 'refugee crisis' in Greece. This paper has the form of a dialogue between a sociologist and photographer (Myrto) and a political theorist and activist (Anna) who investigate different forms of the ways the 'refugee crisis' is changing the socio-political landscapes in Greece. The multiple aspects of our identities provide valuable tools with which we unpack the multiple and contradictory narratives of researching, learning, and disseminating in the current milieu. In particular, we are interested in the ways we shape knowledge and the tension between the epistemological and the ontological ways of knowing. In other words, by moving from theory to praxis and back, we are attempting to reconcile the problem of knowing and the problem of being part of a specific crisis milieu. For example, how can we use crisis as a research methodology? What can we learn from the ongoing 'refugee crisis' in relation to issues of citizenship, belonging, and the future of the European project? Furthermore, the paper attempts to transcend discursive borders between social sciences and the humanities by analysing the deeply performative, situated and embodied practices of doing research in moments of crisis. For example, how to navigate multiple, and at times contradictory, aspects of one's identity without returning to outmoded discourses of positivism and objectivity?

Keywords: Greece, Athens, Lesvos, crisis, refugee crisis, hotspots, borders

How to cite: Tsilimpounidi, M., Carastathis, A. (2017). The 'Refugee Crisis' from Athens to Lesvos and Back: A Dialogical Account.
Slovenský národopis, 65(4), 404–419 doi: 10.26363/SN.2017.4.03

1 Slogan written on Greek walls in Lesvos and Athens prior to the years of the declared 'refugee crisis'.

Imagine you are standing on the shore of a sea staring across at a landmass opposite, which forms your horizon. You know, although they are not visible to you, that beneath the surface of this sea are the corpses of thousands of people who tried to cross it in order to arrive where you are now standing. Your horizon, then, is a border. This sea has long been viewed as a threshold, and yours is not the first epoch during which it has been crossed by masses of people in a rising tide of desperation, propelled by unspeakable violence. But crossing it has, in your epoch, become a crime. It is the liquid border between what is called "Greece" and what is called "Turkey"; and the solid ground on which you are standing is the "entrance gate to Europe." That you are standing here at all depends on prior crossings—including those of your grandparents—which, many years later, contributed to this threshold nation the semblance of solidity, even as they kept gazing across to a place they never ceased to remember as "home." Recently, this border has been multiplied; metaphorically and discursively, it travels; it exists in the imagination as far away as that "island nation" eager to "Brexit" from the continental project of Europe; it's being walled up and razor-wired shut, patrolled by border hunters chasing equally imaginary refugees. Your horizon has become a wall; a multilateral bargain; an aqueous cemetery. Staring at this horizon, things stop making sense. So you turn away. You stop imagining.

The shore. Photographer: Anna Carastathis.

In reflecting on the place of imagination, self-expression and collective cultural creation as an embodied means of engaging with the current milieu of crisis and sudden changes, Arjun Appadurai calls for a view of imagination as a popular, social, and collective fact, with a dual and antithetical character. On the one hand, 'it is in and through the imagination that modern citizens are disciplined and controlled'—by states, markets, and other powerful interests. But it is also the faculty through which 'collective patterns of dissent and new designs for collective life emerge' (2000: 6). Following Appadurai, if the imagination is the realm that produces and sustains the totalities of the status quo, then it is now more crucial than ever to engage in subversive ways of imagining and redefining our vocabularies through action.

This paper follows the trajectories of the formation of hotspots in the European pe-

riphery, which have become the centre-stage of European migration policy. These political trajectories inscribe and proscribe the journeys of people making "illicit" crossings in an effort to survive wars waged by tanks and by banks, only to find themselves, once more, targets and to become the casualties of an undeclared war on migration. Hotspots are Europe's answer to a "migration management" problem it has itself produced; they are sorting grounds, islands turned into prisons, where "human rights" are meted out like scarce goods to those deemed deserving of them. According to the function of hotspots, the national border is moved inward, separating the islands from the mainland, creating a liminal zone of questionable legal status, but also multiplying the border through so-called "mobile hotspots," which follow people on the move who have circumvented the security regime (Spathopoulou, 2016; Carastathis, Spathopoulou and Tsilimpounidi, forthcoming).

The hotspot approach was presented by the European Commission in May 2015, as part of a larger policy push termed the "European Agenda on Migration" (EC, 2015). Ostensibly to facilitate the emergency relocation of refugees to other EU member states, following the EU Decisions of 14 and 22 September 2015, hotspots were conceived in order to "swiftly" sort those deemed eligible for international protection at the point of arrival on the northern shores of the Mediterranean, in Italy and Greece. Five "registration and identification centres" started operating in Greece, on the islands of Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Leros, and Kos. The European Agenda on Migration mandates the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Frontex, and Europol to collaborate "on the ground with frontline Member States to swiftly identify, register and fingerprint incoming migrants" (EC, 2015), dividing those eligible to apply for asylum from those deemed ineligible, who are slated for deportation either to their countries of origin or of exile—or, since the bilateral EU-Turkey agreement went into effect (20 March 2016), for those who passed through that country, back to Turkey. Further, Europol and Eurojust are to assist the "host" Member State in the dismantling of "smuggling and trafficking networks" (EC, 2015). The hotspot approach's main target, then, is managing human mobility across the Mediterranean: what the EU Commission defines as "mixed flows" arriving at the exterior border of the EU.

If the initial pretext for the hotspots, which became sites of indefinite detention and pre-deportation, was the relocation of refugees, it became clear by March 2016, when Balkan countries sealed their borders, closing the humanitarian corridor, that tens of thousands of refugees who had not managed to cross or to be relocated would be "stranded" in Greece. Although EU states promised in 2015 to relocate 66,400 refugees from Greece, a year later, in 2016, less than 6% had been relocated (AI, 2016). Moreover, since June 2016, relocation has only been made available to asylum seekers on the Greek mainland, trapping those who were not given the "right to the ferry" on the hotspot islands (Spathopoulou, 2016). If Lesvos was once imagined as the gateway to Europe, with the implementation of the hotspot approach, it has now become the gateway to a Fortress.

Moreover, this paper engages with the lived realities of a country after eight consecutive years of financial crisis, and after two years of what has been named the "refugee crisis" in/by/of Europe. From this initial one-layered chronological ordering of "the crises", the intersecting realities of the two phenomena become apparent. Thus, even if we primarily focuse on the crisis enacted by the wars in Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, and the concomitant displacement of populations, it becomes inescapable to frame

Sea as Border, author: Efi Xenou. Photographer: Anna Carastathis.

or analyse this within the milieu of precarity and dispossession within the "hosting" country. Therefore, before entering into our dialogical account, we provide the contextual framework of "nesting crises" (Carastathis, 2017); but, most importantly, we underscore how this is altering social realities both for people residing in Greece and incoming refugees. Having said this, we also want to problematise this prevalent dichotomy between the indigenous, hosting communities and the refugees, precisely by engaging in a discussion of the concentric, simultaneous nature of these declared crises.

This paper takes the form of a dialogue between a sociologist and photographer (Myrto) and a political theorist and activist (Anna) who investigate different ways the "refugee crisis" is changing socio-political landscapes in Greece. The multiple aspects of our identities provide valuable tools with which we unpack the multiple and contradictory narratives of researching, learning, and disseminating in the current milieu. In particular, we are interested in the ways we shape knowledge, and in the tension between epistemological and ontological ways of knowing. In other words, by moving from theory to praxis and back, we are attempting to reconcile the problem of knowing with the problem of being part of a specific crisis milieu.

But what do we understand by "crisis"? In Europe post-2008, crisis should be seen as social and political, rather than merely financial, as western countries witness the consequences of consumption, growth, and profit. Post-2015, "crisis" became a reference to the arrival of people fleeing wars in Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, as the European periphery experiences the consequences of decades of western domination, exploitation, colonialism, and wars in the Middle East and central Asia. In this light, social scientists and engaged researchers must develop new approaches to examining rapid shifts in the social landscape, since crisis is not merely reflected in balance

sheets, but is mediated through spectacular imagery of loss, deprivation, and increased vectors of marginalisation. The pervasiveness of crisis has implications for how researchers approach these subjects in order to avoid a discursive crisis, through the imperative to avoid replicating the model of measuring, labelling, and seeking simplistic solutions. Moreover, this paper is consciously avoiding the replication of stereotypical images of fear, survival, and spectacular humanism from the shores of Lesvos. Instead, it provides images that move away from the spectacle, but depict the daily realities of people on the ground.

This paper, then, presents the deeply ambiguous project of engaging with a social reality that is emergent, contested, and that resists singular 'readings'. While people are still trapped in detention centres, and while the implications of ever-increasing policy changes are as yet unknown, analysis can at best seem like conjecture. Academic analysis tends to take a longer view: demanding the perspective of time in order to seem viable or conclusive. We would suggest that we need to question the very notion of viable or conclusive analysis about times of sudden social change and unfolding crises, without entirely abandoning faith in the potential for theories to be productive in a moment in which categories of meaning are revealed to be precarious. At the same time, we resist the tendency/temptation to reduce social phenomena, lived realities, and embodied subjectivities to mere numbers. As demonstrated in the latter chapters of Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou's book *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (2013), there is an insidious relationship between the ways 'crisis' has been problematised and schematised as 'fiscal' or 'political', and therefore positing its cures or solutions as managerial or technocratic in nature. If, however, 'crisis' erodes the distinctions between 'social' and 'economic' spheres, then the conditions of crisis necessitate new ways of responding with new tools of analysis.

Finally, on a more intimate level, the context we have outlined above leads to a subjective account of the extent to which 'crisis' inflects a personal re-evaluation of identity and (non)belonging. In the emergent moment, there is a difference between embodied experiences of crisis, its fallout and mediated representations thereof. From our position in academia outside of Greece and our marginal position on the inside, we have needed to navigate between making sense of flux whilst working to cultivate a critical distance. Researching 'home' when one is no longer 'at home', and indeed when the very idea and material conditions of home are being eroded in a range of ways, can best be achieved by questioning the borders between positionality and objectivity, home and away, belonging and the project of nation-states.

We engage in a dialogue in order to flesh out the multiple aspects of our identities both as insiders and products of the current crisis in Greece; and, at the same time, as scholars researching, writing, and teaching about "crisis-related" themes in academic institutions. By moving from theory to praxis and back, we attempt to reconcile the problem of knowing (epistemology) with the problem of being part of a specific sociocultural milieu (ontology). Furthermore, we attempt to transcend discursive borders between social sciences and the humanities by analysing the deeply embodied, situated, and sensory experiences of multiple crises.

NESTING CRISES

The hotspots installed on the Aegean islands operate in the context of a crisis regime in Greece. Currently, this crisis regime is represented through the 'crisis within a crisis' discourse—or, what elsewhere we have called the construct of 'nesting crises' (Carastathis, 2017)—according to which 'Greece' is suffering from two, overlapping, but distinct crises: the 'economic/financial/debt crisis' and the 'refugee/migration crisis.' By the end of the summer of 2015, the Greek government was declaring that it was "experiencing a crisis within a crisis" (Christodoupoulou quoted in Greenwood et al., 2015; Prime Minister of Greece, 2015), dually victimised by 'unmanageable' migration 'flows' in a context of an unmanageable debt and austerity measures required by its institutional lenders (the 'Troika' of the International Monetary Fund, the European Central Bank, and the European Commission). The figure of "a crisis within a crisis" functions to delineate the boundaries of national space and time, and to construct the normative victims of what are seen as separate, if spatio-temporally overlapping political phenomena (debt and migration). The global economic crisis had already been made 'Greek' by being constructed as a problem inherent in the national economy: thus, it became a "sovereign debt crisis." Similarly, the global war on migration was reinvented as 'Europe's crisis,' and then 'Greece's crisis.' The nationalisation of 'crisis' then, has three effects: first, to conceal the global, systemic nature of violent processes of late capitalist, neo-colonial dispossession and displacement; second, to authorise the imposition of regimes of management and securitization, for instance, through the hotspot mechanism; third, to reify borders that simultaneously fortify state and supranational sovereignties while containing human beings whose mobility is rendered illicit or illegal by those borders. In other words, the figure of 'nesting crises'—'a crisis within a crisis'—emerges through the territorialisation of crisis: in this way, national sovereignty is reasserted and continental unity is reconstituted (Carastathis, 2017). If the implementation of the hotspot system on the Greek border islands reveals the transformation of EU migration and border management through the perspective of crisis, it is important to understand how our everydayness (Lefebvre, 1974) is being spatially and temporally fragmented and bordered through a proliferation of hotspot logics (Carastathis, Spathopoulou and Tsilimpounidi, forthcoming). Our experience in the nationalised space of Greece has come to be constructed and perceived through the vocabulary of 'crisis.'

One of the main concerns of this paper is to move away from the tendency to reduce social phenomena to mere figures and numbers, which has been a widespread approach in the era of fiscal austerity and mass migration. We can appeal to statistics to provide an immediate 'picture' of the ways crisis has affected people in Greece; but as we enumerate them, we would invite the reader to imagine not only the realities they disclose, but those they obscure. Welcome to Athens: a European metropolis where time is not marked out by changing seasons and falling leaves, but in between new austerity measures, debt relief memoranda, experiments in representative and direct democracy, and the concomitant spiral of unfolding crises. In Greece, after eight years of neoliberal austerity, one in three Greeks lives in poverty. Greece has the highest rate of unemployment and youth unemployment among EU member states (23% and 45.7% respectively) (Eurostat, 2017). However, even these figures could be skewed by the fact that many people who are still considered employed may have not been paid for the last 6 months (Kollewe & Inman, 2012). From 2011-2013, the

Stencil 'IMF', artist: Bleeps. Photographer: M. Tsilimpounidi.

spending capacity of ordinary people was reduced by 40%, leaving one third of the population below the poverty threshold (Traynor, 2013). In the absence of systematic studies, it was estimated in 2011 by NGOs that 20,000 people were rendered homeless in Athens alone, a number that has visibly grown (and includes recently arrived refugees) in the intervening six years (Klimaka, 2011). The health system has been radically defunded, leading to devastating direct and indirect consequences including increases in infant and adult mortality rates, seropositivity rates resulting from new infections, suicides, and malnutrition (Kentikelenis et al., 2014). Just in 2012, we saw a 45% increase in the use of antidepressants; suicide rates doubled in 2011 and tripled in the first months of 2012 (Mason, 2012).[2] The effects of austerity were sharp and immediate: as early as 2011, Doctors of the World declared a state of emergency in the centre of Athens, redeploying its international units to the city centre (Kanakis, 2011).

The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has announced that there are now more refugees and internally displaced people worldwide than ever before. The largest group, Syrians fleeing the war that began in 2011, comprises 4.8 million people displaced primarily to Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Europe, and overseas (UNHCR, 2016). The Greek islands closest to the Turkish coast have seen 1,030,170 refugees arriving by sea in 2015 and 2016, while an estimated 1240 people drowned in their attempt to reach the "gateway to Europe" (UNHCR, 2017). The Eastern Mediterranean

2 The most publicised economic suicide was that of pensioner Dimitris Christoulas. He shot himself on 5 April 2012 at Syntagma square, in front of the Greek parliament, as a symbolic (final) act of his refusal to live under these conditions.

became the primary point of irregular entry into Europe after the land border with Turkey was sealed by a ten and a half kilometre fence, constructed by the Greek government in 2012 (Ekathimerini, 2012).

DIALOGUE: CHRONOLOGUE

Waiting for the Barbarians: Generational Crossings (Myrto)

In the opening stanza of his poem '*Waiting for the Barbarians*' (1904/1984), Constantine Cavafy offers some powerful snapshots of a city in 'crisis': a city preparing for the arrival of the Barbarians. As the poem unfolds, we follow the rituals of this preparation in what appears to be a state of emergency since the daily repertoires of the city and its inhabitants have been dramatically altered by these preparations. Cavafy carefully builds up a sense of anticipation while he offers glimpses of these preparatory rituals: for example, the senate stops legislating because the Barbarians will arrive and they will make their own laws; or, the orators will stop making their usual speeches because the Barbarians will arrive and they are bored of rhetoric. And the poem concludes,

> Night is here but the barbarians
> Have not come
> And some people arrived from the borders,
> And said that there are no longer any barbarians
> And now what shall become of us without any barbarians?
> Those people were some kind of solution
> (Cavafy, 1904/1984).

Cavafy's poem provides a frame for some of the concerns running throughout our analysis, following the trajectories of a city in crisis and its constant, desperate search for Barbarians. In Cavafy's poem, crisis is seen as a continuous frame-breaking moment, a fluctuating state of 'waiting for' which dismantles the blueprints that govern everyday practices, imposing new borders between the Self and the Other and anticipating new orders for navigating daily encounters and performances of belonging. This evocation of the new borders of crisis both in Athens and Lesvos through the frame of everyday life brings to mind Michel de Certeau's remark, "what the map cuts up, the story cuts across" (1988: 129). This assertion captures a postcolonial world traversed by diasporic affiliations, the multiple migrations of people, and narratives of unprecedented transnational dependencies. Quite similarly, the slogan that appeared on walls in Athens and Lesvos, "Our grandparents, refugees; Our parents, immigrants; We, racists?" provides the theoretical caveat for the tensions, limitations, and contradictions of academic discourses in conjuring the daily realities of the era of the 'refugee crisis' in Greece.

I remember my grandfather spending hours staring at those same waters between Greece and Turkey, as if he was waiting for a sign that would alter the tranquillity of the view. My grandfather arrived to Greece in a boat, fleeing the Asia Minor catastrophe. He too remembers the journey in an ungoverned boat from the Turkish shores to

Greece. He survived the journey and the stigmatisation of being a refugee and he returned to the same shores with the same wish every time. To be able to make the journey back, to return to what he called his 'home' that was no longer there after the end of the war. So, it became a habit of his during the last years of his life to gaze at the waters from the Greek side for hours, telling me the stories from the other side, or what he remembered from the other side, or perhaps more precisely what he thought he could remember from the other side. I left the village in which I grew up with my grandparents for the big city (Athens), then I left Greece to study abroad, then I left the abroad for another abroad to work. I left from places in which I temporarily lived so many times, yet I always return to this view of the sea from my grandparent's village for a sensation of 'home'. So, here I am standing on the Greek side of the sea, staring, replaying the stories of my grandfather, and feeling like 'home'. And there it is, in the horizon: a boat. Not what I was waiting for.

Hope the voyage is a long one: Generational Crossings (Anna)

Two of my grandparents were born in Alexandria, the cosmopolitan birthplace of the queer poet who taught us that the nostalgic desire to return home is what makes possible the migratory journey:

> Ithaka gave you the marvellous journey.
> Without her you would not have set out.
> She has nothing left to give you now.
>
> And if you find her poor, Ithaka won't have fooled you.
> Wise as you will have become, so full of experience,
> You will have understood by then what these Ithakas mean.
> (Cavafy, 1911/1992)

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, my grandparents' ancestors emigrated to Egypt from the island of Kalymnos in the south Aegean, and from a mountain village in the Pilio region of what had then recently become the mainland of the newly independent Greek nation-state. They were what today would be called "economic migrants"—in one case, an "unaccompanied minor"—who left Greece because their survival had become impossible there. My grandparents met each other in Alexandria; during The War, in which my grandfather had been conscripted by the Greek army, they arrived in Axis-occupied Athens, where two of my grandmother's siblings died—along with 300,000 others—in the famine. The War gave way to another war—this one declared a 'civil war' but in reality a proxy war between Cold War hegemons—and then to dictatorship, and then to the restoration of democracy and 'national unity'. My sister and I were born in the first generation to enjoy the fruits of a post-dictatorship time of democratic socialism. When I was eight years old, my father and mother—herself already twice an immigrant, from Ireland to England and from England to Greece—decided to emigrate to Canada. Twenty-five years later, having myself emigrated to the U.S. to work, I decided to return to Greece—a Greece once more 'in crisis'—while most people my age living there were trying to find ways to emigrate in the opposite direction in order to escape mass unemployment brought by austerity. When I arrived to live in Lesvos, in the spring of 2014, the island was at the precipice

of what, a year later, would be declared a 'migration crisis.' But taking the perspective of a family like mine (or Myrto's, or, for that matter, the family of most "Greeks"), whose members for generations have migrated, 'the crisis' was a function of a rapacious, authoritarian global capitalism, insatiable in its deadly desire for profit at the expense of disposable human lives.

The journey along migratory routes searching for, remembering, or inventing roots, is indeed a long one, and perhaps interminable. If Cavafy's use of migration as a metaphor for the journey that constitutes a human life can risk romanticising migratory voyages (particularly forced or coerced ones), his poem, *Ithaka*, also warns us of the opposite risk: that is, of the reification of "original homelands" that hardened nationalisms, militarised borders, and weaponised seas violently produce. Belonging to a family that has always migrated—and one in which I learned to feel, at once, nostalgia and non-belonging—and engaging in my own ongoing migratory journey (from Greece, to Canada, to the U.S., and back to Greece) with a powerful passport, gives me a perspective on the false dichotomy between the "migrant" and the "indigenous" local. At the same time, staring across a sea that became a graveyard precisely to shore up this dichotomy, I reflect on the possibility of return that is foreclosed to those rendered stateless and therefore homeless, who yearn to rest their eyes on the expanse of the horizon of their own Ithaka.

On the map: geography, power, and territories (Myrto)

Greece's geographical position borders the European Union with the Balkans, Asia and Africa with 92 per cent of the borders being coastline, making it extremely difficult to have a secure border control system. Currently, these factors make Greece the ideal 'entrance gate' to Europe. Quite possibly those were the same factors that made part of the geographical entity that we now call "Greece" an ideal meeting point for trade and commerce in the Mediterranean region. In other words, geography is very much responsible for the ancient Greek civilisation, which is in turn responsible for the birth of democracy—as ancient Greece is often described by many commentators: as 'the cradle of democracy and civilisation'. This idealised and mainstream portrayal of Greek history becomes a very difficult and problematic heritage that creates space for deeply nationalistic and ethnocentric reactions. To be more precise, given that almost every form of nation-building and construction of homogenous ethnic identities evokes the sentiments of a glorious past; this is not a uniquely Greek phenomenon. Yet, in the Greek case, this ancient heritage is supported by worldwide admiration and is presented as the foundation of western civilisation. Such an idealised heritage makes forging new alternatives a difficult, almost impossible, task. Especially in the milieu of crisis and rising xenophobia, when the future is precarious and therefore very difficult to imagine; the present is trapped in a 'waiting for'[3] state; and thus, the certainties of the past seem to be the only way forward.

In this dialogical account, we engage with 'crisis' as a progressive and on-going project which questions the mainstream notion of the term, according to which 'crisis' is

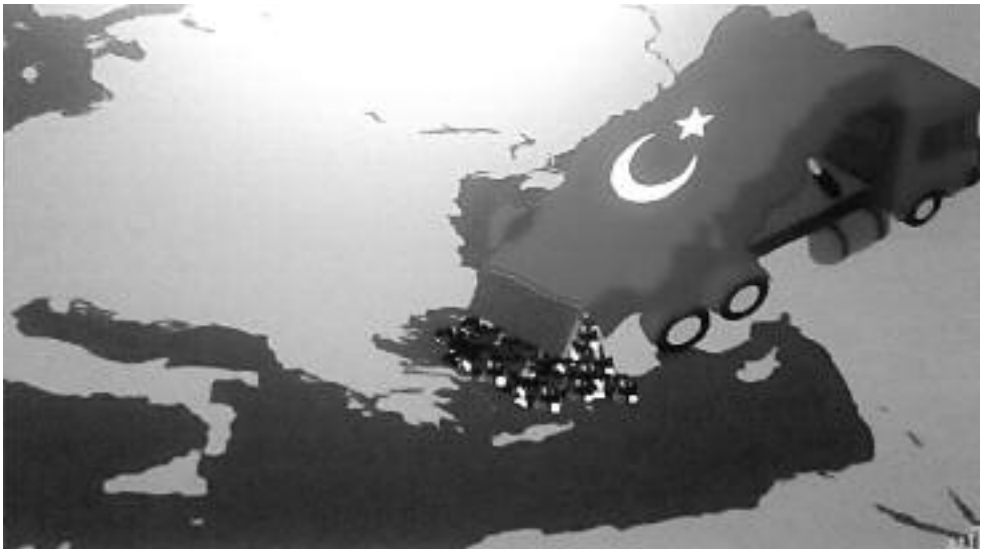
3 For example, waiting for the right Prime Minister who will lead the country away from debt and bankruptcy; and/or waiting for the correct financial recipe that the Troika will implement that would eventually restart the economy; and/or waiting for the return to national sovereignty and the reinstitution of the old currency; the list can go on with the numerous saviours and miracles for which the society is waiting.

Fragments and Ruins of Ancient Heritage. Photographer: M. Tsilimpounidi.

a temporary state of unrest, a momentary schism in normativity, leading to the light at the end of the tunnel. Yet, when it is clear that the crisis being faced by Greece and Europe is not only economic, nor one with a simple fiscal solution, then the idea that a society can return to normal is both empirically intangible and intellectually fraught (Tsilimpounidi, 2017). It is rather difficult to expand upon the ways 'crisis' has altered the fabric of Greek day-to-day life as the situation unfolds rapidly, rendering any attempt to theorise contingent at best, and at worst, always already out of date. This kind of 'crisis' is more suited to media analysis, with its rapid pace of dissemination. And yet, there are nevertheless some emerging paradigms like Cavafy's evocation of 'Waiting for the Barbarians' which addresses the loss of certainty that remains when 'crisis' exposes the constructs of nation and Others to be slippery. In other words, there will always be lulled citizens waiting for the Barbarians on the other side of the borders. This gains significant connotations in the era of declared 'nesting crises' in which Europe is implementing tighter and more aggressive border control systems, clearly dictating from an institutionalised perspective who can be cast as a citizen, who as a refugee, and who as a Barbarian.

On the map: camps, prisons, ferries, and fences (Anna)

The hotspot serves to geographically isolate people who have defied the geopolitical order of borders, making cynical use of the islands' topography—and where it fails to do that, as a nebulous technology of governance with no clear definition, and ambiguous legal basis, it becomes mobile, following migrants onto the mainland, into city squares and border zones via the ferries which transport those with the right papers from Lesvos to Athens. While the urgency of crisis management is expressed, in official communiqués in the hotspot's directive to "swiftly" divide those deemed deserving (or, as the technocrats shamelessly put it, in "need") of international protection from those who will be deported back over the Aegean, in fact what the Lesvos hotspot has produced is a regime of institutionalised waiting: if disavowing the previous government's policy of indefinite detention, under the current policy, in practice asylum applicants face months if not years of waiting to be granted the right to the ferry, the right to leave the



EU-Turkey deal, author: Dimitris Hantzopoulos. Photographer: A. Carastathis.

hotspot island, the right to be relocated to another EU country. On the other hand, reports based on audits of the hotspot procedures reveal that initial sorting procedures occur hastily, and, based on the EASO's "inadmissibility decisions," deportation orders are issued in violation of international asylum law, but in conformity with the EU-Turkey agreement which stipulates the return of all "irregular migrants crossing from Turkey to the Greek islands" as of 20 March 2016 to Turkey, which is defined as a "safe third country" for asylum seekers (ECCHR, 2017). Yet, even before the EU-Turkey deal came into force, eligibility decisions were being made in the Lesvos hotspot of the Moria detention centre on the basis of nationality, with Pakistani migrants (or those perceived by officials to have this nationality), for instance, automatically being handed deportation orders (Carastathis, Spathopoulou & Tsilimpounidi, forthcoming). Thus, the hotspot re-orders not only space but time, accelerating it for some and decelerating it for others, based on "swift" decisions and violated promises.

Not only the promise enshrined in the Geneva Convention, that if you are fleeing war or persecution the signatory states will "protect" you, but the commitments of EU member and accession-aspirant states to "welcome" refugees, were violated as one by one, states' relocation promises evaporated into the thin air of suffocating nationalisms. As we saw the Balkan corridor being razor-wired shut and central European states militarising their borders against human movement, not only the hotspot islands, but the entire country became a site of containment. On 15 September 2015, the European Parliament voted (470) in favour to relocate refugees from Greece and Italy to other European countries (131 were opposed, while 50 Parliamentarians were absent). Although EU states promised to relocate 66,400 refugees from Greece, a year later, in 2016, less than 6% had been relocated (AI, 2016). This reproduces the global standard, according to which, 86% of refugees are hosted by what the UN Refugee Agency refers to as "-developing countries," while less than 1% of the world's refugees are ever resettled (UNHCR, 2016). Indeed, at current rates, it will take 18 years for EU states to fulfil their

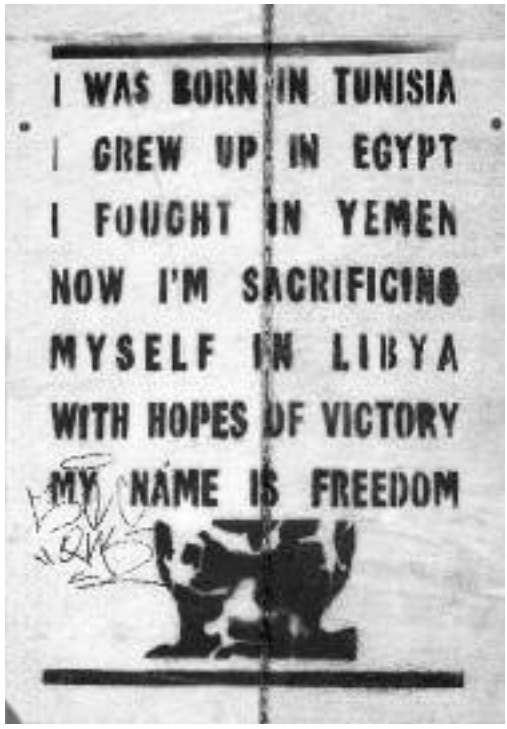
Refugee crisis management with view of Greek taverna. Photographer: M. Tsilimpounidi.

resettlement promises made in 2015, effectively "trapping" refugees in Greece (AI, 2016). Moreover, repayment of the "Greek" debt is forecast to continue until 2057. In other words, the production of Greece as Europe's hotspot, as its holding container, coincides with the production of Greece as Europe's debt colony, as its economic and symbolic periphery (even as it is posited as the 'cradle' of its civilisational or political values). Transformed, through the supranational management of 'nesting crises', into the "debtor" and the "camp" of Europe, Greece becomes a "waiting room of history" (Chakrabarty, 2000: 7; Tsilimpounidi, 2017: 87-88; Carastathis, 2017).

Journeys: From Athens to Lesvos and back (Myrto & Anna)

On a field visit to Lesvos in December 2016, we drive on the newly paved road from Mytilene to Skala Sykamnias, the point on the island most proximate to the Turkish mainland, where a year ago local and Athens-based solidarity activists and international volunteers had created a makeshift reception operation to bring boats ashore and provide a warm meal, dry clothing, and assistance to people who had made the perilous crossing. As we sit in a taverna, we observe a crowd of Greek and Turkish coastguards, international lifeguards, Arabic-language interpreters, photographers, and a Protestant priest with binoculars gathering at the shore. They have been notified that a boat will shortly be arriving and are casually waiting, occasionally lifting their gaze to the horizon to check the boat's progress. This is a new ritual of waiting, in an atmosphere quite unlike that which marked the frenzied reception of refugees by solidarity activists at the height of the "crisis." By now, hotspots in place, the anxious rhythms of the human crisis have been replaced by the cynical pragmatism of its humanitarian-military management. This, of course, points to an economy that

is thriving in times of crisis, that of reception and management of migrants and refugees now performed by international NGOs and state-run facilities. It is important to note, here, that autonomous solidarity movements and international volunteers were criminalised; squatted buildings and open-air collective kitchens evicted (citing fire safety and environmental protection laws); and the Village of All Together, which since 2012 has operated a shelter on municipal property for refugees has been under constant threat since the "crisis" was declared—even as one of its key organisers, Efi Latsoudi, was honoured by the UNHRC for her activism with a Nansen Award. As the hotspot on Lesvos became operative, in numerous cases 'non-registered'—as they were named—volunteers (and concerned civilians) were arrested and charged with human trafficking. At the same time, the civil society mobilisation in response to the crisis was invoked in leftist state discourses as currency in a moral economy that sought to transform the prevalent perception of Greeks in the EU and beyond—from corrupt and tax-evading freeloaders to paradigms of hospitality and exemplars of "European" values of solidarity.



Stencil 'My name is freedom,' author unknown. Photographer: M. Tsilimpounidi.

EPILOGUE: MEETING POINT

The case of Greece has been invoked as a warning for other European societies resisting austerity politics, as financial 'crisis' extends beyond borders, moving from the periphery to the centre of the continent. To argue for a new European vision and to advance politics of hope is not exactly an easy task in the present conjuncture of Greek and European history when far right factions are winning electoral votes and xenophobic policies are implemented creating the bordered reality of 'Fortress Europe'. A new vision of Europe is being implemented by the bureaucrats in Brussels; but it is countered by a growing realisation from the periphery that the Barbarians of our era are to be found in the oppressive structures of capitalist accumulation by dispossession. From the shores of Lesvos it seems like an inescapable fact—despite the rhetoric of "flows," "waves," "influxes," and "avalanches"—that the arrival of millions of refugees is neither a natural, nor a sudden phenomenon. Nor has the crisis subsided, despite the waning of international interest in the spectacle of suffering staged on the shore of this aqueous graveyard. There are no easy solutions or clear pathways to promised lands of economic security and peaceful co-inhabitance; rather, Ithaka can be reached through the every-

day journeys of encounters, solidarities, alternative formations and revisions. In this paper, we deliberately avoided reproducing the spectacular images of people arriving on the Greek shores, as we feel such representations are symptomatic of the wider phenomena of systemic dehumanisation that we are analysing in the text. Human suffering and social solidarity, we feel, is not to be consumed in sensational headlines and exploitative images; rather, they become the driving force that guides our ways of seeing and of ways of knowing as we make our way from Athens to Lesvos and back. The text follows the awkward journeys and uncomfortable trajectories of research produced not only from or for, but within the realities of declared and undeclared intersecting crises. For one last time, we are returning to the shore, searching the horizon for possibilities, but with the knowledge that for too many people, this archipelago is where their last hope of survival expired, as the world went dark.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

MYRTO TSILIMPOUNIDI – is a social researcher and photographer. Her research focuses on the interface between urbanism, culture, and innovative methodologies. She is the author of *Sociology of Crisis: Visualising Urban Austerity* (Routledge, 2016) and the co-editor of *Remapping Crisis: A Guide to Athens* (Zero Books, 2014) and *Street Art & Graffiti: Reading, Writing & Representing the City* (Ashgate, 2016). Myrto is the co-director of Ministry of Untold Stories and a Marie Curie Fellow at the Institute for Sociology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

ANNA CARASTATHIS – completed her M.Sc. in gender studies at the University of the Aegean and her Ph.D. in political philosophy at McGill University, and has held research and teaching positions in various universities in the United States and Canada. She is the author of *Intersectionality: Origins, Contestations, Horizons* (University of Nebraska Press, 2016). Her current research examines the intersecting crises produced by the war on migration as it articulates austerity capitalism and reproductive heteronormativity, focusing on the Aegean Sea crossing in the eastern Mediterranean.

SLOVENSKÝ NÁRODOPIS SLOVAK ETHNOLOGY
4 65 • 2017
ESSAYS/DISCUSSION

IRREGULAR VS. ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION: SETTING THE DEFINITIONS. AN OVERVIEW OF EUROPEAN PRACTICE

STYLIANOS KOSTAS

DOI 10.26363/SN.2017.4.04 © 2017, Institute of Ethnology SAS

Stylianos Kostas, Alumni member of EUIC (European Inter-University Center for Human Rights and Democratization), Monastery of San Nicolò, Riviera San Nicolò, 26 I-30126 Venice, Italy; e-mail: stylianoskostas@yahoo.gr.

For the European Union (E.U.) and its Member States, migration is not a new phenomenon. Administratively abnormal immigration is mainly at the heart of all humanitarian efforts and political debates on the harmonization of the Union's common immigration policy. However, even today, the notion of irregular immigration and the exact wording of the terminology associated with the specific dimension of the phenomenon has not found a general and acceptable version. Interpretations on the categorization of immigrants and their movements depends every time on political discussions, public documents issued and academic studies. The essay demonstrates the variety of use of the relevant terms focusing on the inseparable dependency on the performance of interpretation of the two terms "irregular immigration" and "illegal immigrant".

Keywords: irregular, illegal, immigration, immigrant

How to cite: Kostas, S. (2017). Irregular vs. Illegal Immigration: Setting the Definitions. An Overview of European Practice
Slovenský národopis, 65(4), 420–426 doi: 10.26363/SN.2017.4.04

INTRODUCTION

Migration is seen today as a mass phenomenon in the context of European Union (E.U.) and its Member States, but at the same time in the international level as well, however, the irregular immigration is still the major point of contention, in particular among the politicians. Irregular immigration is approached as a core work subject both at a legislative level and in the decision making policy, considering the necessary measures which have to be implemented, in order to deal with the mass flows of immigrants without a proper documentation. However, policy documents, academic studies, books and public documents of any type each time use a different interpretive approach to describe irregular migration. Different terms are used such as "illegal", "clandestine", "undocumented" or "unauthorized" immigration. This diverse

interpretation of irregular immigration also results in different interpretations of the term "irregular immigrant" which is finally attached to any other characteristic definition by which the immigrant is formulated according to the interpretation of the concept of irregular immigration. Essentially there is an inseparable dependency on the performance of interpretation of the two terms "irregular immigration" and "irregular immigrant".

FALSE IMPRESSIONS

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), **"irregular migration"** is the term which is able to describe the movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries (IOM, 2011). The explanation is more given by the two aspects of the destination and the sending countries. Thus from the point of view of the destination countries it is the entry, stay or work consequences in a country without the necessary authorization or documents required under that country's immigration regulations. On the other side from the point of view of the sending country, the irregularity of the movement is seen in actions in which a person is led to an international border – crossing without a valid passport or travel document or does not meet the administrative criteria for leaving the country.

However, there is no precise definition of the term "irregular migration" that could be clearly described or universally accepted (IOM, 2011). This is, more, a socio-political problem and one that brings with it a language and terminological issue (Perkowska, 2016). This is further complicated by the fact that current academic knowledge based on critical scholarly literature in regards to the E.U. legislation related to irregular migration is lacking in comparison to the regular one. The development of academic study which addresses migration has resulted in a general awareness that the old models and conceptual tools are no longer sufficient to enable rigorous analysis of new and emerging patterns of human mobility (European Commission, 2009). Since the E.U. legislation approximates migration from the point of view of managing the regular immigration, by avoiding in many cases the adoption of the non-regular immigration as an equally or/and secondary nature of the migration phenomenon, it creates a shortfall in the study and the results it generates have no impact on the real expressions of migration mobility as it is operating in an irregular dimension. This is particularly problematic when it comes to analyses of the rights granted to migrants, which – in accordance with policy agendas – are regarded as assets to be distributed for the purpose of enhancing a state's attractiveness, rather than being made subject to a critical evaluation on the basis of human rights considerations (De Somer, 2012).

Moreover irregular immigration is getting a more problematic dimension as it occupies a large section of public opinion through the public policy making, thereby creating false impressions of the different conceptual correlations of irregular immigration with other terms relating to and describing different situations. Saying that, the most glaring example of the failure of research to inform policy and public debate, and in which reliable information is sorely needed, is -what is called- illegal migration (European Commission, 2009). However, it is important to notice that, the worlds of academic research and public policy work on different assumptions, which in turn provide for different endogenous dynamics concerning views on instrumental usage

of knowledge vs. its potential function as ways of understanding and as criticism (Faist, 2010).

That, in turn, if it is accepted in practice and not merely as an assumption, might lead to a better criticism and understanding of the different treatment of the issues arising during and between the conceptualized situations of the irregular and the regular migration, respectively, but also could provide an opportunity of explaining the misunderstandings on the use of terms describing particular actions and / or omissions, related to the above mentioned migratory movements. Notwithstanding, this process of understanding concepts and accepting determinations relevant to migratory mobility might be, potentially, difficult to be achieved objectively since, the media and political figures, then, as powerful actors who influence public opinion, create prejudices, and shape uninformed opinions (especially in the case of socially sensitive issues), are most likely to use the most negatively charged terms when referring to undocumented migrants or issues related to irregular migration (Paspalanova, 2008).

This difficulty and complexity in defining and obtaining the correct interpretation on terms which are relevant to human beings' socio-legal behaviour, makes more sense since the adjective "irregular" appears to be adopted as synonymous to "illegal", which is however defining further the concept of non-legal or/and non-lawful acts. Thus, finally, the role of immigrants and asylum seekers who find themselves in an illegal movement is poorly understood, as are the variety of ways in which immigrants and the individuals and the institutions that assist them, seek to circumvent the law (Black, 2003).

THE CRIMINALIZATION ASPECTS

The term "illegal migration" describes an immigration act of movement that is "not legal" or is carried out in opposition to national or international lawful standards. It is worth mentioning that migrants can never be illegal themselves, only their activities can be regarded as such (Perkowska, 2016). Therefore the relationship between immigration and the criminalization of acts is evident and creates a series of misunderstandings. In a narrow sense, the term "illegal migration" designates the act of entering a country in contravention to the law and is confined to illegal border crossing (but not overstaying the terms of visas or residence), referring only to a flow and not to a stock of persons (Jandl, Vogel and Iglicka, 2008).

However, at the E.U. level the term "illegal" which has been used in many basic policy documents related to irregular immigration, such as the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum in 2008[1] and the Stockholm Programme in 2009[2], referring not only to the illegal cross border crossing but to the illegal stay as well. The article 3.2 of the E.U. Return Directive (2008/115/EC)[3] exactly defines "illegal stay" as "the pres-

1 The European Pact on Immigration and Asylum was adopted by the European Council on 15-16 October 2008, following the Commission's Communication of June 2008 "A Common Immigration Policy for Europe: Principles, actions and tools". Building on the progress already achieved over 10 years, the Pact is a further stepping-stone towards a comprehensive E.U. migration policy. (see http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX% 3A52009DC0266)

2 The Stockholm Programme, adopted by the European Council in December 2009, provides a framework for EU action on the issues of citizenship, justice, security, asylum, immigration and visa policy for the period 2010–2014. It calls for a coherent policy response which goes beyond the area of free-

ence on the territory of a Member State, of a third-country national who does not fulfil, or no longer fulfils the conditions of entry as set out in Article 5 of the Schengen Borders Code[4] or other conditions for entry, stay or residence in that Member State".

Although the use of "illegal" was gradually associated with the entire procedure of an unlawful entry, stay and residence, and in addition to all those actions and / or omissions associated with relevant separately followed procedures during the migratory movement, the further criminalization of the particular immigration mobility, typically understood in contrary to the national laws and the State's sovereignty, brought in addition other features into the concept of "illegal" immigration creating a much more delicate conceptualization due to specific delinquent activities. Paspalanova (2008), in an attempt to describe this wide criminalization, notes that there is one trend, which has attracted attention: migrants are always categorized as "illegal" in contexts relating migration to criminality, irregular working practices, and drug dealing (e.g. Friman, 2001) or in contexts relating to migration control and providing assistance to undocumented migrants (e.g. Pantoja, 2006).

REASONING THE DEFINITIONS

Undoubtedly, the term "illegal" describing both the movement of immigration and the immigrants as its actors, became the main term in use avoiding or overlapping other similar terms. However, the closer to the concept of "criminal" activities were getting, the more widely activists, academics, public opinion and finally many politicians and political institutions started being criticized. Human rights advocates have long argued that the derived noun "illegal migrant" is discriminatory, since "No human being is illegal", as the slogan of a campaign would put it (Jandl, Vogel and Iglicka, 2008). These criticisms have resulted in a wide debate about the use of the term "illegal" related to immigration and especially among academics. Indeed, some authors have argued strongly against the designation "illegal" migration, on two main grounds; first it is argued that migration is only made "illegal" by the action of the states, rather than through any intrinsic quality; second, there is concern that "illegality" in migration could arise from breaking laws other than immigration laws, leading to confusion and a lack of focus on the core element of the "problem" (Collyer, 2001 in Black, 2003).

However, there is still today an emphasis on the determination of immigration as "illegal" even if the immigrant who is following this type of movement should not be

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dom, security and justice. It includes external relations, development cooperation, social affairs and employment, education and health, gender equality and non-discrimination. Section 4.4.2 particularly highlights trafficking in human beings and the necessity to strengthen and enhance the prevention and combating of trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants. It also calls for the establishment of an Anti-trafficking Co-ordinator. (see https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/eu-policy/stockholm-programme-open-and-secure-europe-serving-and-protecting-citizens-0_en)

3 Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals (see http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32008L0115)

4 This regulation is intended to improve the legislative part of the integrated border management European Union policy by setting out the rules on the border control of persons crossing EU external borders and on the temporary reintroduction of border control at internal borders. (see http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV%3Al14514)

considered as an "illegal" one. As to the explanation of that interpretation there are various justifications. Black argues that it could intend to maintain a focus on immigration that is considered as "illegal" for several reasons (Black, 2003). First as a response to the increased interest both from the public and state opinions in Europe in human trafficking and smuggling which are both considered as "illegal" activities and thereby are characterizing the immigration movement as "illegal" as well.

Second because the fact that immigrants and asylum seekers are usually breaking legal standards adds a greater range of importance for justification in specific methodological and practical research issues, rather than the fact that their same practical action could be considered that they are not following the conventional, formal and / or documented sectors. Third because it should be under consideration that there are elements of "illegality" that are rooted of course directly in the immigration and asylum procedures but elsewhere as well, increased the sectors of illegality, like in the immigrants' experience even as "undocumented" or "hidden" who is trying to get access in the labour market but is following anyway an "illegal" process.

NEW PERSPECTIVES

Ultimately in recent years the use of the term "irregular immigration", especially at the E.U. level has gradually gained important momentum in comparison to the use of term "illegal immigration". The new Post-Stockholm Programme[5] which was adopted in 2014 by the European Council providing a roadmap in terms of Justice, Freedom and Security for the five years period 2015-2020 and many other official documents and statements of the E.U. are increasingly using the term "irregular immigration", while however the term "illegal" is still in use. "Irregular migration" in this context denotes a form of migration that is "not regular", "unlawful" or not according to the rules (without necessarily being "illegal", "illicit" or "criminal" in the legal sense) and "irregular migrant" is therefore a migrant who, at some point in his migration, has contravened the rules of entry or residence (Jandl, Vogel and Iglicka, 2008). This is also in accordance with the Resolution 1509/2006 of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly on human rights of irregular migrants. The Recital 7 of the Resolution states that "The Assembly prefers to use the term «irregular migrant» to other terms such as «illegal migrant» or «migrant without papers»; this term is more neutral and does not carry, for example, the stigmatization of the term «illegal»; it is also the term increasingly favoured by international organizations working on migration issues" (Parliamentary Assembly, 2006).

In fact there is still some confusion over the definition between "irregular" and "illegal" immigration considering the problems which arise in separating the "legal" from the "illegal" forms of immigration in general. However, there is an ongoing practice to describe migrants as "irregular" / "undocumented" rather than "illegal" because at various stages they may drift in and out of a legal status (Salt and Stein, 1997). The IOM adopts the use of term "irregular immigrant" as the person who,

5 In June 2014, the European Council defined the strategic guidelines in the area of freedom, security and justice over the coming years. These guidelines are in line with the priorities set in the strategic agenda for the EU, which was also adopted in June. They build on the progress achieved by the Stockholm programme, the multiannual programme for justice and home affairs for 2010-2014. (see http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/strategic-guidelines-jha/)

owing to unauthorized entry, breach of a condition of entry, or the expiry of his or her visa, lacks legal status in a transit or host country (IOM, 2011). Thereby the definition covers, apart from the immigrants who use irregular border crossing practices, those persons who as immigrants or under another status like for example tourists have entered a transit or host country following the legal requirements and standards but however, have overstayed for a longer period than the one that is authorized or even start working in both situations with no related legal documents.

The latest leads to the term of "undocumented immigrant" which is used as equal to the "irregular immigrant" as was already defined. The European Parliament, following an evaluation on the situation of fundamental rights in the E.U. and having regard to the need of harmonizing the way of implementation of its resolutions on fundamental rights and human rights among the Member States, started calling on the E.U. institutions and Member States to stop using the term "illegal immigrants", which has very negative connotations, and instead to refer to "irregular/undocumented workers/migrants" (European Parliament, 2009).

However, "undocumented migrant" is also used as a synonym for "unrecorded migrant", which excludes persons who are documented but nevertheless unlawfully residing in a country, such as rejected asylum applicants pending deportation, persons with a toleration status, and others (Jandl, Vogel and Iglicka, 2008). For this category of persons is more in use the term "unauthorized migrant" which exactly refers to who is entering or staying in a transit or host country without holding the domestic national legal authorization. Of course, not everyone residing in a foreign country needs explicit authorization to do so (e.g. if there are free movement rights like within the E.U.) and we need to interpret "unauthorized" as "not authorized according to the law" (Jandl, Vogel and Iglicka, 2008).

CONCLUSION

It is thereby, due to not merely ethical reasons, a much more appropriate approach to deal with immigration as a phenomenon in its irregular dimension and the relevant interpretations following that, without stigmatizing it in a generally negative perspective basically based on political and social arguments, even though essentially it is considered as a problematic area with unsolved issues. However, even if today more academic papers and political reports seem to prefer the use of terms "irregular immigrant" and "undocumented immigrant" the similar expression terms of "illegal" and "unauthorized" are still in use as well as synonyms with no differentiation importance.

Rather, importance has been given more to the interpretation and explanation of the reasons that cause the phenomenon and the necessary measures to tackle it as well as for measurement purposes due to the statistics and the estimates. However, it should be understood that migration is a phenomenon of human beings' mobility and therefore any circumstances describing it and the resulting consequences have a direct impact on its main actors, who as immigrants are always in a vulnerable position. This brings to light the need for a monitoring of the way irregular immigrants are treated since misunderstandings and different interpretations to their status are associated with concepts and meanings other than the protection and promotion of their fundamental rights.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

STYLIANOS KOSTAS – is a Political Scientist from Greece, specialized in the fields of migration, asylum, security and border management. He is an Alumni member of the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation (EIUC) in Venice, Italy, where he graduated as a Master in European Studies and a Master in Democratic Governance, Democracy and Human Rights in the MENA Region. He also holds a Master in European Studies from the LUISS Guido Carli University in Rome, Italy. He has a relevant to his academic interests work experience at the Greek Ministry of Interior, the Greek Diplomatic Mission in Tehran, Iran, the Brazilian National Committee for Refugees and the UNHCR. His recent publications include *The Development of a Common European Immigration Policy* (Journal of Identity and Migration Studies/2017) and *Morocco's Triple Role in the Euro-African Migration System* (Middle East Institute/2017).

SLOVENSKÝ NÁRODOPIS SLOVAK ETHNOLOGY
4 65 • 2017
ESSAYS/DISCUSSION

SOROS' MIGRATION PLAN – A MYTH OR REALITY?

BORIS DIVINSKÝ

DOI 10.26363/SN.2017.4.05
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RNDr. Boris Divinský, Institute of Ethnology SAS, Klemensova 19, 813 64, Bratislava; e-mail: altiplano@centrum.sk

The author of this contribution attempts to objectively describe and assess the so-called Soros Migration Plan. It is a rather imprecise concept, mostly used by the media and politicians, attributed to a set of statements, publicised by American investor George Soros. His opinions were released as a reaction to the refugee (migration) crisis in Europe culminating in 2015 – 2016, but present until now. Since their publication, Soros' views attracted the attention of policymakers, scholars, non-governmental organisations and, especially, the media which labelled them as his migration plan. However, only a few persons studied these theses in more depth. Not only for this reason, the plan is interpreted very differently as either a strategy to destroy the original European culture, a remedy for the entire migration crisis, a well-intentioned, but amateurish solution out of the persisting problems, or its existence is totally denied. What are the facts about Soros' Migration Plan?

Key words: immigration, refugees, Europe, Soros, migration plan

How to cite: Divinský, B. (2017). Soros' Migration Plan – A Myth or Reality? Slovenský národopis, 65(4), 427–439 doi: 10.26363/SN.2017.4.05

INTRODUCTION

The year 2015 brought to Europe a multitude of various economic, political, social, environmental and other challenges. But a chain of unexpected events related to development in the field of migration[1] showed to be the most critical and considerably impacting the above-mentioned areas too. Through its sudden outburst, great intensity, large-scale character, daily human tragedies, political hesitations to failures

1 In an international context – contrary to the Slovak one – the shortened term "migration" is understood as a full equivalent to the term "international migration" (Divinský, 2005: 17). Analogically for "international migrants" and "migrants". Migration as such then is, within the EU context, perceived as the action by which a person establishes (or ceases to have) his/her usual residence in a Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, at least 12 months (EC, 2014: 190).

and other far-reaching implications, the refugee[2] crisis[3] in 2015 found political representations, intellectual elites, respective stakeholders, the media as well as native populations in the European Union[4] fairly unprepared to produce quick, energetic, deliberate, comprehensive, and humane solutions.

Though already prior to 2015 EU officials presented the first initiatives/plans to tackle negative aspects of existing migration trends – then especially in the Mediterranean, the year 2015 came with further escalations of violence in the Syrian Civil War. This resulted in several huge waves of emigrants from Syria, accompanied by other nationalities from Middle East (later also from North Africa), heading via Turkey for Europe – the Balkans and Central Europe. The media informed about the situation on a daily basis, but most often in a tabloid-like manner, incompetently or even with prejudices.

Besides official institutional responses, many individuals aired their personal views on the issue too. One of them was American businessman and financier of Hungarian origin George Soros. He outlined possible solutions to the (European) migration crisis repeatedly, in modified versions during 2015 – 2016. As G. Soros has been a well-known person in an international, not only economic, framework for a long time, a set of his opinions and recommendations – soon branded Soros' Migration Plan – naturally drew the attention of other actors in the field. Nevertheless, it seems that the absolute majority of them – be they politicians, journalists, researchers, state institutions, non-governmental organisations or international institutions – did not read up on the plan or only its core theses well (if at all). That is why Soros' Migration Plan is generally misinterpreted to largely distorted or even denied. It is done so by various persons, institutions or media with the intent to promote their particular – not seldom antagonistic – goals, policies and ideologies, or from pure ignorance.

COURSE OF THE MIGRATION CRISIS IN BRIEF

Although most of the key stakeholders in the area of migration along with the public describe the events pertaining to mass inflows of refugees/migrants in 2015 to be extremely sudden, unpredictable and unpreventable, it is not quite like that. Development in the numbers of irregular migrants apprehended at borders (i.e. not overstayers[5]) as well as of asylum applicants clearly suggested an incoming change already earlier.

2 In this contribution, I will use the terms "refugee crisis" and "migration crisis" as loose synonyms, though usually "refugees" and "asylum seekers" are understood as categories within forced migration (IOM, 2011: 39; EC, 2014: 131) that has always been a component of overall migration. However, some recent approaches tend to place the asylum seekers/refugees and the migrants on an equal level for practical and political reasons.

3 The concept of a "migration crisis" means a "crisis with migration consequences", i.e. large-scale, complex migration flows due to a crisis, which typically involves significant vulnerabilities for individuals and communities affected. A migration crisis may be sudden or slow in onset, can have natural or man-made causes, and can take place internally or across borders (IOM, 2012; compare Lindley, 2014).

4 The political-geographical units – Europe and the European Union – may be often purposely intermingled in this contribution as immigrants in most cases do not explicitly differ between both territories as targets of their movement. Likewise, the EU often symbolises the whole continent as it has been affected by immigrant waves to a maximum degree.

5 Migrants in an irregular situation who remained in a country beyond the period for which entry was granted (IOM, 2011: 70; see also EC, 2014: 208).

An upward trend in the number of undocumented migrants[6] began to manifest itself in 2013, but primarily since 2014 (dramatic inter-annual growth of 2.6 times – calculated by Frontex, 2010 – 2017). Similarly, after a decade of relative quantitative stabilisation or even decline, the number of persons seeking asylum in the EU countries already sharply rose in 2013 – 2014 (Eurostat data[7]). It may be stressed that right in 2013 Germany became, for the first time since 1999, the biggest recipient of asylum claims among the group of industrialised countries in the world (UNHCR, 2014); likewise in 2014. In other words, migration trends in 2013 – 2014 were good prerequisites to expect large migration inflows to Europe/the EU in the next years.

The above-mentioned acceleration of migratory movements was a natural consequence of developments in Middle East and North Africa (see also Samers, Collyer, 2017; Lindley, 2014). Among the crucial factors belonged notably: the expansion of the Syrian Civil War[8], repeated peace plan failures, the battle engagement and successes of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the partial withdrawal of US troops and continuing attacks by Taliban in Afghanistan, instability in Libya, and increasing concurrent waves of economic migration. As most of the migrants tried to reach the Union through the Mediterranean in a disorderly manner, the European Commission with the Italian government launched a year-long naval and air operation called Mare Nostrum to search for and rescue irregular migrants on the open sea in October 2013. Little willingness to share the funding burden led to its termination and to the following, but rather limited Operation Triton conducted by Frontex since November 2014 to protect EU external borders.

In this period too, top EU authorities took a series of strategic, legal and institutional measures, among others constant improvements in the protection of Schengen external borders, the opening of the European Asylum Support Office (2011)[9] and subsequent steps in building the Common European Asylum System, the adoption of the new Joint EU Resettlement Programme (2012)[10], the enactment of Dublin III (2013)[11], the adoption of the EUROSUR system (2013)[12], the Fourth Euro-African Conference on Migration and Development (2014)[13], discussions at the 1st meeting of the European Migration Forum (beginning of 2015)[14], etc.

Nonetheless, these and other activities to improve the migration management in the European Union and principally to reduce unfavourable impacts of irregular and

6 More exactly, in the number of illegal EU external border crossings according to the methodology of Frontex.

7 Compare more in detail http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_ asyctz& lang=enand http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_asyappctza& lang=en, retrieved July 7, 2017.

8 https://prezi.com/avhh44i5f54b/syrian-civil-war-timeline/, retrieved August 15, 2017.

9 https://www.easo.europa.eu/, retrieved July 8, 2017.

10 https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-is-new/news/news/2012/20120329_en, retrieved July 8, 2017.

11 Regulation (EU) No. 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person (recast).

12 Regulation (EU) No. 1052/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2013establishing the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR).

13 http://italia2014.eu/en/news/post/novembre/conferenza-ministeriale-euro-africana/, retrieved July 10, 2017.

14 http://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/sections-other-bodies/other/european-migration-forum, retrieved July 12, 2017.

asylum migration from third countries were unable to avert the next events. Among the key factors that induced a previously hardly anticipated multiplication of both migratory routes and flows to Europe in 2015 belonged (see also Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2017; Samers, Collyer, 2017; Kingsley, 2016; EC et EMN, 2015):

- the culmination stage of the Syrian Civil War with rising war atrocities (the use of chemical weapons and rockets against civilians, the bombing of overcrowded hospitals and entire residential quarters etc.),
- stunning military victories of ISIL, their establishment of a caliphate on occupied territories and inconceivable brutality against various communities,
- the growing involvement of foreign powers in the war,
- the deteriorating overall situation in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya,
- religious and ethnic conflicts in northern and central Africa,
- increasing environmental migration caused by famine, drought, deforestation (but also armed clashes) in the Horn of Africa,
- parallel enormous opportunistic economic/family migration, particularly from Middle East, southern Asia, northern and central Africa (according to me, the dominant migration component from most regions except for war zones in Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and some smaller areas)[15],
- well-organised and experienced networks of migrant smugglers.

In this context too, in the 1st half of 2015, the European Commission came with an important strategic document of a comprehensive character – European Agenda on Migration[16] – with the main objectives to strengthen the common asylum policy, to address the root causes behind irregular migration, to secure the EU external borders, and to dismantle smuggling and trafficking networks. However, it was too late. Right from the spring of 2015 the phrases "European refugee crisis" or "European migration crisis" have begun to be widely used (Johnson, 2015; Georgiou, Zaborowski, 2017) as the world media became awash with shocking, incredible to sorrowful stories and pictures relating to immense crowds of refugees/migrants wandering on the roads of the Balkans or central Europe and trying to break through various barriers, sailing across the Mediterranean Sea on hundreds of overcrowded and fragile leaking vessels often with whole families, dying on the way locked in lorries or getting drowned at sea – including very little children, and starving in makeshift ill-equipped tented camps while waiting for a verdict.

As a matter of fact, the cardinal feature of the migration crisis was formed by an unprecedented quantitative growth of migrants newly arriving to the territory of the European Union (Europe) in 2015. Indeed in that year, the total number of unauthorised EU border crossings detected by Frontex totalled an astronomic 1.8 million (Frontex, 2010 – 2017). It was almost 6.5 times the number in 2014 or 17.5 times that in 2010 (Table). The real number of persons having passed the EU external borders irregularly was, however, lower because a good part of them were registered in the Frontex

15 See, for example, a statement by F. Timmermans – http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/six-out-of-10-migrants-to-europe-come-for-economic-reasons-and-are-not-refugees-eu-vice-president-a6836306.html, retrieved July 21, 2017.

16 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions – A European Agenda on Migration, COM (2015) 240 final of 13 May 2015.

database several times at different locations in the chaotic situation then. Owing to that, a more realistic figure of migrants coming to Europe in 2015 could be that given by International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2016 – 2017) – over 1 million (with monthly maxima between August and November), which was a fourfold increase compared to 2014. Trends in the area of asylum migration showed similar dynamics; the number of asylum applicants in the EU rose 2.1 times in 2014 – 2015 when calculating by Eurostat data (Table).

The described development resulted in efforts to handle the situation at the EU, national, NGO, IGO and other levels, carefully monitored by the European media and public. In the summer 2015, the Union launched a naval and air operation named Operation Sophia to curb activities of migrant smugglers and to rescue refugees, especially on the high seas off Libya.[17] Also, the Council approved a disputed plan (i.e. the quota system) to relocate 120,000 asylum seekers from Italy and Greece to the other EU countries.[18] Both the mentioned "front-line" states built up the networks of hot-spots for migrants, with 5 operating in Greece and 4 in Italy as of the summer 2017. Still in 2015, the Valletta Summit on Migration sought ways out of the migration crisis together with African leaders.[19] Then, in 2016, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (re-formed Frontex basically) was established as a major institution to better protect the EU external borders.[20] At the same time, significant measures in order to improve the Common European Asylum System, visa and return policies in the EU were taken. At the beginning of 2017, EU leaders met in Malta again to discuss comprehensive immigration policies and to curtail irregular migration to the Union.[21] Nevertheless, the decisive act with far-reaching implications was an EU–Turkey agreement aimed at stemming undocumented migration, concluded in 2016.[22] Though being partly controversial too, it substantially reduced the massive inflow of migrants to the EU (Bendel, 2017; OECD, 2017). As demonstrated in Table, the number of unauthorised border crossings quickly fell 3.6 times, that of arrivals 2.7 times, and that of asylum applicants by 5% in 2016 compared to 2015. The sharp downward trends in all observed migration components have obviously continued also in 2017.

17 https://eeas.europa.eu/csdp-missions-operations/eunavfor-med_en, retrieved July 21, 2017.

18 Council Decision (EU) 2015/1601 of 22 September 2015 establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece.

19 http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-summit/2015/11/11-12/, retrieved July 21, 2017.

20 http://frontex.europa.eu/news/european-border-and-coast-guard-agency-launches-today-CHIYAp, retrieved July 25, 2017.

21 http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/european-council/2017/02/03/, retrieved July 25, 2017.

22 See more in detail the EU–Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/, retrieved July 25, 2017.

Table: Development in selected elementary indicators pertaining to migration flows to the European Union between 2010 and mid-2017 (end-year numbers in thousands of persons)

Indicator / Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	mid-2017
Detected illegal border crossings[a]	104	141	72	107	283	1,822	511	116
Total arrivals[b]	–	–	–	–	260(est.)	1,047	388	102
Asylum seekers[c]	259	309	335	431	627	1,323	1,261	341
Legal immigrants[d]	1,509	1,451	1,397	1,442	1,631	2,417	na	na

Sources and notes:
a = Frontex (2010 – 2017), http://frontex.europa.eu/news/arrival-of-migrants-in-june-numbers-rising-in-italy-and-spain-U2NSTL[23]
The number of detections of unauthorised border crossings rather than the number of persons, as the same person could cross the external EU border illegally several times at different locations.
b = IOM (2016 – 2017), http://migration.iom.int/europe/[24]
The sum of arrivals of third-country nationals to Europe through the Mediterranean Sea and Balkans reported as migrants/asylum seekers.
c = Eurostat data[25]
The number of third-country nationals having lodged an application for international protection in the EU countries in a given year.
d = Eurostat data[26]
The sum of third-country nationals legally immigrated to the EU in a given year.

SOROS' VIEWS ON THE ISSUE AND THEIR EVALUATION

The described dramatic developments in Europe and adjacent parts of Asia and Africa, especially their political, institutional, legal, administrative, economic, social, security impacts on majority societies at the EU, national (country), regional and other levels, naturally aroused the intense interest of many relevant stakeholders (e.g. governments, politicians, research community, non-governmental organisations, international organisations, churches), the media as well as the general public and non-professionals.

Among the individual persons – relatively largely and publicly reacting to problem points of the migration crisis – was also George Soros, the well-known American businessman and financier of Hungarian origin, founder of numerous human rights and educational institutions. This too was a reason why the opinions he had published drew the attention of other actors in the area of migration management not only in Europe. However, it seems that not too many people have read/studied/understood Soros' views on the crisis in a sufficient degree.

23 Retrieved September 22, 2017.
24 Retrieved September 22, 2017.
25 http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00191&plugin=1, retrieved August 10, 2017; http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tps00189&plugin=1, retrieved August 10, 2017.
26 http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database?node_code=migr_imm1ctz, retrieved September 2, 2017.

For this reason too, in 2015 – 2017, I reviewed some 50 print media appearances and around 10 TV media reports on a daily basis. The media were of a heterogeneous character (mainstream, non-mainstream or conspiracy; regional, national or foreign; public or commercial ones). According to my media monitoring, I can state that Soros' proposals of how to deal with the migration crisis have been widely misapprehended or distorted. In this context, several categorical attitudes to Soros' Migration Plan (as labelled by the media; below also SMP for short) may be distinguished. SMP has been most usually regarded as:

- a dangerous plan, strategy or instrument to erode (even destroy) original European culture, civilisation, population structure, particular nations etc. This opinion is most spread among the far-right and anti-immigration parties, groups, media, individuals;
- the existence of SMP is hardly acknowledged, doubted or completely denied. Motives for this are varied: from efforts to prevent its criticism through disagreement with it to a simple lack of knowledge about it;
- a valuable tool forthe entire migration crisis in the EU/Europe, accentuating specially the protection of irregular migrant/refugees. This approach is most often shared by pro-migration and/or far-left NGOs, activists, parties, media;
- one of the attempts intended to ameliorate the situation, made by a person concerned (though not an expert or policymaker). Such neutral, balanced evaluations of SMP are quite rare, informal, practically unpublished.

George Soros submitted his thoughts as a personal response to the European migration crisis to help overcome it. Therefore, SMP has been articulated in the form of recommendations and measures to be done. However, it was not a one-off act but rather a process under development: it was put out repeatedly, in several adapted versions within the period 2015 – 2016. Already in July 2015, G. Soros presented in the press his first partial and brief remarks on the EU's failure to properly and quickly handle incoming refugees and called for a better asylum system.[27]

Later in 2015 (September 26), George Soros released on his own website an essay named "Rebuilding the Asylum System".[28] This text has already been of a broader nature, addressing a complex of contemporaneous migration problems in the European Union. As the author claims, "the EU needs a comprehensive plan to respond to the crisis" and he drafts one such, wishing to be extended beyond the borders of Europe. The plan is composed of 6 components, in which G. Soros suggests taking the following principal measures (shortened):

1. "The EU has to accept at least a million asylum seekers annually for the foreseeable future. And, to do that, it must share the burden fairly."..."The EU should provide 15,000 ($16,800) per asylum seeker for each of the first two years."
2. "The EU must lead the global effort to provide adequate funding to Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey to support the four million refugees currently living in those

27 Financial Times, July 26, 2015: https://www.ft.com/content/b6108088-3212-11e5-91ac-a5e17d9b4cff, retrieved September 4, 2017.

28 https://www.georgesoros.com/2015/09/26/rebuilding-the-asylum-system/, retrieved September 4, 2017.

countries." ... "The EU would need to make an annual commitment to frontline countries of at least 8-10 billion."

3. "The EU must immediately start building a single EU Asylum and Migration Agency and eventually a single EU Border Guard."....."The new agency would gradually streamline procedures; establish common rules for employment and entrepreneurship, as well as consistent benefits."
4. "Safe channels must be established for asylum-seekers, starting with getting them from Greece and Italy to their destination countries." ... "The next logical step is to extend safe avenues to the frontline region, thereby reducing the number of migrants who make the dangerous Mediterranean crossing."
5. "The operational and financial arrangements developed by the EU should be used to establish global standards for the treatment of asylum seekers and migrants."
6. "To absorb and integrate more than a million asylum seekers and migrants a year, the EU needs to mobilize the private sector – NGOs, church groups, and businesses – to act as sponsors."

The aforementioned set of theses by Soros, presented in September 2015, can be informally deemed to be Soros' Migration Plan I as is the earliest in a series. It predominantly covered the refugee crisis and asylum issues, though a few others were marginally also referred to. However, at the time of the summer/autumn 2015, these issues were already fully dealt with or at least intensively discussed by various official institutions and fora, chiefly by the highest authorities of the Union (as depicted in the previous chapter), UNHCR, IOM, some international NGOs, governments etc. As a result, SMP I did not mean a special added value to the topic. Moreover, the first component of the plan – stressing the necessity of accepting over one million refugees per year to the EU – became an extremely controversial point. This requirement was factually exaggerated, unrealistic and unsystematic particularly in a longer-term perspective. It also provoked panic up to total rejection among many (not only) anti-immigration subjects, including some national governments – a situation that has obviously persisted until now. The Hungarian government can be a notorious example of the strongest opponent of the above quota, SMP as a whole and Soros alone. During the period from 2015 onward, Budapest has constantly laid the blame on George Soros for supporting illegal migration and refugee crisis in Europe, attempts to dismantle EU nation states and abolish their borders, and for undermining European religious and cultural identity.[29]

In the spring of 2016 (April 10), G. Soros published on his website another article entitled "Bringing Europe's Migration Crisis Under Control".[30] The author here openly expresses his discontent over progress in crisis management achieved by the European Union. To him, EU's policies implemented till that time had several fundamental shortcomings. For instance, he argues that the EU–Turkey agreement is not truly European and has been imposed on the EU by A. Merkel; migration measures by the

29 Just a few examples: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3297431/Hungarian-Prime-Minister-accuses-billionaire-investor-George-Soros-trying-undermine-Europe-supporting-refugees-travelling-Middle-East.html; http://hungarytoday.hu/news/pm-orban-accuses-george-soros-masterminding-american-lefts-pro-migration-stance-88835; http://www.breitbart.com/london/2017/10/10/soros-plan-satan-assault-europe/, all retrieved October 11, 2017.

30 https://www.georgesoros.com/2016/04/10/bringing-europes-migration-crisis-under-control/, retrieved September 5, 2017.

Union are severely underfunded and; Greece has fallen in poor conditions as regards to the capacity of its asylum facilities. But Soros' most interesting reproach is that the EU asylum policy is not voluntary as "it establishes quotas that many member states oppose and requires refugees to take up residence in countries where they do not want to live".

George Soros in his article has also recommended that:

- the European Union within its comprehensive asylum policy should take 300,000-500,000 refugees annually;
- rules and procedures pertaining to asylum seekers should be amended and simplified in order to reduce the current chaos;
- the EU should finally create a common asylum agency and border force, address the humanitarian crisis in Greece, and establish common standards across the Union for receiving and integrating refugees;
- as this plan requires at least 30 billion a year, restrictive EU fiscal rules should be removed and new taxes levied. The existing EU financial instruments should secure the sufficient funding to cope with the migration crisis;
- the front-line states as Jordan, Turkey, and Greece should be provided with enough financial support and should not be obliged to repay the money they receive.

Because the word "plan" has been used in this essay by the author himself, the text can be named Soros' Migration Plan II. It differs from SMP I by two essential features. First, the number of asylum seekers from third countries that should be accepted, by Soros, in the territory of the European Union per year has sizeably decreased – 2 to 3 times. Very likely G. Soros has become conscious of the fact that the previously proposed figure of 1 million persons would be absolutely inappropriate in the present political, economic and social conditions in the EU, mainly from a long-term viewpoint. Second, SMP II has been overly focused on a wide range of financial issues at the expense of other significant migration factors. Likewise, the businessman warns in the conclusion: "It would be irresponsible to allow the EU to disintegrate for a lack of financing to bring the crisis under control."

Finally, George Soros wrote an article "This Is Europe's Last Chance to Fix Its Refugee Policy" in July 2016.[31] It was followed by another essay published on his website (on September 12, 2016) under the title "Saving Refugees to Save Europe".[32] Both contributions have basically the same philosophy and very similar contents. The first represents a rather extensive analysis of hitherto developments, a quite critical evaluation of migration policies applied by the EU, a subjective identification of shortcomings in the process of managing the crisis, and a set of recommendations and measures to be done without delay. The latter text is a condensed, only moderately modified version of the former; thus it comprises all its key comments, conclusions and suggestions. Due to the complex and coherent character, the given contribution(s) may be called Soros' Migration Plan III.

31 *Foreign Policy Magazine*, July 19, 2016: http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/07/19/this-is-europes-last-chance-to-fix-its-refugee-policy-george-soros/, retrieved September 6, 2017.

32 https://www.georgesoros.com/2016/09/12/saving-refugees-to-save-europe/, retrieved September 6, 2017.

According to the author, he submits this plan as an effective alternative to the EU's current approach to the migration crisis. SMP III is based on 7 fundamental pillars (shortened and selected):

1. "The EU must take in a substantial number of refugees directly from front-line countries in a secure and orderly manner." "... If the EU made a commitment to admit even a mere 300,000 refugees annually..."
2. "The EU must regain control of its borders. There is little that alienates and scares publics more than scenes of chaos."
3. "The EU needs to find sufficient funds to finance a comprehensive migration policy. It is estimated that at least 30 billion per year will be needed for a number of years."
4. "The EU must build common mechanisms for protecting borders, determining asylum claims, and relocating refugees. A single European asylum process would remove the incentives for asylum shopping."
5. "A voluntary matching mechanism for relocating refugees is needed. The EU cannot coerce member states to accept refugees they do not want, or refugees to go where they are not wanted."
6. "The EU must offer far greater support to countries that host refugees, and it must be more generous in its approach to Africa." ... "This means creating jobs in refugees' home countries, which would reduce the pressure to migrate to Europe."
7. "The eventual creation of a welcoming environment for economic migrants. Given Europe's aging population, the benefits migration brings far outweigh the costs of integrating immigrants."

The last Soros Migration Plan in its entirety (i.e. with remarks to the situation, outlined flaws and challenges, and seven pillars with recommendations) constitutes a relatively elaborate text, being of more logical, precise and balanced nature than both earlier versions described above. It is considerably critical to the overall work and concrete activities undertaken by the European Union to tackle the migration crisis in Europe. This is well apparent in statements such as: "The EU is trying to impose quotas ... forcing refugees to take up residence in countries where they are not welcome and do not want to go. ... This is unfortunate." or "The agreement with Turkey was ... imposed on Europe by German Chancellor Angela Merkel. ... The agreement with Turkey was problematic from its inception." Though I can completely accept the first statement, a crucial question should be posed pondering the second statement: how to stop/diminish in a different way the unceasing massive influx of immigrants to Europe through Turkey at that time?

As far as the individual pillars of Soros' Migration Plan are concerned, according to me it is possible:

- to agree with Points 2, 4, 5 and 6 of SMP. Much of them is already being realised or planned. For example, the Border and Coast Guard Agency (former Frontex) has been in operation since autumn 2016 and is conducting several missions at present. The reform of the Common European Asylum System is one of the most important tasks within migration management in the EU (Bendel, 2017) and especially the revision of the Dublin Regulation is under heavy discussion

now.[33] The European Union has recently also manifested its growing interest in cooperation with and support to African countries as a principal source of migrants (EU–Africa Summits, mutual dialogues, other initiatives); this should be even more intensive. As for the compulsory quotas and distribution of asylum seekers across the EU's Member States, I have believed from the very beginning that this approach is ineffective, unsystematic, inhuman and untenable;
- to practically agree with Point 3: the financial means assigned to sustainable comprehensive migration policy in the Union should be unambiguously much greater, just an appropriate sum should be subject to thorough analyses by expert teams from respective EU institutions;
- to be in partial accordance with Point 7 of SMP. As regards economic migration in the EU, this is basically in the competence of Member States and depends on conditions in the domestic labour markets. Then, in a long-term perspective, migration can help decelerate the enormous rate of ageing in Europe only to a limited extent (UN, 2000; UN, 2004). Of course, improving the integration process of migrants is beneficial to all sides involved;
- to absolutely disagree with Point 1. There cannot be a fixed annual quota for taking asylum seekers/refugees to the EU as a whole (though the figure suggested by Soros fell from 1 million persons set in SMP I to 300,000 in SMP III). The real number should flexibly reflect the situation in affected regions of the world and should be based on common consent among the Member States. Besides, the European Union has long been a significant destination for migrants from third countries. Until the migration crisis, the number of those legally arriving to it each year accounted for 1.5 million (by Eurostat data – see Table).

FINAL REMARKS

It may be summarised that the influx of migrants (refugees) into European countries, particularly the European Union, in the course of 2015 – 2116 was the biggest since the end of the Second World War (Kingsley, 2016; Divinský, 2016). The EU's immigration, asylum, integration systems as well as its border management came under unprecedented pressure. But not only has the quantitative aspect been momentous; the Union and its Member States, their chief political representatives, elites, stakeholders, media and general public were not sufficiently prepared to act deliberately, quickly, effectively, synergistically, truthfully and sensitively.

It is clear now that the migration crisis has become one of the most serious threats to the internal cohesion of the European Union in its history and a fundamental challenge to its future. From another viewpoint, some characterised the events of 2015 – 2116 as the greatest humanitarian crisis of our generation (Deliso, 2017). Nevertheless, the detailed evaluation of EU's migration approaches, policies and activities, their merits or failures, is much beyond the topic of this contribution.

In this context, my primary objective was to present, describe, discuss and assess the so-called Soros Migration Plan in the background of migration development in the given years. After examining a number of available sources, (political) declarations, media outputs, related databases, reports and literature, one may state that:

33 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/legislative-train/theme-towards-a-new-policy-on-migration/file-revision-of-the-dublin-regulation, retrieved October 11, 2017.

- Soros' Migration Plan does really exist. It is actually a series of three essays, published by the author successively in September 2015, April 2016, and July/September 2016 on his own website[34] and in the media, freely accessible to all. Therefore, the existence of SMP should not be questioned or denied;
- George Soros alone used the word "plan" in these text(s). As they have the coherent structure with distinguishable textual passages and – notably – sets of measures to be introduced over a certain time period, the mentioned word has been properly applied;
- the last of the three demonstrated versions has been not only the most updated, but also the most balanced, comprehensive and realistic. Hence, this version can be fully legitimately named Soros' Migration Plan and used for any further purposes;
- some of the key recommendations submitted have substantially changed over time in the single versions: this is the case of the number of asylum seekers to be accepted by the European Union annually – it declined from 1 million to 300,000 persons. The latter figure should be duly and correctly referred to within SMP at present;
- Soros' Migration Plan as a whole has been rather critical to EU's foreign, migration, border protection and development aid policies and activities carried out until now or prepared. Simultaneously, the plan categorically opposes the compulsory quota system and forced relocation of asylum seekers across the Member States. This fact might by also one of the reasons for its misinterpretation, disregard to ignorance by official authorities;
- since George Soros is not a politician, scholar, specialised journalist, migration activist or so, his plan should be perceived only as a subjective non-professional response to the ongoing EU/European migration (refugee) crisis from 2015 onwards (no principal report, study, strategy, reform, agenda etc.);
- for the above reasons, SMP should not be overestimated in the academic debate or decision-making process. Likewise, heated to hostile disputes over the plan in the political fora, media or elsewhere are completely useless and incorrect. Soros' Migration Plan thus represents just personal opinions of a well-known businessman on one of the biggest contemporary global challenges.

This contribution was worked on within the project DRIM – Danube Region Information Platform for Economic Integration of Migrants, as part of the EU Interreg Danube Transnational Programme 2014–2020 (DTP1-1-183-4.1), implemented in the Slovak Republic by the Institute of Ethnology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences.
http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/drim
http://www.uet.sav.sk/?q=sk/dunajska-informacna-platforma-pre-ekonomicku-integraciu-migrantov

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

BORIS DIVINSKÝ – population and urban geographer, demogeographer and migration specialist, thematic expert within the EU Interreg Danube Transnational Programme project DRIM, implemented at the Institute of Ethnology SAS in Bratislava. Currently he is focusing on the issues of migration trends, policies and management, migration statistics, integration of foreigners, labour immigration and emigration, undocumented migration, asylum, naturalisation, social exclusion of foreigners, institutional and legal aspects of migration, activities of migrant organisations, civic participation of immigrants and other related questions. He has published several books, research reports, book chapters, studies, analyses and other works in this field, among others *Migration Trends in Selected EU Applicant Countries, Volume V–Slovakia* (IOM 2004), *Labor market–migration nexus in Slovakia: time to act in a comprehensive way* (IOM 2007), *Migračné trendy v Slovenskej republike po vstupe krajiny do EÚ* (IOM 2009), *Nové trendy a prognóza pracovnej migrácie v Slovenskej republike do roku 2020 s výhľadom do roku 2050* (Trexima 2011), participated in projects *Villes d'Europe*, *Politis*, *Argo*, *CLANDESTINO*, *Seemig*, etc. He has collaborated with several missions of IOM International Organization for Migration in Europe and is an expert of the UN Alliance of Civilizations.

STANISLAV BROUČEK a kol.: Migrace z České republiky po roce 1989 v základních tematických okruzích (Migration from the Czech Republic after 1989 in Basic Thematic Areas)
Prague, Institute of Ethnology, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, 2017, 298 p.

In recent years, the migration phenomenon has been increasingly pushed to the centre of attention of not only politicians and experts from various scientific disciplines, but of society as a whole. The general interest is primarily in the consequence of the "fear from migrants". This is due to the fact that large masses of people are arriving (legally, but mainly illegally) to the European Union Member States. The team of authors (Veronika Beranská, Hana Červinková, Anežka Jiráková, Zdeněk Uherek), led by compiler and author of the major part of the book Stanislav Brouček, tackles the less explored, yet potentially equally important "other side of the coin". In their monograph *Migrace z České republiky po roce 1989 v základních tematických okruzích* (Migration from the Czech Republic after 1989 in Basic Thematic Areas), they focus on the causes of departure from the Czech Republic abroad.

The project and the publication were produced on the initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. As it turned out, the first problem that the researchers were facing was that the project sponsor did not specify whether they were to deal only with the population movement abroad or also with the social mobility factor. In the latter case, they would require other research procedures. In the end, the authors chose a pragmatic solution: "Hence, this publication does not deal exclusively with social mobility (such research, accompanied by staying with migrants, would require more time and finance), though it seeks to grasp the value changes in migrants" (p. 15).

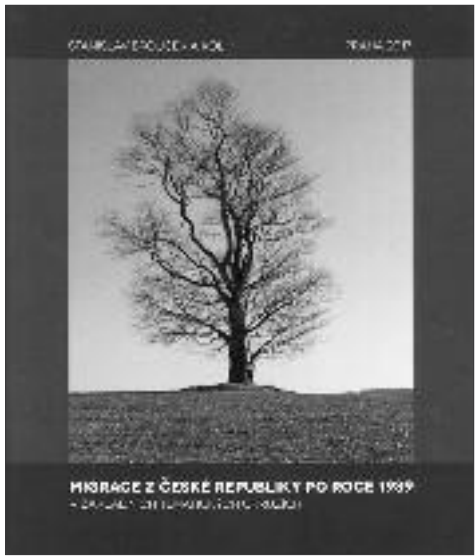
The monograph is divided into 12 chapters (including foreword and annexes). The first parts provide a description of the current state of the Czech diaspora and analyse the legislative approaches and the state policies in the inter-war period (emigration) and in 1948 – 1989 (exile). It should be borne in mind at this point that the different parts of this diaspora live dispersed almost all over the world. They differ not only in their geographical environment, but also in their historic background and the motives for leaving their home country. In spite of this diverse nature, what is common to the Czech (and the Slovak) diaspora is the persisting awareness of its common Czechoslovak origin: "The split of the republic was and still is a live topic for all countrymen" (p. 21). The only exceptions in this regard are Slovak separatists. (Slovak realities can be found at several places. The book includes a separate chapter on the Slovak diaspora policy).

The publication observes a number of issues. I do not consider it necessary to comment in detail on all relevant sources, interesting information or ideas for thinking. I would only note that, apart from their own research, the authors also used (not only) the statistics from the ministry of foreign affairs and other state institutions, worked with press releases and built on their findings from Facebook or internet communication. The book chapters cover complex phenomena (migration trends, the formation of

identities abroad, etc.), but also seemingly marginal phenomena (the teaching of Czech, the actions of some countries against emigrants in their territories). In the chapter On the Profile and Conditions of a Czech Foreign Migrant after 1989, the authors produced a generational description of this group, while emphasising generation Y. They also observed the activities of migration agencies, the forms of organised recruitment, the au-pair phenomenon or student migration. This material suggests that qualified experts (especially doctors and nurses), as well as (seasonal or long-term) wage-earners have the biggest chance to succeed on the global labour market.

The consequences of past migrations as well as recent labour migration include the formation of Czech communities abroad. The authors compare their situation in the neighbouring countries (Austria, Germany), in Scandinavia, oversees and in some EU Member States (mainly France and the United Kingdom). Particularly interesting is the analysis of the motives behind why people consider or do not consider returning from France to their home country. Their return is supported by personal reasons (family, social and cultural). The opposite decision, taken by the majority from the sample, bears a warning signal. The most common arguments why people prefer staying abroad include the political situation, corruption and bureaucracy in the Czech Republic. From this perspective, the finding that complements the above information is important. The analysis of the Facebook communication showed that most respondents (78% of the sample) are indifferent about the Czech state being interested in them and in their problems... It is apparent, though, that the purpose is not their isolation from their home country. In all the countries referred to in the study, Czech migrants use various forms of mutual contacts and communication. From the future perspective, it is essential how the competent institution would cope with this fact.

The chapter based on Facebook and internet discussions offers other interesting and important findings, as well. Its first part "maps topics which are of interest to countrymen working in an on-line environment",



while the other part focuses on "... an analysis of the reactions of foreign Czechs through the Facebook page of the project Analysis of the Migration of Czech Citizens after 1989", and presents the results of the questionnaire survey (p. 161).

The monograph brings more than just a body of knowledge. Potential followers can be helped by the fact that the authors' team did not conceal any complications that appeared in the course of the research or in the process of evaluation of the results and of the ways of addressing them.

In the final chapter, S. Brouček offers a summary of the theme and proposals for general principles to deal with the issues mentioned in the study. He expressed his conviction that the state must deal with external migration on a permanent basis, as one-time support of projects cannot bring the desired results. He is critical about the current approach of the state authorities, and emphasises the need to adopt a political decision about whether the Czech Republic has (or feels) the necessity to build new forms of institutionalised relationships towards the Czech diaspora.

The monograph *Migration from the Czech Republic after 1989* offers information and suggestions which are interesting both to official institutions and the scientific community. Hopefully, they will not get lost and will become an inspiration for the work of the

competent authorities and expert teams in the Czech Republic, in Slovakia and in other countries.

PETER SALNER,
Institute of Ethnology SAS in Bratislava

HELENA TUŽINSKÁ, ĽUBICA VOĽANSKÁ (Eds.): In_akosti slovenské. Z rozprávaní cudzincov (Slovakia: In_different? As Told by Foreigners)
Bratislava, Centre for the Research of Ethnicity and Culture, 2016, 62 p.

Thanks to the media, the migration waves that surged in the past two years got closer to the public, which resulted in many (often unfounded) fears leading to the need to answer a number of questions on one hand, and to the need to support the newcomers in seeing the country, situations and behaviour of its people from the perspective of the cultural context in which they found themselves on the other hand. This is the foundation of the book *Slovakia: In_different? As Told by Foreigners* which aims to enable both new arrivals and old-established residents alike to look at ordinary situations from different perspectives and in more details.

The book was published by the Centre for the Research of Ethnicity and Culture in the framework of the project *Intercultural Guide to Lives in Slovakia,* which is financed from the Research towards Humanity programme administered by the *Open Society Foundation.* In addition to the Slovak version that I held, there are also versions in English, Arabic and Russian. The choice of these languages complies with the main target group – third-country nationals.

The team of authors (Elena G. Kriglerová, Miroslava Hlinčíková, Alena Chudžíková, Jana Kadlečíková, Helena Tužinská, Ľubica Voľanská) prepared this book on the basis of material collected from more than fifty foreigners who were asked about their perception of life in Slovakia, thanks to which they managed to present what people in Slovakia considered common in a broader perspective and with a certain distance. You can therefore find in this book mostly direct statements from partners in conversation, complemented with the authors' comments aimed to "pick up" useful information which can be later used in any context. The structure of the chapters according to the initial words copies the scenario by which the authors conducted the interviews. The eleven chapters are as follows:

- *On Trusting and Checking (Elena G. Kriglerová and Alena Chudžíková)*
- *On the Perception of Space (Miroslava Hlinčíková)*
- *On the Perception of Time (Miroslava Hlinčíková)*
- *On Rules (Helena Tužinská)*
- *On Communication (Helena Tužinská)*
- *On Working and Saving (Jana Kadlečíková)*
- *On Families and Private Life (Ľubica Voľanská)*
- *On Making Friends (Ľubica Voľanská)*
- *On Visiting (Alena Chudžíková)*
- *On Considerateness (Helena Tužinská)*
- *On Blinkers (Helena Tužinská)*

These eleven chapters represent areas "in which there is evidence in Slovakia of prevailing tendencies for certain situations to be dealt with in certain ways".[1] I appreciate the "confession" of the authors that the text they produced was created on the basis of specific materials which are not objective and which take into account the specific situation of the foreigners (work, duration and purpose of their stay, their social and economic conditions, family, etc.) who acted as partners in creating the text. I also appreciate the practical advice on different topics on the page margins. However, I consider the statement "*Slovaks give the impression of being very reserved, but in reality this is true only in the beginning. Sometimes it suffices for the foreigner to take the first step, since the Slovaks, because of caution or low self-esteem, will not take it themselves. They appreciate it if the*

1 Tužinská, Voľanská (2016: 12).

foreigner uses a few words, for example a greeting, in Slovak. At that moment the ice begins to melt" [2] too generalising; in this particular case, I would prefer to leave it out or use a concrete example corresponding to what the authors wanted to tell in terms of meaning. This statement also assumes guaranteed success, which can be misleading. Also, the statement *"trust is gained by mutuality"* is in my opinion vague and slippery, as mutuality (whatever thought by the authors) is not necessarily the only path to gaining trust.

The different chapters nicely open and outline the topics that arose from their work with the partners in research, and the book as a whole can be a useful "welcome gift" for anybody willing to get familiar with Slovakia's cultural context. I see its main benefits in two areas: firstly, it brings a broader perspective of the things which may seem to us as people who were born and grew up in Slovakia as natural in this cultural context, and we thus do not see their background, as often pointed out in this book. For example, the publication highlights our historical context – the socialist regime which can (still) be the origin of mistrust that is largely present in Slovak society. Secondly, it is beneficial to foreigners who can learn more, thanks to this book, about the Slovak cultural context in which they have found themselves, and not only understand certain situations and behaviour, but also get a "manual" on how to behave in these situations.

JÚLIA HOLÁŇOVÁ,
Institute of Ethnology of SAS in Bratislava

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KATARÍNA POPELKOVÁ a kol.: Čo je sviatok v 21. storočí na Slovensku? (What Is a Holiday in Slovakia in the 21st Century?)
Ethnological Studies 21, Bratislava, Institute of Ethnology SAS 2014, 320 p.

The book of the team of authors Zuzana Beňušková, Monika Vrzgulová, Juraj Zajonc and editor Katarína Popelková, leader of the VEGA project *Ritual behaviour as a strategic tool for group identification: The social and cultural context of contemporary holidays in Slovakia* (conducted in 2011–2014), focused on themes which are highly topical in the expert and the public discourse alike. The authors felt for many years the need to bring information about the contemporary ritual practices and answer the simple, yet not easy questions: What does holiday mean to the contemporary inhabitants of Slovakia? How do they spend their holidays? What role is played by contemporary holidays? What can we learn about the Slovak society through holidays?

This extensive book has a logical structure: it consists of the *Introduction,* four

2 Kriglerová & Chudžíková, in: Tužinská, Voľanská (2016: 21).

chapters and the *Conclusion* in Slovak, German and English language. The book includes colour and black-and-white pictures, visual information about the holidays described in the publication, as well as common supplements: bibliography; register of names, items and locations, and brief details of the authors.

In her *Introduction*, Katarína Popelková clearly explained the project objectives. The authors explored holidays as social phenomena and sought to find out their reactions to the transformations of society at a specific moment in history, and in a specific space. Apart from well-known and long celebrated events, they also concentrated on new holidays. I appreciate that K. Popelková described in detail the theoretical and methodological project background and explained the basic terms – holiday, ritual and ritualisation – used in the book. She also mentioned the increase in the number of holidays over recent decades. People still seek to search for opportunities to celebrate (maybe contrary to the expectations of some social prognoses). She also stated that in spite of the growing number of holidays this phenomenon is accompanied by its increasingly individual perception. We could have the impression that it is the manifestation of one of the modernisation processes – individualisation. Certainly, neither individualisation nor other modernisation processes can be seen as linear and evolutionary changes, as they can comprise recurrent and complementary processes (Martin, 1999). This is one of the aspects that open broad possibilities for the research on the transformations of holidays in the future. As proven by the researchers' results, the ritual activities were largely influenced by the transition period after 1989 marked by the new economic and social conditions, as well as the sharp increase in the number of information sources with a rich offer for celebrating holidays. And at times when people enjoy a variety of opportunities and the unification pressures are weakened, attention can be paid to the other side of the same coin. To what extent do people return to the older holiday practices or artefacts that had been suppressed or forgotten for various reasons? Why do they do it and who does it? Can we observe recurrent processes in today's ritual activities?

The book opens with the chapter by K. Popelková *Why do we have holiday legislation?* I consider it a good entry into the topic. At the beginning of this chapter, the author presents the holiday calendar of the Slovak Republic with the dates considered public holidays and days of remembrance. The Act on Holidays was passed back in the first year of existence of the Slovak Republic in autumn 1993, which suggests the importance the state power representatives attributed to it. K. Popelková was exploring the contents and meanings ascribed to holidays by politicians when they adopted the act and other pieces of legislation. She identified many identical as well as contradictory meanings of holidays across the political spectrum. She also pointed out that it is still possible to observe the influence of churches on the choice of holidays and their functions, which is an important finding regarding the influence of these institutions on the contemporary society. She also mapped the ways and the means by which the state power disseminates the specific interpretations and symbols of holidays. She dealt with the instruments of the state´s symbolic violence in advocating public representations and thus contributed to the detailing of Bourdieu´s concepts (Bourdieu, 1998: 69 and n.). The results of her research are supported by the changes in the content of holidays in a relatively short, yet politically turbulent period of two decades, characterised by the major changes in Slovakia's political orientation and in the style of the public discourse and execution of power. At the same time, the gathered information suggests the wide dispersion of opinions on holidays and celebrations among the contemporary population.

Each of the next chapters deals with a specific holiday in the form of case studies which we can read as examples of historical and political holidays – celebration of the Slovak National Uprising; church, family and social holiday – Christmas; and finally, Halloween as a new type of holiday.

In the chapter on the Slovak National Uprising, Monika Vrzgulová analysed the legislative process of recognising this historic event as state holiday. She subsequently focused on the main objective of her work

– an analysis of the widespread representations of this holiday. She described the creation of different pictures about the Uprising after the political changes in 1989 and the changes in these pictures. She concisely described the segmentation of the representations into two lines. The first one was the representation of the Uprising as a historic event which brought Slovakia back into the group of European countries fighting against the Nazi Germany. The other one was the interpretation of the Uprising as a coup against the nation and the state, leading Slovakia into the arms of the Communist regime. M. Vrzgulová linked both lines and their different variants to the changing political establishments that held the power and the means for disseminating "their" ideas about the Uprising. The author managed to confirm the initial theses of the study according to which the representations of a certain event in history are first of all a means for politicians to explain their own political attitudes and justify their specific actions and aims. Among other things, she highlighted the role of celebrations in supporting the existing order of society, considered one of the basic functions of ritual practices at least since the works by Émile Durkheim (1912).

Zuzana Beňušková focused her attention on Christmas as a complex of the most ancient customs in Europe that acquired different forms, contents and interpretations throughout centuries. She aimed to describe the current forms of Christmas in Slovakia and the ways people celebrate and understand them. The author´s ethnographic research includes the period from the turn of the 20th and 21st century until 2013. Along with describing the current holidays, she also observed the changes in their contents and functions. She therefore compared the current state with the situation in other periods, for example, with the form of Christmas in the 2nd half of the 20th century – during the socialist period in Slovakia. She finally aimed to grasp the holiday practices and attributes through several dichotomies: "sacred – profane; tradition – innovation; rural – urban; institutional – private; formal – informal; commercial – civil; global – local; majority – minority" (p. 114). Most of these dichotomies are common in ethnological

works, and are therefore understandable to the reader. Yet the pairs "institutional – private" and "commercial – civil" are not so common and therefore need clarification. The vagueness of these terms is also due to their use in the text. In the final summary, the author mentions the pair "private – public" together with "formal – informal", leaving out the term "institutional". She summarises the commercial aspects of Christmas, however, without explaining how the commercial aspects relate to the civil ones (p. 158). In general, Z. Beňušková fulfilled her objectives. She offered detailed descriptions of the current forms of Christmas and clarified the complexity and the wide extent of this holiday. Through specific examples she highlighted the changes that took place in the past decades and confirmed the stability of the basic structure and functions of the Christmas holiday and relatively minimum shifts in them. The gathered material thus provides a good starting point for further analyses of changes in this holiday in the future, inspired by the theoretical views of Jens Kreinath (2004) and other authors.

The fourth chapter by Juraj Zajonc deals with Halloween as a relatively new phenom-

enon, raising ambivalent reactions in Slovakia. I agree that Halloween is a good subject of research, as it provides the possibility to observe the spread of this holiday "here and now". It also enables exploring how Halloween is becoming part of other holidays and how it follows up on older cultural expressions. Last but not least, the researcher can search for answers to questions about what attitudes people have towards this new holiday, which groups celebrate it and which ones refuse it, and what representations they have in connection with Halloween. In the introductory part, the author offers information about the origins of this holiday in the British Islands, its transfer into North America and spread back in Europe. He subsequently describes the penetration of Halloween in Slovakia after 1989. Highly valuable, in my opinion, is the empirical data on the relation of the oldest Halloween attribute (carved pumpkin illuminated by a candle inside) to the oldest tradition in our territory. J. Zajonc also captured information about the food, costumes and masks and their possible relation to more ancient cultural phenomena. The author depicted the different forms of Halloween and its links to other holidays. He also showed the wide range of the Halloween representations in contemporary society and the role of churches and other institutions in spreading or suppressing this holiday. This chapter provides a differentiated picture of this new holiday based on precisely analysed empirical materials.

In the *Conclusion,* Katarína Popelková and Juraj Zajonc summarised the results of all the chapters. They showed what can be learnt about the contemporary Slovak society based on the research of holidays. They analysed the similarities and differences between the holidays that they examined and their relation to the state, churches and the economy, but also with regard to the differentiated population groups – actors of holidays. They described the wide variety of people´s representations linked to the given holidays, holiday practices, symbols and attributes. I would conclude that the book represents a very good contribution to the study of the meaning of holidays in modern society.

GABRIELA KILIÁNOVÁ,
Institute of Ethnology SAS in Bratislava

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE *CULTURAL HERITAGE IN MIGRATION* (15–16 June 2017, Sofia, Bulgaria)

Issues concerning cultural heritage, its creation, transfer and preservation in its various forms in the foreign cultural context are receiving increased attention along with issues related to the migration policy, the social and cultural adaptation of migrants and the functioning of their daily networks in the receiving society. One of the pieces of proof of the active interest in these processes within academia and in practice was the international conference *Cultural Heritage in Migration*, organised by the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies together with Ethnographic Museum of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IEFSEM-BAS) in Sofia on 15–16 June 2017.

The conference aimed to outline some specific aspects of cultural heritage in the field of migration and interpret it from the point of view of its importance to the preservation of migrants' cultural identity abroad and its role in the process of integration and institutionalisation of immigrant communities. Even though the call placed emphasis on the experience of Bulgarian migrant communities abroad, thanks to the open approach of the organisers the two-day programme addressed the diverse ethnic, cultural and religious contexts of Central and Eastern Europe.

The research presented by the conference participants was divided into eight thematic areas[1]. Due to the complexity of the topic of cultural heritage in the context of migration, these areas overlapped, complemented each other or were interlinked. The presented papers and subsequent discussions showed parallels in certain research contexts and in migrants' strategies in their new home countries, as well as differences developing under the influence of specific political, cultural, religious, economic and social conditions.

The first day of the conference began with the block *Cultural Heritage Abroad: the Factors of Consolidation and Institutionalisation of Diaspora*. The papers presented in this block highlighted the diversity of this theme and the different approaches to grasping it, from language as a source and tool for the preservation of cultural heritage (Irina Sedakova, Institute of Slavic Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences), folklore traditions preserved and handed down to next generations as a means of ethnic identity and differentiation between "us and the other ones" (Veneta Yankova, The Constantine of Preslav University of Shumen), the links between the preservation of cultural heritage and religious beliefs and social class (Magdalena Elchinova, New Bulgarian University) to highlighting the potential processes of redefining cultural heritage into a symbolic and cultural capital legitimising the position of migrants within new social networks (Meglena Zlatkova, Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv).

1 The whole conference programme can be found at the website http://www.migrantheritage.com/international-conference-cultural-heritage-in-migration-programme/.

In the next conference block, I had the opportunity to present a paper based on my dissertation thesis dealing with the diaspora policy of Slovakia as a home country and its impacts on the preservation of the *national identity* of Slovaks living abroad, including through the support of the mother tongue and cultural traditions.

The institutionalisation of the mutual relationships between the country of origin of migrants or their predecessors, the massive influence of the political context of the sending and receiving country and the support of more or less formal cultural organisations beyond borders were the topics of several papers presented during these two days.

Yordan Yanev, an independent researcher from Sofia, offered an analysis of Bulgaria's diaspora policy the changes in which have affected migrants' daily life.

In the context of institutionalisation of the diaspora communities, emphasis was also placed on ethnic education or the impacts of the host country's integration policy on the possibilities of establishing informal community schools with a minority language of instruction. Ralitsa Savova from the University of West Hungary in Sopron dealt with the impacts of bilingual education of the Bulgarian minority in Budapest on preserving its mother tongue. Boian Koulov and Mariyanka Borisova from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences looked at schools not only as a space for education, but also as a social and cultural centre of the migrant community, affecting its cultural calendar and determining the community activities. The influence of the Spanish integration policy and the practices of a state agency related to the activities and functioning of a Bulgarian cultural organisation were described by Nikolai Vukov and Valentin Voskresenski (IEFSEM-BAS, Sofia). They looked at cultural heritage as a source of strengthening the Bulgarian community and preserving their collective identity, while they observed its shift towards the key instrument for the integration of Bulgarian migrants into the local community. Likewise, Tanya Dimitrova (Friedrich Schiller University in Jena) focused on the Bulgarian community in the Federal State of Thuringia in Germany, having explored the process of preservation and re-creation of the cultural heritage within an institutional environment and the influence of the emerging cultural organisation on the entry and acceptance of migrants by the local community. Some of the research activities presented at the conference also focused on church institutions, serving not only for the preservation of faith as a link to the ethnic identification of migrants who often find themselves in a different religious environment.

Nina Vlaskina from the Russian Academy of Sciences highlighted churches and parishes as important centres for the creation of social networks and for the maintaining of relationships with the mother country, but also as support institutions in seeking a job and in facilitating the process of integration in the general society.

Parallel with the institutional sphere, cultural heritage in its different forms plays an important role within the family environment which, according to the conference organisers, represents space filled with family stories and daily objects, thus creating a natural environment for informal education in culture, language, traditions or religion. Material culture is accompanied by many cultural meanings and reflects various changing patterns in the ethnic identification process. Akvilé Motuzaité (Turku University, Finland) examined these processes among mixed couples and the role female migrants play in creating a *home* in a different social and cultural environment.

Leena Samin Naqvi, an independent researcher from Sweden, an architect by profession, talked about food as a universal language and the first step that migrants take on their route towards integration into a new environment. She presented the EAT project implemented in Umeå in the north of Sweden. In the framework of informal mapping of the development of female migrants' social relationships, using the oral history method, she has been examining the changes and impacts on the eating culture.

Lumnije Kadriu from the Albanian Studies Institute in Pristina described the way the role of the traditional meal *flija* changes within the Albanian *diaspora* in Kosovo, including its impacts on the processes of identification and belonging to

a group on the background of integration strategies and social activities.

Besides the institutional and family environment, an important role with regard to the local community is played by the presence of the different elements and forms of cultural heritage in the public space. Shared and emphasised in the framework of different social activities, they are the object of acquiring self-awareness, self-cognition, as well as preservation and promotion. Skaidré Urbonienė from the Lithuanian Cultural Research Institute dedicated her research to the process of searching for different forms of expression of ethnic affiliation. One of them are wooden crosses, symbolically linking the home country to the current place of stay of post-war emigrants from Lithuanian and being helpful in their adaptation to the new environment.

As the conference papers showed, depending on the time aspects, the circumstances of migration movements, the socio-cultural dynamics of the migrant community in the new environment, cultural heritage appears and is re-created in various contexts.

The final part of the conference was about migrants' economic activities and the process of revival and preservation of cultural heritage in ethno-business. The different forms of such economic engagement through souvenir shops, catering agencies, hotels or tourist activities were analysed by Vladimir Penchev and Tanya Matanova (IEFSEM-BAS, Sofia).

The conference *Cultural Heritage in Migration* represented a forum of participants not only from different countries, but also with a diverse background and experience. It thus provided a broad perspective of cultural heritage, specifically reconstructed under the particular conditions of a new homeland, and highlighted the importance of its role in the formation and strengthening of migrant communities in their daily life.

These notes are just a small part of what was discussed at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies in Sofia in the course of two days. A report from the conference will be published, with full texts of all the papers presented at the conference.

NATÁLIA BLAHOVÁ,
Institute of Ethnology SAS in Bratislava

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CONFERENCE *ETHNOLOGY WITHOUT BORDERS* (25–26 September 2017, Bratislava)

The 6th international student conference Ethnology Without Borders was held for the first time in Bratislava on 25 and 26 September, at the Faculty of Arts of the Comenius University. It was organised by the Department of Ethnology and Museology and the Institute of Ethnology SAS. The main topics of this scientific event, which gathered students of ethnology and cultural anthropology from the Visegrad Four countries, were migration, minorities and the theoretical and methodological issues related to their research.

The first conference paper was presented by one of the main speakers, Tomáš Hrustič from the Institute of Ethnology SAS, who talked about the political discourse on minorities. His presentation showed examples of participatory research on minorities and raised an inspiring question about what position ethnology and cultural anthropology are to take in this discourse.

The first two conference panels thematically focused on minorities and migration. The first one was introduced by Kamil Exner from Jagellonian University in Cracow, whose paper based on his research on Ukrainians living in Poland highlighted the importance of a consistent definition of the term "discrimination" in social sciences. Joanna Maurer from Masaryk University in Brno spoke in her paper entitled "*Transculturality. Cultural Awareness and Its Role in Building (In)Tolerance*" about the concept of transculturality, utilising her knowledge obtained from the research on the Polish

minority living in Brno. The first panel was closed by Marta Kluszczyńska from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, who explored the perspective of elementary school teachers in Poznan and Granada, Spain, on the integration of Roma and foreign students.

The second conference panel began with an interesting contribution by Beata Turek about the role of social networks in the migration crisis and about the different models of virtual communication, reflecting the "us vs. them" perspective. Her colleague from Jagiellonian University, Paweł Witanowski, talked in his presentation about the mobility of students and PhD graduates. He also pointed out that the need of young academics to move often leads to the feeling of decreased life stability – not only in the economic sense but also in connection with social relationships and academic freedom. The first half of the conference *Ethnology Without Borders* ended with the presentation by Štěpán Kuchlei from Masaryk University in Brno. He presented in his paper the Misak tribe living in southern Columbia based on the findings from his long-term field research directly among the members of this tribe.

After the lunch break, the floor was given to the second main conference speaker – civic activist Radoslav Sloboda. He talked about growing political extremism in the Banská Bystrica region since the regional elections in 2013 and described the reactions of local activists to this process. Radoslav Sloboda's contribution highlighted the importance of co-operation between social scientists and civic activists in the research of and coping with political extremism.

The third conference panel tackled nationalism and identity issues. The first one to speak was Katalin Pajor from Loránd Eötvös University in Budapest. She focused on the process of changes in the ethnic identity of the members of the Hungarian minority living in Slovakia. In the next presentation entitled "*Fans, Skinheads, New Elites. Internal Stratification within Polish National Organisations*" Weronika Kuta from Jagiellonian University in Cracow introduced the results of her research on the members of nationalist movements in Poland. The third thematic panel was closed by Katerina Ivanova from Comenius University in Bratislava with a paper on the ethnic identification of people living in a multi-ethnic environment. Her research conducted among Bulgarian Turks showed, for example, that the self-identification of minorities can be affected, among other things, by categorisation "from the outside" – in this case, by the Bulgarian majority.

The final fourth panel was dedicated to the theoretical and methodological aspects of research on the topics mentioned above. Another representative of Jagiellonian University, Adrianna Beczek, pointed out in her contribution on "*Cultural Anthropology as an Exercise in Introspection*" the importance of cultural anthropology that can be helpful in facing social problems and expressions of extremism or nationalism by gathering knowledge about "others". The rich conference programme was closed by Kinga Wygnaniec from Jagiellonian University who offered the public an anthropological perspective of the different expressions of crises in society through the example of the student protest in Cracow, which took place on 25 January 2017.

The conference was followed by an informal evening gathering of the participants and organisers in a Bratislava bar. On Tuesday morning, 26 September, the guests visited Devín Castle, thus ending the programme of the successful event. The conference *Ethnology Without Borders* confirmed again that its importance lies not only in the presentation of research and works of ethnology and cultural anthropology students, but also in establishing contacts and in meeting other young people from the Visegrad Four countries.

TOMÁŠ WINKLER,
Institute of Ethnology SAS in Bratislava

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE *INFORMATION MATTERS: TOWARDS POSITIVE PATHWAYS OF MIGRANTS' INTEGRATION* (26 October 2017, Bratislava)

From left: Tatiana Podolinská, director of the Institute of Ethnology SAS, opens the conference. The main conference speakers – Antoine Savary and Rinus Penninx. (Photo by Katarína Paduchová)

The Institute of Ethnology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences was the main organiser of the international conference "Information Matters: Towards Positive Pathways of Migrants' Integration", held at Palffy Palace in Bratislava on 26 October 2017.

The conference, organised by the Institute of Ethnology SAS in co-operation with the Slovenian Migration Institute of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts and the Institute for Labour and Family Research, was one of the important outputs of Part 1 of the Danube Region Information Platform for Economic Integration of Migrants (DRIM) project, implemented under the European Union project scheme Interreg Danube Transnational Programme 2014 – 2020. The DRIM project is implemented by an international scientific consortium composed of nine countries (Slovenia, Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, Germany, Croatia, Serbia, Czech Republic, and Bosnia and Herzegovina).

The project aims to create the "Danube Compass", an information web portal for migrants and state authorities in the countries which have become part of the European migration wave in recent years. It targets mainly state authorities and migrants who need comprehensive, structured, transparent, easily available and comparable information at a single place. At the end of October, international experts and researchers from the Institute of Ethnology SAS presented in Bratislava their experience in creating such a large international portal and their findings on the integration of migrants in Europe.

"We want to present to the public our experience with creating the portal for nine countries of the Danube region which share their legislation and practical experience in co-operating with the governmental sector or non-governmental organisations. The Danube Compass will be a big help in navigating people who left their home country and seek to find a good job or sufficient social security at a new place," said Tatiana Podolinská, Director of the Institute of Ethnology SAS about the project. She, together with Martina Bofulin from the Slovenian Migration Institute, the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts and DRIM Project Lead Partner, opened the event.

The main conference speakers were Antoine Savary, Deputy Head of Unit Legal Migration and Integration, DG Migration and Home Affairs of the European Commission,

Participants of the international conference Information Matters: Towards Positive Pathways of Migrants' Integration (Photo by Katarína Paduchová)

Boris Divinský, Tatiana Podolinská, Martina Bofulin and Tomáš Hrustič (from left to right) are giving an interview for television and media reporters (Photo by Katarína Paduchová)

and Professor Rinus Penninx, prominent European expert in migrants' integration from Universiteit van Amsterdam. They were joined by the speakers of the working panels from Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Germany and Hungary.

The key topics of the Bratislava conference included the role of information in the effective migrants' integration in society; availability, correctness and timeliness of information provided to migrants; and migrants' integration into the labour market of the receiving country. During the conference, the experts also tackled the current issues of modern integration of migrants and migration management within the EU or the background of and interaction between information, integration, economic, migration and population policies. The international conference was accompanied by a domestic press conference and met with active interest from the mass media.

BORIS DIVINSKÝ, TATIANA PODOLINSKÁ,
Institute of Ethnology SAS in Bratislava
MONIKA HUCÁKOVÁ
(Office of the SAS Presidium)

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