Introduction
The Spaces of Politics: Roma Experiences of Citizenship

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Among the many clichés that have circulated about the Romani people and are still repeated today is the one about their supposed indifference towards the space of politics, understood as one of the key spheres of Western modernity. Quite apart from the fact that the notion of Western modernity as a cultural paradigm is itself problematic, this cliché is merely the extension of a common prejudice that has long considered "Gypsies" as archaic beings, detached from advanced forms of social organization. It is a view well embedded in the received wisdom of European- (and American-) majority societies and manifested in a set of stigmatizing statements that have long been present in anti-Gypsy discourses: that they are subjects on the fringes of the law, if not downright criminals, not to mention unproductive, incapable of living in accordance with group norms, inward-looking and resistant to change. According to the best known "Gypsyologist" of all time, the famous British traveller and writer George Borrow, the line that separates the Roma from the rest of society cannot be erased, bearing in mind that the former are "a sect or caste […] who have no love and no affection beyond their own race; who are capable of making great sacrifices for each other, and who gladly prey upon all the rest of the human species, whom they detest, and by whom they are hated and despised".[1]

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1   George Borrow, *The Zincali: An Account of the Gypsies of Spain* (London: John Murray, 1841), 3–4.

There have been readings of the dividing line traced by Borrow, expressed here in emotional terms, in all areas of European life: economic activity, social relations, cultural spaces and, of course, the political sphere too. In the latter, and always following the stereotype, the Romani people only obey their own internal laws and played no part in the historical process of constructing modern citizenship. By perpetuating their traditional clan system of self-government, the Roma could not even be thought of as agents of political change in any universal sense. A century after Borrow, another expert on Romanies, the French abbot André Barthelemy, was convinced that there were limiting conditions to this possibility. Such was the weight of "their lack of education, their spirit of independence, their nomadism" that they were incapable of thinking about organizing themselves as a nation or following a leader of their own.[2]

Borrow would certainly never have contemplated the possibility, but Barthelemy was in reality witnessing the maturation of a Romani political movement, not only in France, but in other European countries, and even offshoots in America. His words too expressed rejection, reflecting his fear and apprehension at the thought of those he regarded as subalterns subject to tutelage having autonomy with political consequences. The birth and consolidation of this political movement, while long neglected by specialists in political history and political science, is now becoming better known, thanks to the work of scholars who have shown how the Roma asserted their rights when the world was divided into blocs during the Cold War.[3] Following in the wake of these scholars, the main aim of Part One of this book is to go beyond the space of stereotypes to offer a brief but substantial selection of the ways in which the Roma have participated in the historical process of fighting for recognition and the expansion of citizens' rights, a process – with all its limitations and conflicts – that has characterized the protean "short twentieth century".[4] Furthermore, the contributors to this

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2 "leur inculture, leur esprit d'indépendance, leur nomadisme, les empêchent de se créer une patrie ou d'accepter l'autorité d'un chef" (*Le Figaro*, 18 May 1971).

3 Some of the key references for the spaces dealt with here are: Jean-Pierre Liégeois, "Naissance du pouvoir tsigane", *Revue française de sociologie*, 16 (1975): 295–316; Thomas Acton, *Gypsy Politics and Social Change: The Development of Ethnic Ideology and Pressure Politics among British Gypsies from Victorian Reformism to Romany Nationalism* (London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974); Thomas Acton and Ilona Klimová-Alexander, "The International Romani Union: An East European Answer to West European Questions?", in *Between Past and Future: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Will Guy (Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2001), 157–226.

4 Following the term coined by Eric Hobsbawm to define the period from the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 to the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991. Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991* (London: Michael Joseph, 1994).

book have set out to approach the subject from innovative points of view, in order to offer not only new information arising from their research, but also rich and complex interpretations of the meanings of Romani political agency in this specific historical context.

To that end, three case studies have been chosen to analyse Romani involvement in the sphere of modern politics, defined here as the set of public spaces, interconnected on various levels and shared with other, non-Romani subjects, where power is exercised, represented and negotiated. These three cases reveal the historical Romani ability to produce political artefacts – ideas, symbols, strategies, images – of universal utility, which have helped to expand the notion of modern citizenship and extend the spectrum of rights that modern citizenship can (and should) accommodate. The three life stories that are discussed in each of the three chapters also provide insights into the complex process of constructing individual and collective identities as they become visible, taking into account their areas of intersection and temporal fluidity so that, ultimately, it is possible to appreciate how much the political, public and "private" spaces overlap. The cases are those of Helios Gómez (1905–56), a Spanish Gitano who was a graphic artist and militant worker in the interwar period; Sandra Jayat (1939?–), a Tzigane of Manouche origin and the author of a body of literary and pictorial work proclaiming the richness of Romani culture in post-war France; and Ronald Lee (1934–2020), a Canadian Rom of Kalderash origin, a political and social activist on both sides of the Atlantic from the 1960s until his recent death in January 2020.[5]

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5   The following terminological choices have been maintained throughout Part One. In general, the preferred terms are "Roma" (noun) and "Romani" (adjective) because, although they are not without controversy, they are self-referential and were chosen with political intent at the First World Romani Congress held in London in 1971. At the same time, the word "Gypsy" is used as part of the historical discourse being analysed, despite its pejorative content. In the case of Ronald Lee, the term "Gypsy" is respected as it was chosen by the writer himself, who used it to define himself and deliberately place himself among the most stigmatized sectors of society during the countercultural movements of the 1960s. For similar reasons, we have preferred to keep the terms used by the other subjects of these studies to refer to themselves and their communities, with cultural and national implications in this case: "Gitano" in the Spanish case, "Tzigane" in the French and "Zingarina" in the Italian; they are the words used by Helios Gómez and Sandra Jayat respectively in their writings and pronouncements; they are also useful as they inform us of the framework of lexical possibilities from which they raised their voices. Finally, "Kalderash", "Manouche" and "Kalé" are, like "Sinti", terms for the various historically constituted Romani world communities with generally accepted territorial, cultural and identitarian connotations.

Roma in Politics: General Coordinates and Proper Names

In order to explain why we have opted for the biographical approach, it is necessary to briefly outline the general historical framework of Roma presence within European political space in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the first place, there was a long tradition of institutional, legal and social anti-Gypsyism driven by the European monarchies throughout the modern age, which aimed at the forced assimilation or even the expulsion or annihilation of the Romani populations. Hence the construction of the stereotype of *Gypsies* as a "problem" that majority societies had to deal with goes back a long way. In the nineteenth century, official anti-Gypsyism was legally mitigated in countries with liberal governments whose constitutions were framed in such a way as to protect all citizens equally, at least in theory. Even in these cases, however, traditional anti-Gypsyism not only remained stubbornly embedded in lower-ranking laws but was updated at the level of cultural representations that were accepted by most of society.

With regard to cultural assumptions, the romantic idealization of the "Gypsy world" was compatible with the stigmatization of those labelled as "Gypsies". In addition, one of the by-products of the prolific scientific development in the late nineteenth century and first third of the twentieth was the creation of racial typologies that consolidated dangerous stereotypes, such as those that described the Roma collectively as archaic, work-shy, amoral and prone to crime. The Nazis used many of these arguments when they included the European Romani population among the targets of their policy of racial cleansing, turning them into genocide victims.[6]

The persecution and harassment of the Roma in modern and contemporary Europe have therefore been transnational phenomena, and the emergence of Romani movements demanding rights for a minority group subject to such protracted ill treatment should be situated against this background. With some early precedents in the last third of the nineteenth century, the Romani associational movement first started to gather momentum in the period between the two world wars, showing particular signs of promise in some countries in Central and Eastern Europe. According to Klímová-Alexander, this was the time when a modern form of associationism arose, increasingly independent and based in ethnic identity, even though some of their initiatives continued to be influenced by non-Romani authorities.[7] A number of politico-cultural initiatives that came into effect in the decades between the wars sought to defend the

6   Anton Weiss-Wendt, ed., *The Nazi Genocide of the Roma: Reassessment and Commemoration* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2013).

7   Ilona Klímová-Alexander, "The Development and Institutionalization of Romani Representation and Administration. Part 2: Beginnings of Modern Institutionalization (Nineteenth Century–World War II)", *Nationalities Papers* 33, no. 2 (2005): 155–210.

dignity and rights of citizens, as well as the specific culture of various Romani minorities scattered across Europe. These initiatives were quite different in scope and intention and ranged from a brief, exceptional period when the Roma were recognized as a national minority in the USSR to Romani activism in Hungary, the emergence of the "royal dynasty" of the Kwiek family in Poland, which was recognized by the authorities, and Romanian support for an international pan-Romani movement.[8]

The racial persecution by the Nazis all but destroyed the political momentum that had started to build up before the Second World War. Nonetheless, two longer-term effects of this process should be emphasized. The first was the formation of a small but active Romani middle class of professionals, artists and intellectuals, which gave rise to spokespersons who drew attention to the plight of this minority in the press, the theatre, civil associations and so on. They initiated a discourse on ethnic identity to show the general public the situation of a cultural minority that had not obtained recognition as a minority – unlike others defined by religious or territorial criteria – after the First World War. Although the genocide perpetrated by the Nazis destroyed that social fabric, some elements of that discourse would be recovered later.

The second effect, related to the first, was that the initial phase of Romani organization during the interwar period can be understood in terms of a reservoir of political symbols attributable to a distinct Romani cultural identity that could be drawn upon later (among them, the notion of *Romanestan* itself).[9] In the period following the Second World War, the resurgence of this Romani movement proved to be an exceptionally challenging process, not only because the previous associative fabric had been destroyed, but also because of the general persistence of negative attitudes to "Gypsies" across Europe.[10]

Despite the difficulties, there were people, before and after the war, who were bold enough to use the label of "Gypsy" as a watchtower from

8   Will Guy, ed., *Between Past and Future: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe* (Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2001); David M. Crowe, *A History of the Gypsies in Eastern Europe and Russia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996); Alaina Lemon, *Between Two Fires: Gypsy Performance and Romany Memory from Pushkin to Postsocialism* (London: Duke University Press, 2000).

9   María Sierra, "Creating Romanestan: A Place to be a Gypsy in Post-Nazi Europe", *European History Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (2019), 272–92.

10 The first post-war organizations were developed in countries like Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, where the new communist authorities initially shared the idea of ethnic harmony in a multi-ethnic state and delayed the policies of forced assimilation of the Roma. See Ilona Klímová-Alexander, "The Development and Institutionalization of Romani Representation and Administration. Part 3a: From National Organizations to International Umbrellas (1945–1970) – Romani Mobilization at the National Level", *Nationalities Papers* 34, no. 5 (2006): 599–621.

which to look out into the space of politics. With effort, imagination and commitment, they set about reversing the negative burden that belonging to the Romani minority had traditionally involved, and turning that background into a platform from which to contribute to the construction of shared public spaces. In this first part, we are looking at a productive activity within the space of political activity that can be addressed through biographical history. While it may be particularly difficult to apply such approaches to groups that have historically been subordinated, as noted in the Introduction to this book, in the space of politics it is not only possible but also very effective, because it allows us to contrast the details of individual lives that contradict the stereotypical images, and which can be revealed by means of a wide range of documents. Thus, our approach involves presenting the stories of three people who create discourses that speak to us, loud and clear, of Romani political interest and political imagination. Analysing them in their specific historical contexts will allow us to appreciate the capacity for political agency of a group that is generally looked down upon in the space of modern citizenship.

There is no question here of creating civic heroes, since these biographical profiles do not escape the contradictions inherent in any process of identity construction that addresses public space with political or mobilizing intentions. It would not be fair to the subjects of the biographies themselves, who faced their own personal development in this area of their lives with doubts and self-criticism. Nor is this our understanding of the exercise in historical research offered here; rather than an idealized narrative of a life trajectory that the historian endows *a posteriori* with artificial meaning, biographical history is a complex way of composing the questions and historical account by focusing preferentially on the narrative construction of the self inserted in its specific and changing historical contexts. It aims to understand the process of constructing meanings that all human beings face – the meaning of our lives, the meanings of our environments – and explain it in relation to the framework of material and cultural possibilities in which we are inscribed.[11] This sort of biography allows us to transcend the dichotomies between public and private, objective and subjective, self and outside world to offer a more complex explanation of the historical past, in which the social is not just the backdrop or context of the individual, but its very raw material. Meanwhile, the individual – placed in the foreground – reminds us of the openness of history, the plurality of possibilities existing in the past.

With these ideas in mind, in the biographical profiles offered here,

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11 Stephen Brooke, "Subjects of Interest: Biography, Politics and Gender History", *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association/Revue de la Société Historique du Canada (JCHA/RSHC)* 21, no. 2 (2010): 21–28; Sabina Loriga, "Écriture biographique et écriture de l'histoire au XIXe et XXe siècles", *Les Cahiers du Centre de Recherches Historiques* 42 (2010): 47–71; Isabel Burdiel and Roy Foster, eds, *La historia biográfica en Europa: nuevas perspectivas* (Zaragoza: Institución Fernando el Católico, 2015).

preference has been given to documents produced by the subjects in question. As well as the manifestos, press articles, novels, short stories, poems, oil paintings, drawings and other personal documents that they produced at different times in their lives, they also turned their hand to various forms of autobiographical writing, and as a result of this documentation, we have been able to recover and give preferential place on many occasions to the first-person voice of the subjects of the biographies. In addition, the use of other documentary sources and methods of critical discourse analysis allows us to properly contextualize these voices. The object of this mixing of sources is not to evaluate their greater or lesser "authenticity" in the sense of their correspondence to "historical truth" – both of which are notions that are as open to manipulation as the purposes of historical writing are varied – but to enrich, from the standpoint of critical coherence, the range of possible interpretative keys within which readers can reach their own conclusions.

Causes and Encounters

The multiple causes to which the three activists who figure here devoted their energies, and the diversity of the individuals and networks they collaborated with, are in themselves indicative of the complexity of the issue at hand. Roma political activism has generally been studied with reference to the autonomous associational movement that emerged in different national contexts in Europe before and after the Second World War. However, as will be seen from the three biographical profiles presented in the following chapters, participation in the public sphere and the politicization of the actions of these historical Roma agents also extended to other causes, which they shared with other, non-Roma activists, and matured within other social movements. In fact, the life of Helios Gómez, which opens this first part, was essentially dedicated to two causes that he understood as being interrelated: the cause of the workers and the cause of anti-fascism. He devoted himself, at great personal risk, to both of these causes during the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. It was within this framework that he thought of the rights of the Gitanos, as forming a part – an especially mistreated part – of the great proletariat. As the reader can see in Chapter 1, his commitment to the struggle for social justice, first during the turbulent period of the rise of fascism in Europe, and later after the triumph of Francoism in Spain, marked out for him a destiny of exile and imprisonment that he probably could have avoided had he settled for enjoying his success as an internationally recognized graphic artist. On the journey that took him to Barcelona, Paris, Brussels, Berlin and Leningrad, Helios Gómez wove a network of friendships, collaborations and solidarity with intellectuals and activists dedicated, like himself, to the workers' cause in Europe between the wars. When Spain became the epicentre of the fight against fascism during the Civil War (1936–39),

his networks were those of his chosen political families, communism and anarchism, with whom he collaborated by turns until the end.

For those Romanies who wanted to raise their voice in the European public sphere after the Second World War, the cause of the fight against anti-Gypsyism – which had led to the Romani genocide – and the demand for specific rights for this minority were priorities that could not be put off any longer, regardless of the path chosen.[12] This was not incompatible with the fact that the Roma cause could be combined with and strengthened in the defence of other causes, however. This was understood and practised by, among others, Sandra Jayat and Ronald Lee, the subjects of chapters 2 and 3. In Lee's case, reflection on the situation of the Roma in his native Canada led him to conceive the alliance of all the wretched of the earth as a challenge, drawing inspiration from Frantz Fanon as well as his own life experiences. The political calling of his concept of the Roma cause became evident in his European period, when he participated in initiatives such as the British Gypsy Council, the Communauté Mondiale Gitane [World Gypsy Community] founded in France and even the preparation of the First World Romani Congress held in London in 1971. His particular interest in what was happening in European centres (such as Strasbourg) where power was negotiated, or the choice of the Council of Europe or the UN as interlocutory institutions for Roma demands were also explicitly political.

At this point, a comparison of his profile with that of his contemporary Sandra Jayat could lead us to the hasty conclusion that her experience and work do not belong to the space of politics. Here we argue just the opposite, starting from an open conception of the political in the sense proposed by Pierre Rosanvallon and Serge Berstein: a space in which the cultural is purely political – and it is so in many ways.[13] The case of Jayat in fact allows us to explore other ways of combining advocacy for the Roma

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12 On the role of the Roma genocide, the reparation of victims and the memory of the Holocaust in the formation of recent Romani identity, see Huub van Baar, "Romani Identity Formation and the Globalization of Holocaust Discourse", *Thamyris/Intersecting* 20 (2010): 115–32; Sławomir Kapralski, "The Memory of Genocide and Contemporary Roma Identities", in *The Nazi Genocide of the Roma*, ed. Anton Weiss-Wendt (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2013), 229–51. The role of Romani writing on the Holocaust in the formation of post-war memory and identity, starting with the first publication of Philomena Franz's *Zwischen Liebe und Hass: Ein Zigeunerleben* (Freiburg: Herder, 1985), is fundamental. A study of this writing is Marianne Zwicker, "Journeys into Memory: Romani Identity and the Holocaust in Autobiographical Writing by German and Austrian Romanies" (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2010), https://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/handle/1842/6201 [accessed 12 January 2020].

13 Pierre Rosanvallon, *Pour une histoire conceptuelle du politique* (Paris: Seuil, 2003); Serge Berstein, "L'historien et la culture politique", *Vingtième Siècle, revue d'histoire* 35 (1992): 67–77.

cause with various individual and collective causes, supported by – and at the same time generating – other encounters. Jayat devoted most of her extensive literary and pictorial work to creating a positive image of the Romani people, in an attempt to dismantle the plethora of negative stereotypes that were still in circulation. She found a way out as an artist and, along the way, vindication of Roma culture and the search for a place of her own in the Parisian avant-garde went hand in hand. In her case, the result is eminently political, because she created a discourse that seeks to empower the Romanies, including a reflection on the place of women at the intersection of the categories of race and gender.

In defending their causes, these three activists modulated their voices and launched their strategies in contact with other actors, Roma and non-Roma. Taking into account the common framework of anti-Gypsyism but without settling for a generic or static definition of it, these biographical studies allow us to look at the complex reality of the conflictive environment in which these activists established their social relations. We understand these environments as "contact zones" in the sense proposed by Mary Louise Pratt, that is "social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power".[14] They are simultaneously spaces of confrontation and cultural exchange, of struggle and redefinition of power. The participants engage with unequal resources, but the encounter itself provides opportunities to fight inequality. The social networks woven within these spaces are an important part of this framework of opportunities.

The voice of Helios Gómez, the first of the cases studied here, was based on the international political networks of the working-class movement. Being a Gitano, as we shall see, was not incompatible with being a class-conscious worker, for the common foe of both was fascistic capitalism. In the later cases of Sandra Jayat and Ronald Lee, the Roma/non-Roma divide carries far greater weight, largely as an effect of the Romani Holocaust, but mainly, and above all, because anti-Gypsy harassment continued even after Nazism had been defeated.[15] At the same time, the differences between these two cases bring us into contact with the multiple ways of being Roma in the space of post-war politics. Through her work as a writer and painter, Jayat created a network of contacts that included Romanies active in the world of French culture (the family of Django Reinhardt, Gérard Gartner)

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14 A term from the field of linguistics that has passed into the humanities and social sciences, with fertile readings from feminist theory and critical racial studies: Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone", *Profession* (1991): 33–40.

15 On what can be considered an all-out pursuit of the victims of the racial politics of the Third Reich, see Sybil Milton, "Persecuting the Survivors: The Continuity of 'Anti-Gypsyism' in Postwar Germany and Austria", in *Sinti and Roma: Gypsies in German-Speaking Society and Literature*, ed. Susan Tebbutt (New York: Berghahn, 1998), 35–48.

and also prominent non-Romani artists and intellectuals (Jean Cocteau, Marcel Aymé, Marc Chagall). On this basis, she used her voice to denounce her experience of anti-Gypsyism and developed cultural capital out of her past that was recognized by her non-Romani interlocutors. Without denying the conflict, Jayat chose to affirm the possibility of intercultural dialogue and friendship. The coordinates within which the Romani consciousness of Ronald Lee was shaped speak of a different contact zone. In Canada, where those branded as "Negroes", "Indians", "commies", etc. were associated with the "Gypsies" and consigned to the underworld of "undesirable classes", he found the colonial relationship that the white elites had constructed for all these groups insulting, and in contradiction with the official integrationist political discourse. Lee rebelled against it. In the course of his struggle he established collaborative networks, preferably between European and American Roma (or activists of non-Roma origin but strongly linked to their cause, such as Grattan Puxon). But, in addition, the contact zone of modern politics, with all its asymmetries of power and its burden of conflict, enabled him to imagine other spaces and generate other relationships with the non-Roma that could be used in the struggle for recognition. I refer here to the academic world, which Lee appreciated for its political value: his criticism of the *gadjo* academic system was compatible with his presence in it and the project for a Romani academy, in a tension both conflictive and productive.

Constructing Identity, Imagining Politically

The complexity of these contact zones is revealed in even greater wealth of detail if we focus, lastly, on the processes of identity construction that develop within them. As noted above, studying the past by looking closely at these processes is one of the most attractive potentials of the biographical method. In critical practice, this approach allows us to appreciate the fluid, "constructed" nature of identities, to understand the complementarity of feelings of belonging and to explain the political effects of all this.

The three cases studied here speak of the permeability and mobility of identity boundaries, the compatibility between different collective affiliations in the processes of construction of the self and the margin of action that subjects have to define their own identity. Helios Gómez was and always felt himself to be a revolutionary worker and, from a certain moment in his life, also a Gitano. Sandra Jayat regarded herself as an artist as much as a Tzigane. Ronald Lee constructed himself as a Romani while living as a second-class Canadian. Using the notion of "emotional community" formulated by Barbara Rosenwein, we might propose that the sense of belonging and the same identity configuration that produces it are primarily the result of our emotional coordinates and that we tend to live trying to reconcile the norms and emotional styles of the different communities to

which we feel attached.[16] Since emotions are a human trait, they tend to be understood as seemingly universal and timeless. It is easy to overlook the artificial, changing – not to say changeable – nature of associations based on emotional norms (which, moreover, are closely linked to gender norms). This is the case with groups that we consider to be more natural, such as the family. With others involving associations and identities with more direct readings in public spaces, we are more aware of their sociocultural construction, but tend to ignore the emotional substratum. Taking note of the set of individual and collective identities constructed over a lifetime as the product of emotional work (what William Reddy calls "emotional navigation") through an open process of attachment to different emotional communities helps us to appreciate not only the complexity of the identity phenomenon in itself, but also the political potential that the cultural shaping of emotion can have.

The identities of the Romani activists whose life stories are told here are not a simple consequence of belonging to a particular community that is assumed to be obvious, but the result of personal choices made out of a sense of political commitment, a commitment to the Roma collective and culture, as well as to other causes. In all three cases, calling themselves "Gypsies" was an act of rebellion with political intent: Gómez emphasized that he was a Gitano from the tragic moment of the Spanish Civil War and made it his emotional refuge in Franco's prisons. Lee referred to himself as a "Goddam Gypsy", provocatively assuming the feeling of contempt that this entailed, rather than proceeding to a whitewashing of his ethnic identity to ensure a more comfortable life for himself. Jayat turned her Manouche past into her artistic present. Without erasing problematic episodes – such as her escape from an arranged marriage – she plunged into the affective world of her childhood to create verbal and plastic images of a culture she chose to be associated with.

All processes of identity construction are contradictory in themselves. Defining oneself as a Gypsy, Gitano or Rom implies objectifying some ideal image that fixes and essentializes positions that are much more fluid in reality. This type of cultural operation contains paradoxes, such as using some of the representations created from outside the community with less than noble intentions as part of the panoply of characteristic features of the chosen collective identity. Thus, in drawing attention to the value of Romani culture, Jayat emphasizes such details as the generic love of freedom and empathy with nature, Lee points out that the Gypsy "exists to beat the system", Gómez elaborates metaphors that identify the

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16 Barbara H. Rosenwein, "Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions", *Passions in Context* 1, no. 1 (2010): 1–32, http://www.passionsincontext.de/index.php?id=557 [accessed 12 January 2020]; William Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Gypsies with Andalusia …. In other words, they are part of a dialogue with majority society stereotypes about what a "Gypsy" is. As in any other case, in the formation of self-attributed identities, alterity sneaks in through the back door of interpellation to create a wide range of hybridizations.[17] As we know from the history of other social and political movements, it is precisely this process of reduction and symbolic sublimation that lends mobilizing capacity to an identity that is felt to be collective and for which rights are claimed. On more than one occasion, this process has undergone the resignification of images of alterity that were originally composed with the intention to disparage: "anarchist" and "queer" are two examples of pejorative labels that have become self-designations, asserted positively with pride and used defiantly with political intent.

Taking stigmatizing representations and turning them into a public platform from which to speak out and demand rights has been part of the historical process of Roma political mobilization. In the cases studied here, choosing to be identified as Romani/Gypsy/Tzigane was a form of empowerment that lent authority to discourses of protest in the public sphere and promoted political action. The ideas, strategies, images and contact networks put in place have served both to claim the civil rights of a group that has been punished throughout its history and to open up the space of modern politics. In absolute terms, their contribution is obvious, for example in the fight for social justice in general, and in the fight against racism, in particular. When read in relational terms, however, other facets of the presence of these Romani political agents are revealed. The creation of links between their own cause and the causes of other disadvantaged groups, which can be found to varying degrees in each of the three cases studied here in Part One, anticipates postcolonial proposals for decentring modern politics – by undermining common assumptions about its actors, its places, its reasons – and compels a critical reconsideration of this space. Focusing on education as a political tool for change – which Lee emphasized repeatedly and Jayat has pursued to great effect through such powerful means as children's literature – obliged them to face problems that are of interest to us all, such as the use of our educational systems to perpetuate power relations or the difficulties of articulating cultural diversity within them.

Finally, the imagination of which they have shown themselves capable in managing to raise their voices from places of enunciation reserved for subalterns has enriched the landscape of European politics. Transnational aspirations and the Europe-America connection have prompted formulas such as "Romanestan", a model that Lee and other fellow travellers invested

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17 Joep Leerssen, "Identity/ Alterity/ Hybridity", in *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters*, ed. Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 335–42.

with such politically attractive components as the deterritorialization of the institutions responsible for ensuring the rights of a collective. Political artefacts demanding freedom of movement across national borders are as necessary today as the anti-fascist internationalism to which Helios Gómez contributed with images that remain intelligible in our present. In both cases, the imaginative boldness of these projects of sociopolitical formulas that were considered utopian at the historical moment of their enunciation should be recovered for future projects, in Europe and globally.