

Foreword

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We are bringing to the readers' attention the collective monograph *Roma Writings. Romani Literature and Press in Central, South-Eastern, and Eastern Europe from the 19th Century until World War II*. It is the second book in a triptych published in the frames of the research project *RomaInterbellum: Roma Civic Emancipation between the Two World Wars*. The first book was *Roma Voices in History: A Source Book. Roma Civic Emancipation in Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe from the 19th Century until WWII* (Marushiakova and Popov 2021a) and the forthcoming third volume is *Roma Portraits in History: Roma Civic Emancipation Elite in Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe from the 19th Century until WWII* (Marushiakova and Popov 2021b).

The realisation of this collective monograph was possible thanks to the joint efforts of the project team, composed of Elena Marushiakova (PI), Vesselin Popov, Raluca Bianca Roman, Sofiya Zahova, and Aleksandar Marinov, from the University of St Andrews. In the authors' team were included also Tamás Hajnóczky, from Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, Viktor Shapoval, from the Moscow City University and Risto Blomster, from The Finnish Literature Society (supported by the Finnish Cultural Foundation). All of them are authors in this collective monograph and the editorial work was done by Raluca Bianca Roman, Sofiya Zahova, and Aleksandar Marinov.

The main purpose of the triptych is in line with the aims of *RomaInterbellum* project: to study the process of Roma civic emancipation from its early beginning in the nineteenth century throughout the interwar period, wherein Roma were not only passive recipients of different and often controversial policy measures of individual states but active architects of their lives. The project delves into the ways in which Roma reacted to the twentieth-century historical circumstances, such as the break-down of empires, state nation-building processes, the formation of minority communities, or the establishment of communist rule. The history of the Roma is considered as an inseparable part of the mainstream European history and, likewise, Roma socio-political visions are treated as an inalienable part of the history of modern political thought in Europe. The studied phenomena are tackled in the framework of an entangled history within the European region, looking at Roma civic emancipation from national and cross-national perspectives.

This collective monograph is looking at Romani literature and press as an inseparable part of the process of Roma civic emancipation. It was also one of the new-born literatures of the nations established on the ruins of the old dissolved empires. In other words, this book approaches in the framework of the entangled history the creation of national literature and press in the region, and it discusses the question of why and in which

way Romani literature and press came into being in individual countries. The presentation of Romani literature and press in several individual countries enables the composition of a comprehensive united picture for the whole region of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe.

The presented monograph contributes to discovering, collecting, preserving, and analysing Romani literary heritage. The study reveals the broad dimensions of the work of Roma authors, the preferred topics and genres, the ways in which the socio-political circumstances of the time influenced their works, and how these were reflected in and part of the processes of Roma civic emancipation.

In addition to the national languages of the countries under discussion, a significant part of the Romani literature and media was written in the Romani language. The composition of the authors' team of this collective monograph and their language competences allowed the in-depth examination of the birth of Romani literature and media along with the process of transforming oral Romani into a written literary language.

The ultimate goal of publishing this book is to introduce the history of Romani literature and we firmly believe it will contribute to its inclusion to the mainstream of Literary Studies.