

# Between two epochs: Gypsy/Roma movement in the Soviet Union and in the post-Soviet space

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**Between Two Epochs:  
Gypsy/Roma Movement in the Soviet Union and in the Post-Soviet Space<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract:** The article is devoted to the Gypsy/Roma movement in Post-Soviet space from its formation in the times of USSR until nowadays. The Gypsy movement in USSR and its development in individual countries after collapse of Soviet Union is analysed within the political context of respective historical periods. The analysis starts with the activity of *All-Russian Union of the Gypsies*, its goals and objectives, and continues with reviewing the organization *Romano Kher*, to the contemporary *Federal National and Cultural Autonomy of Russian Gypsies* in Russian Federation and *Association of Roma in the Baltic States and Commonwealth of Independent States 'Amaro Drom'*. The role of the International Roma Movement from the establishing of the *International Romani Union* to the *European Roma and Travellers Forum* is scrutinised as well, with special stress on participation in it of Roma from the Post-Soviet space. Further is reflected on the impact of major programs of the Council of Europe and European Commission, of main donor programs and of Human Rights Movement on the development and changes in Roma NGO sector. In conclusion, the Gypsy/Roma movement in the Post-Soviet space is placed in context of Roma policies and Roma movement in Europe, and on this basis hypothesis for variants of its future development are made.

**Key words:** Gypsy Organisation, Roma NGO, Post-Soviet Space, Soviet Policies, European Policies

For centuries after they came to Europe from Indian subcontinent, the Gypsies (in the spirit of political correctness called 'Roma' today)<sup>2</sup> in different historical periods and in distinct countries were subjected to various types of state policies. Gradually and relatively slowly, ideas emerged in the Gypsy/Roma communities about their place in the societies they live in and attempts were made to pass from a passive object of different state policies to an active political subject. All these give rise

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<sup>2</sup> In this text we will not go into the discussion about the content and relationship of these basic designations, Gypsies and Roma (about the inadequacy and inappropriateness of the political substitution of the designations see Marushiakova and Popov, 2016a: 7-34). We stick here to a pragmatic approach –the both terms are viewed equipollent, and are used according to the specific historical and social context (i.e. reflecting the terminology used in respective societies and timeframes).

to the potential for developing of separate more or less closed individual groups into an united political active community.

From a chronological point of view, the first testimonies of Gypsy aspiration towards civil emancipation and the equal status of their nation can be found in the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the Balkans within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire (Marushiakova and Popov, 2001: 64-68; 2017: 33-37).

The first Gypsy/Roma organizations worldwide appeared on the Balkans as well, in the new independent states that succeeded the Ottoman Empire, during the time between the two world wars. Various organizations were established in the 1920's and 1930's in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Romania and Greece (Liegeois, 1994: 251-252; Acković 1994: 43-59; 2001: 43-59; Achim, 1998: 127-132; Klimova, 2005: 15-16; Kenrick, 2007: 31, 222-223; Marushiakova and Popov, 2015: 196-201; 2017: 33-37). The Gypsies in those countries wanted to become equal citizens of the new ethno-national states and their social environment; the main strategic goal of these organizations was the equal societal integration of Gypsies/Roma in the composition of the respective nation-states, without losing specific characteristics of their ethnic community, and this goal often came into various contradictions with existing state policies (Marushiakova and Popov, 2005: 434-435).

During this period, however, in the USSR appeared a new, quite different phenomenon – the creation of Roma organizations under strict administrative control and in fact under the leadership of the Communist Party and Soviet state, which aimed at to support their transition to modernity, or using the terminology of the time, their transition from “backward communities” towards “consciousness soviet citizens”. The first Gypsy Comsomol Group (Comsomol is the abbreviation for the Young Communist League) was established in Moscow in 1923 and was headed by Ivan Rom-Lebedev. Later on, this group expanded into a Voluntary Society, which dealt with propaganda and campaigning among the Gypsies (Rom-Lebedev, 1990: 160-162).

Ivan Rom-Lebedev was one of the founders and a long-time head of the famous Theatre “Romen”. He was born into a wealthy family of Gypsy musicians' elite during the times of Russian Empire. In his own memoirs, he described in detail the big house owned by his family in Moscow, where he grew up, and the servants of the family (cook, chamber-maids, and porter) (Rom-Lebedev, 1990: 94–95). It is rumoured that he left Moscow in time of the Civil War (1918-1921), and made his way through turbulent and war-torn Russia with a clear goal – to join the “white” army of General Denikin and then Baron Wrangler's army in the Crimea. In his book, published in 1990, before the break-up of the USSR, Ivan Rom-Lebedev, however, claims that he joined involuntarily the medical and labour units of the “white” army, only because he was mobilized by force, and that his subsequent joining the Red Army as a volunteer was his conscious choice (Rom-Lebedev, 1990: 143-144).

The first Gypsy Comsomol Group was subsequently developed into All-Russian Gypsy Union. It goes without saying that each Gypsy organization or association was constantly controlled, and practically guided, by the Communist Party and the Soviet state. To use the words of Ivan Rom-Lebedev himself “with the assistance of the Party and the Soviet organizations supporting the activities of the Comsomol activists and the Moscow Gypsies”, the Voluntary Society grew into an *All-Russian Union of Gypsies* (this union originally had 23 members) in 1925 (Rom-Lebedev, 1990: 162-163; Druts and Gessler, 1990: 281; Demeter et al. 2000: 205). The Chairperson of the Union was Andrey Taranov, member of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), a Red Army volunteer during the Civil War and a graduate of the Communist University of the Working People in the East. The Secretary of the Union was Ivan-Rom Lebedev, who also became a representative of the Gypsies in the Nationality Department of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union (Druts and Gessler, 1990: 281; Crowe, 1996: 176-179; Kalinin, 2005: 36; O’Keeffe, 2013: 56-64).

The activities of the All-Russian Union of Gypsies (as well as of any other similar public association) were administered by the People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD), which approved, in accordance with the existing legislation, the Union’s Constitution on July 15, 1926 (Demeter et al., 2000: 205; O’Keeffe, 2013: 56-64). The All-Russian Union of Gypsies set itself various goals, drawing fully on the dominant language of the Soviet ideology – to unite the Gypsies, to defend their interests, to improve their cultural development, to involve them in “socially useful work”, to help establish labour artels and communes, to organize the transition of nomadic Gypsies to a settled way of life, to establish evening and Sunday classes, clubs and libraries, to publish newspapers, books and brochures in the Romany language, to fight drunkenness, begging and fortune-telling... (Druts and Gessler, 1990: 282; ; O’Keeffe, 2013: 56-64) The Union’s members participated in the solemn demonstration dedicated to May 1st (International Labour Day) on the Red Square in 1927, raising placards with the following slogans: “ALL GYPSIES IN THE GYPSY UNION”, “DO WE NEED TO REMAIN THE PARASITES OF THE WORLD FOR EVER” and “GYPSIES OF THE WORLD, UNITE” (calque from the famous quote from the Communist Manifesto) (Kisch, 1980: 123).

The All-Russian Union of Gypsies sent Alexandr (Leksa) Grakhovskiy to Byelorussia in 1926 as its representative. With the help of the Party apparatus, he held a series of meetings with local Gypsies, which culminated in a meeting of the organizing committee of Gypsy activists (the Kozlovskiy brothers – Ivan and Alexandr, G. Turia and V. Adamov) held in Minsk on September 29, 1926. During the meeting one of the participants, G. Turia, said: “like a sleeping beauty from a fairy tale, the Gypsy nation was roused from a deep sleep by the Revolution Fairy” (Kalinin, 2005: 88). The meeting decided to prepare a Constitution of the future Union of Gypsies in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (BSSR), which would be submitted to the Central Executive Committee of the

BSSR for approval. The Constitution was approved by the Commissar for Internal Affairs of the BSSR and the Byelorussian Gypsy Union was about to be created but its creation became irrelevant after the dissolution of the All-Russian Union of Gypsies (Kalinin, 2005: 88).

The All-Russian Union of Gypsies existed only for a relatively short period of time. It was dissolved by a Decree of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs from February 15, 1928. The reasons given by the authorities were quite diverse – “no proletarian layer in the structure of governance” (out of the 23 people, involved in governance, 9 traded in horses in the past), poor organization (the Union had no local branches), insufficient results in trying to make nomadic Gypsies settle down, internal conflicts, poor economic management (a total of 15,000 roubles was missing) ... (Druts and Gessler 1990: 282; Demeter et al. 2000: 205; O'Keeffe, 2013: 56-64).

After the establishment of the All-Russian Union of Gypsies the Soviet Government intervened more actively in Gypsy life and this intervention continued without any significant changes even after the dissolution of the Union. In fact, the dissolution of the Union did not change the Government policy in the main areas outlined in the Union's Constitution, what is more, this policy became quite more active (and more efficient too). Most of the Union's members, 640 according to some sources (Kenrick, 2007: 259), including the bulk of its leadership, were involved in this policy in different ways. The policy focused on several main issues –agitation campaigns among nomadic Gypsies for sedentarization and for their involvement in agriculture; labour inclusion of the Gypsies living in towns; standardisation and codification of the Romani language and mass literacy and improvement of the educational level through establishing of Gypsy schools (Marushiakova and Popov 2017a: 48-59), and development of a proletarian Romani culture.

The Government policy targeting Gypsies in the USSR changed radically in 1938, after the adoption of the so-called new “Stalin Constitution” at the 8<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Soviets in November 1936. Up to 1938 the policy towards Gypsies was based on their treatment as a separate nationality, who should develop above all as an ethnic community, part of Soviet society, by creating separate Gypsy kolkhozes, Gypsy artels, Gypsy schools, etc. After 1938 the paradigm was changed, the element of the ‘special approach’ towards Gypsies gave way to the ‘mainstream approach’ towards them and Gypsies were seen above all as an integral part of Soviet society, without any special separation in the main social spheres (the economy, education, etc.); as a community, their development was supported only in an ethno-cultural plan (i.e. in the field of music, songs and dancing). Institutionally only the famous Romani Theatre continued to be supported as a showcase, and in order to preserve and develop their ethnic identity (Marushiakova and Popov, 2008: 8; o'Keefe 2013:191 ff, Bessonov 2016: 143-156). This new approach was the leading one in the policy towards Gypsies in the Soviet Union until

its collapse in 1991, and in terms of the Soviet system, it precludes the creation and development of independent Gypsy organizations (Marushiakova and Popov, 2003: 289-310).

After the collapse of the USSR in 1991, in the conditions of Russian Federation and new independent states, another new epoch commenced for all former soviet citizens, including Roma and consequently a new stage in the development of the Gypsy/Roma movement started. The beginning was in the times of the so-called *Perestroika*, when in 1989 the *Gypsy Culture and Enlightenment Society of Moscow 'Romano Kher'* (Gypsy Home) was established, based on the Gypsy section of the Russian Culture Fund, and was associated mainly with the ideas of preservation and development of Gypsy ethnic culture. The informal Association of Gypsy Women, closely linked with the 'Romano Kher', was originally one of its sections. 'Romano Kher', which united prominent Gypsy figures in various spheres of culture (musicians, dancers, actors, scholars, etc.), was headed by Professor Georgiy Demeter, doctor of pedagogical sciences, author of the book *Lenin about the Protection of Workers' Health and Physical Culture* (Demeter, 1969), which underwent five reprints during the Soviet era and was translated into several languages within the former socialist bloc (including even two translation into Vietnamese).

During the 1990s, several Gypsy associations were also created in Moscow, their activities lay in the field of music and dance arts, such as e.g. the Gypsy Child Ensemble 'Giloni' (Little Song) headed by Vladislav Demeter and transformed later into Cultural and Educational Centre 'Giloni' and the School for Gypsy pop dance and aesthetic education 'Luludi' (Flower), headed by Anna Batalova (Ganga). In addition, the Gypsy World Artistic Society was founded and managed by the Honoured Artist of Russian Federation Georgiy Zhemchuzhniy, and the Russian Academy of Theatrical Art launched a special 'Gypsy Course'; similar course was opened also at the Boris Shchukin Theatre Institute, directed by Nicholay Slichenko, the famous director of the Roman Theatre. Such were for instance the Gypsy Fund 'Roman', managed by the Honoured Artist of Russian Federation Moisey Oglu, again closely linked with the Roman Theatre, as well as the Fund for Supporting and Fostering Gypsy Culture 'Roma', headed by Georgiy Yanko (Yanko Mayer), which launched the Gypsy Variety and Folklore Theatre. The Gypsy Centre 'Romale', managed by Dufunya Vishnevskiy was an extremely interesting phenomenon; it has produced and marketed the fiction movies *I am Guilty* (1993), *False Apostles of Love* (1995), and *I am Guilty 2* (1993) entirely independently, the director and main artist star of these movies was Dufunya Vishnevskiy, and the other main artists were members of his extended family.

At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of 21<sup>th</sup> century Gypsy organizations in Russian Federation gradually shifted to new, much wider societal dimensions and expanded the territorial scope of their activities. In June 1996, the State Duma (lower house of the Federal Assembly of the Russian

Federation) adopted a *Concept of the State and Nationalities-Related Politics of the Russian Federation*, which was followed a few days later by a special Federal Law of *The Cultural Autonomy of the Nationalities*. With the new legislation in effect, a local Gypsy National Cultural Autonomy was founded in 1997 in Yekaterinburg (Torode, 2008: 179-193).

A group made up above all of Gypsy activists of the 'Romano Kher' circles and headed by Vladimir Kutenkov established a local Gypsy National Cultural Autonomy of the South-Eastern District of the city of Moscow in July 1998. Regional Gypsy National Cultural Autonomy of the Moscow' Federal District (a separate constituent unit of the Russian Federation) was constituted three months later and steps were taken to form a Federal National Cultural Autonomy. The *Federal National Cultural Autonomy of the Russian Gypsies* was created in November 1999; it was registered in March 2000 and was one of the first national cultural autonomies. Professor Georgiy Demeter was elected Chairman and Alexandr Bariev as his deputy. Autonomy gradually expanded its influence in the country and in 2002 it had already 7 regional branches (Torode, 2008: 179-193).

Together with this, its leadership enabled these units to be independent organizations, i.e. they could still act as "independent" NGO-s after joining the Autonomy. A Fund was created for the support and sponsorship of the Federation headed by Alexandr Bariev.

The Second Constituent Congress of the Federal National Cultural Autonomy of the Russian Gypsies (FNCA) of the Gypsies in the Russian Federation took place on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Georgiy Demeter, who at that time had just celebrated his eightieth anniversary became Honorary President of the FNCA, and Alexandr Bariev was elected as acting president. That same year the FNCA of the Gypsies had already 18 branch organizations: the Gypsy Cultural and Educational Society of Moscow 'Romano Kher', headed by Professor Georgiy Demeter; the Fund for supporting and sponsoring the FNCA, headed by Alexandr Bariev; the Regional Inter-Regional Gypsy Organization of the Moscow Federal District 'Romano Lav' (Gypsy Word), headed by Alexandr Mashinovski; the Gypsy National Cultural Autonomy of the South-Eastern District of the city of Moscow, headed by Vladimir Kutenkov; the Regional Public Organization 'Smolensk Roma (Gypsy) Diaspora', headed by Alexandr Murashkin, the Public Organization of the City of Rostov-on-Don 'Amala' (Friends), headed by Pavel Limanskiy; the Regional Cultural and Educational Society of Rostov-on-Don 'Roma and World', headed by Vladimir Ivashchenko; the Inter-Regional Public Organization of the Southern Federal Region in Volgograd 'Association of the Gypsies', headed by Artur Gorbatov; the Public Organization 'Romani Duma' (Gypsy Council) at City of Astrakhan, headed by Sergey Kazachenko; the Regional Public Organization 'St. Petersburg Centre of Gypsy Culture V. N. Cherepovskiy' in St. Petersburg, headed by Alexandr Cherepovskiy; the Provincial Section of the Public Organization of the Russian Gypsies in Nizhniy Novgorod, headed by Dimitriy Lebedev; the Charity Gypsy Society 'Kumpania'

in Kaluga, headed by Yan Vitalinskiy; the Gypsy National Cultural Autonomy of the Komi Republic in Siktivkar, headed by Mikhail Baurov; the Samara City Gypsy Cultural Public Organization 'Romani Duma', headed by Vasiliy Kutenkov; the Regional Organization of Gypsies at Samara Federal District, headed by Vladimir Limanskiy; the Gypsy Organization 'Romano Trayo' (Gypsy Life) in Chapaevsk, headed by Victor Karabanenko; the Yekaterinburg Gypsy National Cultural Autonomy 'Roma-Ural', headed by Alexandr Torokhov; the Gypsy Organization 'Romano Drom' (Gypsy Road) in Novokuybishevsk, headed by Yakov Babaev; the Gypsy National Cultural Centre of City of Sizran 'Gilya Romen' (Gypsy Song), headed by Eduard Limanskiy (Тэ авен, 2004: 2).

The development of the Gypsy movement in the Russian Federation as a whole goes from 'top to down', from the capital Moscow to province, from the creation of national organizations to their regional and local branches. After the establishment of the Federal National Cultural Autonomy of the Russian Gypsies, other Gypsy organizations arose, which in one degree or another were perceived as its alternative, and which repeated the pattern of its formation and development.

Union of Gypsy Public Organizations 'Romane Phrala' (Gypsy Brothers) headed by Georgiy Tsvetkov was created in Moscow in 2001. The union consisted of eighteen organizations with 3,400 members (at least this is what the organizers claimed): the Fund for Support and Fostering of Gypsy Culture 'Roma'; the Inter-Provincial Public Organization 'Gypsy Community' in St. Petersburg with branches in the North-Western Federal District of the Russian Federation; the Charitable Organization 'Devla, Milisarama' (Have Mercy on Us, oh God) in Mitishchi; the Charitable Society 'Devla, de drom' (Show Us the Road, oh God) in Novocherkask; the Association 'Renaissance' of Kimry; the Association 'Kumpania' of Kaluga; the Association 'Romanipe' (Gypsiness) of Vologda; the Provincial Association of the Russian Gypsies of Nizhniy Novgorod, etc. (Union of Gypsy, 2001).

The Inter-Regional Public organization of Gypsies from the South Federal District of Russian Federation 'Association of the Gypsies' was created 2002 in Volgograd; it was headed by Arthur Gorbатов, and had branches in Volgograd, Stavropol, Krasnodar, Rostov-on-Don, Republic of Adygea and Kabardino-Balkar Republic.

The Roma Community Inter-Regional Public Organization was formed following a similar principle, it was headed by Nikolay Samulevich, with its centre in St. Petersburg, and it embraced organizations from the North-Western Federal District of the Russian Federation with local branches in Arkhangelsk, Murmansk, Novgorod, Pskov, Kaliningrad, Vologda and Republic of Karelia.

It is actually very difficult to present a full picture of the Gypsy organizations in the Russian Federation because of their unclear status (some were not registered at all), as well as the fact that many of them never functioned, or have functioned only for shorter or longer period of times in the more recent or more distant past (Bugay 2012). Beside the above mentioned Gypsy organizations, we

can also list: the Gypsy Association of Samara in the town of Samara (created in 1993); the two branch organizations of the Gypsy National Cultural Autonomy 'Roma-Ural' (the Renaissance Society 'Romen of Ural' and the Centre for Gypsy Culture of Ural 'Rhythm Romen' in Yekaterinburg; the Centre for Fostering National Culture 'Rromanimos' in Tver (created by Dzhura Makhotin, who died in 2004); the Gypsies of Kuban and the Public Organization 'Bare Roma' (Big Gypsies) in Krasnodar; the Gypsy Cultural Centre 'Roma' in Novosibirsk; the Public Organizations 'Arkhangelska Rom' (Arkhangelsk Gypsies) in Arakhangelsk, 'Romano Lav' (Gypsy Word) in Balashikha (Moscow province), 'Romani Duma' at Astrakhan; 'Romano Drom' (Gypsy Road) in Orekhovo-Zuevo (Moscow province), etc.

The late 1990s saw an intensification of the international contacts of Gypsy organizations in the Russian Federation. The impact of 'external' factors on the development of Roma movement in the Russian Federation throughout the period (apart of booming of the number of organisations) as a whole remains insignificant. The efforts of some international institutions, foundations and NGOs to find new markets in the Russian Federation among local Gypsy organizations built up rapidly in the latter years of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. The growing actuality of the 'Roma issue' for the Russian Federation (as well as for other countries which were formerly part of the Soviet Union) can be easily explained knowing developments in Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe (especially in the countries of the former Socialist bloc) in general.

The fact that most of the countries in the area pass through the pre-accession period and acceded to the European Union (the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia in 2004, Romania and Bulgaria in 2007), as well as the influx of the European pre-accession funds in Western Balkans radically changed the situation also there. Institutions such as the Council of Europe ceased to be so important for these countries, and the previous donors (the Open Society Foundations Network first of all) and the international NGOs linked to them, were substituted by European programs. Thus, the logical reaction of these donor and NGOs, which were gradually losing their actuality with the new realities there, was to conduct "export of democracy" (in practice this meant the implementation of new NGO projects) into new, previously un covered territories where Roma are living.

The first to start the attempts to work in the Russian Federation was European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC). For its strategic partner ERRC chose initially the organization 'Romano Kher'. Based on this, in 1998 ERRC initiated the creation of information and legal centre, headed by Vladimir Kutenkov and Ishtvan Demeter, which, however, failed to take root in the public domain.

The most serious attempt of the ERRC to secure ‘a new market’ for itself in the Russian Federation and the countries in Post-Soviet space, making use of all the resources of the Open Society Foundations Network, was the formation of a regional umbrella Roma organization, which aimed at uniting the Roma movement in post-soviet space. A Constituent Congress of this umbrella organization was held through January 31<sup>st</sup> to February 2<sup>d</sup>, 2003 in city of Smolensk (in the Russian Federation). It was financed by the East-East Program of the Open Society Institute (OSI) and was attended (according the list of participants) by representatives of 36 Gypsy/Roma organizations (according to the Roma Participation Program of the OSI report they numbered 42). The participant list shows that 18 of these organizations came from the Russian Federation, 2 from Belorussia, 8 from the Ukraine, 2 from the Republic of Moldova, 1 from Lithuania, 2 from Latvia, 1 from Estonia, 1 from Kazakhstan, and 1 from Kyrgyzstan (International Union, 2003). The term “organizations” is used rather loosely by the organizers to include not only the regional and local branches of the Federal National Cultural Autonomy of the Gypsies in the Russian Federation, but also the Romeni Theatre, and even the local branches of East-East Program of the Open Society network.

The congress was conceived on a very ambitious scale. It was attended by observers from the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the ministries of foreign affairs of the Russian Federation, Belorussia, the Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, of international Roma organizations (the International Romani Union and the Roma National Congress), representatives of Roma organizations from countries in Eastern Europe and from a number of programs of the Open Society Foundations Network (Ibid.).

The Congress created a new organization, *International Union of the Roma of the Baltic States and Commonwealth of Independent States* (CIS) ‘*Amaro Drom*’ (Our Road), and Oleg Kozlovskiy from Belarus was elected its president. It was elected also National Council (of this International organization!) chaired by Normund Rudevichs from Latvia, with deputies Alexandras Stankyavuchis (Lithuania), Mikhail Sikachev and Arthur Gorbatov (Russia), Mariya Ivanova and Yuri Ivanenko (Ukraine); Auditing Commission headed by Anatoliy Kondur of the Ukraine; National Committees for the separate countries; Executives Committees in line with the chief spheres of the Union’s future activities – Law, Education and Culture, Holocaust, Foreign Relations, Sports, Mass Media, Social Policy and National Security (Ibid.).

In her statement to the Congress the director of the ERRC (at that time) Dimitrina Petrova hailed the new Union and expressed her confidence that this will be the first and an extremely important step towards creating and developing a powerful Roma human rights movement in the countries of the CIS and the Baltic Region, encouraging it to undertake the protection of human rights as “a top priority on its agenda.” It would be of interest to note that the Statute of the new Union states

in its Article 1 that it is “a form of national-cultural, self-identity and the international voluntary organization of the Roma, aiming to preserve the ethnic specificity, to foster the Romani language, education, national culture, raising the social and economic standards of the Roma of the Baltic states and the CIS” (Ibid.), i.e. the ideas of a “Roma human rights movement”, to say nothing of placing the concept of human rights “as top priority on its agenda”, are not mentioned at all.

All intentions of the Union have remained on paper and so far, it has not shown any further significant activity. Thus, it remains just one in a succession of attempts outside the Roma movement to channel development in the direction they believe is best for the Roma. Attempts for breakthrough of status-quo and for directing the activities of the organisations in post-soviet space towards human rights were not limited with establishing of the International Union ‘Amaro Drom’. It was finally the Anti-Discrimination Centre (ADC) ‘Memorial’, the prominent Russian human rights organization, which became the main partner of the ERRC and OSI in the Russian Federation; in 2003, with a grant from the Open Society Institute, its activists founded the North-West Roma Juridical Centre (i.e. of the North-West Federal Province at Russian Federation) without direct Roma participation.

Another international human rights organization, the Minority Rights Group, also implemented several projects in the Russian Federation. Their representative went to work at the Gypsy Federal National Cultural Autonomy ‘Roma-Ural’ in Yekaterinburg that implements several human rights projects. With the active assistance of the Minority Rights Group, a major project for the multiplication of the Roma NGOs under a title ‘Development of Roma NGOs in Russian Federation’ was launched in 2003. Project coordinators were Gypsy Federal National Cultural Autonomy (Moscow) and Transcarpathian Cultural and Educational Association ‘Romani jag’ (Gypsy Fire) from Uzhgorod (Ukraine), and regional coordinators were ‘Romani Duma’ from Samara, and Association of the Gypsies from Volgograd and ‘Roma-Ural’ from Ekaterinburg. In frames of the project a series of courses and trainings (on technology of NGOs registration, on project writings, team building, etc.) were conducted, with the aim to support the civil society development in the Russian Federation. The aims of this project have not been fulfilled due to lack of new projects and new donors, especially after the release of the September, 2004 Decree of President of the Russian Federation, titled *For Further Measures of State Support of Human Rights Movement in the Russian Federation*, which provides for strict control by the state apparatus of all internationally funded human rights projects.

At the same time in the Russian Federation, we witnessed one attempt to seek an another, alternative course of development for Roma movement which deserves special attention. It is linked to the name of Yakov Sergunin (with ‘Gypsy name’ Yan Reshetnikov). He was born July 25<sup>th</sup> 1954 in the town of Beryozovsky, Sverdlovsk (nowadays Yekaterinburg) Province, in a family of the Ruska Roma (from the subgroup of the *Sibiryaki*). He graduated from a military academy, served in the army,

and then in the units of the Interior Ministry (VIII Chief Department, responsible for the so-called 'closed' (i.e. secret) industries and towns). 1987 he was sentenced to three years in prison for corruption and document forgery but was released ahead of time. He was a co-founder of several companies, some of them in the so called "security business" – 'Brok', 'Brok-747', 'Shtit i Mech' (Shield and Sword). In 1991, after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, he joined the Government administration. Simultaneously with taking high positions in the Government administration, however, he ran active private businesses, acting as a broker at the Russian Cargo and Raw Materials Stock-Market, he was the vice president of the Ukrrosmetal (a Russian-Ukrainian concern dealing in metals). He was also head and majority holder of the Shareholding Company 'Aquarius' (dealing above all in oil and foodstuffs), then he sold his shares to the Neftekhimbank (the license of this bank was revoked in September 1999). After 1996 Yakov Sergunin was occupied solely with private business. At that time, the company he worked for, Mosenergmontazh, won a contract for Ru 1,2 billion (about \$ 400,000,000) for the reconstruction of the Argun Thermo-Electric Power Station in the Republic of Chechnya.

The life of Yakov Sergunin took a new and radical turn in 2000. He took up a post with the Judicial Department of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation and was almost immediately appointed Head of the Chechnya Judicial Department, then a Presidential Decree made him Civil Councillor of Justice II Rank, or lieutenant-general of Justice (in the USSR, and subsequently in the Russian Federation the ranks within the judicial system correspond to officers' ranks). In October 2001, President Vladimir Putin appointed Yakov Sergunin Head of the Administration and Vice-Premier of the Republic of Chechnya. Yakov (now known as Yakub) Sergunin married Kilanat, a Chechen girl, and he was known thereon as "the grey cardinal of Chechnya". It is rumoured that he was the real author of the new Constitution of the Republic of Chechnya and that was why he was given the title 'Honoured Jurist of Chechnya'. In 2002 President Vladimir Putin awarded him the Order of Friendship among Peoples. The public uproar in connection with the missing budget of the Republic of Chechnya broke out that same year (the package with the officially sealed papers "vanished" on its way from Moscow to Grozny and the Republic forged ahead for six months without an officially approved budget). Yakov Sergunin was blamed for this disappearance and was forced to quit his post (although he maintained that his signature on the receipt was forged).

Back in Moscow, Yakov Sergunin (Yan Reshetnikov) founded several new companies, was engaged in the reconstruction of Chechnya, and made plans to put up a large trading complex. At the same time, he turned his attention to the Gypsy movement. He founded the Tolerance Fund in Support of the Small Nationalities, which financed the publication of the book *Legal Self-Defence* in which he provided legal advice for the Gypsies on the ways and means to defend themselves from the law and

order agencies as well as the courts (Bessonov and Reshetnikov, 2003). In 2004 Yan Reshetnikov initiated talks with the new leadership of the Federal National Cultural Autonomy of the Gypsies in the Russian Federation. On April 8<sup>th</sup>, he delivered a report at the festive celebration of the International Roma Day, calling for cooperation and integration of the Gypsy organizations in the Russian Federation under common leadership elected according to the Gypsy traditions by the influential members of the community. In April 2004, Yan Reshetnikov published a draft-memorandum, which he tabled for discussion and approval by the leaders of the Gypsy movement. In it he advanced his idea for a 'skhodka' on the model of the so called 'Gypsy court', as the term itself is one of the designation of the Gypsy court use by Roma in Russia (Marushiakova and Popov, 2007: 67-101). This idea he had already expounded in above mentioned book, as well as in his report at the celebration. In his draft-memorandum he proposed that "a public council of trustees from the wealthy representatives of the Gypsy diaspora, as well representatives of the public organizations, should meet on a regular basis with the leaderships of the Gypsy organizations, in order to share experience, information about forthcoming events, as well as to discuss financing opportunities, to decide regularly which organizations should apply for grants ..."; in other words according this memorandum the Gypsy movement in Russian Federation should be centralized using mixture of traditional and modern means.

The ambitious plans of Yan Reshetnikov came to an unexpected end in June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2004. At two o'clock in the morning, as he was leaving the Restaurant 'Vostochniy Dvorik' in Moscow a contract killer on a motorcycle, armed with a Stechkin APS pistol put into him six bullets (his wife was gravely wounded as well). The militia staged a 'Vulkan 3' operation, blocking whole city of Moscow in a vain effort to catch the assassin who has to this day not been found. He was buried with military honours at the Troekurovsk graveyard. This was how the attempt of Yan Reshetnikov, of a man with a truly unusual fate, to head the Gypsy movement in the Russian Federation and to take it along a new road, came to an end.

Currently, Yakov Sergunin (Yan Reshetnikov) has already become a semi-mythological figure of the new post-soviet era and several different legends are told about him in the Gypsy environment. In similar way in the previous historical period a semi-mythological figure became another Rom, who was however not active in then non-existent Romani movement, but nevertheless became famous thanks of his wealth and close connections to the party and state elite (i.e. high societal position). This was Boris Buryatse, from the Gypsy group of Kishinevtsy, an artist in the Romen Theatre, lover of Galina Brezhneva (daughter of the Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and leader of State of the Soviets, Leonid Brezhnev). Boris Buryatse was convicted of illegal trade in diamonds in 1982. Until today the Gypsy tell stories that he is still alive, that he emigrated to the U.S.A., etc. Actually, he died in Yalta shortly after his release from prison in 1987 and his grave is in

Krasnodar. Both personalities could be perceived as symbol of prosperous Rom in two different epochs and shows the different paths to the prosperity.

As part of the process of internationalisation of the post-soviet Romani movement the delegations with Roma representatives from the Russian Federation attended the Fifth Congress of the International Romani Union (IRU) in Prague in 2000 and the Sixth Congress in 2004 in Lanciano (Italy), where Nadezhda Demeter was elected Vice President of the Union, and also the Seventh Congress in 2008 in Zagreb (Croatia) and the Eighth Congress in 2013 in Sibiu (Romania), as well as the alternative Ninth Congress, conducted in 2015 in Riga (Latvia) where for the IRU president was elected Normunds Rudēvičs from Latvia. Following the Riga Congress, under the auspices of the IRU, and with active support of Normunds Rudēvičs and Pavel Limanskiy, a campaign for issuing international Roma passports was running. Similar ideas of Pavel Limanskiy have also been launched in the Internet such as issuing of Roma national currency (in the form of gold coins), creation of a Roma Olympic Committee and even establishing of a Roma Security (secret police). The Roma from Russian Federation do not participate in the latest Tenth IRU congress in Skopje in 2016 and stay attached to the leadership elected at Riga Congress.

After a series of new legislative and administrative regulations adopted by the Russian state, and in particular the 2012 *Amendments to Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation regarding the Regulation of the Activities of Non-profit Organisations Performing the Functions of a Foreign Agent*" (so-called 'Foreign Agent Law'), which limited the possibilities for funding of local NGO's by foreign donors, led to limitation of activities of foreign donors, and of organisation which are supported by them. In 2014 cease its activities in Russian Federation one of the most known such organisation, namely ADC Memorial. The public image of this organization in regard of Roma is quite controversial, as well as its impact on Gypsy organizations in Russia. Factors contributing to this are both the general situation in modern Russia and also the inconsistent policy of ADC Memorial – e.g. after years the Memorial publicly pleaded in numerous reports for “special education for the Roma” and implemented a number of projects in this direction (creating Roma classes and even separate Gypsy schools, learning not only of but even in Romani, etc.) in 2010 this organization took steps to file a lawsuit for the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg against the Russian Federation for the creation of separate classes for Roma children and their segregation (Shkurenok, 2010).

Currently, Gypsy organizations in Russian Federation are cautious about projects funded by foreign donors that could jeopardize their legal status by including them into the "foreign agents" category and in general their activities as kept at minimum or non-existed.

So, in the end, it turns out that the only Gypsy organization that continues to exist and develop some activities these days is the Federal National Cultural Autonomy of the Russian Gypsies with its

branches in the country, which work closely with state and local governments. After the death of Alexandr Bariev in 2010, the Federal National Cultural Autonomy is headed by D.Sc. Nadezhda Demeter (daughter of Professor Georgiy Demeter and wife of Vladimir Kutenkov) from the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology at Russian Academy of Sciences. Nadezhda Demeter was included in the Inter-ministerial Working Group on Interethnic Relations, which in 2013 adopted a Comprehensive Plan of Activities for the Socio-Economic and Ethno-Cultural Development of Gypsies in the Russian Federation. In this way the Federal National Cultural Autonomy of the Russian Gypsies is returned to the protection and custody of the Russian state (Fedral'naya, 2000).

It is hardly possible at the present to speak about a Roma NGO-sector in the Russian Federation, at least under the forms and models known in the Central and South-Eastern Europe; it is almost impossible to find Gypsies earning their living only from their work in such organizations (the so-called "professional Roma"). We should not be misled by the comparatively great number of Gypsy organizations in the Russian Federation. The overwhelming part of these organizations have no activity at all and if they happen to have any, it is sponsored by the Government or by the local authorities, and boil down to music and dance schools, participation in cultural activities and are only very rarely includes involvement in some way in the educational system. The reasons for this state of affairs are quite complicated and they should be sought in different directions. A particularly important set of issues with regard to the developments of the Gypsy movement in Russian Federation is related to the fact that the Gypsy activists perceive the idea that their organizations should act independently or even opposed to the state in some aspects with great difficulty. They are thinking primarily in the context of the Russian Federation and for them the NGOs are roads for achieving particular positions in the society and in front of the authorities (on national, regional or local level). Often the lack of clarity concerning the objectives of the Roma movement in Russia is the result of rejection of donors' policy and mediators' NGOs, which is based on perceptions and stereotypes set by the situation of Roma in Central and South-Eastern Europe, which, however, proved to be inconsistent with local realities and local problems.

Another important factor greatly determining the development of the NGO-sector in the Russian Federation is the general context they have to work in. The Roma civic organizations could be effective in shaping the policies of the state only if the public and the institutions accept them as a real partner and/or factor of influence and take its recommendations to heart. In fact, the main strength (leaving aside the purely financial aspects) of the NGO sector in Central and South-Eastern Europe in the 1990s was its ability to make use of outside pressure (most often from European or US bodies) in order to achieve their objectives. Public opinion and the Government bodies of the Russian Federation, however, are hardly amenable to international pressure regardless of its kind. Moreover, it is

objectively very difficult to convince anyone in Russian Federation that the ‘Roma issue’ is topical and that a special Gypsy-related state policy is needed. The Gypsies in the Russian Federation are only one of the numerous ethnic communities in that huge country and they are comparatively small minority (on this country’s scale) and it is, therefore, hopeless indeed to “prove” that they deserve to be selected for special treatment out of the scores of other communities similar to them (considering both size and problems).

In the new independent states that arose after the collapse of the USSR on the post-soviet space, the Roma movement was (and remains) more or less connected to the similar processes in the Russian Federation. This can easily be explained, as we speak here of one Gypsy community (with its preserved internal divisions – individual Roma groups), formed and evolved over several centuries, firstly in terms of the Russian Empire and then in the USSR. As typical representative of this community we can mention Alexey Belugins (known under the pseudonym Leksa Manush), great poet, translator and scholar of Romani language and culture, famous for his translation of Sanskrit epic poem *Ramayana* into Romanes, originated from *Lotfika Roma* from Latvia, who until his death lived in Moscow. His community is still preserved, in one or another degree it possesses a common level of identity (evidence for this is also the case with the International Union of the Roma of the Baltic States and Commonwealth of Independent States ‘Amaro Drom’ and the adherence of Roma from Russian Federation to the Riga International Romani Union, headed by a Latvian Lotfika Rom).

In Ukraine, the first Roma organization emerged in Transcarpathia, which became part of the USSR only after the World War II and, therefore, from a cultural and historical perspective, it is related to the Central Europe (the former Austro-Hungarian Empire) to a much higher degree than to the regions of the former Russian Empire and the USSR. In May 22, 1993 Transcarpathian Cultural and Educational Association ‘Romani Yag’ (Gypsy Fire), headed by Aladar Adam (together with renowned violinist Ernest Buchko) was created in Uzhgorod (Romani Yag, 1999, 1 (3): 1).

Roma organizations gradually sprang up elsewhere in the Ukraine too. The invasion of the international donors supporting Roma-related projects provided a powerful push for the Roma movement. The very beginning of the boom of the NGO’s was the appointment of Volodimir Zolotarenko from Kiev as regional coordinator of the Rroma Soros Foundation and the series of meetings of Gypsy activists he launched, these were soon to become a series of new organizations: the Society for Gypsy Culture ‘Romanipe’, which grew into Kiev City Association for Roma History and Culture ‘Romanipe’ (headed by Volodimir Zolotarenko); the Association of the Gypsies of Izmail and the Izmail Region (headed by Anatoliy Kondur); the Museum Centre for Gypsy History and Culture ‘Roma’ at Sambor (headed by Fedor Andrash); National Cultural Alliance ‘Amala’ (Friends) (headed by Igor Krikunov, well-known musician and artist, and director of the Gypsy Theatre ‘Романс’); the

‘Forumo Romen Ukrainatar’ (Forum of Roma from Ukraine), headed by Petro Grigorichenko; the Association of Young Roma, headed by Borislav Markovskiy; the Association of the Roma of Odessa, headed by Sergey Ermoshkin (Niko Rergo); the Odessa Roma Congress ‘Bahtalo Drom’ (Lucky Road), headed by doctor Boris Muntyano; the Roma Sunday School at Izmail, headed by Zemfira Kondur, etc.

The Roma NGO-sector in Transcarpathia sprang up and developed parallel to this process. A number of new organizations and associations came into being, such as: the Transcarpathian cultural and educational association ‘Romani Yag’; the Cultural Association of the Transcarpathian Gypsies ‘Rom Som’ (A Gypsy Am I), headed by Aladar Pap; the Transcarpathian Gypsy Provincial Association ‘Amaro Drom’, headed by Aladar Adam; the Transcarpathian Gypsy Association for Musical Culture ‘Lautari’ (Gypsy Musicians), headed by Villi Pap; the Cultural Association of Hungarian-speaking Roma ‘Ung Romen’, headed by Tiberiy Horvat, etc. Twelve organizations in the region merged in December, 1997 and formed the Transcarpathian Association of the Roma Public Organizations ‘Ekhipe’ (Unity), headed by Aladar Adam, and the member organizations in different towns were given the status of regional branches. This Association in 2011 contributed to the creation of a new umbrella organisation, namely the Union of public organizations and humanitarian foundations of Transcarpathia ‘Roma for better life’, in which participated more than 20 organizations. This Union is headed by Miroslav Horvat (he is also a leader of Transcarpathian Regional Youth Roma Union ‘Romani Cherhen’ (Roma Star).

An aspiration toward establishing an unity not only on regional but also on a national level characterized the first stage in the development of the Roma movement in the Ukraine. An organizing committee was set up in April, 1997, included Volodimir Zolotarenko, Sergey Yermoshkin, Anatoliy Kondur, Fedor Andrash and Aladar Adam. They prepared a draft statute of an *All-Ukrainian Roma Organization* (Romanipe, 1997, №№ 17, 19). The new organization intended to embrace and to unite all existing Roma organizations (“territorial or of another type”) with parallel preservation their independence, but with a common leadership at a national level. The comparison of the two variants of the draft-statutes shows a certain development in ideas, at least, as far as the fundamental aims of the new association were concerned. In the initial draft, these aims were in the familiar spirit of the Soviet Union: safeguarding and promotion of the national culture, promotion of the national education, defence of civil and national rights, etc. The second draft was extended with a demand of Roma to “take part in the national policy of the Ukraine” and “the Roma should be recognized as an indigenous population of the Ukraine” (Romanipe, 1997, 19: 2), i.e. the imposition for recognition of Roma as an genuine and composite part of the present Ukrainian nation. The organizing committee was joined by other Roma activists such as Petro Grigorichenko and Igor Krikunov. As a matter of fact, the

establishing of the All-Ukrainian Roma Organization come not to an end as some of the council members withdrew their papers, and the new umbrella organisation simply failed. The efforts of the Forum of Roma from Ukraine to create an alternative national organization with its own branches in the different regions only confronted individual leaders and organizations and finally failed too.

The Roma NGO-sector in the Ukraine gathered momentum in the latter years of the twentieth century, and the early years of the twenty first century, and, increasingly, the so called “Gypsy-industry” has taken the forms as known in Central and South-Eastern Europe. The Roma Ukraine Program of the Renaissance Foundation (part of the Open Society Foundations Network) was launched in 1999. Gradually numerous Roma organizations sprang up, and their number continues to grow (especially since the changes of 2014, known in today Ukraine as Euromaydan revolution or Revolution of Dignity). In order to give an idea about the Roma NGO boom now here, we will mention some of the organization (without claiming exhaustiveness): the Kharkiv Provincial Gypsy National Cultural Association ‘Romen’, headed by Ivan Matyushenko; the Kharkiv Roma City Society ‘Fond Lovari’, headed by the brothers Petr and Yuriy Cherepovski; the Provincial Cultural Centre ‘Ame Roma’ (We, Gypsies) in Kharkiv, headed by Olexander Marafetov; the Kherson City Society of Gypsies, headed by Yuriy Ivanenko; the Mirogorod City Society ‘Romano Drom’, headed by Olexander Buzna; the Donetsk Provincial National Association ‘Romen’, headed by Niokolay Shain; the Odessa Provincial Society for Roma Culture ‘Romani Zbara’ (Gypsy Word), headed by Zhuzhuna Dududchava; the Public Society ‘Ame Roma’ in Zolotunosha, headed by Volodimir Bambula; the Youth Public Organization ‘Terni Zor’ (Youth Power) in Brovary, headed by Rustam Adreychenko and Ignat Kirpat; Chernigiv City National and Cultural Society of the Gypsies ‘Neve Roma’, headed by Maria Ivanova; Association of Gypsies (Roma) of the city of Tatarbunary and the Tatarbunary region, headed by Rustam Stoyan; the Donetsk Provincial Cultural and Educational Association of Roma Women, headed by Nataliya Varakuta, with the Shatritsa (Small Tent) Theatre for Gypsy Songs and Dances, Kirovogradsk regional cultural and national society ‘De Devla Bakht’ (Lord give Lack), headed by Sofia Karol; Roma public organization ‘Chachimo’ (the Truth), headed by Nicolay Burlutsky; Perechyn Regional Roma Organization "Romani Yag" headed by Ignat Tirpak, etc. The vast majority of these organizations are ‘universal’ in their declared intended activities, they have ambitions to work in all possible spheres, and are limited only territorially (according to the Ukrainian administrative division).

There are also some ‘specialized’ Roma associations (i.e. not based on a territorial principle, but profiled according their declared target are also existing, such as the Charity Fund of Gypsy

Women 'Chirikli' (Bird) in Kiev, headed by Yulia Kondur, although in fact their activities are much more varied.

Over the years, unsuccessful attempts have been made to create a united national Roma organization. In 2004 in Kiev, at the First All-Ukrainian Congress of communities of Roma people (Gypsies), financed and organized by the Renaissance Foundation, the Forum of Roma from Ukraine was transformed into an Association (although the pointed funding date of the organization is 1993). Petro Grigorichenko was elected chairman of the new organization and his deputies were Anatoliy Kondur, Josif Pap, Aladar Adam and Ivan Matyushenko. The new organization incorporated existing organizations preserving their operational independence. Very soon, however, most of the Roma activists started to distance themselves from this association, which made it non-functional. ERRC also tried to establish an association which would be ERRC partner organization, and so in frames of one of the ERRC project in 2004-2005 was established the All Ukrainian Roma Human Rights Organization 'Chachipe' (Truth), headed by Aladar Adam from Uzhhorod, who subsequently retreated and transferred the leadership to Mikhail Durachenko from Kiev. 2009 saw a new attempt at uniting the Roma movement under the auspices of the Renaissance Foundation. So, a new association of Roma organizations was created in Ukraine under the title International Roma organization 'Khetane' (Together), headed by Yuri Ivanenko from Kherson (it is unclear why in the official name of this organization is an adjective "International"). The last known union established recently is not an association, but a coalition called the Coalition of Roma NGOs 'Strategy 2020'.

Until recently in Ukraine exist, at least formally, about 60–80 Roma NGOs, at least one third of them are in Transcarpathia. The main donor of all these Roma organizations is the Roma Program of the Renaissance Foundation. In Ukraine are realized also several international partnership projects, such as program of the Council of Europe ROMED. Roma movement in Ukraine as a whole exists mainly in the parameters of the NGO-sector, in a form we had known in Central and Eastern Europe, but with incomparable lower range of sponsors, which significantly reduces its impact on the Gypsy community and its overall societal effect. Currently, in situation of political and military turbulences the interest of international organisations on Ukraine increases and the Charity Fund of Gypsy Women 'Chirikli' became the most proactive organisation.

In the Republic of Moldova, the first Roma organizations emerged in the late 1990s after the recommendations 'from outside' (above all those of the Council of Europe and the OSCE). The Social and Cultural Society 'Romii Moldovei' (Moldovian Roma), headed by Pavel Andreychenko, a prominent Gypsy singer and actor, was officially registered in 1998 (although the declared date of founding is 1990). After the death of Pavel Andreychenko, the Society was succeeded by his son, Pavel Andreychenko-Junior, who was also a leader (together with Dimitru Danu) of the Youth

Organization 'Terne Ginde' (Young Minds) and of the Gypsy Youth Association 'Ternimatango Rroma' (Roma Youths). Several of these organisations merged into a Roma Union in 2001 (The Social and Cultural Society 'Romii Moldovei' remained outside it). Established were also the Ethno-Socio-Cultural-Educational Association 'Baxtalo drom' (Happy Road), headed by Anatoliy Raditsa (founded in 1999); Scientific and Cultural Organization 'Elita Romani' (Roma Elite), headed by Ion Farama (created in 2001); Social Movement of the Roma, headed by Visarion Danu and his son Dimitru Danu (created in 2001). The First National Congress of the Roma in Moldova took place in 2001 and was attended by representatives of nearly all existing Roma organizations at that time. The two organizations claiming national importance (Roma Union and Social and Cultural Society 'Romii Moldovei') were registered as representatives of their 'nationality' (according to the official terminology) at the Department of Inter-National Relations in Republic of Moldova.

In this initial period there were about 20-30 Roma organizations in the Republic of Moldova besides those already mentioned above. Some of them have endured longer while others soon ceased to exist and new ones were springing up. To mention some of them: the Association of Gypsy Women 'Juvlia Romani' (Roma Women), headed by Ekaterina Drosu (founded in 1997); the Roma Students' Association, headed by Nikolae Raditsa and Anna Lepadatu; the 'Tarna Rom' (Young Roma), headed by Marin Ala (founded in 2002); the Centre of Gypsy Culture and Arts 'Ame, Roma' (We, Gypsies), headed by Leonid Cherepovski; Scientific and Cultural Society 'Tradiția Romani' (Roma Tradition), headed by George Martin (founded in 2002); the Gypsy Association 'Rubin', headed by Valentin Cebotar (founded in 2002); the organisation 'Petalo Romano' (Gypsy Horseshoe), headed by Dominika Negru, the name of this organisation was chosen after the Roma series on the national television; Roma Democratic Union, headed by Nikolay Arapu; the Gypsy Society of Gagauzia in Komrat, headed by Maria and Sergey Duminika; the Roma organization at Ceadâr-Lunga, headed Vasili Duminika; the 'Ograda Nostra' (Our Fence) in Cahul, headed by Ruslan Stanga, Civic Organisation 'Bare Rom', headed by Robert Cherari from city of Soroca, etc.

Eight of these organizations were registered at the Department of Inter-National Relations and thus enjoyed 'national' status: the 'Juvlia Romani'; the 'Ternimatango Rroma'; the Social Movement of Gypsies in Moldova; the 'Baxtalo Drom'; the 'Tradiția Romani'; the 'Rubin' (Second Report 2004: 13). The rest of the organizations were registered with the local authorities and counted as 'local'. In spite of this division, there is no difference in scope of activities of the two categories.

The Roma organizations in the Republic of Moldova could be divided also into 'national' and 'international' according to the model of action and funding. This division is not clear-cut. Generally speaking, the first type relies mostly on state subsidies and the second have international donors (foreign foundations and NGO's, as well as international institutions). The 'Elita Romani', 'Baxtalo

Drom', Social Movement of the Roma and 'Romii Moldovie' played the leading role among the first type, while most active among the second group were the 'Tarna Rrom', 'Juvlia Romani' and especially Roma Students' Association, which worked in close cooperation with the Council of Europe and other international institutions and organizations on a number of international projects. They were transformed in 2010 into National Roma Centre, headed by Nicolae Raditsa.

In 2010 was created also Social-Political Movement of Roma in the Republic of Moldova, headed in 2012 by Vasile Drangoi. This movement in cooperation with 'Porojan' Association, tried to participate actively in political life of the country and in the activities of International Romani Union.

Initially the Roma organizations were broad in their scope and intended to shape a common organization (or at least an association), which could represent the Roma community as a whole and to take part in politics. Gradually a differentiation of organization was achieved with the appearance of new organizations – of women, students, youth, as well as cultural and local. However, this have not led to their "profiling". The better part of the exiting Roma organizations, are still very far from the standards of the NGO-sector in Central and South-Eastern Europe and remain without lucrative projects. Explanation of this state of affairs is in the fact that for various reasons the Republic of Moldova has never been a priority sphere of the big donors and the NGO activities are mostly in frames of initiatives of Council of Europe and Open Society foundation targeting Roma.

In Belarus, the Roma movement initially largely followed the model of the Russian Federation – there was one organization that proclaimed itself to be national without actually performing any activities, namely the Belorussian Gypsy Diaspora, headed by Oleg Kozlowski and Artur Gomonov. An attempt to create another national organization of this type, the Belorussian Association of Gypsies 'Roma' proved as unsuccessful and such was also the attempt to create another type of alternative through establishing a human rights NGO, the Gypsy Club 'Romanipe', headed by Nicolas Kalinin. Only in recent years slight signs of change is observed which resulted in emergence of some new Roma organizations, which tries to follow an European path of development. This is the case with organization Oshmyansk Gypsy Community, which, together with the pro-Roma Romaintegration Expert-Enlightenment Association, are implementing joint projects supported by the Council of Europe (Sotsial'naya, 2015).

The situation is quite different in the Baltic States. Roma organizations there are relatively few which is related to the low number of the Roma sparse population.

In Lithuania, there are about 20 Roma organizations, such as: 'Romano Dzhiyipe' (Roma Life), established in 1995; Roma Community Union 'Roma Mission', established in 1999, headed by Alexandros Kasparavičius, in Kaunas; 'Nevo Drom' (New Road), headed by Teofile Bagdonaviciene, in Panevezys; Association 'Ame Roma', etc. From the beginning till now the most active are

organizations, working in the Kirtimay (segregated Roma settlement in Vilnius): Roma Community Centre, headed by Svetlana Novopolyskaya (non-Roma woman); Lithuanian Roma Association 'Gypsy Fire' (headed by Joseph Tichina); Roma Integration House (headed by Bozhena Karveliėne).

In Latvia, the number of organizations is even less, only about 10, the most active among them are: Latvian National Romani Cultural Association, headed by Normund Rudevichs in Riga; Latvian Gypsy Society 'Ame Roma', headed by Vanda Zamytskaya in Ventspils; Roma Association 'Nevo Drom' (New Road), headed by Anatoliy Berezovkis in Tukums, etc.

In Estonia, there is only a small number of Roma organizations, such as Estonian Roma Cultural Society, headed by Roman Lutt (founded in 1991, reorganized in 2001 into North-Estonian Roma Society), as well as the Cultural Centre for Roma Youth, Tallinn Gypsy Cultural Centre, etc. The common thing for all Roma organizations in this region is that they work in constant cooperation with governmental bodies and local authorities and some also participate in international projects.

Roma NGOs have also been created in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, where except Central Asian Gypsies, known as Lyuli or Jughı, with self-appellation Mughat (Marushiakova and Popov, 2016b) also live a limited number of Roma who migrated there during Soviet times. These Roma established Roma organizations, such as Gypsy Association 'Romen' in Almati, Kazakhstan, headed by Ivan Barvalovskiy, and Gypsy diaspora 'Romano Drom' (Roma Road) in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, headed by Nikolay Shiryaev), however, their coming into being was initiated by the local Open Society Foundations in order to demonstrate the presence of Roma organizations in this region at the meeting in Smolensk in 2003 and appeared to be extremely short-living, after the external interest ceased they have no any activities and no public presence.

In recent years, in Kazakhstan some new organizations emerged such as the Real Gypsy Ensemble 'Yagori', headed by Lyubov Yavorskaya, and Gypsy cultural center, headed by Spartak Russecki in Almaty, the Roma Diaspora of Aktubinsk Region, headed by Elena Dmitrieva, in Aktobe. All these organization do not develop project activity, i.e. do not fit into the familiar categories of NGOs.

The last (so far) former USSR country in which Roma NGOs appeared is Georgia. The first attempt for development of Roma civic sector was in 2002, when the Human Rights Information and Documentation Centre, with a grant from the World Bank launched a project for a Protection Centre for Roma Community in Georgia. This project envisaged the creation of a Georgian Roma NGO (reported as established in 2008, but in fact it existed only on paper, without exercising any activity). Currently, there are functioning three Roma organizations in the country: the Kakheti Gypsy organization 'Roma' headed by Venera Martkoplshvili (a non-Roma woman) in Dedoplistskaro; the Adjarian Gypsy organization 'Roma' in Kobuleti, headed by Nargiz Dzhincharadzi (also a non-Roma

woman); the Kobuleti Roma Youth, headed by Jumberi Alimov and Marishka Aslanova. Even proposals for inclusion in the projects targeting Roma communities coming from the NGO-s which offer respective financial support has so far been firmly rejected by the representatives of the 'other Gypsies' (the Lom and Dom communities) (Marushiakova and Popov, 2016b: 90, 101-102).

In the other post-Soviet countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), despite repeated recommendations from a number of international organizations, there are no (yet) any Roma NGOs established. The main reason for this is in the fact that after the collapse of the USSR, no Roma lived there (with few exceptions, e.g. in Baku), and the so-called " 'Gypsies' (Lom in Armenia, Dom in Azerbaijan, Mughat in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan) are in no way willing to be included into the 'Roma' umbrella category (Marushiakova and Popov, 2016b).

To sum up: After the collapse of the USSR in 1991, in the new independent states on the post-soviet space the Gypsy/Roma movement developed largely in one direction but the trends and patterns and the concrete manifestations of these developments vary considerably in individual countries. Generally speaking, traveling from West to East (countries from region of Baltic, the Republic of Moldova, the Ukraine, South Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Russian Federation) one can see clearly a picture of the transition from the European to the Eurasian model of development of the Gypsy/Roma movement. It is palpable that also future fate of this movement will depend from the geo-political trends in the former Soviet space.

The reasons for this situation are in the very existence of the Roma in 'two dimensions', or in two coordinate planes – both as a separate community (or more exactly ethnic communities) and as a society (in particular as its ethnically-based integral part within the respective nation-state, citizens of which they are, with respective national identity). The Roma movement itself in its essence is an attempt to attach certain societal dimensions to the community one and, therefore, throughout the whole history and also nowadays, it appears more or less dependent on 'external' (i.e. standing outside the community) factors. In fact, it will be possible to speak about real Romani movement only when it will rest primarily on the community, which, however, is very far from its present condition.

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