



# **Opre Roma! // Up, Romanies!**

A Thematic Analysis of Appearance, Voice and Agency of Romani Media  
Activists' Platforms in Sweden

Leonie Noe

Thesis Supervisor: Tobias Linné

Thesis Examiner: Deniz Duru

MSc in Media and Communication  
Department of Communication and Media

*“Opre Roma!”*

Up, Romanies!

[Slogan of the First Romani World Congress, originating from a song by Žarko Jovanović and sometimes used as the anthem of the Romani people. It was composed in 1949, shaped by his experiences of the Romani Holocaust in 2<sup>nd</sup> World War]

*”En svensk tiger.”*

A Swedish tiger.

A Swede remains silent.

[A silence campaign during the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war in Sweden, meaning that a Swedish person should remain silent, neutral about the happenings under Hitler’s regime and to not talk about how Sweden was involved. Simultaneously, to be seen as strong and dangerous like a tiger.]

“The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.”

(Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, 2013)



## **Abstract**

This research is concerned with Romani media activists' use of different online platforms in order to counter the stereotypical representation of Roma in dominant discourses, such as in mass media and state policies. Links are made between these platforms and the cultural context of Sweden that they are set in. Additionally, the following explores these platforms in connection to collective identity and civic agency for the Romani community in Sweden. This research takes the standpoint that media and communication play a significant role in the discourses that are created around Roma, and that these discourses have material consequences that impact the lives of Roma. Therefore, the significance of Roma having agency and power over their own platforms, narratives and discourses is underlined.

The empirical data of this research is gathered through semi-structured interviews with Romani media activists and triangulated with articles published on the Romani web magazine *Dikko*. Both sources of data have been thematically analyzed and brought into context of relevant research, orbiting around the themes of othering and dehumanization, and agency, appearance and voice.

The analysis is divided in three sections: The first creates an overview of the Romani platforms and affordances, which the media activists make use of according to the goals they try to achieve. Three different strategies employed through these platforms are examined, which portray the agency of Roma: Countering the dominant discourse, voicing concrete demands and employing emotions, such as anger. The second section goes deeper into two perceived cultural attributes. Firstly, that support to Roma is given in theory, but not put into practice. Secondly, that racism against Roma is met with silence and passivism in the Swedish society. The last section explores the impact of the platforms offering a space for Roma to have a collective identity that exists across past, present and future, giving a sense of durability as a people. This section concludes with a discussion on potential impact and voice through the Romani media activism.

There seems to be a remaining lack of research on the mediation of Roma as active agents and multifaceted humans, as opposed to the existing research around the representation of Roma as victim, passive and criminals. This study comes to the conclusion that the Romani media platforms have an empowering function for the activists and serve as a tool in their struggle to

gain an effective voice. Further research in this field is suggested in order to assure a more appropriate space for minorities in the media world; a space where Roma are represented as human beings.

### **Keywords**

*Romani Media Activism; Media Activism; Collective Agency; Silence; Structural Discrimination; Othering; Dehumanization; Voice; Appearance; Historicity; Decoloniality; Thematic Analysis; Semi-Structured Interviewing; Sweden*

## **Acknowledgements**

First and foremost, my gratitude goes to my supervisor Tobias Linné for guiding me through this thesis project. For somehow managing to keep me motivated, whilst simultaneously providing me with spot-on-feedback and keeping me on track when I spin off. And finally, for always supporting my decisions. I couldn't have wished for more from my supervisor!

Maureen, thank you for reading and re-reading drafts and telling me when my writing just does not make any sense. Your support was indispensable!

Freja, for easing my doubts and, simply, but most importantly, for studying together during quarantine times.

I am also thanking all my teachers of the department, especially professor Annette Hill and my classmates, for making these two years such a smooth ride.

And lastly, to all my friends, and admittedly quite a few random people, who listen when I talk about my research, even when they have no idea what I am talking about.

## Table of Contents

Cover Page .....	1
Abstract .....	3
Keywords .....	4
Acknowledgements .....	5
1. Introduction .....	9
1.1. Aims, Objectives and Research Questions .....	10
1.2. Background .....	11
1.3. Outline of the Thesis .....	13
2. Previous Research and Relevant Theories: Placing Romani Media Activism.....	14
2.1. Dehumanization of Roma.....	15
2.1.1. Subordination through Misrepresentation .....	15
2.1.2. Othering, and the Role of the Nation State .....	16
2.1.3. The Decolonial Lens .....	18
2.1.4. Media's Materiality .....	20
2.2. Appearance, Voice and Effectivity .....	22
2.3. The Romani Perspective: Media Activism.....	24
2.3.1. Collective Agency .....	25
2.3.2. Demanding Voice.....	26
2.4. Literature Review: Conclusive Summary .....	30
3. Approaching Romani Media Activism.....	31
3.1. Reflections on my Position as a Researcher.....	31
3.2. Designing the Research .....	33
3.3. Main Method: Semi-Structured Interviewing .....	34
3.4. Secondary Method: Textual Analysis of Articles .....	36
3.5. Writing as a Method .....	37
4. Analysis.....	39
4.1. Mapping the Romani Platforms and their Affordances.....	39
4.2. Strategies: From Passive Victims to Angry Agents .....	42
4.2.1. Countering the Dominant by Employing Romani Epistemes .....	43
4.2.2. Voicing and Embedding Demands.....	44
4.2.3. Angry Activists.....	48
4.3. The Cultural Context: Swedish Specificities.....	50
4.3.1. Just in Theory .....	51
4.3.2. A Whole Lot of Silence.....	52
4.4. Romani Media as a Space for the Romani People .....	57

4.4.1.	Existing across Time: Having a Past, a Present and a Future .....	57
4.4.2.	Impact: Having a Voice? .....	61
5.	Conclusive Discussion .....	66
5.1.	Answering the Research Questions and Summary of Key Findings.....	66
5.2.	Interdependence, Solidarity and Agonism .....	67
5.3.	Limitations and Possible Further Research .....	69
5.4.	Reflections on Contribution .....	69
6.	References .....	72
7.	Appendices .....	86
7.1.	Crossroad Example.....	86
7.3.	Details Sampling Interviews .....	88
7.4.	Introducing the Interviewees .....	89
7.5.	Interview Topic Guide (TRANSLATION).....	90
7.6.	Consent Form .....	92
7.7.	Transcript Interview Dolores (TRANSLATION).....	94
7.8.	Thematic Coding Interviews .....	109
7.8.1.	Excerpt from Descriptive Coding.....	109
7.8.2.	Excerpt of Thematic Coding of Single Interviews.....	109
7.8.3.	Table Thematic Coding Interviews: Fused .....	110
7.9.	Thematic Coding Articles .....	117
7.9.1.	Detailed Sampling Articles .....	117
7.9.2.	Sources Articles.....	117
7.9.3.	Excerpt Color Highlights.....	118
7.9.4.	Thematic Coding Articles .....	118
7.10.	Excerpt Creative Writing.....	122

## 1. Introduction

I have hidden in certain periods that I am Roma. And that was horrible, you know? But in the end I said: No, I am not going to hide, I will find my own narrative. (Albert)

Albert's word mirror a sentiment that permeates this research: A strength to stand up against antiziganism and a volition to create the narrative that Roma want to be told themselves. Roma's<sup>1</sup> exclusion, stigmatization and marginalization are structures deeply entrenched in European history: "Bans, mass incarcerations, forced sterilization campaigns, and even genocidal plans were not devised by a few individuals, but were actual state projects" (Sigona, 2016, p.272). Due to centuries of systematic discrimination in most European states, many Roma have made their way to Sweden in search for a better life; the first Roma to arrive in 1512 (Pettersson, 2020b). Sweden has a gruesome history against Roma, including amongst others forced sterilizations and, recently, racial profiling by authorities (Rydhagen, 2014). In 2013 it was discovered that the police unlawfully kept a register of Romani people living in Sweden. This register was purely based on ethnicity, including small children, and, therefore, was considered violating several laws (Granlund, 2013). Consequently, the state had to pay damages on the grounds of ethnic discrimination (Tronarp, 2016). As until today, Roma in Sweden are to a certain degree excluded from "most areas of life – in education, in the housing market, in the labor market, and in the criminal justice system – and they have been subjected to negative stereotyping and hate crimes" (Nafstad, 2019, p.840). Albeit, Sweden is rarely questioned internationally as it is perceived as a progressive country with a "strong democratic-socialist tradition" (Klein, 2019, p.251).

The outlined status quo is what the Romani media activism springs from, which the following research is concerned with. The focus is mainly on three different platforms: *Radio Romano*, the web magazine *Dikko*, and *Tehara Media*, an organization producing mainly visual content. The research attempts to shift towards the Romani standpoint, instead of what is said *about* Roma. It is guided by the notion that "[h]uman beings can give account of themselves [...]. Treating people as if they lack that capacity is to treat them as if they were not human" (Couldry,

<sup>1</sup> Roma is "an umbrella term that encompasses a wide range of groups [...], for example, those who identify as Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari, Balkan Egyptians, Dom, Lom, Abdal, Travellers, Yenish, and populations referred to as "Gens du Voyage"" (Amnesty International, 2018, p.5). In this paper the main distinction is between Romani EU-migrants and the Swedish national minority Roma, who are divided in five groups: Travellers ('resande'), non-nordic Roma ('utomnordiska romer'), Swedish Roma ('svensk romer'), Finnish Roma ('finsk romer') and Newly Arrived Roma ('nyanlända'). Travellers arrived 500 years ago, and the newly arrived came to Sweden in the 1990-s (Pettersson, 2020b).

2010, p.1). As Couldry's words already elucidate, there is a correlation between having an *effective voice* and being perceived as human, an observation which this paper sets out to explore further.

The mentioned Romani platforms are directed at furthering *The Romani Question* in Sweden, a term that needs defining: Throughout the conducted interviews the issues that Roma are confronted with in Sweden are often summarized in a collective term: '*Romska Frågan*'. The translation of '*frågan*' is slightly ambiguous, because it can be translated as 'the issue'/'the problem,' and yet, the more direct translation is 'the matter'/'the question' (bab.la, 2020). It will be referred to as *The Romani Question*, as it is deemed closest to the way the interviewees use it, standing for their struggles and the attempts employed to counteract the discrimination.

Taking a Foucauldian perspective on discourse, meaning that discourse "disciplines subjects into certain ways of thinking and acting" and that "human subjects are produced through discourses" (Rose, 2016, p.189), the circulation of discourses is given a constitutive significance in this research. A specific focus is laid on online mediated discourses, as they are undeniably entrenched "in the broader pattern and profile of power in a society, particularly where the distribution of knowledge and the according values are concerned" (Corner, 2011, p.18). Accordingly, both the discourses created by the mass media and the discourses created by the Romani media activists are constitutive of the everyday life of Roma in Sweden, and, henceforth, worthwhile to reflect upon.

### **1.1. Aims, Objectives and Research Questions**

The aim of this research is to explore how Romani media activists make use of different platforms to make their voices heard. I aim to lay out potential ways on how media activism can counter dominant discourses, whilst also creating an online space for the Romani community. By interviewing Romani media activists and looking at articles from one of their platforms, their strategies and intentions from the Romani standpoint are brought to light. It is paid particular attention to the Swedish context and the structures of oppression that create the need for Roma to establish these platforms. Consequently, the following research questions have guided this research process:

1. Which platforms and affordances are Roma making use of in order to further *The Romani Question*?
2. What strategies are employed on these platforms in order to counteract dominant discourses?
3. Which other potential influences on the Romani community, in regards to civic agency and collective identity, are ascribed to the platforms?

Further, in this research, I aim to enhance the plurality of voices and to not shy away from, but rather to embrace their complexity. It involves acknowledging my own biases and to face them. My aim is to contribute to what Mulinari and Neergaard call the “scholarships of hope” (2017, p.93), one that seeks to dissolve racist structures instead of magnifying them.

## 1.2. Background

There have been several attempts set in place by the Swedish government to diminish discrimination against Roma. In Sweden, Roma with Swedish citizenship are to a certain degree protected by *The Minority Legislation*, a law that mandates to protect and to promote Romani chib<sup>2</sup>, to maintain and to develop Romani culture, and that authorities should consult with and “give national minorities opportunity to have influence on issues that concern them” (Sveriges Riksdag, 2019, my own translation). Additionally, the Swedish government also adopted *The Coordinated and Long-Term Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma: 2012-2032* (From now on referred to as *The 20-Year-Strategy*) in 2012. This state-funded strategy that primarily focuses on ameliorating the situation of “Roma who are in social and economic exclusion and are at risk for discrimination” (Regeringskansliet, 2011, my own translation); its implementation is supposed to be based on Romani participation (ibid.).

Apart from organizations that are directed at Romani children and youth,<sup>3</sup> there are several institutions to be found in Malmö that support the minority Roma’s rights. *The Romani Information and Knowledge Center* (‘Romska informations- och kunskapscenter’, 2019, from now on referred to as *RIKC*) is a permanent center in Malmö that operates in order to “increase Romani participation and influence in society” (ibid.). It is implemented by the municipality and its efforts are directed both at Roma and non-Roma, as well as on individual and structural

<sup>2</sup> The officially recognized Romani national minority language in Sweden

<sup>3</sup> Such as the *The Romani Youth Association* (‘Romska Ungdomsförbundet’), Sweden’s biggest Romani organization and at a more municipal level operates *The Malmö Youth Center* (‘Malmö Ungdomcentral’)

levels (ibid.). *The Council for the National Minority Roma* (Rådet för den nationella minoriteten romer, 2020, from now on referred to as *The Romani Council*), organized by *RIKC*, operates as a support for *Malmö City* in order to implement *The Minority Legislation*. It consists of 11 Romani members elected by Romani organizations and nine political members from different parties and gather about four times a year. These are institutions directed at Roma with Swedish citizenship.

Roma are by no means a monolithic group and there are different forms and degrees of discrimination for the various groups. Discrimination against Roma who fall under *The Minority Legislation* due to having Swedish citizenship differs considerably from Romani EU-migrants, as they do not fall under the protection of the Swedish state. Their situation is more difficult due to unclear legal frameworks: as EU-citizens they are free to move within the EU, but after three months in a new country they need to prove that they are able to support themselves through studies, work or equal, which many Romani EU-migrants have no access to. Consequently, “many spend years in Sweden, in a social and legal limbo, deprived of social protection and support” (Amnesty International, 2018, p.7) leading to “extreme poverty, with every day posing a struggle for survival” (ibid., p.6).

Amnesty International highlights an infringement of several of Romas’ Human Rights in Sweden (2018, p.3) and recognizes a “disproportionate and intimidating practice” (ibid., p.46) of the police against Romani EU migrants. There are parallels drawn of the barriers that EU-migrants nowadays are facing in Sweden “that are similar to other barriers faced by Roma for decades” (Davis and Ryan, 2017, p.69f). *The Universal Periodic Review 2020 by the United Nation’s Human Rights Council* states that they were “concerned about persistent societal discrimination against Roma, despite many measures taken to address it” (2020, p.8), that Roma still “face difficulty in accessing education, employment, housing, health care and justice” (ibid.). They especially highlight the “vulnerable position” (ibid.) of Romani EU-migrants in Sweden.

Going into this research with the aim to find ways on how to design communication in order to advocate change that does not reinforce negative power structures, my first step was to look at NGO communication. NGO communication often creates an alternative discourse to government communication, as NGOs are said to have a “watchdog” position in order to ensure democracy, making them indispensable in their function to “expose human-rights violations”

(Thrall et al., 2014, p.135). And yet, the campaigns and activism I was involved in were characteristic in their exclusion of Roma. Paradigmatic for this phenomenon is the website of *Crossroads*, which is a support center in Malmö directed at so called vulnerable EU-citizens (Skånes Stadsmission, 2020). Upon opening one is met by this quote: “I will never forget you and the help I received from you. I will pray for you for the rest of my life”<sup>4</sup> (Skånes Stadsmission, 2020, my own translation). The person is absent, passive and dehumanized, reproducing a stereotypical view of Roma, even though the efforts of the organization are directed at Roma. NGOs’ communication is often seen as “largely benign” (Corner, 2011, p.23), and yet, their communicative aspects often seem to be deepening “existing global divides” (Chouliaraki, 2013, p.29) instead of overcoming them. Even though that is a paradox that should be critically questioned, this research turned towards Romani media activism, aiming at enhancing Romas’ voice and agency as a people that is fully capable to produce their own narrative.

### **1.3. Outline of the Thesis**

The first part of this thesis places the Romani media activism in the existing fields of research by summing up relevant research and giving a theoretical framework that helps to conceptualize the activism and the current media landscape that it springs from. The following part outlines the methodological approach taken and my position as a non-Romani researcher is critically reflected upon. In the third part, the collected empirical data is being thoroughly analyzed and conceptualized within the theoretical framework. The analysis is divided into three sections, in accord with the themes of the empirical findings: Firstly, the concrete actions undertaken by Roma are analyzed: activism, platforms and strategies. Secondly, societal barriers in Sweden, such as hidden racism, will be looked at. Thirdly, the online space created by and for Roma and the impacts on forming selfhood are examined. This analysis will lead to a discussion of impact and voice. Overarching themes that reoccur throughout the analysis are the power of media and missing links to Romani history. The conclusive part of the thesis summarizes the main findings, reflects on the entire research and suggests how the findings could be developed into further research.

<sup>4</sup> For a screenshot see appendix: 7.1. Crossroad Example

## 2. Previous Research and Relevant Theories: Placing Romani Media Activism

Previous research on the representation of Roma in Swedish society show the structural silencing and exclusion in several disciplines. Media and communication are no exception to this, as Roma either seem to be entirely absent or misrepresented. Roma are ‘othered’ in societies Europe-wide, but every country pursues different policies, hence, this overview will focus on the representation of Roma in Swedish society. Additionally, even though “Swedish Roma have a long history of being discriminated against and alienated from mainstream society” (Nafstad, 2019, p.840), this overview focuses mainly on research published within the last ten years, since the last decade marked a change in public discourse on Roma due to significant changes in Swedish and EU politics<sup>5</sup>.

The approach taken in this research is that of social constructivism, assuming that discourse “does not exist in a social vacuum” (Lupton, 2012, p.2): Language and knowledge are socially constructed. The social constructivist approach encourages a critical stance towards “claims to existence of essential truths” (ibid., p.8). Knowledge is a “product of power relations, and [...] always acting in the interest of someone” (ibid.) and, therefore, “never innocent” (Rose, 2016, p.23). Knowledge is produced within social relations, but also “socially shaping – or socially constitutive” (Fairclough, 1995, p.55). Therefore, Rose appeals for a critical approach that reflects on the “various practices, technologies and knowledges” (2016, p.23) through which discourses are constructed.

In times of deep mediatization, meaning that the media are “crucial to the elements and processes out of which the social world and its everyday reality is formed and sustained” (Couldry and Hepp, 2017, p.445), the social constructivist approach is to be expanded to *media* discourses and affordances. There are tendencies to approach these as disembodied processes, which fails to consider the “hegemonic backdrop of the technological revolution” (ibid.), in other words, the tendencies of media to be “implicated in” (Noble, 2018, p.171) and “to magnify” (Silverstone, 2007, p.56) structural imbalances, such as racism. Sharing, liking, algorithms and data is to be seen as a part of this discourse, because they are “contextually relevant and loaded with power” (Noble, 2018, p.171). Silverstone highlights that when researching current societal and political structures “we need to start, and possibly finish, with

<sup>5</sup> Such as that in 2007 Romania has become part of the EU, allowing more Roma to make use of the free movement regulation. Since 2018 there has been discussion of begging bans in Sweden, criminalizing the act of begging, which is often connected to Romani EU-migrants.

the media themselves” (2007, p.29). The following review will attempt to give an overview of previous research on this topic and, simultaneously, serves as a toolbox of relevant theories to position the analysis, focusing on the concepts of othering, appearance and voice, as well as shedding insights on Romani media activism.

## **2.1. Dehumanization of Roma**

When starting to research on the topic of Roma and communication the aspect of misrepresentation of Roma quickly becomes apparent. Roma are assumed to be “not fully capable of speaking or acting for themselves” (Plaut, 2012, p.53) and in fact, often not being depicted as fully human. Minority voices are often oppressed<sup>6</sup>, denying them “authorship of their own lives and struggles” (Nagar, 2006, p.XXXI). Gayatri Spivak’s influential essay on the capability of the subaltern<sup>7</sup> to speak, frames the lack of representation or misrepresentation that seems to be so paradigmatic to communication on Roma. Spivak concludes that the “subaltern cannot speak” (Morris and Spivak, 2010, p.207), this is not because of an inability to speak, but because “they are always spoken *for* by those in position of power” (Riach, 2017, p.12) and, therefore, lack a platform where they can be heard. They are dehumanized through two different processes: “The first is an effacement through occlusion; the second is an effacement through representation itself” (Butler, 2004, p.147). These processes, mediated and non-mediated, lead to further subordination and othering of Roma.

### **2.1.1. Subordination through Misrepresentation**

As Plaut notes, the traditional representation of Roma in European mainstream press and governance bodies is “criminal, victim, or absent” (2012, p.52), they are consistently “portrayed as passive objects in a chess game of great powers” (ibid., p.53). Discourses that deny agency. There is a lack of research on specifically the representation of Roma in *Swedish* media, though, discourses of victimization and hate speech are identified in Swedish social media, particularly Twitter (Enarsson and Lindgren, 2019, p.2). Media discourses across Europe legitimize Roma’s discrimination, discourses that “allude to Roma criminality, illiteracy, immorality, promiscuity,

<sup>6</sup> Oppression is defined as the “unjust or cruel exercise of authority or power” (Merriam-Webster, 2020)

<sup>7</sup> Subaltern studies have been influential in different parts of the world and have slightly different denotations depending on the geographical context. Generally, though, we are talking about non-hegemonic groups that are subordinated (Morton, 2002, p.48). I would like to refrain from aligning subaltern studies with the situation of the Roma interviewees, due to a lack of agency in the term.

laziness and resistance to integration into mainstream society” (for an overview see Brezau and Machin, 2019, p.376f).

More than about Sweden-specific media representation of Roma is written on the misrepresentation of Roma in public policies, giving an insight towards how authorities and other governance bodies communicate outwards on the minority Roma. Vesterberg, looking at labour market project descriptions “targeting unemployed Roma in Sweden” (2016, p.25), argues that Roma first need to be constructed as in need of education through “discourses of isolation, deprivation, substance abuse, gender inequalities and poor education” (ibid., p.38) in order to become educable. He argues that these discourses of miseries present information about Roma, but also construct them as “problematic, unemployable and in need of learning, and thus making them governable and educable in various ways” (ibid.). In other words, he argues that the project descriptions first need to create these discourses of Roma in need of education in order to introduce processes with the intention of increasing employment of Roma.

Analyzing *The National Strategy for Roma Inclusion: 2012-2032*, Alexiadou and Norberg note that it has enhanced the public debate around existing issues, such as “policy tensions that reflect inadequate representation of and discussions with Roma stakeholders” (2017, p.36). Furthermore, they find that the “Strategy has not managed to address adequately those Roma responses that felt wrongly represented” (ibid., p.52). This furthers the perception that Roma lack inclusion in policy making, hence misrepresented. Mulinari and Neergaard term this formulation of policies as an attribute of racism, which they see as typical for what they call the *Swedish racial regimes*: Policies construct, through racialization, Roma as vulnerable, hence governable (2018, p.92). These descriptions in policies, though, reproduce negative stereotypes around Roma which enhances further stigmatization and marginalization (Helakorpi et al., 2018, p.64), simultaneously devaluing the initial goal of including Roma in the labor market. Both in media and other public discourses the voices of Roma are oppressed through exclusion.

### **2.1.2. Othering, and the Role of the Nation State**

<sup>8</sup> “We understand racial regime as the interplay between social structures and everyday life, through which the meanings of race and racial categories are created, negotiated and challenged. Within this tradition, we recognise the Swedish racial regime as continuously bridging exploitative and exclusionary racism by systematically providing classification systems based on the categories of race” (Mulinari and Neergaard, 2017, p.93)

A red thread through previous research seems to be misrepresentation due to a lack of inclusion. Common, especially in the case of Roma, is the process of victimization, under the guise of wanting to evoke empathy, but often merely becoming a tool “to publicize and popularize the organizers and their establishment” (Sangtin Writers, 2006, p.121). Suffering becomes monetized for somebody else’s profit (ibid, p.123), a critique directed at NGO communication strategies (ibid.). To make the problem of victimization more clear, and the effectual process of dehumanization, is the “juxtaposing the vulnerability of distant others with the safety of the middle class” (Chouliaraki, 2013, p.36), so instead of bridging between the self and the other, it “ultimately intensifies such distance” (ibid.). Victimization often appeals to common humanity, but “the spectacle of vulnerability simultaneously evokes the language of power” (ibid., p.29). Victimization seems to be the strategy of those who want to evoke empathy towards the Roma’s situation. It is problematic on a different level when Roma are stereotyped as criminals.

In both cases does the stereotyping, hence misrepresentation, of the Romani people lead to dehumanization (Butler, 2004, p.141). As Butler states: “Some lives are grievable, and others are not” (ibid., p.XV). Some deaths we mourn and others we do not; the disposition to do so is created through, often mediated, discourses, which “produce and maintain certain exclusionary conceptions of who is normatively human” (ibid., p.XV). In order to perceive life as grievable, and, therefore, worthy of protection, it has to be first recognized as human, which could potentially be reached through media representations. It is not as simple, though, that appearance in the media means humanization, as “personification does not always humanize” (ibid., p.141). Rather, with Roma the frames of misrepresentation, as victims, as criminals, effect dehumanization (ibid.).

This dehumanization of Roma in the Swedish context can be conceptualized as *othering*, a discourse of “us” and “them” that creates and maintains power relations (Hall, 1996b, p.93), as in “disregarding, essentializing, denuding the humanity of another [...] people” (Said, 1978, p.108). Through discourses the West is constructed as active and *the other* as passive, ensuring the domination by the West (ibid.). Hand in hand with the silencing of Romani voices goes the “[s]ilence and negation of systemic racism” (Mulinari and Neergaard, 2018, p.88): European knowledge production marginalizes “the phenomena of racism” (ibid.) and, therefore, maintains rather than challenges systems of racialization.

The process of othering Roma is tightly connected to the concept of nation-states and citizenship: “statelessness is the ultimate ‘other’ to citizenship” (Sigona, 2016, p.266). Hannah Arendt argues that the protection of human rights is “inextricably blended with the question of national emancipation” (Arendt, 1951, p.32), making human rights to a certain degree redundant. Human rights are meant to serve the protection of all, especially those who are not protected by the state, and yet, their reinforcement is dependent on some state body. So this process of othering Roma leads in its most extreme to the denial of human rights, arguing that because of a lack of citizenship the Swedish state is not responsible for Romani EU-migrants and the protection of their rights. It is not just that the Romani EU-migrant is the ‘other’ to the citizen, but they are the “necessary ‘Other’ to the formation and reproduction of modern Nation-States” (Duarte, 2017, p.9). Hence, this process of othering Roma is ensuring the domination of the West (Said, 1978, p.108).

Therefore, the conception of the ‘other’ is a construct that serves the nation-state and racism “indissolubly tied to the present social structure of the nation-state” (Mulinari and Neergaard, 2017, p.90). Mulinari and Neergaard term this *the racist regime*, which “is the societal struggle around social relations in and across nation-states, configuring humanness and citizens by the constructions of race” (ibid.). Partly responsible for upholding this racist regime of othering, deciding who is human and therefore eligible to citizenship, are the media, as “views that are not in line with the nationalist norm” are discredited through media (Butler, 2004, p.XX). Accordingly, what is not aligning with the nation-state is either absent or misrepresented in mainstream media.

### **2.1.3. The Decolonial Lens**

Knowledge production and representation are processes entrenched in colonial structures, as are the process of othering and its consequent dehumanization of certain peoples, in the case of Roma. In addition to “a racial system of social classification” (Mignolo, 2009, p.160), does Lugones define *coloniality* as “the process of active reduction of people, the dehumanization that fits them for the classification, the process of subjectification, the attempt to turn the colonized into less than human beings” (Lugones, 2010, p.745). The characteristics of colonialization are evident, even though Roma have not been formally colonialized:

there is no question that Roma have been silenced and their agency systematically stripped by governments and institutions in the name of cultural and ethnic hierarchy or

“progress”. At times, this takes place through virulent racism, at times through paternalism and most often systemic marginalization. (Plaut, 2012, p.55)

An important aspect to coloniality is that knowledge is being produced through a Western perspective, a notion that resonates Said’s concept of othering. The Western perspective creates norms through which the world is interpreted (Tlostanova et.al., 2019, p.290), and, therefore, is a way of subordinating non-Western knowledge. Mignolo describes this perception as: “the first world has knowledge, the third world has culture” (2009, p.160). In other words, knowledge about Roma is produced in a colonial setting.

Therefore, a decolonial approach regarding the situation of Roma in Sweden is being emphasized in this research. It is a twofold approach: Firstly, to delink from imperial knowledge (Mignolo, 2009, p.160) and to foreground “the fact that the achievements of modernity are inseparable from racism, hetero-patriarchy, economic exploitation, and discrimination of non-European knowledge systems” (Tlostanova et.al., 2019, p.290). Secondly, decolonial knowledges need to be emancipated (ibid.). Concretely, this can be achieved by shifting “the attention from the enunciated to the enunciation” (Mignolo, 2009, p. 160); shifting to the human beings, to Roma, whilst acknowledging racialization processes (ibid.). Mignolo argues that the discourse needs to change away from “making claims for the ‘transformation of the disciplines’” (ibid., p.178), meaning for example institutional structures, and to instead place human lives in the center (ibid.). In the case of the Romani EU migrants this could mean a move away from the discourse of them as “threats to the nation” (Mulinari and Neergaard, 2017, p.92) to Romani EU-migrants as human beings. This shift is to be undertaken by actively engaging in “both decolonizing knowledge and decolonial knowledge-making, delinking from the web of imperial/modern knowledge and from the colonial matrix of power” (Mignolo, 2009, p.178), which is indispensable “for imagining and building” (ibid., p.160) societies that are just.

Couldry connects the undermining of voice (returning to below) with neoliberalism (2010, p.11), which is a factor not to be disregarded when looking at the situation of Roma in Sweden today. Couldry argues that neoliberalism is creating meaning by having been normalized, followed by “the *embedding* of neoliberalism as rationality in everyday social organization and imagination” (ibid., p.14, author’s emphasis). It affects all instances of society, such as policy making and media representations. It seems, though, as Couldry sees neoliberalism as the macro-context, and other forms of power, such as racism as “underlying differentials” (ibid., p.119). Aligning with Mulinari and Neergaard, I would like to avoid an orthodox Marxist

understanding of “racism as serving the interests of capital owners by dividing the working class” (2017, p.89). In this understanding tackling racism is marginal to tackling classism, as the erasure of capitalism would lead to no one earning on racist structures. There is no doubt of the “inseparability of racialization and capitalist exploitation” (Lugones, 2010, p.745). Regarding racism, though, solely through the lens of classism is what Mulinari and Neergaard criticize, as it leads to: “racism as a central principle for social organization in the West in general and Sweden in particular has been silenced or marginalized in scientific scholarship” (2017, p.88). There are different systems of power and oppression, which lead to the dehumanization of certain subjects, that come into play and are to be looked at holistically, but racism is one to be emphasized in this research.

#### **2.1.4. Media’s Materiality**

For the following chapter it is helpful to define the term *discourse* as used in this research. Hall, his definition closely intertwined with Foucault’s thinking, sees discourse as a set of statements that enable the construction of a topic, but also limits the meanings that can be created through it. Importantly, Hall’s notion of discourse collapses the “distinction between thought and action” (1996b, p.86) in a sense that “discourse enters into and influences all social practices” (ibid.). Moreover, it is advantageous “to see the human ground [...] in which texts, visions, methods, and disciplines begin, grow, thrive, and degenerate” (Said, 1978, p.110), as mentioned above, applicable to digital media. Discourses are human-made and affect human lives. As Silverstone argues, this makes them “fundamentally moral” (2007, p.62), in a way where they guide the audience by “inscrib[ing] judgements of good and evil, of benevolence and malevolence” (ibid.). Discourses create “real effects in practice: the description becomes “true”” (Hall, 1996b, p.87). This is not to confuse with a discussion about ‘truth,’ rather what people assume to be ‘true’ and, therefore, think, judge and act upon.

Consequently, discourse is power and cannot be innocent, certainly not when it comes to the discourse of what Hall calls “the West and the Rest” (1996b, p.88), “because it [does] not represent and encounter between equals” (ibid., p.89), rather a domination of the Other (ibid.). Recalling Said, constructing Roma as passive is a way of ensuring domination and authority by the West (Said, 1978, p.3), because, not “only is discourse always implicated in power, discourse is one of the “systems” through which power circulates” (Hall, 1996b, p.89).

Butler argues that frames, such as the above discussed *othering* and *dehumanization*, that are created through media contribute to “the conditions under which it becomes possible to apprehend a life or a set of lives as precarious, and those that make it less possible, or indeed impossible” (Butler, 2009, p.2). A precarious life is a “life that matters” (ibid., p.14). These normative frames, therefore, “intelligibility establish of what will and will not be human, what will be a livable life, what will be a grievable death” (Butler, 2004, p.146). They “must circulate in order to establish their hegemony” (Butler, 2009, p.12). Though usually talking about the frames of war, Butler does connect this to the politics of immigration, where “racism instituted and active at the level of perception tend to produce iconic versions of populations who are eminently grievable, and others whose loss is no loss, and who remain ungrievable” (ibid., p.24). The importance here lays in Butler’s notion of inseparability of media representations and the consequent *material reality* (ibid., p.25):

This differential distribution of precarity is at once a material and a perceptual issue, since those whose lives are not “regarded” as potentially grievable, and hence valuable, are made to bear the burden of starvation, underemployment, legal disenfranchisement, and differential exposure to violence and death. (ibid.)

As a recognized national minority<sup>9</sup> (excluding Romani EU-migrants), “Roma culture and traditions are entitled to distinct protection and facilitation by the state” (Nafstad, 2019, p.840) and the neglect of certain cultural aspects “can be seen as *symbolic violence*” (ibid., p.855, my own emphasis). Even though this is an observation she bases on legal practices in Swedish criminal courts, she connects this to wider societal structures: “As long as ‘othering’ of Roma is taking place in wider society, so the courts will also ‘other’ Roma. Discourses and social processes are interconnected” (ibid., p.855). When it comes to Roma, certain discourse, for example their history, are suppressed, which Spivak calls “epistemic violence” (Riach, 2017, p.11). Symbolic or epistemic, this is not a discussion “about who gets to sit at the head of the table. In the context of violence, it is sometimes a deadly serious matter of who will survive and who will not” (Creanshaw, 1991, p.1265). It is indispensable to be aware of the connection between “how intersecting forms of structural violence play out on bodies” (Nagar, 2006, p.XXXII) and the media, because, as Butler so fittingly puts it: “politics – and power – work in part through regulating what can appear, what can be heard” (Butler, 2004, p.147). Nowadays, the internet often evokes the notion of an “apparently free space for new voices” (Couldry,

<sup>9</sup> Nafstad finds, by looking at written verdicts of the Swedish criminal courts, that Romani culture is subjected to “legal silencing by the court – it is either not given significance or is given a form of attention that essentializes and alienates the culture” (2019, p.839)

2010, p.133), but one should keep in mind that these are equally “dominated by norms” (ibid.), that both reiterate and produce the neoliberal and colonial filters. The lack of representation or misrepresentation of Roma are acts of violence that have material consequences on their lives.

## **2.2. Appearance, Voice and Effectivity**

The following will turn to Hannah Arendt’s concept of appearance, with one distinction: this research does not see media “as an addendum to the social or the political, as Arendt might have seen it, but as one of its major constituents” (Silverstone, 2007, p.29). Arendt perceives speech and action, both forms of appearance, as acts that “cannot even be imagined outside the society of men” (Arendt, 1958, p.22), in other words, that have to be part of the public realm. They are constitutive of “our plurality as distinct individuals” (Conovan, 1988, p.xxi) and are to be seen as a sort of second birth, as in “to take an initiative, to begin, [...] to set something in motion” (Arendt, 1958, p.177). She opposes these to labor, which we need to biologically sustain (Conovan, 1988, p.xxi) and work, which relates to the building of objects (ibid.), both situated in the private realm. In the public realm, though, through “acting and speaking men show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world” (Arendt, 1958, p.179).

Arendt lays great importance on appearance, without it a life “is literally dead to the world; it has ceased to be a human life because it is no longer lived among men” (Arendt, 1958, p.176), pointing once more towards the correlation of human life and voice. San Martin applies Arendt’s concepts to the situation of undocumented Latin American immigrants coming to Europe, a group that has “no rights and no visibility” (San Martin, 2008, p.147). They are confined to the sphere of labor, “the one of pure survival” (ibid., p.141), needing to be invisible in order to not face persecution by the state (ibid., p.149), therefore, not able to be unique individuals and to begin anew. Being denied speech and action in the public sphere, is in Arendtian terms, being denied human life (ibid., 141). The “public realm accepts only what is appropriate” and by that logic those who are denied appearance are deemed inappropriate (ibid., p.144).

A notion of effective appearance opens up, which “only has meaning [...] when human beings think, speak and act in relation to each other, for each other” (Silverstone, 2007, p.38). The previously discussed misrepresentation and dehumanization of Roma, though, shows that

effectiveness is not just appearance. As Spivak says, when the subalterns' voice is denied, or not "recognized, they are in effect erased from their place in the world" (Riach, 2017, p.11). Couldry's concept of effective voice is helpful at this point, which is that of a voice that "matters" (Couldry, 2010, p.10). An effective voice is what Roma seek and should not be denied, because "to deny value to another's capacity for narrative – to deny potential for voice – is to deny a basic dimension of human life" (ibid., p.16). In other words, to have an effective voice, online and offline, is indispensable to being human.

Couldry outlines three definitions of voice: Firstly, the sound produced while speaking (2010, p.11). Secondly, voice as an opinion, as an "expression of a distinctive perspective on the world that needs to be acknowledged," often used to frame inequalities (ibid.). Couldry, though, adds a third definition that describes two further dimensions of voice: voice as a process and voice as a value. The former is "the process of giving an account one's life and its conditions" (ibid., p.16). The latter refers "to the act of valuing, and choosing to value, the frameworks for organizing human life and resources that themselves value voice" (ibid., p.11). He treats this as an active decision, to respect and sustain, instead of denying and undermining voice (ibid.). Valuing voice is in itself twofold: It lays focus on the conditions where voice becomes effective, but also how power structures "may subtly undermine or devalue voice as a process" (ibid.).

Intentionally or not, though, these discussions may cause one to assume that the valuing of voice can solely derive from the outside, which would mean in the frame of this paper's subject that non-Roma put a value on the voice of Roma. This is a reading that I would like to avoid, considering the decolonial approach this paper is set to take. The value and effectiveness of voice, in a sense that voice matters (Couldry, 2010, p.12), should not be perceived as that just the West can make the voice of Roma matter. It should be acknowledged that it is indispensable that the greater public starts to listen, but the frames of voice and the standards for measuring effectiveness should derive from the minority's perspective. Otherwise, this reading reestablishes Said's concept of othering, where the "West is the actor, the [Other] a passive reactor" (Said, 1978, p.108f), a notion where just the West is perceived as a suitable judge for the other's behavior (ibid.). Voice, the definition used in this research, are the literal (in this case mostly mediated) acts of speaking and writing, the frames created by and the effectiveness measured from the Roma's standpoint, but also the potentials of challenging and changing of existing discourses.

There are two attributes that contribute to appearance and voice being effective: Plurality and sensitivity. Arendt sees human plurality as having “the twofold character of equality and distinction” (1958, p.175f). If people were not equal there would be no understanding and no perception of a future. If people were not distinct “they would need neither speech nor action to make themselves understood” (ibid.). We are equal, but we are different. It is a notion of plurality and its appearance that carries potential for media to be “the space between the familiar and the strange, myself and the other [...], of public life and political action” (Silverstone, 2007, p.36).

Couldry highlights the importance of acknowledging the complexity of voices, another form of plurality, and simultaneously coming from a place of sensitivity towards voices (2010, p.117). Both are indispensable to a respectful understanding of where voices come from and where they are denied, consequently leading to sensitivity rather than defensiveness. Starting to listen to and learn from voices enables the “imaginative move towards the standpoint of the other” (Chouliaraki, 2013, p.203), a move that is necessary in order to let the other have a voice and, thus, be treated as human. Sensitivity leads to “interventions that [do] not further marginalize people who are already in the margins” (Noble, 2018, p.171). Sensitivity goes hand in hand with recognizing “the uncertainties of my own voice” (Couldry, 2010, p.133) and to be aware of a proper distance to the other’s voice; a distance that does not push the unfamiliar “to a point beyond strangeness, beyond humanity [or draws it] so close as to become indistinguishable from ourselves” (Silverstone, 2006, p.172). Both hinder the silencing of effective voice once more. Sensitivity is what distinguishes from simply recognizing another’s voice to “imagin[ing] the other in his or her own terms” (Chouliaraki and Orgad, 2011, p.341) which trying to learn enough about the other “to enable responsibility and care” (Silverstone, 2006, p.172). This sensitivity is significant, as Arendt sees the infringement of human rights as “manifested first and above all in the deprivation of a place in the world which makes opinions significant and actions effective” (1951, p.37). Appearance is political influence, hence power, and “the politics of the disadvantaged, the marginalized, the minorities – depend on that visibility.” (Silverstone, 2007, p.30)

### **2.3. The Romani Perspective: Media Activism**

As established above, the representation of Roma as passive victims or criminals is othering and dehumanizing. One of the problems here lies within the notion that representation could be

done without it being an act of power; instead appearance and voice are “the result of continuous struggles of recognition and battles over symbolic power” (Couldry, 2010, p.120). Representation of Roma by non-Roma are at once symbolic and material acts of power. Above all, it needs to be acknowledged that even under oppression, people are able to reflectively tell their stories: “To assume otherwise would be to deny [...] that narrative is a fundamental capacity of human beings” (ibid., p.127). As Crenshaw and Harding argue, the standpoint of the oppressed is indispensable, as “when one discourse fails to acknowledge the significance of the other, the power relations that each attempts to challenge are strengthened” (Crenshaw, 1991, p.1282). Failure to approach issues intersectionally, which means attentively to the convergence of “systems of race, gender and class domination” (ibid., p.1246), will often “replicate and reinforce the subordination” (ibid., p.1252). Obstacles faced by the individual are different depending on which of these systems are at work and they need accordingly varying strategies (ibid., p.1246). People who do not face the same systems of domination might not be able to recognize these. Strategies need to be set in place from the Roma’s standpoint, because only they can “reveal the objective natures and conditions of dominant groups” (Harding, 2008, p.14), which create their situation. By excluding Roma, as we did see above, one is likely to do more damage than good. Consequently, the media has to be created by Roma themselves to ensure the right kind of appearance.

### **2.3.1. Collective Agency**

When discussing the effectiveness of appearance and voice, one mistake can be to deny the capability of agency. Krause, also looking at immigration and statelessness through the Arendtian lens, is agreeing with San Martin on that in “official representations of political life [migrants are] commonly ‘symbolically eliminated’ or taken up by an increasingly hostile discourse on ‘illegal immigrants’” (Krause, 2008, p.331). The Arendtian perspectives of labor, work and action in the private and public realm are useful to conceptualize the complexities of the situation of Roma. There are Roma who hide their identities in Sweden, which moves their expression of identity into the private sphere, “sacrificing vital aspects of their existences” (San Martin, 2008, p.142). Then on the other hand, EU-migrants are often physically in the public sphere, for example, in camps and by begging, which are means of basic survival and should in Arendt’s concept be in the private sphere. Both are denied acting and speaking and the revelation of “their unique personal identities” (Arendt, 1958, p.179).

However, instead of simply regarding the migrant as a victim, but not disregarding the “multiple vulnerabilities resulting from this situation” (Krause, 2008, p.334), Arendt does see the migrant as political actors (ibid., p.340). Her argument is that statelessness is not denying “the fundamental human capacity to act” (ibid., p.335) against instrumental violence, which is due to collective appearance in the public realm: “power corresponds to the human ability not just to act, but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual: it belongs to a group” (Arendt, 1970, p.44). Social movements and activism can be understood in the broadest sense as “people [...] working together” (Earl and Kimport, 2011, p.123). It is collective action that is “special by virtue of the pressure it could create for change” (ibid., p.124). It is marked by a togetherness “in cause, space and time” (ibid., p.124), which was traditionally physical togetherness, but is nowadays expandable to digital media (ibid., p.125).

Sigona accepts Arendt’s view of the “stateless person as rightless” (2016, p.267), but refers to Krause in order to argue that Roma do not lose agency. Statelessness “does not make the Roma *bare life*, it reveals instead political subjectivity as an embodied and emplaced process, where subjects actively negotiate their position in the world vis-à-vis the state” (ibid., p.263). Even in the most vulnerable positions, Roma do have agency, which all of the articles emphasize. They are to be perceived as “political actors whose public appearance can be potentially explosive and liberating” (Krause, 2008, p.340), by exerting power through collective action (ibid.).

### **2.3.2. Demanding Voice**

A radical, democratic citizen must be an active citizen, somebody who acts as a citizen, who conceives of herself as a participant in a collective undertaking (Mouffe, 1992a, p.4)

Dahlgren reminds us of the importance of mediated communicative spaces (Dahlgren, 2009, p.104) “of civic cultures<sup>10</sup> that potentially support radical forms of alternative politics” (ibid., p.197). The Romani media platforms serve as a space for activism as civic agency, strategically bringing forward specific demands and “striving to make a difference under systemic constraints of injustice” (Chouliaraki, 2013, p.193). A lot of Roma’s work is from within the political state system, especially through *RIKC* and *The Romani Council*. The media activism,

<sup>10</sup> “Civic cultures refer to cultural patterns in which identities of citizenship, and the foundations for civic agency, are embedded” (Dahlgren, 2009, p.103).

though, is not bound by constraints of what is eligible within the system, but can actually point towards “the shortcomings of democracy-in-practice” (Corner, 2011, p.109), influencing all the same policies, politicians and processes within the systems. This is an important factor in keeping a state just to all its citizens, because “without certain kinds of input from citizens, the quality of democracy degenerates” (Dahlgren, 2009, p.104). For Roma “making injustices visible is vitally strategic” (ibid., p.194), because it is them who are being exposed to the violence of such injustices.

Activism is a high level of participation in democracy (Corner, 2011, p.109), enabling citizens’ “powers of agency” (Passerin d’Entrèves, 1992, p.146), being effective through “concerted action” (ibid.). As Arendt reminds us, it is a potential space of appearance that must “be continually recreated by action” (ibid., p.147). When gathered efforts cease, these spaces disappear, because “[p]olitical equality for Arendt is not a natural human attribution, nor can it rest on a theory for natural rights” (ibid., p.150). The Romani platforms are an attempt to secure political equality for Romani citizens, but also serve as spaces where Romani citizens “find participation meaningful” (Dahlgren, 2009, p.164). In return, civic cultures and their communicative spaces “shape civic agency and thereby impact on citizen’s engagement and participation in democracy” (ibid., p.102). The activism is a form of exerting citizenship: Roma appeal to their rights and the responsibilities that the Swedish state has.

Butler deems it necessary to “try to install new frames that would enhance the possibility of that recognition [of the precariousness of life]” (Butler, 2009, p.12), that “repeatedly interrogate and challenge the reasons for their exclusion and negotiate precarious and contingent forms of inclusion” (Sigona, 2016, p.275). That calls for a notion of power which is not a simplified one “as an oppressive, highly visible, sovereign-based power” (Lupton, 2012, p.10), but rather a manifold notion of power “that changes over time and space” (ibid., p.9). Discourse, being “subject to change” (ibid.), carries potential to disrupting oppressive powers, and to reclaim power over one’s own stories. Resonating Versterberg’s notion of communication “making them governable” (2016, p.38), is exactly what Romani media activism is counteracting: The platforms a space for Roma where they are ungoverned. Because as Foucault says: “[w]here there is power, there is resistance” (1976, p.95), and resistance is power in itself.

The affordances of emerging digital media offer “unprecedented opportunities for voice, and, in theory participation and decision-making” (Dreher et al., 2015, p.23). Additionally, they also

provide those who are not part of the group “with wide access to those voices” (ibid., p.35), meaning that if one is interested the information is to be found. Due to diverse platforms, strategies can be tailored to the contexts of each struggle (Duarte, 2017, p.1). Digital media, especially social media, are recognized as an efficient “organizing tool” (Dreher et al., 2015, p.35) that have proved “vital to building solidarity networks and mobilizing support” (ibid., p.34). Digital media activism is also used for minority groups, to “destabilize colonial power and hopefully, decolonize” (Duarte, 2017, p.1), and consequently, creating healthier conditions (ibid., p2).

Although Roma are not Indigenous, it is beneficial in the frame of this paper to turn to Indigenous media activism for several reasons, apart from there being very little research that consider Roma’s agency. Firstly, because Indigenous media activism is sensitive to colonial trauma (Titifanue et al, 2018, p.33). Secondly, and consequently, it creates a sense of multi-dimension by not solely wanting to influence policies, but to also “reinvigorate culture” (ibid.). The media part of activism is often regarded through the benefits of “cost- and time-savings tools that online coordination makes possible” (Earl and Kimport, 2011, p.5), which then loses other dimensions such as “to practice a politics of visibility, cultivate solidarity, diffuse an Indigenous consciousness, enforce dominant governments’ trust and treaty responsibilities, and remind many of the irrevocable injustice of colonialism” (Duarte, 2017, p.1). Taking all dimensions into account, it is a space “for collectively imagining alternative social and political visions” (ibid., p.2).

Dreher et al. find that Indigenous media activists make extended use of technologies in order to attempt to influence or even participate in the policy-making process (2015, p.34). They identify that the problem of a continued lack of inclusion of Indigenous voices is not due to a “lack of opportunity for voice, but rather the uncertainty of being heard in the key spheres of influence – mainstream media and policy-makers” (ibid.). They, therefore, highlight the “importance of listening” to minorities when effecting change that is in accordance with that group. Even though discussing attempts to gaining lands’ rights, the importance of listening when effecting policy changes is equally indispensable to the situation of Roma in Sweden.

The necessity of movements and their platforms lays in that “it is often the only way in which communities or activist groups can express their choice and needs” (Jordan et al., 2005, p.5). This research focuses on digital media practices that range from writing articles, influencing specific political processes, events and discourses, for example through petitions, producing

movies, newspapers, and community building. Plaut examines how Roma media activists took voice and agency in the 2010 refolement of Roma who lived in informal settlements in France to Bulgaria/Romania, where she yet again recognizes that “the voices of the Roma themselves remained curiously absent” in the public discussion (2012, p.53). She observed, though, that Roma were “crafting and changing their representation in the media and thus discursively moving from passive victims to active subjects by engaging in strategic framing and advocacy” (ibid., p.52). She identifies the Roma using “media as a political tactic, even to mobilize transnationally as a subaltern counterpublic” by what she calls *counterframing* (ibid.):

Romani activists were placing themselves as active subjects rather than passive objects and thus engaged in a process I term “De/Re”: a purposeful written process of de-naturalizing, de-normalizing, de-colonizing as a means of re-defining, re-writing, and re-claiming. (ibid., p.53)

Plaut identifies that “Roma are becoming public agents in their own stories” (ibid., p.62), and, therefore, go from being denied voice to demanding voice.

Even though Plaut recognizes that “the Romani community is extremely heterogeneous” (2012, p.56), she insists that in the case of Roma “choosing to project an essentialized view of oneself for political purposes” (ibid.) is advantageous. Not objecting the benefits that result from having a “unified front” (ibid.), this research takes a skeptical stance towards essentialism, as again, dissenting voices will be glossed over. As Couldry says: “We will get nowhere, however, through a simplified view of the ‘identities’ enunciated through voice” (2010, p.117). When looking at Roma media activists in Sweden, reducing the digital media tactics of Roma to counterframing is simplifying their strategies.

Duarte notes that Indigenous media tactics “become part of the greater interplay of forces shaping place-based decolonisation efforts” (2017, p.2), but she notes two problematic assumptions about digital media activism: Firstly, as established above, that increased appearances “naturally lead to more opportunities for democratic participation” (ibid., p.8) and, secondly, that “social movement theorists and media theorists alike conflate social media participation with democratic participation” (ibid.). Consequently, the media activism is not solely targeted to gaining political participation. It is an activism that is “nuanced” (ibid., p.3) and that takes historicity into account (ibid.), as “uses of social media will cohere to the specific political demands of specific Indigenous groups in specific geopolitical locations” (Duarte, 2017, p.10). Roma, as are Indigenous people, are influenced by “traditions, and historical

legacies of peoples with memories reverberating through eras well before the founding of modern nation states” (ibid., p.9). Once again, the materiality of this media activism is to be highlighted, because for the Romani activists this is “concrete, material, real, undeniable, muddy, bloody, uncomfortable, painful, lived, embodied, traumatic and transformative” (ibid.). Demanding voice is an embodied action by Romani Media Activists.

#### **2.4. Literature Review: Conclusive Summary**

In the previous chapters, the line of thought has moved from the Roma’s voice being silenced, to the importance of proper appearance, and, finally, to the demanding of voice. The process of othering and the consequent dehumanization of Roma shows the need for a decolonial approach. Reflecting on the inseparability of media discourses and their material consequences, shows that the Roma’s standpoint is indispensable. Additionally, appearance and voice become effective through approaching humans as equal, though different, and with sensitivity. Finally, the last chapter frames Romani media activism as not just a space of resistance, but also for collective imagination and for processing colonial trajectories.

### 3. Approaching Romani Media Activism

In this chapter some reflections on my own position in this research process and ethical considerations will be shared. Additionally, the methodological approach of this research will be laid out, as well as the design of the methods used: Semi-structured interviews with Romani media activists, textual analysis of eight articles from the web magazine *Dikko* and, finally, my own creative writing.<sup>11</sup>

#### 3.1. Reflections on my Position as a Researcher

This chapter starts out with an approach of “critical self-scrutiny” (Byrne, 2012, p.213) of the impact of my social position (ibid.) of a non-Roma researching Romani media platforms. Much as Richa Nagar<sup>12</sup>, “I could not free myself from anxieties about writing” (2006, p.XXXIX), as I am bound to lack an in-depth understanding of the Romani culture and of experiences such as discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity. Hence, the results of this research are biased due to me being an outsider (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p.165). Even though I was determined to conduct the research with a “high sensitivity to context” (ibid.), I started out with a lack of knowledge, consequently, a lot of my empirical data consists of the interviewees explaining the basics of Romani culture, institutions and discourses to me. Duarte argues that theorists should be a part of the group that is being researched in order to be “able to meaningfully engage, decipher, and catch on the coded language, turns-of-phrase, significance of political connections, and deeper philosophical meanings” (2017, p.9f). As a non-Roma, I need to acknowledge that I will probably never be able to understand this research with that kind of depth.

These anxieties also stem from the entailing issues of voice, power and representation. It needs to be acknowledged that the position as an outsider “affects the approach taken, the questions asked and the analysis produced” (Byrne, 2012, p.213). In other words, it permeates the entire angle of the research. As established above, discourses about the “West and the Rest” cannot be innocent, and also my writing as a non-Roma should be approached critically (Rose, 2016, p.23). My position might lead to misrepresentation, which “may unintentionally support the [colonial] structures” (Tlostanova et al, 2019, p.293). As much as I attempted to avoid it, I am to a certain degree imposing an interpretation onto the data collected, which “however well-

<sup>11</sup> See appendix: 7.2. Additional Considerations and Reflections on the Research Process

<sup>12</sup> Richa Nagar guided the writing process of the Sangtin Writers, a women activist collective in India, and translated the book *Playing with Fire* into English

intentioned – can be as damaging in the postcolonial world as the agency-stifling political structures of the colonial world itself” (Riach, 2017, p.5). Wrong interpretations are not an innocent lack of understanding.

Consequentially, potential solutions were sought out. Firstly, the idea of the researcher as an expert should be deconstructed (Nagar, 2006, p.XXXIX); rather, the researcher’s writing should be seen as a “complementary skill” (ibid.). A non-hierarchical plurality of voices that are in dialogue is attempted, “with no one voice, including that of the researcher, claiming final authority” (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p.139). Concretely, a focus of this research was to find out what is important to Roma, so that it does not become “totally irrelevant” (Burman, 2018, p.54) to the community. The interviewees are to be seen as “critical and knowledgeable thinkers” (ibid., p.56) and not just as informants. This approach does not attempt to “extract knowledge from individual and communities” (Burman, 2018, p.56), but instead to “co-produce” (Tlostanova et.al., 2019, p.291) research *with* the community together.

Secondly, a decolonial approach was enhanced, meaning the delinking from Western knowledge by attempting to center on Romani perspectives. Concretely, this research’s empirical material consists *of* Romani knowledge, collected through interviews and articles, and not of what is written *about* them. Delinking knowledge can be done by learning, thinking and acting from Romani epistemes (Tlostanova et al, 2019, p.294), a process that includes a shift towards “re-thinking and re-configuring” (ibid.). It, therefore, needs to be a methodological approach set at the grassroots, with a sensitivity to colonial difference and paying attention to the “intersection of complex systems of oppression” (Lugones, 2010, p.747). Decolonial research demands a commitment “to take people and their narratives seriously” (Burman, 2018, p.50), recognizing every person as “a live, historical, fully described being” (Lugones, 2010, p.747).

The delinking of knowledge ties back to a possibility of learning about the deficiencies of the systems and “issues of power relations at the macro-level” (Lupton, 2012, p.9). This research is not meant to “understand the cultural characteristics of the Other, but [to] gain novel and critical insights into the structures, practices, and assumptions of the powerful societies and institutions” (Burman, 2018, p.50). As established above, it needs the standpoint of the oppressed to unveil the domination (Harding, 2008, p.14). The question remaining, as a white person deeply embedded in colonial structures, is to what extent the knowledge I produce can

really be termed decolonial. In this research, I am the Other. It poses a conundrum that I could not solve by myself, but turned once more to one of my interviewees, asking to read through the final draft before submitting and to verify that I have understood the empirical material correctly.

### 3.2. Designing the Research

This research reinforces an inductive approach<sup>13</sup>, meaning that inferences stem from the empirical data (Bruhn Jensen, 2012b, p.261) and a dedication to letting the data “speak for itself” (Hine, 2015, p.81). Whilst, though, being informed by previous research and the researcher’s familiarity with media and communication theories, it is classified as an abductive approach, where previous knowledge is iteratively applied on the data (Bruhn Jensen, 2012b, p.266). The approach also leans on phronetic research<sup>14</sup> in as much as it “focuses on what is variable, on that which cannot be encapsulated by universal rules” (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p.57) and is concerned with ethics and values (ibid.). It is a context-dependent approach that is “[o]riented towards action” (ibid.). This research is not concerned with creating generalizable outcomes that claim universal truth, and yet, by looking at the Romani media activism one can learn about the structures these platforms are embedded in.

Digital ethnography is an approach considered as well, marked by a sense of “prolonged immersion” into a “field site [that] is multi-sited and diffuse” (Hine, 2015, p.56). On the one hand, having migrated myself within the EU gives me a sensitivity towards what is cultural specific to Sweden and, consequently, has led me to develop a critical stance towards certain cultural norms. On the other hand, having lived in Malmö for more than five years at the start of this research and having worked with different associations gave me already a good notion of the locality of Malmö and the organizations and municipal institutions involved. This gave me the advantage of “a clear sense of the normal and the unusual for this setting” (Hine, 2015, p.56). My locality also means that I am aware of the discourses that Roma are confronted within organizations, established news media, but also how people talk about Roma in Malmö.

<sup>13</sup> Opposed to a deductive approach (Jensen, 2012b, p.262), where a hypothesis is created first in order to then be reinforced or contradicted by empirical data (ibid.)

<sup>14</sup> Flyvbjerg, leaning on Aristotle, prioritizes *phronetic* science, which he opposes to *epistemic* and *technic* science. *Episteme* is the notion of scientific knowledge that is perceived as “[u]niversal, invariable, context-indepenent” (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p.57) and foregrounds rationality. *Techné* is the science of crafts and arts (ibid.).

For this research, a “*paradigmatic case*” (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p.80, author’s emphasis) was sampled, based on judgement and information (ibid., p.57/p.80) gained through previous research on NGO communication and experiences of working with Roma in different organizations (ibid., p.57). The dichotomy of communication around Roma in Malmö quickly became apparent: It is striking how many multifaceted Romani platforms exist locally, and yet non-Roma organizations rarely communicated on *The Romani Question*. Therefore, I deemed it a suitable case in order to study agency of marginalized groups; to learn from the microcosmic details in order to aim for ‘macrocosmic’ inferences (Bruhn Jensen, 2012a, p.237). A paradigmatic case attempts to “establish a school for the domain which the case concerns” (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p.80), in that this research, additionally to answering the research questions, is also concerned with finding processes of producing decolonial knowledge.

The research design was one of “*planned flexibility*” (Bazeley, 2013, p.33, author’s emphasis). This research is placed in “unpredictable field settings, which move from face-to-face and mediated forms of interactions” (Hine, 2015, p.56), depending on what is deemed most appropriate for the stage of the research process. It embraced a mixed methods approach (Bryman, 2006), shining light on different angles of the same phenomenon (Hine, 2015, p.89).

The research process began by mapping the field (Hine, 2015, p.132): during and after the first interviews I made myself familiar with the online spaces of the different institutions involved, such as their websites and Facebook pages, a habit I continued throughout the entire research process. In order to gain deeper insights in the workings of the platform, the method of “*elite<sup>15</sup> interviewing*” (Bruun, 2016, p.131) was implemented, referring to people with exclusive “non-publicly available knowledge” (ibid., p.135) of the content and platform creation: “the aim of production analysis is to understand the inner workings of the media” (ibid.). Even though this research refrains from looking at the audience, it does not deny the active engagement of audiences as they “take away what they have appreciated or understood of what they view or read” (Silverstone, 2007, p.48).

### **3.3. Main Method: Semi-Structured Interviewing**

<sup>15</sup> The term elite is somewhat problematic, because she opposes it to “giving voice” to the marginalized other” (Ho cited in Bruun, 2016, p.132). Information is always exclusive to the person, in this case I am referring to that the interviewees are Roma, therefore have knowledge that is not accessible to the majority of society and are the creators of the platforms/content on the platforms, which is also inaccessible from the outside.

In order to access “backstage” (Bruun, 2016, p.135) and “expert knowledge” (ibid., p.132), eight one-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted (Byrne, 2012, p.209). Semi-structured interviewing is a method aimed at in-depth knowledge (ibid., p.208), that is “well suited to tap social agents’ perspective on the media” (Bruhn Jensen, 2012a, p.240) as it encourages to talk “at some length, about a particular issue or range of topics” (Byrne, 2012, p.208). It is a method that highlights, formulated by themselves, “people’s knowledge, values and experiences as meaningful and worthy” (ibid., p.209). It was chosen in order to give the opportunity to “explore voices and experiences” that otherwise often are “ignored, misrepresented or suppressed” (p.209f). It is a method that enhances sensitivity, depth and complexity (ibid., p.210)

There are certain issues that arise with this method, but the main critique is that the results can be “somewhat artificial” (Hine, 2015, p.115), as the interview setting is fairly unnatural. The data received is one that the interviewees consider “relevant to their experience” (Hine, 2015, p.113), it is dependent on their context (Byrne, 2012, p.208) and information might be missing, forgotten (ibid., p.212) or even withheld (Bruhn Jensen, 2012a, p.240). Hence, the data’s analysis needs to be treated as “a particular representation or account of an individual’s views and opinions” (Byrne, 2012, p.209). Yet, semi-structured interviewing is deemed a suitable method for this paper’s purpose, because even though the critique is relevant, that is exactly what this research is aimed at: The Romani perspective.

As the interviewees were indispensable to the quality of this research, the recruiting process was careful and mainly enabled by the openness of my first interviewee, Paul, who established contacts to the other interviewees and ‘snowballing’ (Bruhn Jensen, 2012a, p.239). The sampling criteria were that the interviewees were Roma with Swedish citizenship, considered themselves activists and were engaged in media.<sup>16</sup> Seven out of the eight interviewees were from Malmö, the eighth interviewee is the founder of *Dikko*. She does not live in Malmö, but was considered anyways as she could deliver insights to the history of the platform.

The interview questions were designed to guide through the same themes, in order to establish some comparability between the interviews and to keep the duration of the interviews within the range of about one hour. Simultaneously, the design of the questionnaire left space for flexibility, so that the interview could “adapt in response to the reactions and responses of the

<sup>16</sup> For more detailed information on recruitment see appendix: 7.3. Details Sampling Interviews

interviewee” (Byrne, 2012, p.212). The designing of “open-ended” (ibid., p.209) questions allows the researcher to access “individuals’ attitudes and values” (ibid.). Additionally, the interview guide was slightly adapted according to the platform or institution the interviewee was working with/at, for example from *Dikko* to *Tehara Media* the questions were changed from focusing on articles to a focus on film. Finally, the interviews that had been previously recorded were later on transcribed (ibid., p.220), a process that familiarizes the researcher with the empirical data.

After the completion of the interviews, the main goal was to identify “key themes” (Rose, 2016, p.214) from my empirical data in order to fuse these with theoretical concepts in the analysis. Therefore, a thematic content analysis was undertaken (Rivas, 2012, p.367): a systematic coding process that “reduces the volume of the original data and turns it into something meaningful and easy to digest” (ibid.). It allows for an inductive approach in the beginning by creating codes going through the interviews “line by line” (ibid., p.370).<sup>17</sup> In this descriptive coding process both my own words and *in vivo codes* were used, meaning the exact words of the interviewees (ibid., p.372). In a separate excel-table<sup>18</sup> sub-categories were created that derived from the descriptive codes. Therefrom categories were created which could then again be formed into themes. First, this was undertaken for each interview individually in order to then be fused in a final table.<sup>19</sup> The analysis is more focused on *what* the interviewees say, than *how* they say it (Byrne, 2012, p.212). Furthermore, the analysis pays attention to “complexity and contradictions” (Rose, 2016, p.214) and explored absences as well as the clearly visible (ibid.). It seemed to be a suitable approach to “explore how meaning is created” (Hine, 2015, p.105), which expands from *how* people make use of media to including *why* people use media (McDonald et al., 2016, p.90).

### **3.4. Secondary Method: Textual Analysis of Articles**

In addition to the main method, a second method was introduced in order to triangulate the empirical data collected through the interviews (Bruhn Jensen, 2012b, p.271). A textual analysis of eight articles<sup>20</sup> that were published on *Dikko* was selected as suitable material in order to be studied “as representations of social meanings” (Altheide and Schneider, 2017, p.5).

<sup>17</sup> For an excerpt see appendix: 7.8.1. Excerpt of Descriptive Coding

<sup>18</sup> For an excerpt see appendix: 7.8.2. Excerpt of Thematic Coding of Single Interviews

<sup>19</sup> See appendix: 7.8.3. Table Thematic Coding Interviews: Fused

<sup>20</sup> For more detailed information see appendix: 7.9.1. Detailed Sampling Articles

Looking at the actual platforms provides more detailed knowledge on what the creators want to transmit to the audience (Hine, 2015, p.136). The articles are concerned with the upcoming *International Conference about the Holocaust 2020* (from now on referred to as *The Conference*). It is to be held place in autumn 2021<sup>21</sup> in Malmö and seen as significant in the work against racism (Malmö Stad, 2019). *The Conference* was a recurring topics of current events in the interviews. Referring to an offline event that the interviewees aim to impact on, the data selected exemplifies their activism that exists “across the offline-online dichotomy” (Jørgensen, 2016, p.60). Through the search function on the *Dikko* website the articles that were concerned with the Holocaust were filtered out. In order to look at the most current events, only articles from 2020 were chosen. Additionally, those with less than 50 shares were excluded, leaving eight articles to analyze.

At this point of the research, it became evident that this research was an abductive “iterative process” (Bruhn Jensen, 2012a, p.236). The interviews already brought forward the themes that were recognizable as being important to the activists. Yet, determined to let the empirical data guide the research process, I once again turned to thematic coding for the textual analysis, starting with *in vivo codes* in order to then create categories and finally themes<sup>22</sup>, following a similar process to the coding of the interviews. This rather inductive approach is a textual analysis that pays less attention to the linguistic level, but rather focuses on themes and discourses, which mediate “much wider ‘socio-cultural practices’” (Schröder, 2012, p.106). The aim was to stay close to the intentions of the authors of the articles, without putting too much interpretations on the written text.

### **3.5. Writing as a Method**

Writing as “a method of discovery and analysis” (Richardson, 1994, p.516) was usually undertaken when I felt the need to explore “ambiguities and uncertainties” (Hine, 2015, p.89), especially during the beginning of the research process. It ranged from writing about happenings on a certain day to reflecting on emotions, such as frustrations, and especially reflections about changes of my own perspectives and prejudices. It helped me to be more aware “about the different meaning I invest” (ibid., p.98). I especially reflected on my locality (ibid.), as me and the interviewees inhabit similar spaces. Additionally, as an activist myself, I needed

<sup>21</sup> When analyzing the articles, the conference was still to be held in 2020. Due to the Covid-19-pandemic it has been moved to 2021 (Government Offices of Sweden, 2020)

<sup>22</sup> For details and excerpts see appendix 7.9.3. Colour Highlights and 7.9.4. Thematic Coding Articles

to aim for “a consciousness of my own clear affinities with the field” (ibid., p.154). I, therefore, aimed to be especially careful with biases. Writing became a way of being aware of my “embodied and emotional experience” (ibid., p.83) and the fact that my “personal circumstances shape my relationship with the [data]” (ibid., p.96).

Creative Writing is a “method of inquiry, a way of finding out about yourself and your topic” (Richardson, 1994, p.516). Holding a Bachelor’s degree in Literature and having enrolled in several creative writing workshops gave me a broad skill set to draw on, even though I mainly stuck to stream-of-consciousness writing, a method that helped me to formulate my thoughts in a specific moment and to be able to later in the research process return to them. Having detailed observations and also personal notes helped me to later on reflect, verify or disqualify early hunches about my findings (ibid., p.526). This process “cautions against unthinking pursuit of a “complete” understanding of such a phenomenon” (Hine, 2015, p.97),<sup>23</sup> as it makes you aware of your own changes in thought processes.

<sup>23</sup> See appendix: 7.10. Excerpt Creative Writing

## 4. Analysis

The analysis of the empirical data is threefold: The first part introduces the platforms used and their affordances. Additionally, some paradigmatic strategies that can be encountered on the Romani platforms will be outlined. The second chapter places the activism into the broader Sweden-specific context. Thirdly, the Romani platforms will be explored not just as a space to counteract, but as a space where Roma can have a meaningful engagement with their past, a space to form a Romani identity and to imagine possible futures. Finally, the analysis will finish with a discussion around the perception of impact that the activists have on *The Romani Question*.

### 4.1. Mapping the Romani Platforms and their Affordances

In this chapter, an overview of the online platforms as an “enabling device” (Fenton, 2007, p.227) for social change will be established. The media are often the chosen tool by Romani activists: “The goal [with *Tehara Media*] was this: to fight with media, because media, as everybody knows, is the 4<sup>th</sup> power in society” (Albert), presumably referring to the perception of media being as powerful as the political legislative, executive and judicial powers in a state. Though, they do not perceive the online structures as intrinsically democratic and Dolores acknowledges:

[media] can be angled even if you are impartial, so you are still a little too dependent on the context. And there, it’s there I realized, okay, media have such an incredibly, incredibly great power. It’s crazy. Because, well, they are producing a reality, they are not just showing the reality.

The activists are aware that media discourses are not created in a social vacuum and have a constitutive power. The platforms “inherently spaces of power” (Couldry, 2010, p.132) to the Romani media activists.

The first platform subject to this analysis is *Dikko*, a non-profit web magazine “that wants to transmit a traveller’s/Romani perspective in the news world and spread knowledge about the minority Roma” (Dikko, 2020). Britt-Inger recounts the motivation for founding the platform:

there was nowhere where you could share specific articles that were about the minority Roma and the matters that affected them. Where the minority Roma could express themselves.

The feeling of lacking a space led to first creating the street magazine *Diik Manush*, founded in order to give Romani EU-migrants a chance to sell a newspaper instead of begging. Due to a lack of material and funding, this street magazine was laid off in 2018 and *Dikko*, the web version, was established with the intention to create a newspaper that is “by and for Roma” (Dusan). When starting the online magazine, Britt-Inger posted an appeal on Facebook for donations that enabled the starting up of the website. She highlights the importance of this collective effort for the aim of creating a Romani newspaper:

*Dikko* really is everybody’s newspaper. Because everybody contributed to it. So it is, like the minority Roma’s newspaper.

*Tehara Media*, the second platform to be analyzed, is a non-profit association founded by Paul, in cooperation with his father Albert, that “works with film and media as a tool for change” (Facebook, *Tehara Media*). *Tehara Media* is strategically focusing on film with the hope of creating frames “under which it becomes possible to apprehend a life or a set of lives as precarious” (Butler, 2009, p.2). Alma attempts to evoke with her movie:

a thought, a feeling, an aha-experience [...]. You can reach out to different ages, to different people [...], I think film can better help to get to feelings and thoughts.

One of their productions in process is the movie “Klassens Z” (‘The class’ G’). It is based on the director Alma’s personal experiences and intends to raise awareness towards antiziganism and everyday life discrimination of Roma in Sweden. It is exemplified through Alma’s experience of the careless use the discriminatory term ‘gypsie’. Amongst other projects, *Tehara Media* organizes the *Tehara Film Festival*, screening Romani films, and supports *Dikko* with audio and visuals.

The third platform, *Radio Romano*, is part of *Sweden’s Radio* (‘Sveriges Radio’), hence, a public radio that is state funded and transmits news and programs in Romani chib (Sveriges Radio, 2020). Dolores’ features, her being a reporter at *Radio Romano*, range from current news to specific cultural features, such as young people and their view on and use of the Romani languages. In Dolores’ eyes, the radio is “a way to spread knowledge”:

you can share the radio's posts or programs that have been recorded and broadcast. But then it is also that the radio is in the car, it is in the phone and is also a way to spread knowledge and use media. So it's really important.

Through bottom-up participation, the radio can hence serve as a “catalyst of social change” (Manda, 2014, p.4).

Apart from *Facebook*'s facilitating function “to coordinate and organize offline events” (Miller, 2011, p. 183), applied at certain events by *RIKC*, social media are mainly used by the activists to share information:

On *Facebook* you can share, share, share, share and then you get a huge outreach. [...] *Facebook* makes it so easy for you. And you can reach a lot more people than anywhere else, any other platform. And *Facebook* is a great tool, because you can make it public it so everyone can see it. (Dolores)

The internet is a suitable medium for activism, as it fits the common characteristics “of new social movements: non-hierarchical, open protocol, open communication, and self-generating” (Fenton, 2007, p.226). It is comparably low in costs and easily enables participation across “time and space” (Earl and Kimport, 2011, p.10), which allows for networking:

I am also on *Facebook*, in all the important groups and networks, so I have a lot of information. [...] I am a bit of an influencer. A lot of people who know me, you know. But then there is also a lot of racism, but we work together. Even shut down certain sites [...]. Racist sites. (Albert)

Identifying, but also targeting racism that the interviewees encounter on social media is part of their every-day use of these platforms. When Alma saw a girl on *Twitter* that dressed up as a so-called ‘gypsie’ for Halloween, she recollects writing to her:

‘I can help you to get more information and facts about how Roma’s history looks like, because [...] then you will a 100% understand why you should not dress up as a gypsie at Halloween, instead my history, my culture is not your Halloween costume.’ But she did not understand that at all, she just got angry at me, she got aggressive.

The quotes show a high awareness amongst Romani activists of different social media functions and a skilled use of them in order to further *The Romani Question*. When they feel like social media cannot satisfy their needs, they use other digital platforms, such as blogs, serving as a platform to process the experience of injustices:

I can for example write in the blog that I think that the Swedish government should apologize to the travelers’ children for the abuse that happened in the ‘30ties and ‘40ties

and that in my opinion the Swedish state has not made up with their history with the minority Roma. (Britt-Inger)

She perceives the blog as advantageous for longer narratives, which are then spread through social media outlets to secure a wider reach.

All in all, the interviewees are well aware of the different affordances of the platforms and use them accordingly. Even though some of the online actions are very context-specific, one of their main intentions seems to be the spread of knowledge in order to fight the stereotyping of Roma:

It's simply about time to see Roma with a different pair of glasses. To see them for who they are. (Diana)

These online spaces are an important tool to advance *The Romani Question* and are used by the activists in many different ways.

#### **4.2. Strategies: From Passive Victims to Angry Agents**

The following sections will be concerned with the platforms' "potential to communicate and mobilize political agency" (Fenton, 2007, p.227). The platforms *Dikko*, *Tehara Media* and *Radio Romano* can be considered as a "civic resource" (Dahlgren, 2009, p.190) and "anti-systemic communication" (Corner, 2011, p.23), which defies the stereotypical representation of the Romani as absent or passive victims. Media activism moves the discourse from the image of Romani as "anti-technological" people (Lawrence, 2002, p.3) to a discourse of subjects strategically using collective agency for decolonization efforts (ibid.). On the platforms they can collectively generate meaning that allows for "calling for action" (Mortensen and Trenz, 2016, p.344). Creating content is an active implementation of resistance strategies where Roma make use of their agency when they perceive their rights as infringed. As Dusan says:

There is no one who has given me this possibility [of impact]. I have really taken and fought for this. [...] There is nothing that has been served, I had to be really assertive to come, to get the possibility of contributing the little that I have.

In line with these words, Couldry reminds us that voices, and the according spaces, are not to be taken for granted (2010, p.131), rather that they need to be actively created and maintained.

#### 4.2.1. Countering the Dominant by Employing Romani Epistemes

One of the reoccurring themes in the interviews is the one of regaining power and influence, especially on decisions where Roma's lives are affected:

The goal is to take empowerment, to take power. To have our own power over the narrative, on what is being transmitted. (Paul)

The power of activism is not just seen as a means to reach certain goals, but should also be understood in terms as “potentially positive, affirming, enabling idea of ‘power to’” (Corner, 2011, p.17). It is opposed to the “dominative, negatively constraining idea of ‘power over’” (ibid.), which is more connectable to the power of the state, meaning “strategies to achieve and sustain control that can in their strongest articulation be called forms of ‘symbolic violence’” (ibid.). In other words, through Romani media activism a shift is to be effected from the negative power over the Romani representation, to the positive power of expressing themselves and evoking change.

The Romani platforms are meant to counteract racism through spreading knowledge from Romani epistemes; the strategy of decolonizing knowledge:

You enlighten people about things that they maybe do not know about [...], have prejudices against or believe in some tall tale that has been around for centuries almost. [...] If we, the Romani minority, are ever going to be able to reach out with our history and perhaps have some kind of cure against that ignorance that exists, then we must reach out. (Britt-Inger)

It is a step towards fighting racism, which “involves documenting process of colonization from the perspectives of those who experienced it” (Lawrence, 2002, p.25). It is also an act of reclaiming power that minorities are deprived of when non-Roma claim to be the experts on Roma's experiences (ibid.).

As the “diversity of outlets by itself is no guarantee of diversity of coverage and of opinion” (Corner, 2011, p.27), there is a consensus between the interviewees that change must happen from the Romani perspective. That does not mean that non-Roma should be excluded from this process, but rather that the communication needs to come from Roma themselves. As Paul says:

‘until the lion learns how to write, every story will glorify the hunter’. So it is ourselves who need to teach ourselves to communicate, teach ourselves to narrate, teach ourselves to write, teach ourselves to produce this medium, to mediate. Otherwise it will always be non-Roma who do it for us, at us.

Remarkable is the shift from ‘for us’ to ‘at us,’ which carries a decisively different connotation.

The online activism offers Roma a space to voice opinions. By creating knowledge from the Romani standpoint they generate an “alternative discourse” (Dahlgren, 2009, p.191), counteracting the dominant ones of mass media, hoping to thereby change public opinion. The Romani media activists take on the power to have an opinion that usually belongs “to a privileged few” (Corner, 2011, p.27) and to deconstruct dominant discourses “to show these are partial rather than genuinely shared, and are incapable of giving choice to the needs and hopes of subordinated groups” (Fraser, 1986, p.428). In other words, mass media have a tendency to create discourses, that are rarely questioned and that discourage critical stances, enhancing that “certain kinds of narrative structuring reduce the possibilities for thoughtful engagement” (Corner, 2011, p.66). This tendency is challenged by the alternative discourses that the Romani platforms create and, therefore, knowledge can be appropriated collectively by Roma (Dahlgren, 2009, p.109). To generate knowledge is an act of civic agency (ibid., p.77), and due to the “inexorable link between knowledge and power” (ibid.), Romani epistemes have the potential of “effectively placing a check on mainstream media power” (Corner, 2011, p.18). Creating their own platforms is a way of going around the “accepted grid for filtering” (Said, 1978, p.6) knowledge about the ‘other’:

There is so much that does not reach the majority of society. Narratives and how the situation is actually. [...] It goes through different filters that are not our filter. We do not have any power over these filters. (Paul)

Consequentially, one strategy of countering the prejudices against Roma is by creating content that is not filtered through the mass media’s grid: Romani epistemes. Anyhow, whatever strategy is sought out in order to transform structures “none will be acceptable unless they are based on valuing individuals’ ability to give an account of themselves” (Couldry, 2010, p.175).

#### **4.2.2. Voicing and Embedding Demands**

Whilst not only creating alternative discourses to challenge the stereotypical perceptions of Roma, the articles and interviews used as empirical data in this research are permeated with specific demands that are perceived as necessities in order to further *The Romani Question*:

We need to stop to negotiate and instead pose demands. We need to stop to compromise and instead start to make certain problems visible. (Dusan)

This resonates with the chapter of *Demanding Voice*, establishing Roma as active agents well capable of using their voice (Plaut, 2012; Sigona, 2016). One reoccurring demand is the inclusion in the discussions and events that concern the remembrance of the Holocaust, specifically *The Conference*. The demands voiced are dividable into discursive changes and practical ones. A concrete change on the discursive level is the inclusion of Roma in the definition of the Holocaust, instead of making the distinction of genocide of Roma and the Holocaust of Jews; a demand based in the articles on that both Jews and Roma “were exterminated based on their ethnicity” (article 6) during the Second World War:

We no longer want to accept that the government maintains an antiquated antiziganist discourse that diminishes, denies and neglects Romani victims by not giving them the same dignity as the Jewish. Today, Roma are not included in the concept of the Holocaust, so they are sidelined when it comes to efforts concerning the Holocaust (article 6)

The background is that when discursively included in the definition of the Holocaust, Roma are included in official documents, events and efforts that are concerned with the measures taken for remembrance of and resolutions for the victims of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. The connection between discourses and material consequences is to be remembered, as the aimed discursive change here entails practical changes.

On the practical level, Roma voice specific demands concerning *The Conference*: Antiziganism should be focused on in an appropriate manner, meaning that a Romani delegation “should get space on the rostrum in order to talk about antiziganism and the Romani Holocaust” (article 8). This demand springs from the concern of being entirely excluded from the discourse on the Holocaust, as experienced at a similar conference in the year 2000 in Stockholm. Roma were initially denied to talk about the Romani Holocaust and only received speaking time on this subject when the Indian delegation gave away seven of their fifteen minutes adduction to one of the present Roma: “*One voice on borrowed time*” (article 7, my own emphasis). Göran

Persson, the prime minister at that time, officially apologized after the conference and promised that Roma will not be excluded again (ibid.).

The “ambiguity and context-dependency of silence” (Schröter and Taylor, 2018, p.2) can make the absence and exclusion of Roma hard to prove. Exclusion, hence, seems to be insufficient as a reason to be included. The media activists’ strategy is to embed the demands in a historical context and, therefore, to justify them. This can be helpfully framed with the concept of historicity, a perception of the “shaping influence of temporal process – that the things that happen to you in the past make a difference to who you are in the present” (Burn, 2008, p.33). Historicity “refers to the human perception of being-in-time” (Geană, 2005, p.349). Instead of perceiving “past + present + future” (ibid.) fragmentarily, it is more to be perceived as a temporal continuum (ibid.), where “past-present-future” are “mutually implicated” (Hirsch and Stewart, 2005, p.261), including material consequences of discourses of the past. The relation to the past is a socially constitutive relation with relevance to present circumstances, instead of an objective description of history” (ibid., p.262).

Even though there seems to be a consensus in Sweden that history in regards to Roma should not repeat,<sup>24</sup> all interviewees refer to a lack of talking about Romani history, both on individual and institutional levels. When looking at discourses, one should not just consider the links that are being made, but also ask oneself which links are missing (Couldry, 2010, p.129). The exclusion of Roma when talking about the Holocaust is what Paul frames as the denial of the Romani Holocaust on a state level:

It mirrors where we are at. You often hear that history repeats, but how does it repeat? Concrete example: This is this here! This is an example! If you erase the history, then you erase the society, the Romani society!

Historicity can be useful as a critical stance towards the past and as a means to learn from mistakes (Geană, 2005, p.358), but when links are missing, no learnings can be drawn from these mistakes. The interviewees perceive that the missing linkage to Romani history leads to the discrimination of Roma today:

<sup>24</sup> Such consensus in Sweden is visible through the example of the public agency *The Living History Forum* who “work for democracy and equality between all people, using lessons learned from the Holocaust” (The Living History Forum)

You don't understand the history, which I think is super important in order to understand our situation today. And there it becomes just more difficult in the end to actually to keep on and to get at that you, that we will receive our rights. (Alma)

Couldry argues that in order to understand the consequences of oppressive, in his case neoliberal, discourses, one needs to map what narratives are possible, and “what previous narratives are blocked off – and with what consequences for the coherence of people’s larger account of themselves as agents worthy of emotional, moral and social recognition” (2010, p.128). It leads to an understanding of the “pattern and organization of people’s practice of voice” (ibid., p.127). In other words, that certain discourses are enhanced and others missing shapes people’s capabilities of expressing their voice; it can limit their voice. To lay out these limitations, to map them, can challenge their limitation as being perceived as normative.

An example is one of the dominant Swedish discourses, that Sweden has not participated in a war since more than 200 years (Fröberg Idling, 2014), therefore, there is a political tendency to having little responsibility in making up for what happened in the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. Roma challenge that perception by employing historicity and creating links that seem to be missing in dominant discourses:

1914-54, Sweden had an entry ban for Roma. This meant that the white buses that the Red Cross drove down to get people from the concentration camps did not bring travelers/Roma. Those who accidentally arrived with the buses had to get off in Copenhagen where they were then sent back to the camps.

Sweden was not naive and innocent, but the country was part of the racism preceded by the Germans. (article 1)

Accounts of decolonized history do not only highlight the oppressed’ experiences, but also challenges “the myths that are crucial to [...] nation-building” (Lawrence, 2002, p.26). The experienced denial of Roma’s mistreatment, that myth of Sweden being innocent of racism, is challenged by the accounts of Romani history. Romani voices that have been “deliberately denied [...] within national discourse” (ibid., p.23) in order to keep up the progressive image of Sweden. Arendt identified that from the beginning of the discussions around the rights and responsibilities of people, these rights “were regarded as being *independent of history* and the privileges which history had accorded certain strata of society” (Arendt, 1951, p.39, *my own emphasis*). If one, though, regards *The Romani Question* as a structural problem created through century long structural discrimination, then efforts have to be undertaken in order to deconstruct this and to let the Romani community heal. Hence, historicity is a way of creating links from the past to the present, embedding their demands for inclusion, referring to misconduct of

Europe and the Swedish state. The demands that Roma voice outline exact changes that are necessary in order to ameliorate their situation.

### 4.2.3. Angry Activists

When talking about the use of media in order to further *The Romani Question*, the interviewees sometimes apply war-like metaphors, such as the frequently-used term ‘fighting’:

We just need to make that visible. Through media for example. That is the only weapon we have. That way we have gained territory in the debate around the Holocaust. (Dusan)

The platforms offer a space for Roma to be angry, an emotion that is usually stripped away when stereotyped as passive, victims or thieves. Articulating anger and grievances can be a constructive resource (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2019, p.92) that gives “ostensibly negative emotions [...] an empowering role” (ibid., p.12). Even though not identified as an active strategy in the interviews, anger is not an emotion that they step away from:

Angry, young activists, is there anything better? Who burn for the matter. Who have not yet become replete or are leaning back, who are engaged. I think it is them who can do it! (Britt-Inger)

Anger as a political emotion is “a reaction to injustice” (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2019, p.90). Emotions are nowadays socially accepted “key building block of mediated politics” (ibid., p.1). As we can see in Dusan’s quote above, this anger does not come across as a ‘blind-with-rage’ emotion, but rather is an strategically employed anger. Through the articulated anger Roma can verbalize boundaries: “Until here, but not any further” (article 2). Roma “refuse to accept” (article 5), and will react to unmet demands with national protest:

We who are writing this text are relatives to the victims of the Holocaust on the Romani people and we will go out on the streets and squares in order to protest if it is that that is necessary. (article 5)

Mediated anger, hence, can be an appropriated form of anger that is strategically employed to fight injustices and solution-oriented (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2019, p.91), which is to be separated from the pure emotion of individual anger (ibid., p.92).

Another effect of the voicing of anger can be the humanization of Roma in the perception of the readers, viewers and media users, since articulated emotions can lead to “the cultivation of authenticity and compassion” (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2019, p.90). As a non-Roma consuming these platforms, one can perceive Roma as multi-faceted humans with a range of emotions. On their platforms, Roma are able to create “specific narratives that make meaningful specific types of agency” (Couldry, 2010, p. 128). Agents who are not subdued to the filters of non-Roma, hence, bringing non-Roma closer to Roma. Dusan does not hold back his frustration in the debate articles:

I do not know what is more incomprehensible, that people can create a systematic death machine so that they can in one night kill 3000 children, women and men. Or that two of our primary politicians have expressed 17 382 signs and 2801 words in verbal and written over the past three years, and yet not dedicated a single word in order to make a connection between Roma, antiziganism and the Holocaust.  
If that is not Holocaust denial, I do not know what is. (article 4)

Me, as a reader, could perceive his anger that permeates his writing. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of February, when starting to read the articles, amongst them the one quoted above, the notes I took that day read:

*When I look at Dikko, I see small imperfections. I see people, I can see the anger when Dusan is writing. I can see the years of activism, the love for history when Albert is writing. I can see the academic and traveler in Britt-Inger’s call for Roma to start to demand. You ask me what makes Roma’s media so great? It is because I can see the human behind the words. It is because I get to see all the facets.*

Employing anger makes it possible for the viewer to recognize Roma as human. My notes identify individual character traits of different writers, that are detectable in their writing. Articulated anger, therefore, serves an identification process. Identification is the recognition of “shared characteristics with another [...] and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation” (Hall, 1996a, p.2). Being able to imagine the other is a moral premise for humanity (Silverstone, 2007, p.48). In contrast, to not be wary of attempts of overcoming difference can be detrimental, because a form of what Arendt establishes as *evil* is the “denial and destruction of difference, both in the symbolic and the material worlds” (ibid., p.60). ). Chouliaraki, leaning on Hanna Arendt, calls for an “‘imaginative mobility,’ that is, the performance of the vulnerable other as a sovereign actor endowed with her/his own humanity” (2013, p.193). In other words, the perception of anger, or all emotions, enables the reader to imaginatively move closer to the activists, enabling solidarity.

Conclusively, apart from media's "coordinating function," (Dahlgren, 2009, p.191) and the functions of "assisting action and mobilization" (ibid., p.195), the Romani platforms serve a wide range of strategies. They can be directed inwards for cohesion and collective identity, which will be elaborated on in the last chapter, and outwards "to the general public, decision-makers, and/or economic power holders" (ibid.). As much as every movement has individualized media strategies (ibid., p.196), so do also Roma employ strategies depending on the context and intention. Those focused on in this chapter, creating alternative discourses, voicing demands and using anger, are just a few to be mentioned.

### **4.3. The Cultural Context: Swedish Specificities**

In the following chapter, the landscape that the Romani platforms are set in will be explored; a landscape that is one of empty words and simultaneously one of silence. When conducting the interviews an ambivalent picture of Sweden is drawn by the interviewees. There is a hesitation towards if there is going to be positive change for Roma, but there is a general consensus traceable among the interviewees that Sweden is a good place to initiate change from. Specifically the city of Malmö is generally depicted as being a comparably good ground for activism, which could be connected to the relatively young and multicultural population (Malmö Stad, 2020):

I would say that I am glad over being Roma in Malmö and not any other town. [...] We have something here that makes me keep on going. Or keep on being active in *The Romani Question*, to dare to use my voice. (Alma)

And yet, the interviewees are unified in stating that Roma in Malmö are regularly discriminated against on the basis of racial prejudice:

Roma are judged collectively, which is quite unfair. A lot of times, you don't see the individual, instead if you are Roma then you already have a picture of how Roma are supposed to be in a certain way. [...] This stereotypical picture of Roma, the prejudices, they remain in our society to the highest degree. (Renata)

Possibly due to "the interplay between social structures and everyday life, through which the meanings of race and racial categories are created" (Mulinari and Neergaard, 2017, p.93), and their remediation in the mass media, the racialization of Roma leads to a "David against Goliath" (Dusan) feeling for the interviewees. The following chapter explores two perceptions of how racism is structured in Sweden. The first elaborates on the perceived gap between theory

and practice, and the second is concerned with the silence around structural and everyday racism against Roma in Sweden.

#### 4.3.1. Just in Theory

Looking at the numerous organizations and efforts of both the state and civil society that are in place in Sweden and comparing the actual outcome, a clear discrepancy is detectable. As mentioned in the *Introduction*, on the state level *The Minority Legislation* and *The 20-Year-Strategy* are established. In Malmö, there are several Romani organizations funded by the municipality, the most important ones being *RIKC* and *The Romani Council*. Multiple associations with other organization are mentioned, as well as schools, libraries, social services and the police. And yet, the amount of efforts and institutions in itself seems to be a symbol of how much still needs to be done. The discrepancy between efforts and outcomes is tangible when Diana talks about *The 20-Year-Strategy*:

Roma who turn 20 the year 2032 shall have the same, equal possibilities as non-Roma. I don't think we're gonna get there (laughs). [...] Roma have been here since 500 years, and if we have not succeeded in 500 years and this *20-years-strategy*. I think it needs more than that. [...] One needs to work more.

This discrepancy leads to a perception in some of the interviewees that these efforts by the state are *just in theory*, mere “pretty words and promises” (article 7), as “voice is persistently offered, but in important respects denied or rendered illusory” (Couldry, 2010, p.1). When looking at the characteristics of colonialism in Scandinavia, Tlostanova et.al. argue that minorities receive “a mandatory acknowledgement but no substantial engagement” (2019, p.291). Couldry's explanation to this paradox is the doctrine of neoliberalism, but as mentioned above racism and capitalism are inextricable (Lugones, 2010, p.745). These are macro-structures that keep, according to the interviewees, efforts such as *The 20-Year-Strategy* from being “put into practice”:

there is no serious will, it is just talk. Well, everything looks good from the outside. Everybody wants to do, everybody says, hold speeches and ministers and all of that bullshit, excuse me. But when it comes to the practical parts are all doors closed. (Albert)

One example that comes up repeatedly throughout the interviews is the system of reference groups, which are groups of Roma assembled in order to advice on Romani matters. These are

to be found in many Swedish political and cultural institutions nowadays, ranging from *Sweden's public television (SVT)* to politically implemented organs, such as *The Romani Council*:

and then the authorities go in a bit, pet us on the head and then they do anyways like they planned on doing it in the beginning, but they have talked with us. They have met the requirements, but they do not consider them. (Britt-Inger)

This means that final decisions are felt to be out of the hands of Roma, even when these decisions affect their community.

As already touched upon in chapter *Othering, and the Role of the Nation State*, Arendt connects the treatment of minorities with the universal acceptance of “the supremacy of the will of the nation over all legal and ‘abstract’ institutions” (1966, p.360). It seems as some rights of Romani citizens are only “halfheartedly protected” (ibid., p.361) by the Swedish state. In contrast, the state labels the minorities “as an exceptional phenomenon” (ibid.), which entails that the state does not need to make substantial changes, which leaves “the system itself untouched” (ibid.). If Roma are being seen as “deviated from the norm” (ibid.), policies and society overall, never have to change; instead, the burden to change is put on those suffering.

#### **4.3.2. A Whole Lot of Silence**

Silence is witnessed in the empirical data of this research in different forms: Silence around antiziganism, silence around being Roma, the silencing of the Romani voice. It is this “culture of silence”, as Britt-Inger calls it, that is specific to the situation that Roma face in Sweden, which is accompanied by a passivism towards racism. The following chapter explores the dimensions of different silences and the dangers that these entail. The Romani media activists challenge these silences, but in order to understand their activism it is advantageous to look at the passivism first.

All interviews are permeated by a notion of a Sweden-specific dichotomy: whilst the interviewees experience distinct forms of racism on a day to day basis, they describe a general culture in Sweden of not wanting to talk about racism overall. Consequently, “race categorizations are both neglected and acted on in Sweden” (Mulinari and Neergaard , 2017, p.88). Alma terms this dichotomy as *hidden racism*:

One forgets that Roma are also exposed to racism [...]. When I say hidden racism then I am thinking about racism where people purposely decide not to talk about or that they do not understand. And there I am thinking mostly about how *The Question* is treated in schools [...]. That you talk about racism, that you talk about minorities, you talk about all that, the Holocaust. But you do not mention Roma.

In some cases, this hidden racism is exercised in such a subtle manner, that even the interviewees do not read it as racism immediately:

you actually do not feel it directly that this is like, oh, I have just, I got derogated, I got discriminated. But you think about it afterwards. People who come and say to me: 'Hey you, I can give you a job, the janitor's job, that would fit very well to you, don't you think? Cleaner, you can maybe become a cleaner?' Are you with me? (Dusan)

Both quotes show that the discrimination against Roma can be very subtle and is, hence, harder to comprehend and also to challenge. The phenomenon of hidden racism is not confined to the private sphere, it is experienced by Roma on institutional levels as well:

[Racism] has a lot to do with structural discrimination. It goes all the way from the state down even to the individual level. If you have it on the state level, it is unfortunately also going to build downwards. It come from both sides. (Dolores)

In Sweden, structural racism is rarely being acknowledged, as racist ideology is seen as being "located in the past [...] or belongs to specific individuals" (Mulinari and Neergaard, 2017, p.89). Nevertheless, all the interviewees have accounts of structural racism, which is often for an outsider not recognizable as such, as Dolores says that authorities: "do not go into direct attack against Roma, [...] instead a lot of it is unofficial." Hence, also structural racism is equally perceived as hidden racism among the interviewees.

Further, the interviewees describe a tendency of antiziganism generally being excluded from discussions about racism:

Nowadays you would not deny racism against for example black people. There you would immediately get classified as racist. But you dare to deny Roma. You'd not even be seen as racist. (Paul)

you talk about racism, but you don't talk about Roma, their exposedness and their history. (Alma)

Mulinari and Neergaard term this “exclusionary racism” (2017, p.93), a form of racism that excludes certain discourses, in this case the ones on antiziganism from the broader discourses on racism. Even though these exclusionary discourses carry a notion of passive forgetting, Couldry reminds us that we “need to think about how constraints on voice, initially based on direct *acts* of exclusion, become reinforced and naturalized” (2010, p.126, *my own emphasis*). Hence, contrary to the ostensibly passive motive of forgetting, in many instances, the discourse is actively steered away from talking about racism to discourses of “migrants, integration, culture and religion” (Mulinari and Neergaard, 2017, p.89):

They don’t want to talk about racism. They want to talk about Swedish values and that it is important to educate immigrants about them. (Dusan)

Another form of exclusionary racism is that “when one talks about Roma, then it is always the bad things that are taken up” (Alma), constructing Roma through stereotypes “as a threat to normative order” (Mulinari and Neergaard, 2017, p.93). Again, these exclusionary discourses are actively enhanced by authorities. Dolores says about the illegal ethnic register by the police:

There you get clearly and distinctly to see that, okay, so you are criminal just because of being Roma. That is the picture the police have of us. [...] You can’t see it directly, but that’s the message that you get out of it.

The way communicated by the authorities is a “strategic reproduction of dominant assumptions and ideas in ways which exclude others” (Corner, 2011, p.23); excluded here is the idea of Roma simply being human instead of stereotypes. These discourses have the effect of enhancing the notion of individual flaws that are actually exceptions, instead of highlighting the flaws in the system, preferring “narratives that explain social happenings in non-social ways, for example in terms of individual failings” (Couldry, 2010, p.128). Individual stories are being preferred in order to not having to create a narrative that is explanatory of the situation (*ibid.*), which would be a narrative that explains the individual situation whilst looking at the structural flaws.

This is a phenomenon that is also transferrable to how the interviewees experience being communicated about in the mass media:

There is a lack of knowledge about Roma. But the prejudices, the stereotypes are out there and they are being reproduced in the mass media and for example movies, newspapers, etc. So, they live on and it’s is very grown into people. (Renata)

How the consumer judges cultural production, which critical perspective one takes, is selective: “a selectivity which is often fierce in its exclusions and emphases” (Corner, 2011, p.68). This is, though, not just a thought-less trait of media, but as Silverstone argues the media are also “culpable” (2007, p.61) in normalizing and amplifying exclusions (ibid., p.56). Media, on the one hand, provide frames for “judgements of good and evil” and, guiding who is to be perceived as human and who is not by establishing “practices of inclusion and exclusion” (ibid., p.57). On the other hand, they create a “smokescreen for authentic or at least sustainable moral judgement” (ibid.). Hence, they seemingly provide viewers with tools for judgement, but essentially they keep them from moral judgement by providing frames that keep the viewers from being able to critically judge themselves.

Another crucial aspect to these silences is that many Roma hide their identity: “They do not dare to say that they are Roma” (Dolly). Britt-Inger connects this hesitance to “reveal” that one is Roma partly to previous treatment of Roma by the Swedish state:

We back down and hide us and we have a culture of doing that in Sweden, because Sweden was a transit country in the 30ties and 40ties where they just let through the Germans to Norway. Travelers, anyhow, learned to hide. If you are quiet, then you are going to survive, and you can keep your children, you avoid being sterilized. Some changed their last name, a lot of such things. I can think today that we do not have that history of war as many other countries have. Which makes that we do not stand up for ourselves the same way. We are a little bit more scared to stick out our heads in order to speak up, to be uncomfortable [for others], to take space.

Arendt highlights that a highly problematic aspect of totalitarianism is that it creates “personal isolation” (Silverstone, 2007, p.59). The silences of hidden racism and also hidden identities, nevertheless, carry on that historic practice of personal isolation of Roma. Without the Romani platforms, Roma can feel isolated, as their plurality is erased and simple stereotypes that they do not want to identify with are instead in place. The result is a vicious circle of being silenced and being silent. Romani activism is meant to break that vicious circle, by breaking their own silence, making the interviewees understand that they are not alone:

Of course, when I hear somebody else coming up to me, that this person recognized themselves, I got all like, wow, it isn't just me. [...] You understand how incredibly important it is to keep on going with *The Romani Question*. (Alma)

Dolores creates a link between the lack of multi-faceted representation of Roma in mass media and the ongoing discrimination of Roma that needs to be tackled in order to create engagement in *The Romani Question*:

especially for us because it becomes recognition [...]. If we do not gain knowledge and understanding of who we are, then we will not be able to improve the situation of Roma.

This link between the Romani media platforms and the subject of Romani identity will be returned to in the last chapter of this thesis.

As my observations have shown, the silence around racism makes the capturing of systemic racism very difficult. Paradoxically, this leads to racism becoming normalized, though not being thematized:

There are not many that speak up against [racism], but there are many that just tag along. And that is also that which contributes to racism becoming more public. Discrimination becomes an everyday situation. (Dolores)

In all its perceived passivity, this process still stems from an active decision to not act upon racism, hence hidden and exclusionary racism can be seen as an active action:

it is bad if you know but you are not doing anything against it. It is an active action that you are taking, which is quite dangerous [...] This is passivity that kills. That is how the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War came into being. (Paul)

Arendt also makes this connection, terming it “the fearsome, word-and-thought-defying *banality of evil*” (1963, p.365). It is this kind of “evil” she ascribes to Adolf Eichmann, the man that came up with *The Final Solution*. She states that Eichmann “never realised what he was doing” (ibid., p.379): “He was not stupid. It was sheer thoughtlessness” (ibid.). Even though there were many people in Germany opposed to Hitler’s regime, they “did nothing [...], they remained completely silent” (ibid., p.338). This lack of voiced resistance hid away the opposition for the perpetrators. As Arendt recounts it, in the case of Eichmann “the most potent factor in the soothing of his own conscience was the simple fact that he could see no one, no one at all, who actually was against the Final Solution” (ibid., p.347). Eichmann came up with one of the most disastrous plans of history, but was not met with opposition, but with passivism: encapsulating the dangers of silence and passivism.

#### **4.4. Romani Media as a Space for the Romani People**

The following chapter explores how the Romani media platforms make use of the “the spatial quality of public life” (Passerin d’Entrèves, 1992, p.152), not just in order to resist, but in order to create a space where they can exist (Tlostanova et.al., 2019, p.293). The first section is concerned with how the platforms can create a sense of durability for the Romani people. The second, and final, section examines the notion of having an impact. Through the platforms they can lay the grounds for shaping a collective Romani identity, a connective space where they are allowed “to take centre-stage as an historical agent” (Chouliaraki, 2013, p.193). Dusan says about *Dikko*:

Roma are our target group [...]. The idea is that we reach as many Roma as possible with the news that affect them. Other established media do not see so much newsworthiness in this. But there are so many Roma in Sweden who rarely get to read about news that refer to Roma, especially positive news.

The platforms create a space for Roma to be the focus of attention and to have a past and a future, which they perceive as lacking in other media spaces.

##### **4.4.1. Existing across Time: Having a Past, a Present and a Future**

Arendt argues that without being able to perceive permanence and durability “life would never be human” (1958, p.135). In other words, a life deprived of a sense of durability past one’s own lifespan, is a life being deprived of humanity. A sense of durability allows for an identity of a people within the connectivity of past-present-future and constructing “a lasting and stable world that allows for human remembrance and anticipation” (Passerin d’Entrèves, 1992, p.148). For Arendt, this durability of a people existing across centuries can only subsist through the public realm (1958, p.55). The media space that the Roma create for themselves can possibly create durability, or a “common world” (ibid.) with those who lived before and those who come after: it transcends into the past, the connection to history, and into the future as the world they imagine to create and are willing to fight for. Especially a people like Roma have a rich cultural tradition and history to build onto; an identity that should have its space to be remembered and maintained, instead of being isolated and suppressed. Appearance can create narratives that are meant to secure the existence as humans across time; a “measure of immortality” (Passerin d’Entrèves, 1992, p.148).

The mass media's representation of Roma and their own self-representation, are constitutive of the "construction of selfhood<sup>25</sup> within the terms of a densely mediated society" (Corner, 2011, p.115). Media, by creating a symbolic environment, contribute considerably to people's perceptions of themselves (ibid., p.86f). Anthony Giddens defines self-identity not as certain character attributes, but as "the self as *reflexively understood by the person in terms of her or his biography*" (1991, p.53). In other words, self-identity implicates a "continuity across time" (ibid.) and the agent who can reflect on that. When only represented as absent, victims or criminals, detached from the past and the future, this sense of "biographical continuity" (ibid., p.54) gets lost. Consequently, the possibility to form a self-identity is diminished, let alone its underlying reflexive process, tangible through the lack of "the capacity to *keep a particular narrative going*" (ibid.).

Arendt argues that appearance in the public sphere constitutes what is perceived as reality (1958, p.50). In other words, what Roma see in the media becomes to a certain degree a reality that they grow up with, a reality that often makes them hide who they are. "People's voices only count if their bodies 'matter'" (Couldry, 2010, p.132) and on their platforms they have voices and, inversely, their bodies matter. In the present circumstances the platforms that are created by and for Roma offer a space where they can identify with being Roma and potentially form selfhood. An example is *Radio Romano*'s feature on Romani languages. Dolores recounts:

The youth actually want to keep the language, there are a lot of young people that want to teach themselves the Romani language, which they did not get to when they were young. For example the parents did not speak Romani with them or something like that. And there they want to like on their own, I want to learn about my identity.

The radio serves as a way to re-learn some of the language that is lost, connecting young people with their Romani identity. Throughout the interviews a longing for positive recognition of the Romani identity becomes visible, which was already touched on above when talking about the isolation that Roma experience:

We need to talk about Roma in a more positive way. About Romani idols. About Romani events. How Roma have contributed to society, for example. Rather than problematizing *The Romani Question* all the time. (Dusan)

<sup>25</sup> Selfhood is "indicating the 'space of the self' both at conscious and unconscious levels and the various factors contributing to the self's constitution and agency within the world, [...] including self-awareness and self-development" (Corner, 2011, p.86).

It becomes clear that the platforms are more than simply a means to an end, such as creating counter-narratives. Action and speech are not created solely for the fulfilment of “certain objectives” (Arendt, 1958, p.180), but in order to create the ““who,” the unique and distinct identity of the agent” (ibid.).

Instead, in order to understand the role of the platforms it is once again advantageous to turn to the concept of historicity, but not simply as a way to embed demands in. Historicity has an individual and collective identity defining function (Geană, 2005, p.358). In other words, the past is a part of how our identity is shaped in the present. Through looking at history one can see that it is not Roma who have created the situation today, but that the situation today “is the historical result of the combination of deeply rooted prejudices against the Roma” (Sigona, 2016, p.272). The stereotypes of Roma are a process of othering, “an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence” (Said, 1978, p.5). When being able to represent history from their own perspective on the media platforms, they can differentiate it from the euro-centric representations, that gained dominance throughout that process (ibid., p.3). Historicity serves as an understanding that the ongoing discrimination against Roma is not an *internal issue* of the person or the collective group, but a created from the *outside*. By understanding these historic implications, Alma changed from hiding her identity to publicly acknowledging that she is Roma:

When I started reading about our history on my own, I kind of started to investigate more, went in into our history, then I understood that: Hello, it is not our fucking fault that the situation looks like it does, instead it is 100% because how Sweden and Europe and like the whole world has treated Roma. And if you'd do the same thing with non-Roma today, that they get to learn more about Romani history, then I believe in that a lot would change. So, therefore, my main wish for change is that one should learn more about our history.

Albert, who had a similar development to Alma, refers to history defying the prejudices and stereotypes Roma are confronted with:

We are valuable in Europe. They cannot say that Roma have been lazy and parasites and dirty. History proves the opposite.

The historicity of the Romani people that is created on the media platforms may potentially lead to an increased openness about their Roma identity in the public realm. The media platforms offer a space where they “are not cast as faceless, unreal “stick figures” lost in a

ferment of European interests, but as the living subjects of their own histories” (Lawrence, 2002, p.45).

Another aspect of durability is the possibility of imagining a future. Butler defines *living* as existing “social conditions of persistence and flourishing” (Butler, 2009, p.20). To be able to imagine possibilities is a premise for being human, for living a precarious life. And yet, Roma do not feel secure of having a future, as “genocide is an actual possibility of the future” (Arendt, 1963, p.370):

That what is happening today, the xenophobia; and the racism and Nazism which surfaces today, it gets really close. It gets really close because it is just one generation away from me. That what happened when Hitler had the power. Because my mother is born '30. And I grew up with these stories all my life. So of course that is frightening. (Britt-Inger)

When asked what activism means to him, Dusan answers:

It means a lot to me, because it is a way to make sure that our people and culture and our future children have a future to choose and to live.

Notice the parallelism between choosing and living; dreaming of the future cannot just be the aversion of a genocide. Media and their narratives as “a site of imagination” (Corner, 2011, p.87) play an important role in creating the premises in order to create capacities for dreaming. Silverstone claims that significance is created through narratives: “It is in the stories we tell ourselves, the historical and the contemporary as well as the fantastic, that we seek and sometimes find the shareable meanings that create the possibility for a shared understanding of the world” (2007, p.52). Having the possibility to flourish and to narrate across time makes us able to dream and to imagine “what kind of society we want” (Dahlgren, 2013, p.140). A premise for collective identity and consciousness is to be able to imagine and to narrate a future that is worthwhile to strive towards; a narrative that is “flexible, inclusive, and visionary – that will offer us all *the hope of a better tomorrow*” (Fenton, 2007, p.238, my own emphasis). Albeit, Albert defines “the Romani peoples’ dream [...] to have influence on our own lives.” When asked what changes Alma would wish for, she answers:

to stop forgetting us [...] so that one starts to talk more with us, not just the negative things about us. Because we are humans just like everybody else.

To be recognized as human is still, after 500 years in Sweden, a dream of Roma, which can be seen as a sign of not being able to flourish in this society. Yet, dreaming is essential for activism: A collective consciousness needs a visionary social imaginary in order to stand strong against the “complex, confusing, and contradictory tangle of global capitalism, nation, states, and everyday social life” (Fenton, 2007, p.238). Roma need to be able to dream farther than the aversion of the worst, they need to be able to have “visions of a better future; it needs utopias” (ibid., p.237).

#### **4.4.2. Impact: Having a Voice?**

One interview question was how the Romani activists assess the impact of their work. Whilst none of them would consider to stop with their work, they are all feel limited:

Sometimes it feels like [I can have an impact], sometimes it feels like going against upwind. [...]. You take one step forward, and then two back. (Renata)

I hope it's gonna be this reaction, you know, when you throw a little stone in the water, and it makes waves, the last wave is always the biggest. (Paul)

Media activism in itself does not secure a “fair and just governmental recognition of [...] peoples' rights” (Duarte, 2017, p.9). The limits that the Romani activists experience are manifold, often of economic or institutional nature, that represent the structures of the “state's economic neoliberal colonial apparatus” (ibid.) examined above. Yet, to offer an alternative discourse to established media is the result of a strong will, because it needs “commitment, effort and imagination” (Corner, 2011, p.18).

All of the interviewees identify the need of unity and working together in order to reach the changes that are necessary for them to not be exposed to violence anymore:

We have to keep together in order to fight racism, antiziganism, you cannot do that from different groups. (Albert)

This resonates Arendt's perception of power coming into existence when groups act in concert, discussed above in the chapter *Collective Agency*. Some also highlight that Roma and non-Roma need to work together in order to achieve an impact:

It is obvious that you need people from different directions to fight and push forward together. Katarina Taikon, she was one of the ones that pushed for [...] that Roma's Human Rights are being implemented. And she did that with other activists, both Roma and non-Roma. (Diana)

And yet, there are divides detectable between the different Romani groups, most noticeable between Romani EU-migrants and Roma that hold Swedish citizenship. This legal split between Roma is enforced by the state, since many state-driven efforts of fighting antiziganism in Sweden exclude Romani EU-migrants. This divide is a limitation that keeps Roma from unifying, and to a certain degree even undermines their efforts against racism:

What hurts the most, are Roma themselves. Organizations, activists, those who have the chance to change, those who have the chance to do something and who do *not* do it. (Paul)

*The Romani Council* voted no to the proposal because they heard the word EU-migrants. [...] They have actually shot themselves in the foot. Because hate crime [...] impacts Roma in schools, it impacts Roma at work, Roma on the street and it even impacts EU-citizens, but it impacts all Roma. (Paul)

In Paul's perception, excluding EU-migrants from *The Romani Council's* work is actually damaging the group as a whole, as it undermines efforts against hate crime that *all* Roma are exposed to. Albert suspects that dominant structures gain from this divide:

politicians and all others in history, you can see that that was good for them, they have gained from that. That Roma should not gather. But these groups should exist and the differences should be developed between them. (Albert)

Lugones lays out that even the resisting subjects are "thickly constructed by inhabiting the colonial difference" (2010, p.754). In other words, their resistance can potentially be shaped by colonialism, by centuries of oppression. This seems to be especially the case when work is done from within the system, such as through *RIKC* and *The Romani Council*. Consequently, the colonial structures forced onto them seem to be to a certain degree inherent in their movement. However, even though by no means a monolithic group, as Plaut notes, it can be "more strategic to appear to an external, hostile public, as a unified front" (2012, p.61). They find themselves in a conundrum; being silenced, being split, but in the dire need for change that they only see as accessible through unity. The Romani media platforms, being independent from regulations by the state, potentially offer a space for unity and resistance against the colonial divide created within the group.

Unity does not mean that Roma should be treated as a homogenous group, because, as I mentioned before, diversity should always be actively engaged with (Nagar, 2006, p.141). The goal is not the unity of a public representation, as that would “inevitably marginaliz[e] other perspectives” (Plaut, 2012, p.61). The media activism, though, offers a space that does not “eradicate difference but can be said to promote political consciousness, reflexivity, and agency” (Fenton, 2007, p.234). Additionally, a simplified representation in the media does not allow for non-Roma to construct Roma as human. Silverstone reminds us of the importance of media and communication “through which we learn about those who are and who are not like us” (Silverstone, 2007, p.31), and how these learnings permeate all political bodies (ibid.). Identification, or the imaginative move towards the other, needs to happen at a proper distance, being “close, but not too close, distant, but not too distant” (Silverstone, 2006, p.172), making it possible to “imagine the other in her or his own terms” (Chouliaraki and Orgad, 2011, p.341). While identification leads to humanization, it is not meant to vanquish difference: “The one with whom I identify is not me, and that “not being me” is the condition of the identification” (Butler, 2004, p.145f). In other words, disidentification is intrinsic to the process of identification. A humanization process that happens at a proper distance, which the Romani media platforms allow for, can possibly enhance a solidarity between non-Roma and Roma.

Tacchi encourages a communication environment that inverts the traditional message flows, where those who usually are at the receiving end become the creators of messages (2011, p.653), a process which is enabled through the Romani media platforms. Tacchi further states that “participation happens when voice is appropriately valued in the development process” (ibid.). This means that those in power to change the situation need to be actively listening. Because the information, the demands, the narratives, the voices are created by Roma. In spite of, the institutions who could transform the Romani epistemes into effecting change are “structurally unsuited for listening” (ibid., p.662). As Dolores says:

even if you are many, even if you gather, in the end it is still the state that decides. And if the state discriminates you and sees you as a less worthy citizen, then it's easy for them to wash their hands, shrug their shoulders and say, no, unfortunately. Even if we fight, and we have been fighting for over 500 years, and we are still fighting. Like, it proves how reluctant the state and the authorities are towards giving us equal rights and the same opportunities as the rest of the population.

To have a voice means to the interviewees to have effective influence on *The Romani Question*. As we have seen above, even though slowly gaining more influence on the discourse level, there is still by no means a guarantee that their voices are implemented on a practical level. To continue their work is indispensable, as “effective participation can give people a sense of belonging and control over their lives” (Tacchi, 2011, p.654). Simultaneously, to fulfilling the needs of the citizens, participation legitimizes the government for these citizens. Tacchi emphasizes that if there is a chance of success for effective participation, then “the focus needs to be on inclusion and social justice” (ibid.).

Civic engagement is, though, already “effective political agency” (Passerin d’Entrèves, 1992, p.161). The communication of movements can be fragmented “but produces nonetheless a high degree of identification among citizens of the web. The capacity to maximize connectivity and interaction is *‘the’ political act*” (Fenton, 2007, p.230, my own emphasis). Creating connectivity, where a lot of people are engaged and participate in, is an impact in itself, as it “boosts their confidence” (Dolores). Alma reflects about the kind of changes she has undergone since becoming an activist:

I can now spread information and talk about things that I once had hidden so deep inside of me. And that means a lot to me, because I can remember that I used to avoid places, avoid people, my friends, avoided even family members because I was afraid to get connected to xenophobic prejudices. I didn’t want to be the disgusting Romani thief. So it means a lot to me [...] that I can do amongst others make this movie.

So for those who want to have their voices heard, the platforms are a good place to be recognized and reassured to become active. Dahlgren identifies a classic dialectic of online activism spaces who provide knowledge that people need in order to participate, and then “the thus-empowered citizen engages in practice, leading to new knowledge and competencies – as well as strengthened civic identity” (2009, p.199). Creating the platforms is a move to taking agency and a form of knowledge production from Romani epistemes, that “involves stepping into the public sphere [...]; from that other actions may be taken” (ibid., p.76).

Conclusively, one can say that the Romani activists have an impact, at least to a certain degree. When the interviewees have a feeling of impact it is often connected to their platforms and to being open about being Roma:

I feel that I can impact. Amongst others through the magazine, but also because I am who I am and I stand for who I am. [...] I say what I think. I don't care about what people expect me to say. (Britt-Inger)

There is no use in deterministically celebrating the Romani platforms as there are limits to this form of activism, as it is outside of the institutions of the nation. And yet, my analysis has shown that it is “also wrong to argue that the Internet and social media have no influence at all on political change. They are neither unimportant nor determinant” (Flisfelder and Fuchs, 2016, p.275f). The platforms offer a space to create new conditions for participation “as social agents,” which can lead to a more empowered citizen identity (Dahlgren, 2009, p.199). They are not any longer citizens that need to hide in order to survive, but they are citizens that speak up for their rights. Their platforms provide a “relatively secure environment” for them to counter the dominant (ibid., p.164) and to further Romani epistemes.

## 5. Conclusive Discussion

In this final part, firstly, the research questions will be answered and key findings summarized. The second section is concerned with discussing these findings in connection to solidarity and agonism, in order to create a possible frame for the potential of the Romani platforms. Thus, this section serves as an outlook on how media activism created by minorities could initiate processes of effective voices. Thirdly, some limitations of this research and possible future research will be outlined. Lastly, the thesis concludes with a reflection on this work's contribution to the field of media and communication.

### 5.1. Answering the Research Questions and Summary of Key Findings

The first research question, “Which platforms and affordances are Roma making use of in order to further *The Romani Question*?”, can be briefly answered. Additional to a wide variety of social media appliances, which are consciously chosen depending on the goal and after affordance, there are three different platforms that have been looked at: *Dikko*, a web magazine, developed from a previous version as a street magazine that is meant to give space to news created by and created for Roma. *Tehara Media*, a media organization mainly creating visual content, such as films that center on experiences by Roma. Lastly, *Radio Romano*, following a similar vision as *Dikko*, but operating as a state-funded radio station.

The second question, “What strategies are employed on these platforms in order to counteract dominant discourses?”, led to the discussion of three different strategies: Firstly, the countering of existing dominant discourses by employing narratives and knowledge from the Romani standpoint. Secondly, the voicing of concrete demands and their embedding in historicity in order to justify their necessity. Thirdly, the enhancement of strategic anger in their communication, a character trait that is often stripped away when Roma are represented as passive, absent, victims or thieves.

Answering the second research question lead to an examination of the cultural specificities in Sweden as a source of these strategies. Roma perceive the Swedish state as being effective in creating strategies for Roma that make sense in theory, and yet, are not entirely put into practice, hence, not empowering Roma to leave the oppressed position. Additionally, a culture of silence, especially concerning racism against Roma, makes it difficult to target antiziganism. Looking

at Romani media activist's strategies, as in countering narratives, voicing demands and speaking out in anger, a connecting aspect is clearly visible: all strategies are very forward and to be read as active actions carried out by agents; opposing the perceived passivism in Sweden with activism.

The last question, "Which other potential influences on the Romani community, in regards to civic agency and collective identity, are ascribed to the platforms?", is discussed in terms of durability, as the Romani media platforms serve, in contrast to representation in the mass media, as a space for Roma to have a past, a present and a future, a common world so to speak, that Arendt sees as indispensable for being human. The analysis ends with a discussion of the perceived impact of these platforms. Most interviewees feel that they have some kind of impact, a feeling of empowerment, agency and voice through their platforms, even though aware of limitations. Additionally, the platforms create unity through diversity, as all Roma groups, regardless of legal status, can potentially unify on these platforms, which they cannot through state institutions.

## **5.2. Interdependence, Solidarity and Agonism**

The Romani media platforms offer a space to learn from Roma from a proper distance, and, therefore, shapes the basis of "a morality of cooperation, the ability of individuals to identify with each other in a spirit of mutuality and reciprocity" (Fenton, 2007, p.232). This research takes a standpoint of acknowledging a "shared vulnerability" (Dean, 1995, p.137) of all people, that stems from a "fundamental dependency on anonymous others" (Butler, 2004, p.XII). Acknowledging interdependence, even though in highly different shapes, depending on your background, opens up to a sensitivity towards solidarity. Spivak identifies the conundrum of the subaltern to be either *spoken for* or not *listened to* in systems of oppression (Riach, 2017, p.12, *my own emphasis*), therefore, not having an effective voice. However, it "requires support and enabling conditions" (Butler, 2009, p.21) to shape the circumstances for lives to be grievable lives (*ibid.*). Solidarity, therefore, "requires us to speak out against oppression and exclusion" (Dean, 1995, p.137). If we acknowledge our own interdependence and strive towards solidarity, we can create a democracy "in which oppositional voices are not feared, degraded or dismissed, but valued" (Butler, 2004, p.151).

Mouffe goes as far as to say that not just the pluralism of voices should be enhanced in order to sustain democracy, but also "their tension, should be legitimized" (Mouffe, p.5, 1992a). She

deems this necessary in order to step away from essentializing groups and to instead acknowledge “the contingency and ambiguity of every identity, as well as the constitutive character of social division and antagonism” (ibid., p.10). In the context of this research this means that Roma as a group should not be regarded through essentialism, as there are different Romani groups with different needs, the same way that different Swedish citizens have a variety of needs. Mouffe sees this agonism, the potential positive outcomes from political struggle, as integral to democracy, as a system that has an inherent tension of logics between being an individual and a citizen; or “between the principles of equality and liberty” (Mouffe, 2009, p.320). Disregarding these tensions would mean the dominance of one or the other logic, and she sees the resolution of these conflicts as impossible and the attempt as counterproductive to democracy: “this belief [in a final resolution of conflicts] is something that puts it at risk. Indeed, it implicitly carries the desire for a reconciled society, where pluralism would have been superseded“ (ibid.). In other words, making conflicting voices matter is vital to the upholding of democracy. And yet, Fenton argues, conflicts and fragmentation are viable only in connection to solidarity (2007, p.231), a solidarity that can be created through the presence of different standpoints in the mediated public. Silverstone argues that appearance can lead to recognition, and hence, responsibility (2006, p.39), whilst appealing to the “honesty and integrity, however pious this sounds, of the communications we construct for each other” (ibid.).

Solidarity requires a non-essentialist “inclusive politics of voice and representation” (Fenton, 2007, p.232). Voices need to matter, and diversity is “to be acknowledged and respected, not erased in the building of alliances” (Mohanty, 2003, p.7). And yet, if pluralism is enhanced to fight injustices, “one must be able to discriminate between differences that exist but should not exist, and differences that do not exist but should exist” (Mouffe, p.11, 1992a). There are differences created between the Romani groups, such as the division in treatment depending on holding Swedish citizenship or not, whilst at the same time not paying attention to the different needs of different groups, such as the recognition of the mistreatment of Roma in Sweden in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both could be interpreted as serving dominant structures: Sweden avoiding responsibility for Romani EU-migrants, whilst not taking responsibility for their previous actions. The Romani activists are aware of these structures and their platforms are an attempt to make them public.

Plural standpoints, such as offered on the Romani media platforms, offer deconstructed, and decolonial, knowledge, such as “the fact that some existing rights have been constituted on the

very exclusion or subordination of the rights of other categories” (Mouffe, 1992b, p.236). When these structures are deconstructed, in solidarity that acknowledges interdependency and pluralism, new rights can be created, that ensure that different voices matter. The platforms can construct Roma as precarious, as grievable lives, potentially reducing the violence they are exposed to.

### **5.3. Limitations and Possible Further Research**

One limitation of this research is its main focus on the online realm. The media are a central chosen tool of Romani activists, but the fight to further *The Romani Question* is carried out with all means necessary, or accessible. The importance of their media platforms is undeniable, but “we risk major analytic error by ignoring other non-mediated setting” (Dahlgren, 2013, p.4). It is beyond the scope of this research to dive deeper into those, but it should not be left unacknowledged that considerable efforts are in place offline as well.

This research refrains from taking gender into account, not because it is not deemed important. A larger sample of interviewees, which was beyond the capacity of this research, would have been advantageous in order to pose inferences. Future research should include gender perspective, as “taking racial regimes and racism seriously requires an intersectional approach” (Mulinari and Neergaard, 2017, p.91).

Additionally, there should be considerations on the notion of media activism as exploitative labor. The work that they are doing is unpaid and emotionally, and in parts physically, very straining. Roma should be protected by the state, a protection deemed insufficient by the interviewees, leading to them taking on the work themselves. Future research could possibly put this dimension more into account as some scholars see capitalism as “the root of inequality, and cannot be channeled for social justice” (Wrenn, 2019, p.204). Capitalism constitutes “an insuperable obstacle to the realization of democracy” (Mouffe, 1992a, p.2), which I deem not sufficiently examined in this research due to a prioritized focus on racism, and yet, it should be examined in what ways it affects the Romani online spaces.

### **5.4. Reflections on Contribution**

You know biases are the stories we make up about people before we know who they actually are. But how we gonna know who they are, where we’ve been told to avoid and

be afraid of them? So, I am going to tell you to walk towards your discomfort. (Myers, 2014)

I am “in full knowledge that we cannot find ultimate answers” (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p.140), but that is neither the goal of phronetic research, nor of this research. Rather, it was attempted to outline problems and to find paths towards “how things may be done differently” (ibid.). Not trying to lay out a deterministic impact of these platforms, this research rather shows that the Romani activists are painting the whole picture as agents in their fight. It also shows that for those who seek to walk towards their biases, decolonial knowledge can be found. Rather than perceiving research as objective, I see it as embedded in colonial structures. There is a lack of research in the field of media and communication considering Roma as agents creating their own media, instead research generally focuses on their misrepresentation in the media. This research attempted to shift this focus, therefore contributing to this discourse with a different, under-represented perspective.

One of the biggest faults of humanity for Arendt is the one of thoughtlessness: “the heedless recklessness or hopeless confusion or complacent repetition of “truths” which have become trivial and empty” (Arendt, 1958, p.5). Thinking is the premise to change the way we act (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p.127) and media potentially create frameworks “for the connectivity, positive or negative, without which the globe would be merely a shadow” (Silverstone, 2006, p.11); a space that shapes the “public dispositions towards vulnerable others” (Chouliaraki, 2013, p.3). The media are, therefore, to be seen as a powerful tool to enable social change, whilst not to be regarded without critical scrutiny. And yet, they can enable thought processes and the hope of a better tomorrow. Going back to my intention of addressing this research from a place of sensitivity, I hope this paper can contribute to more sensitivity towards *The Romani Question*, in a sense that people do not take oppressive structures for granted and always question their own involvement as well. Hannah Arendt’s thinking guided this research process, so it seems accurate to end here with her words: “What I propose, therefore, is very simple: *it is nothing more than to think what we are doing*” (Arendt, 1958, p.5, my own emphasis).



## 6. References

### Primary sources articles

Dikko Malmö, 2020. *Romska organisationer och riksförbund inleder en nationell protest mot regeringen*. [online] Available at: <<http://dikko.nu/nyheter-romska-organisationer-och-riksforbund-inleder-en-nationella-protest-mot-regeringen/>> [Accessed 20 July 2020].

Fredriksson, K., 2020. *Sverige deporterades romska flyktingar till nazisterna*. [online] Available at: <<http://dikko.nu/kronika-sverige-deporterade-romska-flyktingar-till-nazisterna/>> [Accessed 20 July 2020].

Hedström Lundqvist, B., 2020a. *27 januari nationella minnesdag för Förintelsens offer*. [online] Available at: <<http://dikko.nu/nyheter-27-januari-nationella-minnesdag-for-forintelsens-offer/>> [Accessed 20 July 2020].

Hedström Lundqvist, B., 2020b. *Om jag är flata och resande/rom spelar det någon roll?* [online] Available at: <<http://dikko.nu/debatt-om-jag-ar-flata-och-resande-rom-spelar-det-nagon-roll/>> [Accessed 20 July 2020].

Hedström Lundqvist, B., 2020c. *Varför osynliggörs den romska Förintelsen?* [online] Available at: <<http://dikko.nu/dikko-plus-varfor-osynliggors-den-romska-forintelsen/>> [Accessed 20 July 2020].

Hedström Lundqvist, B., 2020d. *Förintelsen, resande/romska röster måste få höras*. [online] Available at: <<http://dikko.nu/debatt-forintelsen-resande-romska-roster-maste-fa-horas/>> [Accessed 20 July 2020].

Marinkovic, D., 2020a. *“Om du vill överleva, gå på tå”. Låt det sjunk in en stund... ”*. [online] Available at: <<http://dikko.nu/debatt-om-du-vill-overleva-ga-pa-ta-lat-det-sjunk-in-en-stund/>> [Accessed 20 July 2020].

Marinkovic, D., 2020b. *Intervju med utbildningsministern Anna Ekström*. [online] Available at: <<http://dikko.nu/dikko-plus-intervju-med-utbildningsminister-anna-ekstrom-s/>> [Accessed 20 July 2020].

### Online References

Adichie, C. N., 2013. AZ Quotes. [online] Available at: <<https://www.azquotes.com/quote/475056>> [Accessed 9 January 2020].

Amnesty International Report, 2018. *Sweden: A Cold Welcome. Human Rights of Roma and Other 'Vulnerable EU Citizens' at Risk*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.amnesty.se/agerahub/ocksa-manniska/om-kampanjen-ocksa-manniska/>> [Accessed 29 January 2020].

bab.la, 2020. "fråga" på engelska. [online] Available at: <<https://sv.bab.la/lexikon/svensk-engelsk/fr%C3%A5ga>> [Accessed 13 August 2020].

Dikko, 2020. *Dikko Magasin*. [online] Available at: <<http://dikko.nu>> [Accessed 12 June 2020].

Facebook. *Tehara Media*. [online] Available at: <[https://www.facebook.com/pg/tehara.media/about/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/tehara.media/about/?ref=page_internal)> [Accessed 12 June 2020].

Fröberg Idling, P., 2014. *Sveriges 200 år av fred*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.expressen.se/kultur/toppnyheter-/sveriges-200-ar-av-fred/>> [Accessed 12 June 2020].

Government Communication, 2012. En samordnad och långsiktigt strategi för romsk inkludering 2012-2031. Kulturdepartementet. [online] Available at <[https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/tackling-discrimination\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/tackling-discrimination_en)> [Accessed 4 March 2020].

Government Offices of Sweden, 2020. *Malmö International Forum on Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.government.se/government-policy/remember--react/>> [Accessed 13 August 2020].

Granlund, J., 2013. Romer registreras av polisen i hemlig databas. [online] Available at: <<https://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/a/8wOGaE/romer-registreras-av-polisen-i-hemlig-databas>> [Accessed 13 August 2020].

Malmö Stad, 2019. *Internationell konferens om Förintelsen i Malmö*. [online] Available at: <<https://malmo.se/Huvudnyheter/2019-05-27-Internationell-konferens-om-Forintelsen-i-Malmo-2020.html>> [Accessed 12 June 2020].

Malmö Stad, 2020. *Befolkning*. [online] Available at: <<https://malmo.se/Fakta-och-statistik/Befolkning.html>> [Accessed 13 August 2020].

Malmö Ungdomscentral, 2018. *Välkommen till Malmö Ungdomscentral*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.malmoungdomscentral.se/>> [Accessed 27 April 2020].

Merriam-Webster, 2020. *Oppression*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/oppression#synonyms>> [Accessed 13 August 2020].

Myers, V., 2014. *How to overcome our biases? Walk boldly toward them*. [online] Available at: <[https://www.ted.com/talks/verna\\_myers\\_how\\_to\\_overcome\\_our\\_biases\\_walk\\_boldly\\_toward\\_them?utm\\_source=facebook.com&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=tedsread&fbclid=IwAR0W2HMmyH0BHddImxTQZ7gmuiMuR6BAaNzbTzqRbASuv0\\_-IMWwkvVBmzU#t-125653](https://www.ted.com/talks/verna_myers_how_to_overcome_our_biases_walk_boldly_toward_them?utm_source=facebook.com&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=tedsread&fbclid=IwAR0W2HMmyH0BHddImxTQZ7gmuiMuR6BAaNzbTzqRbASuv0_-IMWwkvVBmzU#t-125653)> [Accessed 05 June 2020].

Pettersson, J., 2020a. *Romernas historia*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.minoritet.se/romer/historia>> [Accessed 27 April 2020].

Pettersson, J., 2020b. *Romska grupper*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.minoritet.se/6101>> [Accessed 27 April 2020].

Rådet för den nationella minoriteten romer, 2020. *Rådet för den nationella minoriteten romer*. [online] Available at: <<https://malmo.se/Service/Om-Malmo-stad/Politik-beslut-och-paverkan/Politik-och-fortroendevalda/Radet-for-den-nationella-minoriteten-romer.html>> [Accessed 05 June 2020].

Regeringskansliet, 2011. *En samordnad och långsiktig strategi för romsk inkludering 2012-2032*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.regeringen.se/49baf6/contentassets/4a3df6c115584782935d8d9efa7ab6e3/en-samordnad-och-langsigtig-strategi-for-romsk-inkludering-2012-2032-skr.-20111256>> [Accessed 27 April 2020].

Romska Ungdomsförbundet, 2020. *Om Romska Ungdomsförbundet*. Available at: <<http://rufs.org/omoss/>> [Accessed 27 April 2020].

Romskt informations- och kunskapscenter, 2029. *Romskt informations- och kunskapscenter*. [online] Available at: <<https://malmo.se/Sa-arbetar-vi-med.../Nationella-minoriteter/Romskt-informations--och-kunskapscenter.html>> [Accessed 05 June 2020].

Rydshagen, M., 2014. *Vitboken avslöjar förtrycket mot romer*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.expressen.se/nyheter/vitboken-avslojar-fortrycket-mot-romer/>> [Accessed 27 April 2020].

Skånes Stadsmission, 2020. *Crossroads Malmö*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.skanestadsmission.se/verksamheter/crossroads-malmo/>> [Accessed 05 June 2020].

Sveriges Radio, 2020. *Radio Romano*. [online] Available at: <<https://sverigesradio.se/radoromano>> [Accessed 12 June 2020].

Sveriges Riksdag, 2019. *Lag (2009:724) om nationella minoriteter och minoritetsspråk*. [online] Available at: <[https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/lag-2009724-om-nationella-minoriteter-och\\_sfs-2009-724](https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/lag-2009724-om-nationella-minoriteter-och_sfs-2009-724)> [Accessed 27 April 2020].

The Living History Forum. *The Living History Forum*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.levandehistoria.se/english>> [Accessed 12 June 2020].

Tronarp, G. Staten falls för romregister – tvingas betala skadestånd. [online] Available at: <<https://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/a/Kv1aa4/staten-falls-for-romregister--tvingas-betala-skadestand>> [Accessed 13 August 2020].

United Nations' Human Rights Council, 2020. *Working Groups on the Universal Periodic Review Sweden 2020*. [online] Available at: <<https://undocs.org/A/HRC/WG.6/35/SWE/2>> [Accessed 27 April 2020].

### **Literature:**

Abercrombie, N. and Longhurst, B., 1998. *Audiences: A Sociological Theory of Performance and Imagination*. London: Sage.

Alexiadou, N. and Norberg, A., 2017. 'Sweden's Double Decade for Roma Inclusion: An Examination of Education Policy in Context', *European Education*, 49(1), pp. 36–55.

Altheide, D., and Schneider, C., 2017. *Qualitative Media Analysis*. London: SAGE.

Arendt, H., 1963. From *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. In: *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, ed. P. Baehr, 2000. New York: Penguin Books, pp.313-388.

Arendt, H., 1958. *The Human Condition* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Arendt, H., 1961. What is Freedom?. In: *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, ed. P. Baehr, 2000. New York: Penguin Books, pp.438-461

Arendt, H., 1966. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. UK: Penguin Classics.

Arendt, H. 1970. *On Violence*. London: Allen Lane.

Arendt, H., 1951. *The Perplexities of the Rights of Man*. In: *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, ed. Peter Baehr, 2000. New York: Penguin Books, pp.31-45.

Bazeley, P., 2013. *Qualitative Data Analysis: Practical Strategies*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

boyd, d., forthcoming. *Making Sense of Teen Life: strategies for Capturing Ethnographic Data in a Networked Era*. In: Hargittai, E. and Sandvig, C. *Digital Research Confidential: The Secrets of Studying Behavior Online*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Breazu, P., and Machin, D., 2019. 'Racism toward the Roma through the affordances of Facebook: bonding, laughter and spite', *Discourse & Society*, 30(4), pp. 376–394.

Bruhn Jensen, K., 2012a. Chapter 14: The qualitative research process. In: K. Bruhn Jensen, 2nd ed. *A handbook of media and communication research: Qualitative and quantitative methodologies*. London: Routledge. pp. 235-253.

Bruhn Jensen, K., 2012b. Chapter 15: The complementary of qualitative and quantitative methodologies in media and communication Research. In: K. Bruhn Jensen, 2nd ed. *A handbook of media and communication research: Qualitative and quantitative methodologies*. London: Routledge. pp. 254-272.

Bruun, H. 2016. *The Qualitative Interview in Media Production Studies*. In: Paterson, C. et al. eds. 2016. *Advancing Media Production Research: Shifting Sites, Methods, and Politics*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan. pp.131-146.

Bryman, A., 2006, *Mixed methods*. SAGE benchmarks in social research methods. London: SAGE.

Burman, A., 2018. Are anthropologists monsters?: An Andean dystopian critique of extractivist ethnography and Anglophone-centric anthropology. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 8(1/2), pp.48-64.

Burn, S., 2008. *Jonathan Franzen at the end of Postmodernism*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Butler, J., 2004. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London: Verso.

Butler, J., 2009. *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?*. London: Verso.

Byrne, B., 2012. Qualitative Interviewing. In: C. Seale, ed. 2012. *Researching Society and Culture*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Chouliaraki, L., 2013. *The Ironic Spectator: Solidarity in the Age of Post-Humanitarianism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Chouliaraki, L., and Orgad, S., 2011. Proper distance: Mediation, ethics, otherness. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 14(4), pp.341 –345.

Conovan, M., 1988. Introduction by Magaret Conovan. In: *The Human Condition*, Arendt, H., Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, pp.xix-xxxii.

Corner, J. 2011. *Theorising Media: Power, Form and Subjectivity*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Couldry, N., 2010. *Why Voice Matters: Culture and Politics After Neoliberalism*. London: SAGE Publications.

Couldry, N., and Hepp, A., 2017. *The Mediated Construction of Reality*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Crenshaw, K., 1991. Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and the Violence against Women of Colour. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), pp.1241-1299.

Dahlgren, P., 2009. *Media and Political Engagement: Citizens, Communication and Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dahlgren, P., 2013. *The Political Web: Media, Participation and Alternative Democracy*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Davis, M. and Ryan, N., 2017. 'Inconvenient Human Rights : Water and Sanitation in Sweden's Informal Roma Settlements', *Health and Human Rights*, 19(2), p.61-73.

Dean, J., 1995. Reflective Solidarity. In: *Constellations: An International Journal of Critical & Democratic Theory*, 2(1), pp.114-140.

Dreher, T., McCallum, K. and Waller, L., 2016. 'Indigenous voices and mediatized policy-making in the digital age', *Information, Communication & Society*, 19(1), pp. 23–39.

Duarte, M., 2017. Connected Activism: Indigenous Uses of Social Media for Shaping Political Change. *Australasian Journal of Information Systems*, 21(0), pp.1-12.

Earl, J. and Kimport, K. 2011. *Digitally Enabled Social Change: Activism in the Internet Age*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Enarsson, T., and Lindgren, S., 2019. 'Free speech or hate speech?: A legal analysis of the discourse about Roma on Twitter', *Information & communications technology law*, 28(1), pp.1–18.

Fairclough, N., 1995. *Media Discourse*. London: Arnold.

Fenton, N., 2007. Contesting global capital, new media, solidarity, and the role of a social imaginary. *Reclaiming the Media: Communication Rights & Democratic Media Roles*

Flisfeder, M. and Fuchs, C., 2016. Digital Labour and the Internet Prosumer Commodity: In Conversation with Christian Fuchs. *Alternate Routes*, 27, pp. 267–278.

Flyvbjerg, B., 2001. *Making Social Science Matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Foucault, M., 1976. *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction*. Translated by Robert Hurley, 1978. New York: Random House.

Fraser, N., 1986. Toward a Discourse Ethic of Solidarity. *Praxis International*. 5(4), pp.425-429.

Geană, G., 2005. Remembering Ancestors: Commemorative Rituals and the Foundation of Historicity. *History & Anthropology*, 16(3), pp. 349–361.

Giddens, A., 1991. *Modernity and self-identity: self and society in the late modern age*. Stanford: Polity Press.

Hall, S., 1996a. Introduction: Who needs Identity?. In: S. Hall and P. du Gay, ed. 2011. *Questions of Cultural Identity*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Hall, S., 1996b. The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power. In: T. D. Gupta, C. E. James, C. Andersen, G.-E. Galazubi, R. C. A. Maaka, eds. 2018. *Race and Racialization, 2E: Essential Readings*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press. pp. 85-93.

Harcup, T., and O'Neill, D., 2017. What is News?: News values revisited (again). *Journalism Studies*, 18(12), p.1470-1488.

Harding, S., 2008. *Sciences From Below: Feminisms, Postcolonialities, and Modernities*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Helakorpi, J., Lappalainen, S. and Mietola, R., 2020. 'Equality in the Making? Roma and Traveller Minority Policies and Basic Education in Three Nordic Countries', *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 64(1), p. 52.

Hill, A., 2019. *Media experiences : engaging with drama and reality television*. London: Routledge.

Hine, C., 2015. *Ethnography for the Internet: Embedded, Embodied and Everyday*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Hirsch, E. and Stewart, C., 2005. Introduction: Ethnographies of Historicity. *History & Anthropology*, 16(3), pp. 261–274.

hooks, b., 1990. *YEARNING: race, gender, and cultural politics*. Boston: South End Press.

Jordan, T. *et al.*, 2002. Social Movement Studies: opening statement. *Social Movement Studies*, 1(1), pp. 5–6.

Jørgensen, K. 2016. The media go-along: Researching mobilities with media at hand. *Journal of media and communication research*. pp.32-49.

Klein, N. 2019. *On Fire: The Burning Case for a New Green Deal*. New York City: Simon & Schuster Publishing.

Krause, M., 2008. Undocumented Migrants: An Arendtian Perspective. *European Journal of Political Theory*, 7(3), pp.331-348.

Lawrence, B., 2002. Rewriting histories of the land: colonization and Indigenous resistance in eastern Canada. In: Razack S (ed.) *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society*. Toronto: Sumach Press, pp.21–46.

Lugones, M., 2010. Toward a Decolonial Feminism. *Hypatia*, 25(4), pp.742-759.

Lupton, D. ed., 2012. *Medicine as Culture: Illness, Disease and the Body*. London: Sage.

Manda, L., 2014. ‘Catalyzing Sustainable Social Change through Public Communication, Radio for Development, and Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation’, *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 15(3), pp. 1–10.

McDonald, T., et al. 2016. Small Places Turned Inside-Out: Social Networking in Small Communities. In: Hjorth, L. et al., ed. 2016. *The Routledge Companion to Digital Ethnography*. London: Routledge. Ch.8.

Miller, D. 2011. *Tales from Facebook*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Mignolo, W., 2009. Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thought and Decolonial Freedom. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 26(7-8), pp.159-181.

Mohanty, C., 2003. *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Morris, R., and Spivak, G., 2010. *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Mortensen, M. and Trenz, H., 2016. Media Morality and Visual Icons in the Age of Visual Media: Alan Kurdi and the Emergence of an Impromptu Public of Moral Spectatorship. *Javnost – The Public*, 23(4), pp.343-362.

Morton, S., 2002. Chapter 3: Learning from the Subaltern. In: *Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*. Taylor & Francis Ltd/Books (Routledge Critical Thinkers), pp.45-69.

Mouffe, C., 2009. Religion, Liberal Democracy, and Citizenship. In: H. de Vries and L. Sullivan, eds., 2009. *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, pp.318-326.

Mouffe, C., 1992a. Preface: Democratic Politics Today. In: C. Mouffe, ed. 2003. *Dimensions of Radical Democracy: Pluralism, Citizenship, Community*. London: Verso. Pp. 1-16.

Mouffe, C., 1992b. Democratic Citizenship and the Political Community. In: C. Mouffe, ed. 2003. *Dimensions of Radical Democracy: Pluralism, Citizenship, Community*. London: Verso. Pp. 225-240.

Mulinari, D., and Neergaard, A., 2017. Theorising Racism: Exploring the Swedish racial regime. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, 7(2), pp.88-96.

Musaro, P., 2017. Tensions and paradoxes of humanitarianism. Dialogue with Lilie Chouliaraki. *International Review of Sociology*, 27(2), pp.280-286.

Nafstad, I., 2019. 'Legal Silencing of Minority Legal Culture: The Case of Roma in Swedish Criminal Courts.' *Social & Legal Studies*, 28(6), pp. 839–858.

Nagar, R., 2006. *Playing with Fire: A Collective Journey across Borders*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Noble, S., 2018. *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism*. New York: New York University Press.

Passerin d'Entrèves, M., 1992. Hannah Arendt and the Idea of Citizenship. In: C. Mouffe, ed. 2003. *Dimensions of Radical Democracy: Pluralism, Citizenship, Community*. London: Verso. Pp. 145-169.

Plaut, S., 2012. Expelling the Victim by Demanding Voice: The Counterframing of Transnational Romani Activism. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 37(1), pp.52-65.

Richardson, L. 1994. Writing: A Method of Inquiry. In: Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y., 1994. *The Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE. pp. 516- 529.

Riach, G., 2017. An Analysis of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's *Can the Subaltern Speak?*. London: Macat International.

Rivas, C., 2012. Coding and Analysing Qualitative Data. In: C. Seale, ed. 2012. *Researching Society and Culture*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Rose, G., 2016. *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Material*. 4th Edition, London: Sage.

Said, E., 1978. *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Books.

Sangtin Writers, 2006. *Playing with Fire*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

San Martín, M., 2008. Immigrants' Rights in the Public Sphere: Hannah Arendt's Concepts Reconsidered. *Societies Without Borders*, 2009(4), pp.141-157.

Schrøder, K.C., 2012. Discourses of fact. In: K. Bruhn Jensen, 2nd ed. *A handbook of media and communication research: Qualitative and quantitative methodologies*. London: Routledge. pp.98-116.

Schröter, M., and Taylor, C., 2018. Exploring Silence and Absence in Discourse: Empirical Approaches. Cham: Palgrave MacMillan.

Silverstone, R., 2007. *Media and morality: on the Rise of the Mediapolis*. Cambridge: Polity press.

Sigona, N., 2016. 'Everyday statelessness in Italy: status, rights, and camps', *Ethnic & Racial Studies*, 39(2), pp. 263–279.

Tacchi, J., 2011. Open Content Creation: The issues of voice and the challenge of listening. *New media & society*, 14(4), pp. 652-668.

Thrall, A., Stecula, D., and Sweet, D., 2014. May we have your attention please? Human-Rights NGOs and the problem of global communication. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 19(2), pp.135-159.

Titifanue, J. *et al.* (2018) 'Digital diaspora, reinvigorating Indigenous identity and online activism: social media and the reorientation of Rotuman identity', *Media International Australia*, 169(1), pp. 32–42.

Tlostanova, M., and Thapar-Björkert, S., and Kobblock, I., 2019. Do We Need Decolonial Feminism in Sweden?. *NORA – Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 27(4), pp.290-295.

Vesterberg, V., 2016. 'Exploring misery discourses: problematized Roma in labour market projects', *European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults*, (1), p. 25.

Wahl-Jorgensen, K., 2019. *Emotions, Media and Politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Wrenn, C. L., 2019. The Vegan Society and social movement professionalization, 1944-2017. *Food and Foodways*, 27(3), pp.190-210.

## 7. Appendices

### 7.1. Crossroad Example

Crossroads Malmö



(Skånes Stadsmission, 2020)

Translation: "I will never forget you and the help I received. I will pray for you the rest of my life"

## 7.2. Additional Considerations and Reflections on the Research Process

Ethics are a reflexive process that need to be constantly considered (Hine, 2015, p.188). Following “an ethical commitment to openness” (ibid., p.120), the research interest was laid out when recruiting the interviewees. Consent forms were designed and signed and all of the interviewees have given their written informed consent to use their full names (Byrne, 2012, p.214).

Navigating in online spheres leads to contextual decisions about “whether material found online should be treated as public or private” (Hine, 2015, p.187). Even though I befriended interviewees on Facebook and had access to blogs, I refrained from using any of the data in the research, even though it helped me in my immersion in the field. Dikko, the Romani news magazine, was considered as public data. Quoting online material “places the material into a new context” (Hine, 2015, p.187), so rather than protecting the authors’ anonymity (as would be appropriate with more private content), traceability to the original content was ensured.

One of the problems of this research was that the interviews were conducted without having a pilot interview (Byrne, 2012, p.219). Even though the interview guide was carefully constructed, a pilot interview could have potentially focused the interviews more on what is relevant to the Romani community.

Even though face-to-face interviews were preferred, as “they offer depth and context to what I see online” (boyd, forthcoming, p.4), following the wishes of the interviewees, five of the eight interviews were conducted on the phone. I, therefore, had to adjust my interviewing style, as nodding or eye-contact is not suitable on the phone. The attention on the voice is quite high on the phone, as one is not distracted by the surrounding (compared to a café), but having the phone on speaker and recording with the computer sometimes led to bad recordings which were difficult to transcribe.

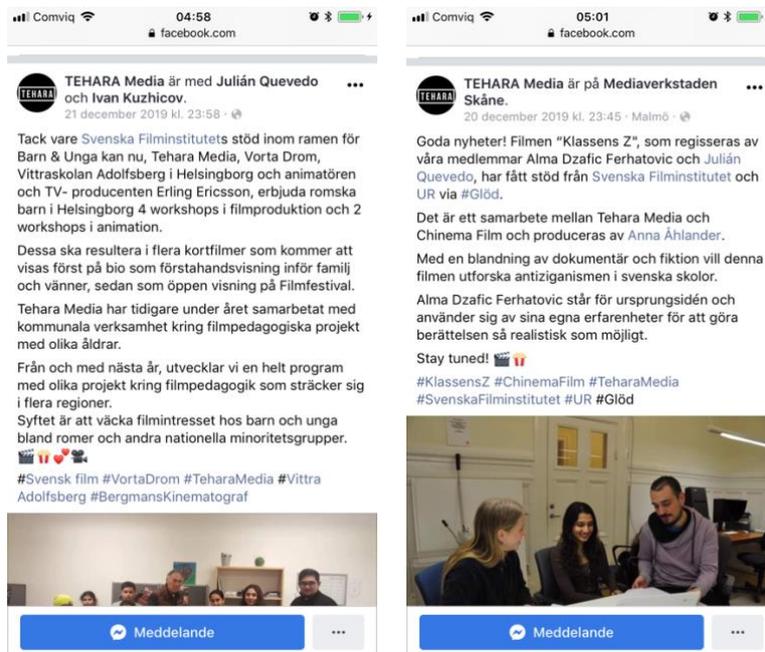
People who are highly engaged in the topic of research are good as interviewees, as they have thought the issues they are concerned with through and care about what they talk about. They are used to expressing their views and opinions, online and offline. The interviewees also gave me the feedback that *The Romani Question* should be more researched and talked about, so they wanted to support my cause and usually gave me positive feedback. I made sure to always have enough time after the interviews, because I usually got quite a few questions about why I am interested in the topic and what my perspectives are.

Another point of reflection is that this research was undertaken in Swedish, both the interviews and the articles (the switch from Swedish to English was when I went from descriptive coding to creating categories and themes). The decision to conduct the interviews in Swedish was based on that the platform’s language is mainly in Swedish (or Romani), therefore, the language arguments and views of the interviewees are usually formulated in. It is, though, cause for reflection as, firstly, Swedish is not my mother tongue, therefore, there might be parts that I do not understand. Secondly, all of my findings needed to be translated from Swedish to English

and “no act of translation is without problems of voice, authority, and representation” (Nagar, 2006, XXIII).

### 7.3. Details Sampling Interviews

I contacted the first interviewee, Paul, on Facebook because I got interested in *Tehara Media*'s projects that I stumbled upon when researching around Romani media projects in Malmö:



We set up a phone interview the next day. Through Paul the rest of the interviewees were recruited through snowballing, receiving phone numbers and Facebook names through which I reached out. Additionally, I sent E-mails to *Dikko* and *RIKC* and recruited more interviewees through that process.

#### 7.4. Introducing the Interviewees

In the following, each of the interviewees will be presented shortly:

- Albert Dandos (58) is a project officer for the hate crime project employed by *Crossroads/Stadsmissionen*. The project is intended to reduce hate crimes against Roma, specifically Romani EU-migrants. He has been an activist since his late teens, involved in different projects and now one of the founders and active member of *Tehara Media*.
- Alma Dzafic Ferhatovic (20) studies *Human Rights* at *Lund University* and has been an activist for several years, amongst others giving speeches and holding workshops for the *UN*. She is also the director of the movie *Klassens Z*, a short film about the racism that Roma experience on a day to day basis in Sweden that is produced by *Tehara Media*.
- Renata Andersen (45) is a community counselor at *RIKC* and engaged in *The Romani Question*.
- Britt-Inger Hedström Lundqvist (61) holds a Master's degree in ethnology, is the owner of the web magazine *Dikko* and has been an activist for a long time.
- Diana Bogelund (41) is a community counselor at *RIKC* and engaged in *The Romani Question*.
- Dolores Andersen (22) studies *International Migration and Ethnic Relations* at *Malmö University* and works as a reporter at *Sweden's Radio* with *Radio Romano*. She has been an activist since her teens.
- Dusan Marinkovic (22) is a student and is a member of *The Romani Council*. He also frequently writes articles for *Dikko*. He is an activist since his early teens.
- Paul Dandos (34) is the operation manager at *Tehara Media* and *Dikko Malmö* and has been an activist since his teens.

## 7.5. Interview Topic Guide (TRANSLATION)

### *Questions for Alma*

#### Introduction:

Can you tell me a little about what you do?

Can you tell me a little about your own background?

Can you tell us a little about the film 'Klassens Z'?

- The purpose?

- Do you have any more projects that you are involved in?

What is your motivation for working with Roma?

- Own experience? Other people's experiences?

#### The situation in Malmö

What do you think about the situation for Roma in Malmö today?

What differences then exist for Swedish citizenship Roma and Romani EU migrants?

- concrete examples?

- your experiences?

- other people's experiences?

Do you see changes in society (like in the last 5 years)?

- Do you have any concrete examples?

How do you feel about these changes?

What different organizations are there that support the rights of Roma?

- What do you think about them?

How does the discussion on the begging prohibition look like in Malmö?

#### Comparison with the rest of Sweden?

Can you compare the situation with other places in Sweden?

- How is it similar/different?

Thoughts around Vellinge municipality?

How is the situation specific to Sweden? Comparison with other European Countries

- Do you have any concrete examples?

#### Romani EU migrants:

What are your thoughts on the begging ban?

What do you think is needed to improve the situation of Romani EU migrants?

- concrete thoughts?

What do you think of the legal situation in Sweden when it comes to Romani EU migrants?

#### Engagement:

What different ways do you have for sharing information on Roma?

- Facebook/other social media?

- More?

Are you involved in other organizations?

Would you say you are an activist?

- if yes, what significance does it have for you?
- What potentials do you see with activism in this situation?
- concrete example

Do you get positive/negative reactions?

- own experiences/others' experiences?

Do you engage online /offline in discussions?

- How do they look? Do you have any examples?

Do you feel that you can influence the situation?

- In what ways?
- if not, what would be needed?

### Communication

What do you think about how the authorities communicate about Roma in Malmö?

- Do you have any concrete examples?

What do you think about NGOs communicate about Roma in Malmö?

- Do you have any concrete examples?

### What can we do?

What improvements would you like to see?

What do you think is needed to improve the situation?

What do you think people like me can do on an everyday basis?

Who is it that we need to influence the most?

What do you think specifically about the way organizations should communicate?

- NGOs
- Authorities

## 7.6. Consent Form

# Consent form

## Communication Strategies for Roma in Malmö

Master in Media and Communication Studies, Lund University

**Researcher:** Leonie Noe

This research aims to find constructive communication strategies for Roma in Malmö. The interviews lasts approximately 60 minutes. The data will be used for the Master's Thesis within the course "Media and Communication Studies: Master's (Two Years) Thesis MKVM13."

I would like your written consent to record the interview and use it to present my findings in the form of a Master's Thesis. You are welcome to say as much or as little as you want. You can also choose to not answer any of the questions or to stop the interview at any time.

I ensure that your identity will remain anonymous, if you don't want your name to be mentioned in the later presentation of the project. Please tick one of the two following options:

- ◇ I don't want my name to be used
- ◇ I'm fine with my name being used

Please sign your name below if you agree to join this study,

---

Full name

---

Age

---

Occupation

---

Date/Signature of Interviewee



## 7.7. Transcript Interview Dolores (TRANSLATION)

09<sup>th</sup> March 2020 15:00

Malmö University, Malmö

Face to Face interview

01:00:05

Short introduction

L: Can you talk a little bit about what you are doing?

D: At the moment I am studying at the university. Should I say it in Swedish? International migration and ethnic relations. Soon done and I am also working at *Sveriges Radio* as a reporter.

L: What do, ehm, so you are writing your Bachelor's now?

D: Yes.

L: Interesting. What are you writing about?

D: We are not there yet, in a year we are there. So I am not really sure what yet.

L: And what are you doing at *Sveriges Radio*?

D: I work as a reporter at *Radio Romano*, which is a radio station for exactly those who speak Romani.

L: But here in Malmö?

D: Exactly. Their main office is in Stockholm.

L: Yes, exactly.

D: But they also have reporter that work from Malmö.

L: Nice. But did you work with Dikko before?

D: No, not really. I was supposed to be a part of that, but then I got the job at *Sveriges Radio* instead.

L: Can you talk a little bit about your own background?

D: I am Roma from Poland. I am born here and grew up here, we have been here for three generations. Fluent in Romani, different dialects. That's that about me.

L: That's probably good for *Radio Romano*.

D: (laughs) Yes.

L: What, ehm, can you talk a little bit more detailed about what kind of projects you are a part of or have been a part of regarding media and Roma?

D: Right now we feature for example where we interview Roma in this society, right now I have the role to interview Roma in Malmö about for example the corona virus. And there it is about how they are feeling about it, if they are scared, what they think about the future, and for their children. But we also did a feature on culture, and there is my focus a lot on teenagers. And that is also like *Radio Romanos* way into the target group. And there it is young people up to 25, maybe a little older. And there one talks about, for example, the latest uploads were about language. How they look on language and if they think that it is important. If they use the language, if they use Swedish words instead for Romani or polish instead of Romani. And if we are losing the language or if we are going to keep it. So it's a bit general actually. A lot of different topics.

L: And, are they losing the language?

D: You use a lot of loanwords from other languages. But the youth actually want to keep the language, there are a lot of young people that want to teach themselves the Romani language, which they did not get to when they were young. For example the parents did not speak Romani with them or something like that. And there they want to like on their own, I want to learn about my identity and that does a lot and there it is a lot of radio that you listen to, movies that one, that there is Swedish subtitles to, so that they can like understand the words and see how they are used and the grammar is different in our language, so there you can also see, that is like different in our language.

L: So there is a difference between the generations?

D: Yes there is.

L: It sounded like the young people are trying to get it back.

D: Exactly, because it is also that, it is also like you use words that are easiest for you. So that it just flows easily and there if you take our older generation for example, there they have a lot of Romani words that they know, but that they replaced with loan words from other languages. So and there, like their children did also know that there are Romani words, but we grandchildren, we don't know that those words exist, but instead we just use what we get to hear. So we do not know about those Romani words until we ask. And maybe there are words that we think are Romani, but then you realize, no, this does not sound Romani, this sounds for

example Polish, or this is a Romanian word and it is there you start to realize, okay, now we need to get back the language, because the next generation will know even less if we do not start to use the words.

L: Nice. Do you have some other projects that you are involved in or that you have been?

D: Within media. There is the film institute, made a movie about the minority groups. So there we talked in Romanec and so there you got extra subtitles in Swedish. So there it was both visually, you got to hear it and then you had the text as well.

L: And there it was also with, ah yes, you said the film institute. Exactly. What's your motivation behind working with Roma?

D: It is, ehm, actually, essentially, it is about the injustice that was against Roma and the bad treatment of Roma. And that got me interested, okay, why have they been persecuted in so many centuries and why are they in the situation that they are in? And there you go, once you actually start to read yourself into the history and how it looks in society and how it looked like centuries before that, then you get an insight, a completely different understanding why the Romani groups is so exposed and why the Romani group is still discriminated and disregarded. And there, which awoke my interest and that's where I realized, something needs to be done. So in the beginning it was a lot of activism. But when I started to study we had, for example, discourse analysis and there we got into media as well, what great power media has, well, it can be angled even if you are impartial, so you are still a little too dependent on the context. And there it's there I realized, okay, media have such an incredibly, incredibly great power. It's crazy. Because, well, they are producing a reality, they are not just showing the reality, but they are producing it as well.

L: And why, shortly summarized then, which does not work, but, did you get an answer to your questions, like why? Or why, do you think, is it still like it is?

D: It has a lot to do with, with still structural discrimination to do. It goes all the way from the state down even to the individual level. If you have it on the state level, it is unfortunately also going to build downwards. And it come from both sides.

L: When... because you said it was a lot of activism in the beginning, what was it then? What did you do there?

D: It could be panel discussions, give different speeches, be active. Like going to different events, create different events, demonstrations, it was a lot of stuff like that.

L: What do you think about how the situation is for Roma in Malmö today?

D: It has been a big change compared to how it was 500 years ago. But Roma are still treated badly. And there is clear evidence for that and there is racial profiling, which is within social services, it is within almost all institutions that we have. It is very sad and a lot of work is

needed, but it is also Roma themselves that needs to catch a hold of this and realize that this is not acceptable.

L: What differences are there for Roma with Swedish citizenship and Romani EU-migrants?

D: It is a really big difference. Both in Swedish society, but also within the Romani society. Because when it comes to Roma that are Swedish citizens then they are protected by the minority legislation, but EU-migrants are not, for example. And then the difference that is created then is, when it comes to EU migrants you have to reference to Human Rights, and that is where it gets difficult because that is no law in Sweden. The Human Rights Declaration isn't like, law in Sweden. Then it gets difficult, because then it is difficult for example the EU legal courts or similar or the UN to judge Sweden, because they don't follow the protocol and the convention. And there is becomes that, there is becomes a very great discrimination. Okay, Swedish citizens and national minorities and then you have those that come and beg, simply. And that is a lot, a lot of really bad discrimination as well. Because even if they do not live here, so are they still in Sweden. They should not be needed to be treated as badly as they are. And if you look at The Declaration there it says that you still have the right to housing, sanitary basic rights, and it is quite rarely that they have that.

L: But then you talk mostly about discrimination from the state. You also said between Roma?

D: Yeah exactly, because there it is the same thing. Because when you talk for example about the EU migrants that have come then many Roma say that: But they do not belong to the national minority. No, but they are still belonging to the group Roma. And that is like, my argument usually is, but how was it when you came here? Because once upon a time were we them and then it was often the Romani people themselves who were already living in Sweden that helped the Roma who just newly arrived. And that is like, this link is often forgotten by a lot of Roma that have been living in Sweden for several generations. And there it becomes also discrimination within Roma that, like, one discriminates EU migrants because they are not like us, somehow. Even if they are not a part of us are they somehow not like us.

L: Do you see... Do you see changes in society within the last five or maybe ten years? Concerning Roma. You got a little bit into it when you talked about improvements, but...

D: There are improvements and you, Roma have it a lot better than they had it before, but it is still not perfect and there are still a lot of differences to be found, especially if you compare Roma with ethnic Swedes. And there it is like how they are treated by authorities, how they are treated by the state, but also how they are treated by civil society. And then you have to think about that many of the EU migrants are Roma. And they are incredibly, incredibly vulnerable, there are in an incredibly vulnerable situation and there it is. It has also built up more, even more racism than what there had been. Because there it is as well, when you say: I am Roma. Aha, are you a beggar? That is like the connection that is made immediately. Or when you go past a beggar: Haha, your cousin is sitting there. It is like this racism that is much more public. Much more acceptable. Because it is like so many that say that, or, beggars, they are actually rich, or they do not deserve to be here and that they should be sent back. And that they have no

right to sit in front of our supermarkets and that is okay, it is okay to say so. There is not a lot that would speak against that, rather many that just tag along. And that is also which contributes to racism getting much more public. Discrimination becomes an everyday situation which Roma are with and witness daily. And there it is both Swedish citizens, but even those who are not Swedish citizens.

L: So this part has become worse? That the racism has become worse again?

D: That's right. And then you can just look at the politics. Swedish Democrats have become Sweden's biggest political party. And there the hostility against strangers has only been rising and rising within the last couple of years.

L: How do you feel about these changes?

D: I am not happy, to say the least. It feels, it feels not at all good and that. Sweden has always, Sweden has not treated Roma so well. It got a little bit better, but now it is that it is going to get worse again. And that, you have already seen at, for example, a proposal that the 'skolverket' (school government office) put forward, that they want to stop teaching high school students on national minorities and there one starts to realize, okay, where are we actually going towards? And then we have the hijab prohibition in several municipalities. We have the Swedish democrats as Sweden's biggest political party. We have Sweden's migration politic which has been stooped down and become, which is not as solidaric as it once has been and we just see how it turns and turns towards the right. And we, we, we, Sweden has lost a lot of what they stand for, just a couple of years back.

L: What different organizations are there in Malmö that support Roma's rights?

D: Eh, there are quite a lot actually. Let's see. We have the youth organization ('ungdomsförbundet'), then we have, what do we have more. Malmö youth centre ('Malmö ungdomscentralen'), we have Tehara Media. We have, what do we have more. I do not remember all the names, but there are actually quite a lot of Romani organisations. That support just Roma, both in their rights and right to culture, right to language, and much that is said in the minority, minority legislation.

L: Why do you think that, is there some, is there some difference with this compared to other places in Sweden? Is it Malmö-specific that there are so many organisations?

D: Nja, so and so, what you look at is that there are a lot of Roma that live in Malmö and if you look at the percentage so is Malmö one of the highest cities with the highest Romani population. And that is maybe that which is different to other cities. But then there are also a lot of associations in Stockholm. There are quite a few in Gothenburg, there are even associations, there are friggings, even in small municipalities. But Malmö is a big city with quite a lot Roma that live here. That contributes also to that there are a lot of organisations.

L: And those organisations, when we talk about roma now, then we do not mean Romani EU-migrants, but...

D: Yes, exactly.

L: What do you think about how the situation is specific compared to other European countries, or in general countries, but mostly European?

D: If you look generally, then Sweden is situated quite well, if you for example compare it to Rumania. If you compare it to Italy. If you compare it to the Balkan countries. Then Sweden is quite well situated. But if you, you can still. It becomes difficult to compare, because they are vastly different structures in, if we take the Slavic countries and the North. And then there also has been a different kind of racism. If you take Italy for example, so has it been a lot, a lot of fascism there. That remains, it is not that it has disappeared, but. It remains. If you look at the beginning of 2000, it was for example, when the Balkna war was coming to an end, there was a lot of Roma living in Kosovo. And then they became, or, those who lived in Kosovo, the local people then said that Roma are dirty, and that they have negotiated with the Serbs and they really want to kill us and then it became a lot of chase/baiting ('hets') against Roma. And then they wanted to kill all the Roma who were there. And their resort was to flee to Italy. But Italy said, no, we certainly do not take in you, because the Roma are, what was it, a worse class than us and they are thieves and we do not want them in our society. So they stayed in Kosovo, there were thousands who were murdered, solely because they are Roma, just because of their ethnicity. So it is, Sweden is situated well, but it is still, Sweden still has a long way to go, especially if there is a backlash, it may be that in 10-20 years it will be as bad as it is for example in Romania.

L: If you say it is good compared to other countries, what do you mean by good?

D: If you take Romania, for example, Roma are extremely vulnerable/exposed and then they live in segregated areas, some have for example that they live in a certain area and the Romanian people have built walls around where they live, because they do not want to have any contact with them. It may be that Romania, for example, has been condemned by the EU because the state decided that the police should go in and do a razzia in a Romani neighborhood and then they were abused, there was tear gas, they were beaten and this went all the way up to the court that sentenced Romania, or the Romanian state, that they incited chasse against an ethnic group ('hets mot folkgrupp') and then there was something more. I don't really remember. So there is a big difference. Because although Sweden has exposed areas, they do not have specific, very ghettoized areas with just Roma. Instead here, it's more like the native borns against the immigrants. And that is exactly, but then we have within the groups of immigrants we have Roma who are at the bottom. So it becomes like double discrimination. Once because you are not Swedish and once because you are Roma. And this is also where the difference lies because if you take Romania, Bulgaria, Italy then it is racism specifically against the Roma, it is antiziganism. But then we have Sweden for example where it is very broad and it is not so direct, but it is indirect discrimination, or indirect contact with Roma. But then in Italy it is that they point directly, but it is just Roma. In Romania the same, where it is precisely against Roma.

But in Sweden you do not say that it is Roma, instead you, like, man, you go past these roads and do not go directly into the problem but talk around it, but you understand what the problem is. So you talk around it, but you understand what it is. So that's exactly it and Sweden has always been very good at, going around the problem but still clarifying what the problem is. But if you take other countries where there has been communism or where there has been a lot of racism and fascism then, they do not care so much, except they go straight to the point. But in Sweden you usually go around.

L: Is that then good or bad?

D: It is what it is. Actually it is bad in my opinion. Because it makes it sound so great. That people go for it and they don't really understand what it is about. Because it can be, now I have taught myself to be very critical. But me and a friend who may not have gone to university, when we. We can hear the same speech and my friend can say: Oh, but this was great. But read between the lines. This was not great, but listens to what the person is trying to get at. And then they will, yes, but no, I do not understand. And then you explain, and then they can listen to it again and then they realize, okay, oh, but this was not good at all. But if you are not critical, if you do not understand where this person is going, then it is very easy to see but this was a great speech. This is what Sweden needs. But you really don't understand what it means, what the speech means. Because that's exactly where it gets dangerous. Because if you say it's Roma, it's the Roma's fault, then you understand that it's the Roma's fault. But then you understand if you vote, what you vote for. And then you understand if you have split opinions, what opinions you have. But if you simplify it, refine it, you don't really understand what you have your opinions on. So that's exactly what is so dangerous when you, when you talk so diplomatically and so nicely without going to the problem that we have, or what they consider what the problem is. Instead you talk around it. And that's what is dangerous, so then you get people who may not know Swedish very well. Who may not understand this diplomatic, academic language who then may not understand what you are saying but you get it to sound so good they still, like, share opinions with you. And this is what gets dangerous with exactly that.

L: What are your thoughts on the begging ban?

D: I'm against it (laughter). There, yes, there are, it should not be denied that there are those who have money but still come here, but if you take, for example, what is it called in Swedish, work labors, yes.

L: You can say it in English, that's fine.

D: If you look at like, if we say you come from Poland and have a bad country there then you move to Sweden because it is a better country, then it is okay. But on the other hand, when you look at the EU migrants, then it is not okay, instead they are there begging. And that's exactly where it comes to, okay, but that's the discrimination again. It is how you look at things and that is someone's perspective, for many people also feel, when they see beggars, it makes THEM feel bad, it makes THEM have feelings of guilt. Okay, but think about the person sitting there in minus degrees and freezing their ass off, just to get some change. But you feel bad

about it, so they can't sit there. They are not a problem except they are the product of a problem. They are a consequence of a problem, they are symptoms. They are not the problem, but they are what the problem led to. And that is what many people do not understand and many do not know how they have it in Romania. Because there are so many Roma (who stay in the hotel), they sleep with a thin blanket, they have no shoes, clothes that are torn, they struggle to get food. And they have no opportunity to get a job in Romania, their children are not allowed to go to school, but what they see as their way out in order to make their children not hungry (mätta) is to come to Sweden and other EU countries to beg. And even if they do not collect as much, they collect enough to feed themselves and their children. For them, that's the most important thing. They do not do it to become millionaires and they will not become that either. Instead they do it to survive and that is what people must realize. It may make you feel a little weird and you feel bad because of it, but still this person has it much worse than you. You should not see them as a problem. The problem lies in Romania, they are a product of it. It is like, if you forbid the begging then you forbid like the persons' last survival, you forbid, you don't forbid the problems and you don't stop the problems, but the only thing you do is sweep the problems under the rug. That's like everything.

L: Why do you think it's coming up right now?

D: Romania has not been a member state in the EU for so long and then so have Roma even, Roma usually get information quite late. They always tend to be the last ones to get information about what it looks like around and I think they did not see that as an opportunity to provide for themselves, except they focus a lot on like their home country, where they live and so on. But then it was like one or two that went there and, but there is an opportunity to provide for ourselves then so the more who went, more who went, more who went, until finally the begging ban was introduced, there was a lot of debates that one should not give them money and the majority, there was a lot of people who believed in that and believe in that even today. That you should not give money to them because they are criminal and they get exploited and so on, but there are really many families where one of the parents goes to another country in order to provide for them. And it's like, it was because it took time for them to realize that you can go to another country, what it looks like in the EU, how long you can stay, like I didn't even find out until a couple of years ago. Even I did not know what it looks like with the EU and free travel and free movement. I had no idea about it until I started reading about it myself and that's just. If I don't even know about that, how could they get to know who are vulnerable. And then they tried out, they went, and they saw that it was anyways possible to collect a little change. And then they said, to the neighbors, or to the cousins, or to the family that yes, if you are lucky then you'll get some money together.

L: But that doesn't explain the discussions about the begging ban, why is it coming up right now? Because we have, people who came here and begged, Swedish people who begged, so it is, after all, nothing new. Why do you think that discussion is allowed to be there now?

D: Exactly, and there it has a lot to do with begging having been around in Sweden for a long time. Homelessness has been around in Sweden for a long time, but now it has become a much larger scale and now it is not Swedish citizens who are begging. It is not Swedish homeless

people who sleep on the street. It is not only Swedish people who need help in some way. Instead, I think there has been so much debate because they come from another country to Sweden, are Roma, and then it is building upon, not only that, like, it does not look good and they want to get rid of them, but instead even that, now racism adds into that. And discrimination adds into that. And then it is, then you get that perspective they have again, natives versus immigrants. And natives, in whatever situation they are, no matter how you look at them, if you consider someone as, like, the lowest class of all. If you still have the immigrant and the native, then the native will still be above the immigrant. And that's how it is in this case as well. Because begging is not a new phenomenon in Sweden, homelessness is not a new phenomenon in Sweden. But the new phenomenon is, in Sweden, is that they come from another country, which is not really their country, because they are Roma, in order to come here and beg. And then that's the connection that you could say, if it was a homeless man, no, but he'll just waste it on alcohol, for example, but now it is, it was like, a lot of people had that idea, so, why should I give him money, he will anyways waste it on drugs or alcohol or whatever it may be. But it was still not like associated with, with criminal organization, but now it is like that because Roma have always had a stereotype and a stigma that they are offenders, they are criminals, they are thieves. They do this, they do that, they do so. And Roma already have that stereotype. So when this group sits down and begs, then it is a criminal act, then it is. So we contribute to the criminal organization in Sweden and exploit the people from Romania and it is like a stereotype that contributes to even more stigmatization of EU migrants who come and beg. Because they are already stigmatized in their home country, but when they come here and then beg, they become even more stigmatized.

L: There is the double stigmatization again. What do you think is needed, what is needed to improve the situation? And there you can give two answers, for EU migrants and for Roma with citizenship. Or connect them, I don't know.

D: For Roma who are Swedish citizens, to begin with, you get to, for example, you get the state, authorities to realize that they are in a situation because you have created it, they are a product of how you treated them. And what you have to do is, okay, how should we improve it, how should we move on? Because structural discrimination still exists in Sweden. Okay, how are we going to break that. Then we have authorities that still discriminate Roma only because they are Roma. Okay, but how are we going to change that. And there it is a lot of Roma that Roma have to do themselves. Because it is the authority that do it. So it is the authorities that are the culprit, then the rest has to be the hero and save them. And this is where it becomes so difficult, because before, for example, you have had, for example, that you have received recognition, or you have as if you did. You'd get recognition not only, by, like, the state and authorities, but also by the civil society. Because now, the population vastly lacks knowledge about national minorities. If you ask anyone about, for example, Sami, it's like, yes okay, they live up there and they have reindeer. Okay, but do you know what they were exposed to? What, no, I don't know. Okay, have you heard about the Tornedalingen? No, I don't even know what that is. Okay, Roma? Ah, the thieves. It's like, that's where you also have to break within individual conversations, within civil society. Because a lot is being built up there and the problem lies in the fact that even though it is being built up there, it is the task of the government and the state to step in and put a stop to it. That's exactly what they don't do instead they let it continue and

even contribute to it. And this is where you have to stop it. And a lot is on Roma, but they cannot get a whole state and the whole parliament to realize that this is wrong, instead they need the state itself to realize and help the Roma. To claim their status, to be able to enjoy equal rights with equal opportunities. And that's where it comes to a huge clash. Because you have had one, right now, we have a government that denies that the Roma were victims under the Holocaust. It is said that it was genocide, but it started out as genocide, that's true, but when Hitler decided to systematically exterminate all Roma because of their ethnicity, that's when it went from genocide to holocaust. But still the government does not want to recognize it as the holocaust. And this is, like, that is where you have antiziganism at the government level. And if you have it at the government level, it is very difficult for the Roma to be able to move on, because there will be a stop, the government is above us. That's how it is. And it becomes difficult for us Roma to improve our situation and improve how we have it and get people to understand and authorities, when the state works against us. So that's where it becomes a huge clash.

L: From all directions.

D: From all directions, yes.

L: What different ways do you have for spreading information?

D: A lot of media, mostly media.

L: You may be very detailed with this.

D: Specific, yes. There's a lot on Facebook when it comes to articles, whether it's collections, like name collections. If it is to express my thoughts on something specific. Then it is very much Facebook, because Facebook has such a huge reach. On Instagram, it can be difficult to share someone else's posts if you don't take a screenshot. But on Facebook you can share, share, share, share and then you get a huge outreach. On Instagram it is difficult, not many people will screenshot it and then publish it on their site. But Facebook makes it so easy for you. And you can reach a lot more people than anywhere else, any other platform. And Facebook is a great tool, because you can make it public so everyone can see it. As soon as someone shares, you can also see if it gets further shared, etc. So Facebook is really big and then the second part, that's the radio. And there it is also, you can share the radio's posts or programs that have been recorded and broadcast. But then it is also that the radio is in the car, it is in the phone and is also a way to spread knowledge and use media. So it's really important. By contrast, what is really missing for Roma, is the visual. You have, for example, SVT that makes different programs, etc., but it still is, it becomes difficult because they are specific programs about a specific thing. Or it is about Roma, Roma are perhaps even with, but they speak in Swedish, for example. And it can be children's programs in a certain dialect. So it is not spread so much within the group itself within Roma except within a certain group within the Roma. So what I think what is missing is a platform where just Roma voices, Roma people appear on TV. And not only this 10 minutes of reportage, but really getting a platform. That is exactly what I think is the next step, because there is the radio, there is social media, of course, now there is Dikko,

because before that they had (Romano Neglinda), which was shut down because they no longer received support. But you have in any case a newspaper online. Although no newspaper in physical form, it was laid down then. But then it is the visual, because that is missing. Sure you can listen, but you also want to see. And it does very much, especially for us because it becomes recognition, and that's what is very important that one understands that, oh, look, there is roma on TV now. And it's a program, it's about that and that. And that it doesn't have to be so serious things, because there is so much that has been done about how Roma were treated and so on. But something funny, that's what's missing. Something for young people. There is for kids, there are some programs for adults. But young people are usually the ones who are forgotten. And that is precisely the phase that you are forgotten in so often. You are forgotten in society, you are forgotten at home. You forget on TV, you are forgotten in your group, within Swedish society. It's a group that often, like you don't focus too much on it. That is also what is missing, because that is, if we do not gain knowledge and understanding of who we are, then we will not be able to improve the situation of Roma. Because we are the ones who will have to carry and fight for the Roma. For the older ones that will eventually pass away, so it will be our fight. But if we do not have the tools and understanding, then we will not be able to know how or where to go. And it is also that many young people hide their identity, they dare not say that they are Roma. And this is also what is very important to highlight within, within the media, because that is where the focus needs to be. Because you can talk to a friend, but you already know your friends but here it is, there are 20 different people in your city who feel the same, so you also get another like, okay, I'm not the only one and then about this, for example, what they do, if they are active, that they dare say that they are Roma. So you also get, like, a boost in your confidence, that you also can do it. And that is what is so very important because the young people are often forgotten. So it is important to boost them, so that they continue the fight and hopefully so, they break structural discrimination. And the only way to do it is through media.

L: Do you want to add something?

D: No. That was it 😊

L: Are you, would you say you're an activist?

D: Yes.

L: What does it mean to you?

D: It's part of the person I am. It has a huge significance, because as soon as you hear something, as soon as you find out something, as soon as you see injustice, you see how bad people are treated, it awakes feelings within you. And that is what makes me to who I am, but without activism, I would not have continued to fight. I had stopped several, several years ago. But that is, activism is more of a driving force. That's exactly it, it's a driving force.

L: What potentials do you see with activism in this situation? Do you have some examples where, where activism is so important?

D: So activism is what influences, to a certain extent, at least. Because if they see that we are many, if they see that we all stand behind each other, then it becomes difficult for authorities, for the state, for civil society to deny, and riots have been around for many years. And this is where you see that there is an impact, you can see it in France, you can see it in Sweden, you can see it within, not only within, as well as, discrimination and racism, but you can see it in migration to one protests against deportations too dangerous, like, countries. You can see it now, for example, with Greece and Turkey. And it's like, it's got so much coverage in the media because, it hasn't, this is not a new phenomenon, this has been going on earlier than 2015 and it has not received as much coverage if we take 2017, 18, 19 but now again, because people are making something bigger of it. And it is not for the media wanted to report about it, but now it is that you have to, because it has become so big and people want to hear and know. So people, thousands of people have died in the Mediterranean and nothing is reported in Swedish news. But now it is, because it has got, like civilian people, the greek govenment, the turkish government has been highlighted so much that it has now become the world news, but it is not a new phenomenon, it has already, like been going on for several years and this is also what shows that people can build it up and people can show as well what activism can really do. Because if it hadn't been for that, you wouldn't have cared so much. They still had, the migrants would still stand in Turkey outside the border of Greece and one had not thought so much about it. But because of, like civilians have built up this image and really like pushed for it, it became big, like news agencies that are covering it, because it's gotten so much attention from, from like individual people. There you also see, okay, activism has a very big meaning. Check out what this has led to, like it's news all over the world.

L: Do you feel that you have impact, or that you can influence the situation?

D: To a certain extent. You can, you can do everything in your power. But if you are an individual person then you have a hard time going against the state. Or you don't have a hard time going against the state, but you have a hard time overcoming it. That is exactly what is going to be difficult, even if you are many, even if you gather, in the end it is still the state that decides. And if the state discriminates you and sees you as a less worthy citizen, then it's easy for them to wash their hands, shrug their shoulders and say, no, unfortunately. Even if we fight, and we have been fighting for over 500 years, and we are still fighting. Like, it proves how reluctant the state and the authorities are towards giving us equal rights and the same opportunities as the rest of the population.

L: Do you engage in online and / or offline discussions?

D: Very rarely online discussions.

L: So you wouldn't comment?

D: Very rarely. In case it's not something that I really feel for and it's really something that I have to get people to realize. But the thing is online, it is very impersonal and it does not affect very much if you are for it and another one is against it. You will argue for yours, he will argue for his. Like, there comes one, on the internet is not that, I listen in order to hear what you have

to say, but I listen because I want to give you a counter-argument. That's a lot of what's happening over the net. But in personal life, like, private, it gets different, because it gets direct contact and it's also harder like, like, ignoring what the other person has to say, you still listen, even if you are like against it you still want to hear the person's perspective. But on the internet it's really hard to get your point through and really know that, alright, this person understands where I'm coming from. Because they don't want to hear your perspective, they want to hear your argument so that they can give you a rebuttal, and like, that's it. And that's what makes the difference with online and offline conversations and arguments. So that, offline arguments it is easier to talk and understand each other than when it's online.

L: What do you think about how authorities communicate about Roma in Malmö?

D: It is, that is, it depends. Because, as I said, they do not directly go into attack against Roma, or how to say, except much of it is unofficial. And then it is, the clearest example may be the police register they had. There you have a clear register of ethnic registration which is illegal where the police broke the law. There you can clearly see that, okay, so it is criminal only because of being Roma. It's like the picture the police have of us. And that has, well, the trust that you start to build up and begin to get for the police it was totally broken down. And then you realized, okay, the authorities, the police, the social services, there is nothing you can trust on, because they only see us as criminal thieves. And that, it was like, even if they don't, like, directly, they still do, it's still the message they give out and that's also the case with officials, authorities, (...) is that it is, sometimes they can throw comments. The police can throw comments in the middle of the street. Social secretaries can say unpleasant things to a person just for being Roma. People also treat Roma differently, especially if they do not have good Swedish. Then it is clear and distinct discrimination, for example, if we say that my sister, she was not born here, you can hear that she has an accent and when she calls the social services and says, hey, I need help with this, so they are usually very unpleasant. As soon as, like, if we take a community supervisor pick up the phone and says: but this is a right, and then you hear how the tone is changed from the social secretary, oh, yeah, that, we take it and solve it right away. And so that is the message, which, like, is pumped out from the social services, from the police, from the authorities, from the Social Insurance Office, the state. They do not say directly that it is just because we are Roma, but they, like treat you differently, because you have a different ethnicity. Whatever it is, there is still a huge difference between ethnicity and your integration into society. So it is, you may not see it directly, but it is the message you get from them.

L: What improvements would you like to see?

D: I want to see, no structural discrimination. I want to see the recognition of the state about the Holocaust. I want to see improvements for EU migrants. I want to see less stigmatization and discrimination because of ethnicity in Sweden. And I don't want to see the discrimination between the natives and the Roma.

L: And what do you think is needed to get there?

D: Will to work together from the state and authorities and knowledge for, all the way from from the prime minister all the way down to the 7 year old who goes first-year at a school in Småland. Like, one knows about the stereotypes of Roma, but one doesn't know their history. Why they are in the situation they are in. And it is not just for Roma, it is for Sami as well. Like, that national minorities are a national minority for a reason. And that is what people must start to realize and that it is implemented in school. Because now it says that you have to teach them, but in practice, there are very few schools that really do that. And that is also what needs to be improved in order for the next generation to get an understanding of the situation, why things are as they are.

L: What message would you like to spread?

D: Love, peace and understanding.

L: Good. That was all my questions, is there anything you would like to add?

D: I have a question for you: Why exactly Roma?

(Switched off the recorder, put it on again after a while)

D: Roma are used as a reference group or like, idea-producing people who will come up with their proposals and then non-Roma will use it to do something for the Roma. That is very wrong, because if it is about us we should be the ones doing it. That's it.

D: A lot of Roma, they don't want to take on the victim role. Instead, okay, all the same, what's next? Like, how are we going to move on, and it's there, too, it's like, a clash, because we have a government, like, oh Roma, we treated them so badly, but when we try to like improve our situation, they say no no no. (...) Alright you treated us bad, treat us well now and let us do now what we have to do to, like be good again. You get me? And that is exactly what is going to be so difficult, because there is a great deal about how Sweden has treated us, everything was not written in the white book, but a lot of it was. But still when we want to take the step forward, the state stands before us and says, but you can't go past. And it's like, why are you pushing us back again? Because it will be like, if you do not let us go forward, then we may have to back off.

D: The thing is, the system, it has so many laws in Sweden's society, so you don't understand that it's based on racism and discrimination until you really get into it.

D: And the other thing is, ethnic Swedish people, they live in denial, because they will not believe it until you see it, but you won't see it cause you're white. Like, what. You won't be able to see it because you have two lines. The first one is for the Swedish one, but when you are an immigrant, the first one disappears and you are the second one. But you will not be the second one if there is something in front of it. (...) Just because you are not able to see it, it doesn't mean that it doesn't exist, because it truly does exist.

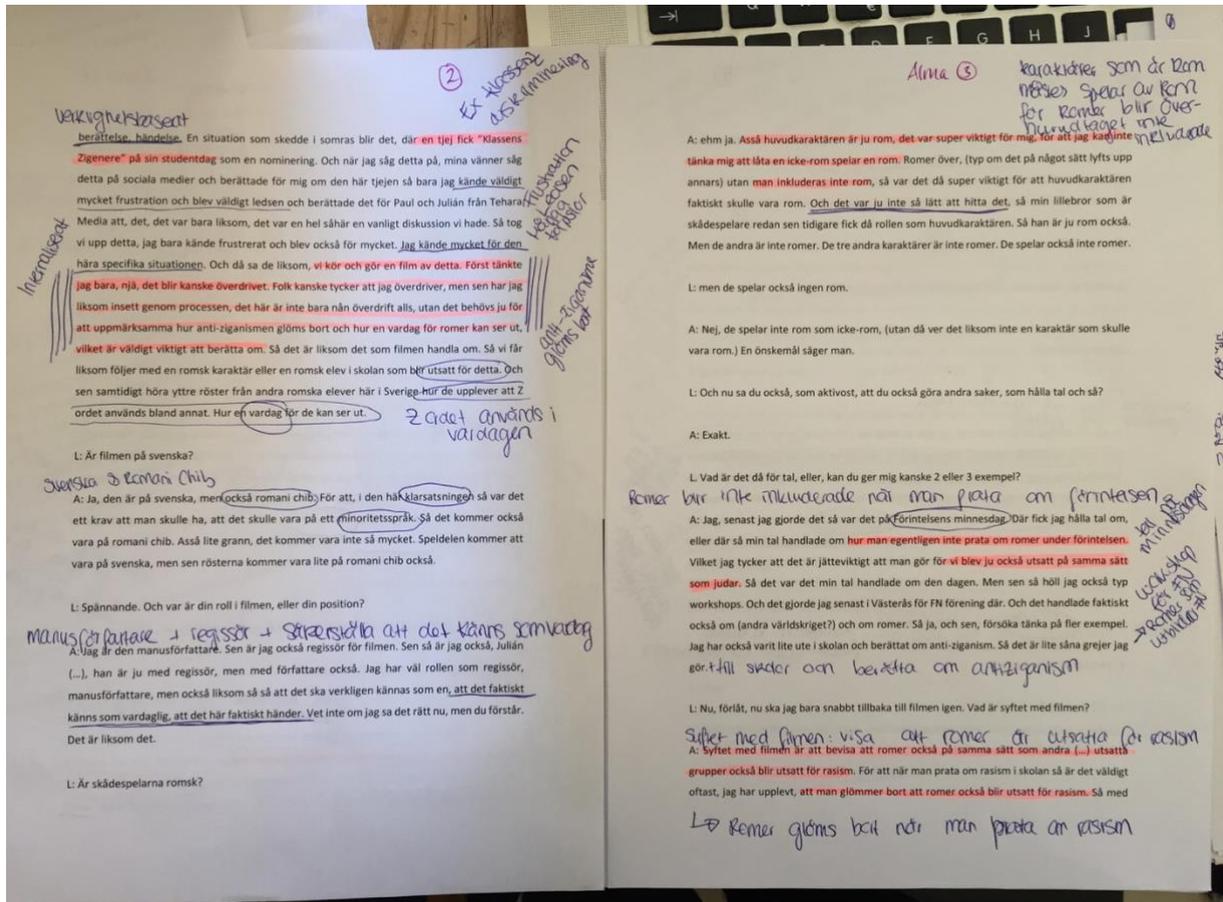
D: Authorities who, like daily, work with 'the Romani question', it is usually not Roma who are employed in that position. That's what is a shame. For example, you have authorities for civil society issues. There they have, like, a budget, yearly, which goes to like Roma projects and Roma youth and so on, but still the person leading and like, dividing the money, is not a Romani man or woman, but is an ethnic Swede.

D: A couple of years ago, maybe 10 years ago, it was a struggle, one should not talk about us but with us. And then it was that, we didn't want a Swede to stand in front of an audience and talk about our history, but it should be a Romani person standing there talking about our history. And there it was very much like this, you should not talk about us, we should talk about ourselves. But now we have realized that, okay, they use us in reference groups, they use us like when they need feedback and so on. (...) Use us. It is not where we want to be, instead we want to be the ones who make decisions for our people. That's what we want. We want to make a decision about, like, a Roma to decide for, for whom, who will, which Roma, or which Romani associations will receive grants this year, or which projects the grants will go to, or what is needed for the Romani population just this half year. It should not be a non-Roma who makes these decisions, because if you are a Roma you have a different understanding for the culture. Another may see it as idiotic, like stomping on the floor, but for us it may be part of our culture. And you will never be able to understand it until you are part of it. Like, such a simple thing. And then they say, no, you are not allowed to do that. But it is part of our culture. Nah, but it doesn't look so smart. But like, alright, but still, though, be a part of our culture and you won't have the understanding for it until you are like one of us. And this is also what gets super wrong, if you sit in a like, a position, where you have the power to decide, for example, budget, or grant, or culture or whatever it may be, if it has to do with Roma, then it should be Roma who decide who it goes to. Not sitting there as a reference group and then in the end making the decision themselves. Instead just giving their opinions. It's like, not fair.

## 7.8. Thematic Coding Interviews

### 7.8.1. Excerpt from Descriptive Coding

p.2-3 of Alma's interview: After having transcribed all interviews, I started with descriptive coding, using a mixture of highlighting and mostly *en vivo codes*:



### 7.8.2. Excerpt of Thematic Coding of Single Interviews

I then went over to do thematic coding of all of the interviews separately in an excel table. This is where I switched the coding process from Swedish to English.

738	DUSAN	DUSAN	DUSAN	DUSAN
739	SUB-SUB CATEGORIES	SUBCATEGORIES	CATEGORIES	THEMES
740		silts in the romska rådet		
741		engaged since he was 13	activist	
742		used to be a reporter on SVT		
743		media to create public opinion	importance of media	
744		the roma perspective is missing in journalism		
745		a way to spread knowledge that would otherwise not be spread		
746		a movie is more appealing than a debate article	affordances	
747		roma	background	
748		a family that is proud to be roma		
749		trauma within the family (mothers brother who got killed)		
750			stories of family history as a way into activism	
751	Roma newspaper by and for roma	Dikko	importance of own power	
752	reach as many roma as possible with news that affect them			
753		do not see news worthiness in roma news	mass media	importance of their own media
754		lack of positive news about roma		
755		they just talk about the abuse of eu-migrants		
756		talk about events that a roma organisation has planned	own media filling the lack of mass media	
757		newsroom for roma	space	
758		everybody can send in articles		
759	bring forward that roma have been victims of the holocaust	articles		
760	interview politicians		media as a way to create public pressure	
761			media as a way to spread information	
762				

These were pre-categories (ex: own media filling the lack of mass media) and pre-themes (ex: importance of their own media) that were later on fused and revised (ex: when fusing them I found 'Importance of Romani media' more to be a category than a theme).

### 7.8.3. Table Thematic Coding Interviews: Fused

Earlier I went from subcategories to categories to themes (inductive). When fusing all of the interviews I already had a quite good overview due to the previous coding and re-sorted them by themes. Thereby, my data became accessible for me to work with.

- Albert Dandos (1)
- Alma Dzafic Ferhatovic (2)
- Renata Andersen (3)
- Britt-Inger Hedström Lundqvist (4)
- Diana Bogelund (5)
- Dolores Andersen (6)
- Dusan Marinkovic (7)
- Paul Dandos (8)

CATEGORIES	SUB-CAT.	SUB-SUB-CATEGORIES	Notes
ACTIVISM	Permeates entire live	job&freetime 1 3 6, since a long time 1 7, roma rights as the purpose of life 1 7 8, all means necessary 3 4 2 8, through being Roma 4, fighting against structural problems 3	
	Motivation	Roma not having to hide their identity 2 3, Roma having a future 7, same terms, rights and possibilities 3, no judgement, no stigmatization 3, fight against ALL injustices 1 2 3 4 6, inclusion, no othering 3, spread the message 4 challenge passivity 8, personal history 1 8	
	Engagement	Because of being exposed to racism 1 2, to care about 2 4, because of traumatic experiences (family, past) 1 7, because of being roma 8	
	Recognition of each other	Not alone 2, several people 2, important to be recognized within the group 5 7, to help roma come together 1	
	Necessity	A lot needs to be done 2 6, everybody needs to be impacted/change 2 3 4 7 8, change is too slow, activists to make positive changes 5	
	Relief	It means a lot to be able to talk about it 2, not hiding identity any more 2, control and not being the victim anymore 6	
	Exhaustion	Tired of activism 3, a lot of work 4, no time beside work 5, better results when getting paid 1	
	Impact?	Yes, by standing up for being roma 4, yes, through media 4, needs also non-roma 5, through activism 6, yes, because he fought for it 7, needs to be done more 1 2 8, on paper, but practically? 1, certain individuals 1 3, is not sure if she does 2, one step forward, two steps back 3 Difficult to see changes 1	
	Unification	Need of fighting together 1 3 4 5 6, unified front 7, every single person in solidarity 8, NGO and municipalities need to work on this 5, roma and non-roma need to fight 6, international networks 8	

	Challenge passivity	there isnt many that stand up against racism - there isnt many that stand up against racism 6, if you do not do anything that is an active action 8, danger of passivity 8, they have to work with their prejudices, everybody 4	
(MEDIA) PLATFORMS		A lot of Romani organisations 5 7, cooperations with others 1 3 5 6	
	Tehara Media	Film Klassens Z 2 8, supports Dikko with visuals 4, Tehara Film Fetsival 8, Romani Gala 8, document events and happenings 8, produce films 8, teaching other Roma how to do film 8	
	Dikko	Webmagazine 4, Debaterarticles 1, chronicles 1, platform for Roma 4, non-profit 4, success 4, follows and reads Dikko 5, by and for roma 7, newsroom for roma 7, talk about events that a roma organisation has planned 7, everybody can send in articles7,	EX slavery 1, ex argument for inclusion in the debate around holocaust 7
	Dik Manush	Street magazine to help EU-migrants 4, was layed down and turned into Dikko 4	
	Radio Romano	talking about what is current (coronavirus) 6, extra focus on teenagers (target group) 6, extra focus on language 6	
	Stadsmissionen/ Crossroads	Hatecrime project (concrete colution) 1, to help EU-migrants 8	Humanization
	RIKS (municipality)	Creates safety 2,5 bridge between roma citizens and institutions 3 5, direct, need-based help 3 5, educate institutions/ authroities 3 5, goal: same rights and possibilities 3, ensures that the minority law is implemented 3, trust 3, permanent 3 5 7, Not responsible for EU-migrants 3 5, Website and Facebook to update 3, RIKS makes roma part of the municipality 5,	
	Romska Rådet (municipality)	Coordinated by RIKS 5, polititicians and Roma from organisation 5, discuss questions that affect roma 5, can voice their wishes 5, direct contact with politicians 3	
	Facebook	Appeal for articles/funding 4, sharing posts 4, to shut down other racist sites 1, influencer 1	
	Twitter	Message to girl that dressed up as a 'G' 2, spread information	
	Snapchat	Share articles 2	
	MASSMEDIA	Reproduce stereotypes 3, do not include roma when creating them 3, high influence 3, lack of representation of roma as people as everybody else 3, increase stigma 3, problematise Roma 5 7, great power - they don't just show a reality, they produce a reality 6, everything that is published is angled 1 6, do not see news worthiness in roma news 7, racism in omments 3	Importanc e of inclusion/ own media Ex Exotifyin g Romani Women
	SOCIAL MEDIA	A way to impact 3, commenting 3, sharing information 3 5, contact with international organisations 3, as a means of support within the group 8, powerful 4	
	AFFORDANCES	Social Media good for events 3, visuals reach more people 2 4 8, from street to web: being able to share 4 6, Register for events 5, Instagram you need to screenshot to share 6, FB for petitions 6, radio: to be able to listen when you cannot watch 6, useless to engage in discussions through comments 6, social media can be flat 8, a movie is more appealing than a debate article 7, film is the future 8, film reaches feelings 2, social media: good because of follower function 4	
	Blogg	Talking about what she does for Roma 4, transparency 4, history 4, let out frustrations 4	

	filminstitut	Short film in romanes, swedish subtitles – in order to learn the language	
	Established media	Publish articles 1 7,	
IMPORTANCE OF ROMANI MEDIA	Intention	Media to impact on Roma's situation 1, Media to fight racism 1, Spreading the word 1 4, information impacts racism 1 4, educating on roma history 1 4, to show Roma get exposed to racism 2, the use of the G-word, and that nobody speaks up 2, For fulfilling the need for roma to be able to express themselves 4 6, goal of RR to keep the language – identity 6, a way to counteract prejudices 4 6, to increase knowelrde 4, to raise our voices 4, Media to create transparency 4, raise awarness and knowledge 6, spread information 6 7, media to create public opinion 7, a way to spread knowldge that would otherwise not be spread 7, reach as many roma as possible with news that affect them 7, talk positively about roma 7, To write about what is usually not written about 1, need for idols, positive images, also for themselves 5, you get more open, understanding 8, they are all different individuals 2	humanisation
	Power/ Influence	Media as the 4th power in society 1, Media for empowerment ('egenmakt') 1, Media for influence 1, Media for political power in situations where Roma are impacted 1, word's significance and power 4, media as a way to create public pressure 7, articles to criticise the municipality 7, a way to make aware of deficiencies in the system 7, articles to criticise the system 7, media to get participation and influence 8, power over the own narrative 8, until the lion learns to roar every story will glorify the hunter (8), media is a great power pillar in society 8, hard to fight without power - trying to get that power through media 8	
	Tool	Media is our tool (Tehara Media) 1, To organise and to demand 1, to give the understanding and tools to those who fight the fight 6, a way to fight the structural discrimination 7, MEDIA ARE THE ONLY WEAPON WE HAVE 7, to mediate the fight of the roma 8	Ex Paul commenting on RIKS website
	Own perspective	Roma's history never told from their own perspective-dangerous 1, Film from a Roma perspective 2, important that the content is about roma 4, non-roma lack understanding to roma culture 6, we are experts on what works best for us 7, narratives, stories, and our situation 8, roma news are usually filtered, and they cannot decide on the filter 8	
	Historicity	connection of past-present-future 1, the denial of the holocaust leads to that it repeats again 8	
	Relieve	People think I exaggerate, but the film helped her 2,	Internalized racism
	Necessity	No positive change because it isn't talked about antiziganism 2, <i>Dikko: many articles from all over the country that got sent in – need to express</i> 4, Ignorance about different groups 4, Wrong names for groups 4, No knowledge about Roma 4, we need to be written about 4, Roma are underrepresented/misrepresented in mass media 6, need for recognition 6, the roma perspective is missing in journalism 7, not very visible in general media 8, they always only talk about the bad things connected to roma 2, they can never voice their opinions 3, they do not get information 6	Ex seeing roma on TV 6
	To be proud	a way to have teenagers not hide their identity 6, to make them dare say that they are roma 6, we know what is best	

		for us 5, now its about time that we rise 5, Roma need to own their fight 5, Katarina Taikon 2 5	
RACISM/ DISCRIMINATION	MATERIALIZATION	spit, kick, and call them bad words 3 EU-migrants exposed to hatecrimes 1, because visitors at Crossroads had been hit and spit on 1, Revolution: Roma died 1, Roma's accomodations were burnt down 1, being afraid that being roma affects their employment 3 5, *they will freeze to death* eu migrants 4 child doesn't go to school - structural problems are to blame 3	
	Institutional Barriers – no trust in authorities	Perpetrator of hatecrime did not get jail-time 1, Police does not know enough about minority laws 1, pliceregister destroyed trust that they try to build up 5, no trust in authroities 5, racial profiling of all institutions 6, still mistreatment 6, the state works against us 6 8, authorities contribute to the discrimination 6, this question is not prioritised 7 state created a system where roma have to compromise 7 we have been fighting for 500 years, but we still need to fight 6	
	Intersectional	doublediscrimination, first, all immigrants, then roma as the lowest 6,	
	Roma do not understand why	Why are there barriers? 1, there is something shady - we do not know why it is like this 1, We are still there??? 3, Why are you pushing us back again? 6	
	Exclusion	Excluded in discussions around the Holocaust 2, Excluded in discussions around racism 2 3 8, They talk about minorities, but not about Roma 2, Nobody wants to have Roma 1, In the outskirts of the city 1, all doors are closed 1, You ca nnot work for Roma without them 1, talked over the head of roma, not with them 3 David against goliath situation 7 holocaust conference: that we try to be a part of that just shows how deep the problem lies 7, should be same terms for roma 5	
	referencegroups	system creates a roma elite, but the rest is not heard (referenecegroups) 4, but the final decision lays in the hand of non-roma 6, system created so that they do not really have influence 7 no proper power to make decisions 7, they do not listen to existing needs 7	
	Everyday	All roma are discriminated 2 3 7 8, exposed to racism in all countries 2 5, you are not like other roma-prejudices 2 3 5, society doenst see her as swedish, because of dark skin 3, society sees roma as shady 3, they should be kept outside ('utanför') 3, roma are judged collectively 3, all individuals get discriminated 3, suspisions against all that are not following the norm 4, xenophobia 4, exitification 5, It is incredibly stigmatized to be Roma 4, both from the state, but also from the individual – structural discrimination 6, that one doesnt have to say where they are from 5, that one can be proud of one's background 5	Also Materialization  Ex stateminister uses the g word 3
	Internalised Racism	Hiding to be Roma 2, she used to avoid places and conversations 2, afraid of being connected to stereotypes 2 5, others think she exagerrates 2, roma hide their identity in order to not be discriminated 3, Roma not saying that they are Roma (at work) 4 5, change of last name 5,	Also materialisation
OTHERING	Not a part of the we	perspective: natives versus immigrants 6, inclusion in the 'we' 5, not to be the others 5, Roma should be a part of the 'we' in society 5	
SWEDEN	Gruesome past	brutal history 3 4, *gypsiexperts* 3 5, forced sterilisations 3 4 5, special schools 4, change of last name to not be sterilised 4, Roma werent allowed to go	Historicity

		to school 5, no right to vote 5, roma werent allowed to stay somewhere more than three weeks 5, forster homes for children 5 SITUATION TODAY IS INFLUENCED BY THAT – ALL INTERVIEWEES	
	EU-migrants	Now they give nothing to EU-migrants 1	
	No openness	Sweden used to be more open 1, Swedes do not have the EU-feeling/not EU-oriented 1	
	Just in theory	Agreements with other countries are just in theory 1, just talk - no real ambition to change something 1, needs more work than the strategy 5, on paper it says it should be done, but it is not implementes 6 Sweden: social, economical safety, but no influence	
	Hidden racism	"Everything looks good form the outside" 1 6, Sweden is very good with the hidden racism 2, used to be more open racism, now its more hidden 2, To not talk about Roma is racism (school) 2, Racism sits in the spine 5, deeply rooted 4 5, here it is indirect dicrimination 6, sweden talks around the problem 6, it's inofficial racist communication from the authorities 6, no one does overall not want to talk about racism 7 8, communication from authorirties kills us slowly 8 sweden tries to look good, but keeps them from having a real influence 4	Ex articles only about other countries 2
	Not wanting to face their own racism	Swedes feel guilty when seeing beggars 1, they want to look away 1, Swedes do not want to be uncomfortable 1	
	Sweden is good, but a lot needs to be done	Sweden nevertheless okay 5, Sweden is the best country, but still there is so much racism 1, There are stains on the sun as well 1, sweden has lost a lot of what it stands for 6 relatively good in Sweden 3	
	Not making up with their gruesome history	they need to make up with history 'åtgärdar' 1, Silence around Roma's past in Sweden 2, Sweden does not talk about how badly they treated Roma 2, Sweden has not made up with their treatment of roma 4,	
	Splits the group	when hatecrime was mentioned in connetion to EUM they voted against it 8,	
DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE GROUPS	No homogenous group	Different groups 1 4, no homogenous group 5, but in sweden the five minorieties are treated as one group 4	
	EU migrants - Exclusion by roma organisations	EU migrants are not included in the 'romska frågan' 2, it should be more talked about within the roma organisations 2, EU-migrants need to be protected through Human Rights 6, they are even deprived of HR 6, authroities, state, civil society treat them badly 6 organisations are mainly for citizens 6, big differnecs in treatment 6, not accepted, not even from Roma 1 RIKS does not include them in their work 1,	
	EU migrants also Roma	EU are also Roma, seems to be forgotten sometimes 2, They are belonging to the group of roma 1 6 8	
	Travellers	Resande are most affected by the swedish history 4, Travelers are comparably well integrated 1	
	Citizens	citizens are protected by the minority laws 5 6,	
	They shoot themselves in the foot	Hatecrime affect all roma 8, there should not be made a differnece btw citizen and eu migrant 8, their presence made the racism against all roma more public 6 organisations sometimes damage the fight instead of help it 4	
HISTORICITY	Personal	Second world war is just one generation away from me 4, I grew up with the stories 4, policeregister reminded	Ex Dusan: where the begging

		of second world war 5, roma often still see the connection 7 history repeats 4	prohibition leads to
	History affects today	Roma had to hide themselves/ be quite in order to not be sterilized/keep their children – culture of silence 4 - Do not dare to stand up for themselves (more in other countries) 4 a product of long term harassment of roma 8 racism is connected to the history 3, structural problems- One needs to look at history in order to understand the situation 3	
	Sweden 2nd world war	sweden as a transitcountry, they never had to take responsibility 4	
	As a way to become proud	becoming proud of being roma through history 1, Roma as worthy 1, Swedes do not want to recognize positive Roma history 1	
	Roma seen as incapable	Took away their children 5, non-roma have always known what's best for roma 5, not seen as the one with knowledge 7	
	Problematic to forget about history – within the group	problematic that established roma forget about how it was when they came here 1 6, established roma have forgotten that they also came here 8, intern discrimination because of forgotten history 8, it makes roma not unified 8	
CHANGES	necessary	less stigmatisation and discrimination because of ethnicity 6, a will to work together 6, proper working together 7 make demands 7 4, be visible and organise 7, unify (include eu migrants) 7 the view of stereotypes around roma needs to change 5, transparency 4, more credibility 4 history and development of competences in order to fight against racism 5, to see roma with a different pair of glasses 5, Stop forgetting Roma, start treating us like everybody else 2, Talk to Roma not about Roma 2, start seeing it as a structural problem 2, learn about history (especially non-roma) 2, To actually want for change to happen (non-roma) 2	
	Concrete	Inclusion when talking about the holocaust 6 7 8, educate better 6, employed instead of reference 4 6, journalists have to change the way they talk about roma 7, for eu migrants: clear laws in order to protect their right 8	
	citizens	Positive changes for citizens 5 7	
BEGGING PROHIBITION	Rise of right wing	Because of the rise of the right wing 2 3 5 6 8, consequence of structural discrimination 4 6	
	prejudices	Swedish people feel guilty 6, prejudices against roma beggars are ethnically specific 6, increases stigmatization 6, we don't help, we send away 4	
		begging prohibition is to brush the problem under the mat 6, begging prohibition is okay because it is roma 6, what discrimination that they do not even want to see roma 5 The question is what does Sweden want with that? 1	
		One cannot forbid poorness 4 3 1	
MALMÖ		feels more welcoming than other parts in Sweden 8, malmö has always been a more solidaric town 8, biggest roma population - so they kind of have to 6 7, in the front of the fight- we can at least talk to our politicians RIKS 7, malmö has RIKS 3, I malmö she dares to use her voice, because of more activists 2 EU Migrants: In malmö they do not exist - no help directed to them 1	

DEFENDING THE STEREOTYPES		EU-migrants are not more lazy than others 4, they are not rich 6 3 the people who beg are poor, and not criminals 1	
TO LEAVE OUT	What they say about other countries	Take in: in other countries it is clear antiziganism 6	

**THEMES:**

- Concrete Actions: Activism, Platforms and Strategies
- Power of Media
- Societal Barriers in Sweden: Othering, Silence and ‘Just in Theory’
- Missing Links to the Past
- A Space for Roma, by Roma
- Necessary Changes: The Need to Unify and to End Discrimination

## 7.9. Thematic Coding Articles

### 7.9.1. Detailed Sampling Articles

In order to triangulate my data I chose to include another method and deemed the platform *Dikko* the most suitable. *Radio Romano* is in different Romani dialects, hence, not accessible for me, and *Tehara Media's* film projects were on hold in spring 2020. Additionally, as the day of *The International Holocaust Remembrance Day* is on January the 27<sup>th</sup>, more articles were published around that date, making it possible for me to have a bigger sample on one topic. Through the search function on the *Dikko* website I could filter the articles that were concerned with the Holocaust. To limit the sample I focused on articles in 2020, which were a total number of 12 articles. To further narrow the sample, I excluded all that had less than 50 shares, leaving me with 8 articles. One of the articles is a video of a recitation of an article that was originally published in the *Expressen*, a Swedish newspaper, so instead of analyzing video, I turned to the written version.

### 7.9.2. Sources Articles

All articles are accessible via the online magazine *Dikko*. Article 5 is also accessible via the online platform of *Expressen*.

	Title/Translation/Genre	Date	Author	Newspaper
(1)	“27 januari nationella minnesdag för Förintelsens offer” / “27 January national day of remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust” - News article	15.01.2020	Britt-Inger Hedström Lundqvist	Dikko
(2)	“Om jag är flata och resande/rom spelar det någon roll?” / “If I am gay and traveler/Roma does that play a role?” - Debate article	25.01.2020	Britt-Inger Hedström Lundqvist	Dikko
(3)	“Sverige deporterade romska flyktingar till nazisterna” / “Sweden deported Romani refugees to the Nazis” - Chronicle	26.01.2020	Kim Fredriksson	Dikko
(4)	“”Om du vill överleva, gå på tå”. Låt det sjunk in en stund” / “If you want to survive, walk on your toes” - Debate Article	02.02.2020	Dusan Marinkovic	Dikko
(5)	“Varför osynliggörs den romska Förintelsen?” / “Why is the Holocaust of the Roma being made invisible?” - Debate Article	02.02.2020	Dusan Marinkovic, et al.	Expressen/ Recital in Dikko
(6)	“Intervju med utbildningsminister Anna Ekström” / “Interview with the minister of education Anna Ekström” - Interview	05.02.2020	Dusan Marinkovic	Dikko

(7)	“Förintelsen, resande/romska roster måste få höras” / “Holocaust, traveler/Romani voices must be heard” - Debate article	22.02.2020	Britt-Inger Hedström Lundqvist	Dikko
(8)	“Romska organisationer och riksförbund inleder en nationell protest mot regeringen” / “Romani organisations and national association commence a national protest against the government” - News article	24.02.2020	Signed by several Romani Organisations	Dikko

### 7.9.3. Excerpt Color Highlights

25/01/2020 – 152 *shares*,  
<http://dikko.nu/debatt-om-jag-ar-flata-och-resande-rom-spelar-det-nagon-roll/>

**Debatt | Om jag är flata och resande/rom spelar det någon roll?**

Den 27 kommer Förintelsen uppmärksammas över hela landet. Vi ser idag hur **fascismen breder ut sig** och tar sig in i etablissemangets och maktens korridorer. **Samtidigt sår och tillåter vi själva hat mellan minoriteter.** **Passivt ser vi på när människor blir påhoppade** på grund av härkomst, religion, sexuell läggning eller hudfärg.

I Förintelsen dog “sex miljoner” judar tillsammans med romer, mörkhåriga slaver, homosexuella, Jehovas vittnen, funktionshindrade och motståndsmän. Samtidigt som det judiska folket skulle förintas pågick det en **klappjakt på romer, sjntj och andra resandefolk i hela Europa.** **Romer, sjntj och andra resandefolk har inte kunnat föra sin talan på samma sätt som judarna** och är därför ofta bortglömda i sammanhanget.

Resande/romer **fråntogs sina medborgerliga rättigheter** och **förbjöds bland annat att gifta sig**

### 7.9.4. Thematic Coding Articles

While reading through the text I started to color code repeating themes that seems to come up.

**International Holocaust Remembrance Day**

**Historicity – Roma past that creates situation today- general- Racism**, but also as a way to show that Roma should be part of the Holocaust remembrance

**Historicity – Sweden Specific (What did they do) - responsibility**

**Situation today**

**Arguments for togetherness**

**Forgotten/Silence**

**Call for action!- things that should be done/are done outside of the text**

## Exclusion from the Holocaust Remembrance (Conference)

THEMES	CATEGORIES	SUB-CATEGORIES	SUB-SUB-CATEGORIES
ACTIVISM	Call for action	Attitude	Together we can make a difference 2, we cannot accept 5 6, we cannot accept a forum that promotes antiziganistic discourse by excluding us 5 6, our voices need to be heard 5 7, knowledge should be critically examined 6, to stand up for everybody's equal worth 7
		Action	Stand up for each other 2, we need to talk about this 3, we will go on the streets and protest 5 8, we want to know if we are going to be part of the conference 7, romani organisation national protest against government 8, to sign under the protest
		Demands	Give victims and survivors the dignity to at least be mentioned 4, connect Roma, antiziganism with Holocaust 4, be included in the Holocaust museum 5 7, minorities need to be the ones to talk about their history 5, conference: we want a romani delegation, time for a speech on the conference 5 8, same dignity as jews 5 6, roma need to be included in the term holocaust 6, roma part of the Stockholm declaration 6 8, make the holocaust of roma visible 7, discursive change 8
		Documentary Lindy	Ashamed for who I am, trying to keep it hidden 2
		Stadsbibliotek Romani Holocaust	To honour the victims 6 7
	Need of Togetherness	Existing hate btw minorities 2, Roma spreading hate against other minorities is like shooting themselves in the foot 2, hate between minorities harms the own peoples 2	Message to not combine pride and Roma flag 2
		Need to not be blind to one's history 2, possibility of stopping hate together 2, show that we are many 2, stand up for HR and equality 2, only together we are strong 2, together so that history does not repeat 7, together against racism 7	Hither, but no further 2
DISCRIMINATION	Situation Today	Fascism spreads 2, passivity towards discrimination 2, Experience of hate should have taught us better 2, racism is always there 2, Roma persecuted, discriminated, deprived of HR in Europe 4, state representatives do not listen to roma 6, no response to their demands 8	Materiality: called Gypsie, hit in the streets, policeregister 4

	<b>Silence</b>	Roma couldn't speak on their behalf 2, silent because of persecution and discrimination 2, children hide their identity in school 4	<p>"If you want to survive, walk on your toes" 4</p> <p>A majority cannot narrate a minority's history</p>
	<b>Exclusion from Holocaust/conference</b>	Roma are often forgotten in the context of the Holocaust 2 7, state minister does not mention Roma in his speech 2018/2019 4 5, 2020: <b>Damberg did not mention Roma under the memorial either</b> 4, Holocaust denial 4 5, The government is not planning on including us in the conference 5 6, erase the Roma victims that Hitler eradicated 5, again unsure if they are going to be included in the upcoming conference 5 6, exclusion in the term Holocaust 6, Stockholm declaration does not include Roma, no plan on including it 6 7, it is like Antiziganism does not exist 7	<p>17 382 signs and 2801 words in speech and written, but not a single one dedicated to make a connection between Roma, Antiziganism and the Holocaust 4</p> <p>Distinction btw Romani genocide and Jewish Holocaust 6 – leads to it often being forgotten</p>
<b>HISTORICALITY</b>	<b>Past creates today (~1930-1950)</b>	<p>Roma affected by the situation under WW2 1, Nürnberg laws 1, no rights for Roma under WW2 1 2, Roma seen as inferior race 1 2, Holocaust 1 2 3 4 5, persecution already before Hitler times 1, a quarter of the Romani peoples got killed during WW2 1 2 3 7, witch hunt on Roma 2, suspicion against Roma since 500 years 2, WW2: people did not act fast enough/sufficiently 2, Josef Mengele experiments on Romani children 4, cruel action of Nazis 4, History repeats 5 7, we will never forget 5, we are relatives to the ones who died 5 8</p> <p>The writing of history does not happen in a vacuum, but in a political context 6</p> <p>History wise should no distinction between genocide and Holocaust be made 6 7</p>	<p>Germany recognizes the Jewish Holocaust just as much as the Romani Holocaust 5</p> <p>Svenska Dagblad Quote? 7</p>
	<b>Sweden Specific (~1930-1950)</b>	Sweden entry ban against Roma 1 3, Red Cross buses did not take Roma from the concentration camps 1, Roma had to leave the buses in CPH and were sent back 1 3, Sweden part of the racism, not innocent 1, for the J stamp 1, a part of the cruel fate 1, thumbscrews 1, Sweden did not allow refugees to come 1 3, but allowed the Nazis to use it as a transit country 1, Sweden deported Romani refugees to the Nazis 3, Roma seen as a threat against Swedish race hygiene 3, denied speech at the Holocaust conference 2000 5 7, disgrace, Sweden apologized, does the same today 5 7	<p>While the white buses symbolize the Swedish benevolence, were Roma deported at the borders 3</p> <p>There are no excuses for how the Swedish state acted. Instead of rescuing people from the gas chamber, chose one to push them in 3</p> <p>A voice on borrowed time 5</p>

	<b>International Holocaust Remembrance Day</b>	27/01/1994 prisoners of concentration camps were released 1, 1999 national day of remembrance in Sweden 1 7, 2005 UN international day of remembrance 1, Holocaust remembrance 1 2 3 7	
--	--	--	--

## 7.10. Excerpt Creative Writing

### *Screenshot of my own writing:*

best, we needed to first make the system visible. All the powers against our cause, like the municipality, political parties, the rise of the right-wing, are exhausting to face and still keep the motivation up to come up with an efficient strategy. So in the end of the first day it just all felt very abstract and complex. I went to watch reality TV (obsessive compulsive cleaners, very entertaining) and have beers with a friend. When I woke up the next morning I felt confused and tired, not knowing what to expect from the day.

That's when I met Maria. Maria sat in front of me in the Stockholm subway, some stations before I had to get off. She was wearing the typical Roma clothing and it was clear that she was gonna ask me for money. I had my headphones in and my first instinct was to just keep them in and to not look at her, to ignore her. I was reluctant, but aware of the hypocrisy of the entire situation. Here I was, claiming to want the situation for her, but not even wanting to talk to her? Her Swedish was quite good and she was smart at getting me involved in a conversation, at making me feel at ease. She asked me what I was going to do and where I was from. She was from Bulgaria. She guessed my age, she guessed between 23 and 25. I laughed, usually nobody gets my age right. We both laughed. She is 23. The entire memory is connected to her laughing, the sun rising, the subway, the view out of the train on the canals in Stockholm between Gamla Stan and Slussen. Two women in their early 20ies meeting, both from somewhere else. So similar, and yet our situation couldn't have been any different. She spent the night before outside, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January. She was 5 months pregnant, with her third child. She was hoping to get enough money together so that she could have the child in Bulgaria, where her sister was, taking care of her two older children. She had to ask me if I could buy her breakfast. I am worried if I will get a job after having my Master's Degree. What is that compared to her uncertainties?

The second day was much easier, if yet emotionally heavier, because I had Maria in front of my eyes all the time. Because she is the reason we are doing this. She is the reason not to give up.

#### Changing Perspectives (2020/02/26)

When I went into this research I felt like it was important to only talk to EU-migrants, those that came after 2007. I reasoned that they would be different to Swedish Roma (Citizenship), that their situation is too different to compare the two groups. And practically they are, their legal status gives them very divergent premises to how they will be able to live their lives. But where they become inseparable when is when we look to fight the discrimination by Swedish people. If we look at the antigianism that permeates Swedish society we cannot try to make the situation for Swedish people better whilst potentially raising the antigianism against EU-migrants (One of the likely consequences of the begging prohibition). The degrees and forms of discrimination are very different, and they should not be disregarded, but the Roma activists are aware of that a rise of discrimination of the one means the same for the other. Which means that there has to be a more holistic approach.

This connection for me was missing before, it is a connection that the NGOs that I work with and the discourses created by the state did not make. NGOs try to not call out on the antigianism out of fear that they might offend their voters. And as it seems to be a goal of the state to get rid of EU-migrants, their inclusion in the work against antigianism would be counter-effective to their goals. But here it becomes very clear, on the example of myself, what a wrong perception is created when we do not listen to Roma themselves. They are very aware of the connection, they also know that the antigianism against Swedish Roma is far from being tackled, as they are confronted by it. I very quickly created links that I hadn't made before.

#### Small Imperfections (2020/02/27)

When I look at Dikko, I see small imperfections. I see people, I can see the anger when Dusan is writing. I can see the years of activism, the love for history when Albert is writing. I can see the academic and traveler in Britt-Inger's call for Roma to start to demand. You ask me what makes Roma's media so great? It is because it makes them human. And not because they try to evoke empathy through pity, it is because I get to see all the facets. It is less filtered. It shouldn't be surprising to me, but once I started to listen I started to see their world through their eyes. NGOs always preach that they want to humanize Roma, or other groups they focus on. But once you start to adapt stories to what you think what your Swedish audience will connect the most with, you start to filter out the human in the stories. You start to simplify, you show only certain sides. Roma that are angry and frustrated, that doesn't sell. Roma who suffer, Roma who want to work etc etc. It is always the same story. And I fell for that, I always looked at those narratives and wondered how you could do it better, I was so indoctrinated by that one story line, that I couldn't imagine anything else. When I started to discover all the platforms I was astonished by their multifacetedness, their complexities. And that's just sad, why should that be surprising? A one-sided story is easy to manipulate, because it's not believable. Aren't one sided stories the ones that enable discrimination? Isn't that discrimination already in itself? The assumptions you put one person just because of their ethnicity? The stories that we get indoctrinated, the assumptions, the boxes we put people in. An a person who is Roma has to fight a lot harder to not be put in a box. We all deserve a chance to write or own narrative.

#### Prejudices

I feel prejudices vanish, they just disappear.

Before I sometimes had thoughts that definitely were prejudiced, then I had to correct them in my head, that I shouldn't think that way. Now they just don't come up anymore. I realize that when I talk to other people and they say something prejudiced and I get surprised that they think that way. But I could have thought that way before, but I don't anymore. It's a relief to see that we can unlearn such things. I always feel so guilty when I have to confront my own prejudices, but I am relieved right now to see that they are not static, but that they can actually be unlearned. It's a process with no end, we should never stop unlearning prejudices.

#### 02/03/2020

I suddenly stopped to doubt if the strategies implemented were right or Wrong. When working with NGOs I was Always unsure if we are really doing the right thing. With this strategy, arent we maybe damaging the ones we try to protect? Is our strategy misguided. I was working on hunches. I don't have that when I look at what Romani are demanding. Being acknowledged at the Holocaust convention makes complete sense.

#### 06/05/2020

As a non-Roma they show me where the system that I do take for granted has faults. It shows me which of my assumptions are built on prejudices. I have unlearned so much under this process and will never look at Europe, and in particular Sweden, in the same way as I did before. It is a system that coerces minorities into positions where they are oppressed. It is a system of racism and capitalism that I do not want to align myself with, and where I now have a much deeper knowledge on where the actual flaws are sitting: I can put a finger on the structural discrimination if Roma, one that seemed so elusive to me before. I felt I was working with hunches that it's there, but couldn't quite argue for it. But when I look at the interviews it becomes so much more tangible!