



Roma, Romanian, European: A Media Framed Battle over Identity

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Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines
<http://cadaad.net/journal>
Vol. 5 (2): 102 – 119
ISSN: 1752-3079

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Abstract

The enlargement of the European Union towards Central and Eastern Europe, the profound transformations throughout the EU member-states, old and new, and the recent financial and economic crisis have led to a resurgence of discrimination and new racism, affecting in particular migrants. The paper looks at the reactions occasioned in the Romanian public space by the Italian and French measures against Romani immigrants, among whom there is a large number of Romanian Roma. It employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodology (argumentation schemes, intertextuality) to explore a press campaign targeted at policy change for the purpose of preventing the ethnonym-based confusion between 'Roma' and 'Romanian'. The media articles are significant on two levels: the role of the media in policy deliberations and the dynamic and strategic construal of collective identities. The findings indicate, first, that the arguments put forward by the newspaper are not rationally persuasive and, second, that the discursive configuration of collective identities gives prominence to a nationalist discourse of Romanian (national) identity. At the same time, a disempowered view of the 'Gypsy' ethno-cultural identity is highlighted, oscillating between negative stereotypes and positive, romanticised ones.

Key words: discrimination, policy-making, media argumentation, deliberative rhetoric, collective identity construction, Romanian Roma

1. Introduction

After the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, the 'Roma problem' has been constantly raised in European politics and has acquired a well-established place on the agenda of a rapidly expanding European public sphere. The latest wave of Eastern enlargement of the European Union, which marked the integration of Romania and Bulgaria (January 2007), brought along two major political and cultural crises involving EU nationals of Romani origin, one in Italy, in the fall of 2007, and the other in France, in the summer of 2010. The two crises entailed a series of similar measures being introduced by the respective states (expulsion of the illegal Roma, dismantling of their camps, fingerprinting), whereby questionable limits were set to the freedom of movement of EU citizens, as well as other freedoms and rights. Needless to say, such measures, on the fringes of legality from the viewpoint of EU treaties and conventions, fit well

into the general picture of xenophobic resurgence and populist political strategies (Wodak et al. 2009), exacerbated at present by the ongoing economic and financial crisis.

As the state with the largest Romani minority in Europe (535,250 at the 2002 census, but unofficially assessed at around 2 million; see also Ringold et al. 2005: 22), Romania inevitably found itself in the midst of each of the two crises. The repatriation of a large number of Romanian Roma and the popular backlash against law-abiding Romanian migrants (in particular in Italy) reopened the issue of the status of Romanian citizens in the European Union and exerted unprecedented pressure on the Romanian authorities to protect their rights and to address the 'Roma problem' in a satisfactory manner. In the absence of an immediate, successful resolution of a most complex, deep-running crisis, Romanian society was plunged into a climate of enhanced insecurity and dissatisfaction, incompatible with the hopes it had attached to EU accession. A common reaction in the past, the scapegoating of the Roma and the attempt to dissociate Romanians from their negative image, re-occurred with renewed strength, on the backdrop of an official response lacking in substance and efficiency.

In the present article, I critically examine the involvement in this prolonged crisis of a Romanian broadsheet of large circulation, the *Jurnalul Național* (hereafter *JN*), which in the spring of 2009 set out to gather signatures for a bill proposal that would replace the ethnonym 'Roma' with that of 'țigan' in official documents. The newspaper suggested this course of action as the best available means for repairing the damage done to Romania's image in the European Union, allegedly caused by the confusion between the names 'Roma' and 'Romanian'. During an approximately one-month press campaign, *JN* engaged in a 'deliberative rhetoric' (Walton 2007) about its proposed solution that ultimately reinforced the cleavage between a (national) Romanian identity and a (minority) Romani one, each premised on specific ethno-cultural elements. The discursive practices through which this was achieved may be considered a classic illustration of the media construal of collective identities (Triandafylidou and Wodak 2003; Van Dijk 2000; Wodak et al. 2009): an in-group ('us'), identifiable through a number of shared features (origin, language, history, tradition), is straightforwardly pitched against an out-group ('them'), also constituted around similarities, but distinct from the in-group and often subjected to 'othering'.

The *JN* campaign carries implications for both policy-making and identity construction. In the realm of political action, it bears significance in terms of the power the media possess to shape and sway public opinion on a particular course of action, especially in crisis circumstances (Franklin 1999). In the realm of identity formation, it reveals the relational, context-dependent, interactive, and flexible nature of collective identities: 'there is essentially no such thing as *one* national identity, but rather [that] *different* identities are discursively constructed according to context, that is according to the audience to which they are addressed, the setting of the discursive act, the topic being discussed etc.' (Triandafylidou and Wodak 2003: 213). This understanding, while contrasting sharply with the traditional interpretation of ethno-cultural group identities as static and permanent, is well-suited even in those situations, such as the present one, where a well-established set of core

characteristics holds centrality in the constitution of a collective identity (who the 'Romanians' or who the 'Roma' are). The media framed negotiation of ethnic and national identities betrays precisely the openness of these categories to the selective inclusion or exclusion of new elements, such as 'Europeanness', and the strategic nature of their reification in identity politics. The new (extreme) right, racist attitudes in Europe contribute to the reinforcement of a national Romanian identity orientated towards Western values, while a long-standing history of discrimination and abuse, in Romania and in the rest of Europe, lays the ground for the construction of the 'Roma' as part of their fight for group rights.

In what follows, I discuss the meaning and the political significance of the appellations 'țigan' and 'Roma', and situate the newspaper campaign in the context of post-communist transformations in the Romanian public space. I then present the selected corpus and the CDA methodology employed, and I discuss my findings through the prism of the role of the media in public deliberation and of its potential impact on identity formation and identity politics.

2. The Context: Ethnonyms, Policy-making and the New Mission of Romanian Journalists

The ethnonyms commonly employed in Europe to refer to the Roma, whether variants of 'Tsingani' or 'Egyptian' (etymologically derived from *Aigyptos* (Gr.) or *Athínganos* (Gr.)), are exterior labels reflecting the view of the majority populations with which the Romani travellers came into contact. They confirm the existence of power relations that, in the past, relegated the Roma to an inferior status and made them the object of prejudice, racism, and subjugation. Scholars in Romani studies provide explanations of the introduction in use of these ethnonyms, misnomers from the viewpoint of the Roma, and highlight the negative connotations they possess. Special emphasis is placed on the ignorance of the Romani origin and culture, and on the practices of discrimination behind such labels, which have circulated since their arrival in Europe (Crowe 1991: 149; Hancock 2002).

'Țigani' is the Romanian form (plural, masculine) of the Greek *Athínganos* or *Atsínganos*, which they acquired during their stay in the Byzantine Empire, presumably after the name of a heretical sect with a similar lifestyle (Achim 2004: 9; Fraser 2010: 56; see also Reisigl and Wodak 2001: 68-9). The word was first attested in 1068 in a Georgian hagiographic text where *Adsincani* designated a group of sorcerers and evil doers, and then later, for example in the thirteenth century, in a letter of the Patriarch Gregorios Kyprios (1283-89), concerned with 'taxes to be collected from so-called Egyptians and Athínganos' (Achim 2004: 9; Fraser 2010: 56-7; opinions are divided about the first attestation of the word). The meaning of the ethnonym is 'don't touch' or 'hands off' people and, according to Hancock (2002: 1), it finds justification in the Romani habit of keeping a distance from non-Romani people, perceived as impure. In Romanian culture, the term is imbued with negative and pejorative undertones and can be encountered with reference to anyone whose behaviour is judged to be inappropriate, irrespective of their ethnic origin

(Crowe 1991: 73). During the time that the Roma were slaves in the Romanian Principalities, it also came to mean 'slave' (Achim 2004: 29).

The appellative denominations of 'Roma' (masculine noun, plural) and 'Romani' (adjective) are connected with the Romani movement for national and international affirmation of their ethnic identity, with their ethnogenesis and fight for rights and reparation (Achim 2004: 215; see also Vermeersch 2006). Traced back to the interwar period (Achim 2004: 157), the movement continued and gained strength after World War II. The term 'Roma' was officially adopted by the community during the First World Romani Congress of 1971, when appellations such as 'Tsiganes' or 'Gypsies' were rejected (O'Nions 2007: 4, note 21). Unlike 'Gypsy' or 'Tsigane', 'Roma' mirrors a process of self-identification and political mobilisation. It is a Romani word (meaning 'married Romani male' or 'husband', Hancock 2002: xix), which does not carry the negative connotations and stigmas of the other ethnonyms in use, and is intended to construe an image of the ethnic group that would be 'more positive, more neutral, and less romanticised' (Vermeersch 2006: 13). In Europe, the 'Roma' achieved recognition and group rights in the 1990s, as a result of intense lobbying and policy-making under the aegis of identity politics (Vermeersch 2006: 192ff.). At the time, Romanian politicians were deeply preoccupied with the similarity it bore with the ethnonym 'Romanian' and the confusion it might create in the international arena. The term 'Roma' was introduced in official Romanian documents in the year 2000, through a memorandum (D2/1094/29.02.2000). This was done under pressure from the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and various international NGOs, in light of the conditions for Romania's EU membership candidacy, which included the request to grant full protection and rights to minorities.

The *JN* campaign, targeted at a change of policy believed to be 'in the best interests of Romanians' (dissociated from the Roma), is not in itself new or special. The suggestion to replace the politically correct term 'Roma' with the 'traditional' one of 'țigan' has become a kneejerk reaction to almost every major image problem Romania has been confronted with before and after its EU integration. Shannon Woodcock (2007) discusses at length the causes, effects and implications of similar responses and attitudes in the Romanian public sphere in the year 2002, when France threatened Romania with the reintroduction of visas. Thus she concludes:

As international criticism was directed towards Romanians as unwelcome invaders of Western Europe spaces and markets, Romanians dealt with a feared refutation of their European identity by claiming that Europe misrecognized Țigani (Roma) as Romanians. This interpretation was disseminated in the media, and blamed the stereotypical Țigan Other for actions that were contrary to the European image of Romania as naturally belonging to the West. (Woodcock 2007: 515)

Contrary to EU integration expectations, not only have the problematic aspects identified by Woodcock carried over into the post-accession period, but they even escalated. The solution of replacing 'Roma' with 'țigani' (or other appellative denominations that have a neutral meaning, such as 'Indo-Roma') is placed periodically on the Romanian public agenda. What I find of particular concern about the *JN* campaign is the unavoidable association of a quality newspaper with populist initiatives that smack of discrimination and

even racism, two years after Romania's accession to the European Union. While the newspaper has a nationalist agenda, prominent especially in the past, it would be an easy way out to simply dismiss it as nationalistic, not least in view of its considerable contribution to a pluralist public sphere in the post-communist period. Its action needs to be situated against the background of profound transformations in and of the Romanian public space, pertaining to the Europeanisation of media institutions, practices, and relations, and to a redefinition of the role assumed by Romanian journalists (Beciu 2007a, 2007b; Beciu et al. 2009). In this respect, Beciu (2007a) points to the emergence of a civic, militant identity of Romanian journalists, linked with a deliberative media discourse around various EU integration topics of general public interest. In the context of the campaign discussed here, the negative attitudes against Romanian migrants in certain EU member-states added a new dimension to the civic undertaking of Romanian journalists, as explained below.

The period immediately before Romania's accession in 2007 was characterised by intense media involvement in the reshaping and the repositioning of a Romanian collective identity in relation to EU values and norms. This active process of identity reconstruction, during which journalists embraced the public role of catalysts of the newly forged Romanian identity, became integral to the strategies of framing various EU-related topics. Press campaigns, with a civic and commercial component, were led for the purposes of rediscovering the 'authentic' Romanian values and role-models, and for rallying public opinion in support of a new hierarchy of values (Beciu 2007a; Beciu et al. 2009). One of *JN*'s distinctive features is its section dealing with the national history in the interwar period and during communism, focused on everyday practices, and the reassessment thereof in connection with Romania's present-day history and Europeanisation (Beciu 2007b). The derailments in the *JN* campaign I analyse in this paper have to be seen as undesirable developments of such (legitimate) transformations, accentuated by the unfavourable depiction of both Romani and Romanian migrants in various European media. The excesses in the national rediscovery in this case also need to be balanced against the absence of other types of (efficient) political action, and explained through the increased responsibility weighing on the journalists' shoulders to compensate for this lack.

More than an awareness-raising campaign, the campaign 'From Romani to țigan' was geared, as noted earlier, to policy change. In this sense, the newspaper took on the function of watchdog for the interests of citizens in a democratic state (Franklin 1999), which ties in with the type of deliberative journalism introduced above. In the practice of policy-making, this position can be further complicated by political and economic pressures, such as possible interference from (and complicity with) various interest groups, political parties and government representatives, and, on a different level, marketing imperatives (Franklin 1999; Richardson 2007). As a result, a careful contextual analysis is necessary to assess the type of media involvement in a given situation. *JN* purports to mobilise, and thus empower, Romanian citizens to make use of their constitutional right to put forward a bill proposal before the Parliament, provided that 100,000 signatures are raised (the legal condition). In the face of a worsening international situation for Romania and of little governmental efficiency in dealing with it, *JN* claims

to create an appropriate space for Romanian citizens to take action and promises 'a rational and balanced approach to the campaign' (*JN*, March 5, 2009). Taking this commendable aim as a point of departure, several questions need to be asked:

Is the rhetorical force of the campaign texts put in the service of the best possible course of action for all Romanian citizens and for Romania as an EU member-state? Are the arguments presented rationally persuasive? Is the construal of national and minority collective identities, through the discourses drawn upon by *JN*, in accordance with EU democratic, multicultural ideals, as the newspaper contends?

3. Corpus and Methodology

3.1 Corpus

My corpus is a small one, comprising 20 articles published by *JN* between March 2 and April 9, 2009; they represent all the campaign texts made available in the newspaper's online archives. The texts have a predominantly argumentative structure and encompass the voices of a wide array of news participants, invited to express their views about the proposed course of action: political elites (Romanian and Romani politicians and leaders), governmental and non-governmental organisations, experts (linguists, sociologists, anthropologists), and ordinary Romanian and Romani citizens – vox populi.

At the time of the campaign, in 2009, *JN* recorded the fourth highest readership rate after two tabloids and another quality newspaper which I estimate to be closer to a mid-market in the topics covered and style (the ranking is based on the data provided by the Bureau for National Circulation Audit). The campaign failed in its attempt to gather the necessary number of signatures. It was, however, picked up in 2010 by a Romanian MP, Silviu Prigoană, and at that point it enjoyed enough support from the population and various institutions and organisations to be brought before the Parliament. It was eventually rejected in February 2011.

3.2 Methodology

In keeping with my theoretical framing of the research object and with my overall aim to critically examine the newspaper's involvement in policy deliberations and identity construal, I employed CDA methodology. CDA seeks to offer scientific explanations for problematic aspects of social phenomena (relations of power and domination, naturalisation of ideologies, etc.) through the study of semiosis, which it views as an integral component of social life at the level of structures, practices, and events (Fairclough 2003, 2009; see also Fairclough and Wodak 1997; Fairclough et al. 2004; Wodak and Meyer 2009). Within this frame, media discourse is seen as being shaped by and as shaping media practices, in a professional and organisational context, and social practices, in a wider social, political, and cultural context. Media texts are instances of discursive practices of media production and consumption, which are constrained by the economic, political and ideological

practices wherein they are embedded (Richardson 2007; see also Fairclough 1995). However, these can also be (radically) altered in the course of media production and consumption. When analysed from a CDA perspective, the linguistic features of journalistic texts need to be considered in relation to the social practices outside the texts and explored in terms of the interactions between journalists, politicians, opinion leaders, and active audiences, and, more generally, in terms of mediation processes and governance issues (Richardson 2007; see also Fowler 1991; Fairclough 1995, 2003). I have presented the media practices relevant for this case study and the Romanian context of the *JN* campaign in the previous section.

Starting from the declared objective of the campaign – deliberation on policy-making – I employed two main analytical tools: argumentation schemes, in particular value-based practical reasoning (since the main goal of the texts is to stir readers into endorsing a course of action), and intertextuality and interdiscursivity. A comprehensive framework for the CDA investigation of political discourse in the light of practical reasoning is being developed by Fairclough and Fairclough (2012 forthcoming). I base my analysis here on one of their published articles in which this framework is introduced (see Fairclough and Fairclough 2011) and on Walton's approach to media argumentation, rooted in informal logic (2007; Walton et al. 2008; see also discussion in Fairclough and Fairclough 2011). Speaking from an Aristotelian position that reconciles rhetoric and dialectic, Walton posits that arguments that use 'rhetorically effective techniques to persuade a mass audience' (2007: 1) are not inherently fallacious (the argumentation schemes in this category include, for example, practical reasoning, *argumentum ad hominem*, the argument from expert opinion, the argument from popular opinion, etc.). They are 'defeasible' or 'presumptive' arguments, which may be accepted as reasonable, but may also be proven to be fallacious or unreasonable, by using a 'dialogue model' to examine their underlying cognitive structure, the same for both rhetorical and dialectical arguments (Walton 2007: 4ff.).

Successful arguments are therefore expected to be 'rationally persuasive', i.e. to stand up to a series of critical questions that may be asked by a respondent challenging their premises and conclusion, questions that are different for each argumentative scheme (for a detailed presentation, see Walton et al. 2008). In the pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation, rational persuasion is captured by the notion of 'strategic manoeuvring', which is 'directed at diminishing the potential tension between jointly pursuing the "dialectical" aim of reasonableness and the "rhetorical" aim of effectiveness' (Van Eemeren 2009: 82; see also Iețcu-Fairclough 2008; Richardson 2007). The difficulty with media argumentation comes from the fact that journalists address, directly or indirectly, a mass audience who does not have the possibility to formulate a response right away. According to Walton (2007), the dialogue model in media argumentation requires the media to engage in 'simulative reasoning' (premised, for example, on opinion polls or readers' feedback), so as to incorporate in their arguments answers to a wide range of points that the audience might raise and to address all their commitments and values. If it fails to take into account objections and alternative standpoints, argumentation is weak or fallacious.

In my interpretation of the data, I evaluate arguments from the viewpoint of rational persuasiveness. The strengths of this approach derive from the acceptability it confers to rhetorical arguments and from the integration of emotions and values in argumentation (for a fuller description of the relevance of this framework for CDA, see Fairclough and Fairclough 2011: 262-3). It thus corresponds to a mode of deliberation which, while broadly compatible with the Habermasian norms of communicative rationality (Bickenbach and Davies 1998, qtd. in Fairclough and Fairclough 2011: 246), also accommodates (rational) persuasion and lends itself well to the new realities of the public space and engaged journalistic practices (see previous section). In my analysis, I do not discard media rhetoric in public policy-making as inherently fallacious; however, while acknowledging the fact that it can be put in the service of the best course of action, I interrogate the reasonableness of the arguments put forward.

The other analytical tool used, intertextuality, covers, when viewed in a broad sense, both interdiscursivity, *i.e.* the articulation in texts of discourses, styles, and genres, and intertextuality more narrowly defined as the degree of presence of other voices in texts (ranging from dialogicality to non-dialogicality or assumption-making), and their framing (Fairclough 2003; see also Reisigl and Wodak 2001; Richardson 2007). Intertextuality indicates the openness of news articles to a multitude of diverging opinions and distinct worldviews. One of the strategies the media can resort to is to merely create the impression of openness by using formats that seem favourable to debate and polemic, or by framing the voices incorporated in the coverage in a way that keys the readers into particular interpretations of the events (Fairclough 1995, 2003; Richardson 2007). As Richardson notes, ‘a piece could be “objective”, because it has included competing factors or perspectives, and yet still privilege a white male point of view because of the way journalism places more importance on certain factors’ (2007: 46). In the second part of my analysis, I look at the discourses where the premises of the main arguments originate, and at their distribution and configuration in the *JN* articles.

4. Analysis and Findings

4.1 Discussion of Argumentation Schemes

The overarching argumentation scheme, the one that frames the entire campaign and subsequent discussions and opinion clashes, takes the form of value-based practical reasoning, with a shift of emphasis on the proposal itself, rather than on deliberation about the best course of action in pursuit of the envisaged goal. The goal can be summed up as the improvement of Romania’s negative image in the European Union, by cleansing it from any associations with the negative stereotypes and the accusations formulated against the Roma. The scheme is spelled out in some detail in the first campaign article, available online on March 2, 2009:

The *Jurnalul Național* proposes a bill for the reintroduction of the word *țigan* (Gypsy) instead of *rom* (Roma), both nationally and internationally, so as to avoid the confusion between this ethnic group and Romanians. Our initiative is all the more justified as the crimes perpetrated by *țigani* ethnics in Italy or other

Western states have led to the unfortunate confusion *rom/român* (Roma/Romanian), casting an anathema over the entire Romanian people.

The intensification of the crimes committed by *țigani* in Italy and not only, as well as the connection between such deeds and the Romanian people, portrayed as a people of rapists and thieves, has a negative impact not only on the image of our country, but on the well-intentioned Romanians who go abroad to make an honest penny. We witness the paradox of Romania no longer being, in the eyes of the foreign press, the country of Nadia Comăneci, Brâncuși or George Enescu, a country of outstanding beauty and tradition, but a land of barbarians, who steal, rape and attack people. And it all starts from a confusion of terms, *romi/români*, terms which in other languages, such as Italian – *rom-romeno* – are very similar, so differences are erased in the collective mind and the two words become synonyms. (Antoniou 2009, my translation)

To reconstruct the chief argument, I used the argumentation scheme for practical reasoning proposed by Fairclough and Fairclough, developed from Walton's, but different in several respects (added premises, different position assigned to the values premise, etc.; see their discussion in 2011: 248; 256-7). I replaced 'Values' in their scheme with 'Commitments', so as to avoid any confusion with the values implicit in other premises I identified (for example 'Circumstances') and to highlight the rational dimension of values (see Sayer 2005). The reconstruction below also includes some ideas advanced in other *JN* articles, which complete the practical reasoning outlined at the beginning of the campaign:

Claim	The right thing to do is to officially replace the term 'Roma' with that of 'țigan'.
Circumstances	The confusion between the [criminal] 'Roma' and 'Romanians' 'has a negative impact not only on the image of our country, but on the well-intentioned Romanians who go abroad to make an honest penny.'
Goals	To remove the 'anathema' cast on the Romanian people in the European Union / [expressed in other articles] To benefit both the Romanians and the 'țigani' by restoring the (historical, linguistic, cultural) 'truth'.
Commitments/ Concerns	[expressed in other articles] Commitment to tradition, linguistic accuracy, historical accuracy, fairness, self-determination (i.e. control over one's collective identity and name).
Means-Goal	If we substitute the name of 'țigan' for that of 'Roma', we will put an end to the confusion which damages Romania's image abroad.
Cost-Benefit	[expressed in other articles] If we did nothing, the confusion would persist and Romania's image problem would get worse./ If we did nothing, the 'țigani' would unfairly profit from taking on the Romanian identity.

Walton suggests a set of five critical questions for the evaluation of practical reasoning argumentation schemes:

1. Are there alternative courses of action apart from *B*?
2. Is *B* the best (or most acceptable) among the alternatives?
3. Should goals other than *A* be considered?
4. Is it really possible to bring about *B*, in the situation?
5. What bad consequences of bringing about *B* should be taken into account?
(Walton 2007: 354; see also discussion in Fairclough and Fairclough 2011: 261)

One of the problems plaguing the *JN* campaign, which immediately becomes visible through the lens of these critical questions, is the drastic limitation of deliberations to only two courses of action: the proposed change of ethnonyms or no action at all. This has the undesirable effect of polarising society between two ‘camps’, and their respective interests, and of channelling their commitments along an artificial ‘either (Romanian) – or (Roma)’ division. It is true that ethnonyms, as forms of introduction of the ‘who’ in collective identity, as the outer layers of ‘who we are’, have significant symbolic capital attached. Nevertheless, improving Romania’s perception in the European Union goes far beyond a question of ethnonyms. One might reasonably wonder, for example, whether instead of replacing one ethnonym with another, as a means of engaging in (retaliating against?) identity politics, a solution to Romania’s image crisis does not lie in enhanced lobbying for the rights and freedoms of *all* Romanian citizens in the European Union, and in addressing more efficiently the serious social and economic difficulties that constitute push factors for the most disadvantaged categories in Romanian society. People in such categories may end up committing crimes at home and abroad, irrespective of their ethnicity, and this situation could indeed be tackled on a European scale by identifying better strategies for redressing poverty and social inequality. Furthermore, while it is theoretically possible to change Romanian legislation and bring about the proposed action, it is not possible for Romania to change international legislation (even if it may try). It is to be expected, then, that the suggested course of action will fall short of clearing up the Roma/Romanian confusion, should this matter be as serious as the newspaper claims, and that it would contravene EU norms of political correctness and anti-discrimination. A significant point about who is entitled to make recommendations about ethnonyms, and under what circumstances, is made by Reisigl and Wodak, who point out that such decisions ‘must always be left to [...] those persons to whom the anthroponyms refer, whether they are heteronyms or autonoms’ (2001: 69).

In light of these weaknesses, it is hardly surprising that the newspaper devotes great energy and space to buttressing the circumstantial premise about the reality and gravity of the confusion at issue, and to presenting arguments that counteract possible objections related to political correctness and acceptability. Below I present an excerpt (one of several) intended to arouse emotions, concerns and fears, including the feeling of being under threat, and

to intensify the sense of urgency behind the proposal. The example is a full argument from negative consequences, which both constitutes evidence for and supports the principal claim of the campaign:

Ion Antonescu [former Secretary of Culture] recounts an incident he witnessed during a flight, which involved two Romanians, husband and wife: ‘A Romanian family (husband and wife) were unlucky enough to be seated on different rows. We were on an AirFrance plane and my friend kindly asked his neighbour, in French, to swap places. Before answering, the Frenchman asked him where he was from. When he was told Romania, he said, ‘Ah, Roma? (Ah, *țigani?*)’, and refused to swap places. I’m sure things would have been different, had it been about some other country,’ says Antonescu. He points out that if the word *țigan* is not reintroduced in use, what happened on that plane will happen again in the future and all Romanians will be taken for *țigani*. However, Antonescu adds that there is no blame attached to being *țigan* and that as soon as ‘they start doing their duty and obeying the law, like any other European citizen, there will be no difference between Romanian and *țigan*.’ (Dimitriu 2009, my translation)

Arguments from negative consequences and from fear appeals are widely used in the media. They have a practical reasoning underlying structure (in the sense that a solution is offered for an existing problem) and therefore are likely to appear reasonable to audiences (Walton 2007: 148-9). In certain cases, they may be entirely reasonable. Nonetheless, before accepting the conclusions of such arguments, there are a number of ‘escape routes’ available to the respondent (Walton 2007: 148-9). Here, for example, readers may question whether the confusion does take place on a general level, and whether it is the main cause of discrimination against Romanians. Equally, they may not feel threatened by it, or they may envisage other courses of action or goals to cope with the problem, as previously discussed. The newspaper, however, does not take into account any of these possibilities.

The argumentation schemes spread throughout my corpus contain premises of several types (factual, empirical, value-based, etc.), in support of the final conclusion that the ethnonym ‘*țigan*’ is correct (linguistically, historically, culturally) and/or acceptable, which grants legitimacy to the action proposed by *JN*. Space limitations do not allow for a full reconstruction of the arguments here, but below I list some of the recurrent premises in the articles (rephrased in my own words where not in inverted commas). They belong to a variety of argumentation schemes (see Walton et al. 2008), which I mention in brackets, and are repeated, in slightly modified forms, in the course of the entire campaign:

‘...the term “*țigan*” has been predominant over the centuries. Cuza [Romanian ruler] emancipated the “*țigani*”, Aman painted their emancipation, Ioan Budai-Deleanu wrote “*Țiganiada*” [“The Gypsy Epic”] and the Phoenix band delight their fans by singing the “Little *Țiganiada*”.’ (Scarlat 2009, my translation; **argument from tradition**)

‘The word has a special flavour, when you say Gypsy music (*muzică țigăneasă*), Gypsy customs (*obiceiuri țigănești*)... think what Romani music or Romani food sound like!’ (reader’s opinion, qtd. in Antoniu 2009, my translation; **argument from tradition**)

‘It doesn’t make sense to impose upon the Romanian language an appellative that comes from an ethnic language: we call French people French, not “Français”; we call Germans German, not “Deutsch”; we call Belgians Belgian, not “Belges” and so on...’ (George Pruteanu, Romanian linguist, qtd. in Mihalcea and Piciu 2009, my translation; **argument from expert opinion**)

‘The “țigani” are not embarrassed to be called “țigani”, these problems are manufactured, just as they are in the Hungarian case.’ (Silviu Prigoană, Romanian politician, qtd. in Piciu 2009, my translation; **argument from popular opinion and analogy**)

‘In Spain, the “tribes” of “Gitanos” don’t seem to be too affected by their old name.’ (Cires 2009, my translation; **argument from analogy**)

‘Italian newspapers, which had adopted the term *rom* for several years, have lately returned to the traditional word *zingari* (*țigani*). This term had stopped being considered politically correct due to its negative connotations.’ (Piciu 2009, my translation; **argument from authority and analogy**)

British newspapers use the word ‘Gypsy’. (Aldea 2009, my translation; **argument from authority and analogy**)

The ‘țigani’ do not call themselves ‘Roma’ in everyday interactions. (**argument from pragmatic inconsistency**)

The ‘țigani’ leaders and politicians fail to use the word ‘Roma’ consistently. (**argument from pragmatic inconsistency/inconsistent commitment**)

A widespread characteristic of the *JN* argumentation strategies is that, regardless of the initial source of the premises, most of them are embedded in and cut across both arguments from expert opinion and arguments from popular opinion, so that a consensus on the matter seems to emerge. Arguments from expert opinion have superior claims to epistemic authority when compared to arguments from popular opinion, which are quite weak (Walton 2007). Their combination, however, produces what Walton calls a ‘bolstering’ effect, to the point that their acceptability is significantly enhanced (Walton 2007: 210).

A close interrogation of the premises enumerated above, which do not exhaust all the premises and the argumentation schemes included in the campaign, demonstrates that the arguments under discussion are not rationally persuasive. If we take the arguments from tradition and popular opinion, for example, *JN* fails to accept the burden of proof for points that could lead to the refutation of the claims initially made. Thus, the centuries-old ‘tradition’ (linguistic, historical, cultural) which presumably confirms the correctness of ‘țigani’ is a predominantly Romanian tradition, and the status of the Romani population within it cannot be neatly disentangled from almost five centuries of slavery and the Holocaust (see Achim 2004), or from everyday practices of discrimination that have become naturalised and ossified. The newspaper’s commitments to self-determination, linguistic accuracy, or historical truth, assumed to coincide with the readers’ commitments and values, stem from the one-sided position of a Romanian tradition that mistreated or excluded the Roma. The newspaper’s strategy for coping with this downside is to emphasise the positive stereotypes this tradition associates with the Romani ethnicity

(good singers, good craftsmen, etc.). I shall return to this aspect in the next subsection.

Moving on to the arguments from pragmatic inconsistency and from inconsistent commitment, the fact that the Roma call themselves ‘*țigani*’, that the ethnonym appears as a cultural brand (food, festivals, etc.), or that some of the Romani representatives use it to refer to themselves and to their ethnic group on the whole, may have several explanations. None of them, however, supports the conclusion that the appellative ‘*țigani*’ is ‘correct’ or ‘acceptable’. The everyday use of the word by the Roma may be due to an internalisation of the discriminatory practices they have been subjected to for centuries, or to a misunderstanding of its pejorative implications (especially by the Roma who do no longer speak Romanes). Romani leaders may choose to employ the word ‘*țigan*’ as a means of protest, in order to draw attention to the injustice suffered by the Romani people, or out of a sense of pride in the struggles and achievements of the Roma over time (see also Reisigl and Wodak 2001: 69). Finally, some of the Romani NGOs may insist on preserving this appellative denomination because they do not see the benefits in taking a group rights approach instead of a socio-economic integration one (Vermeersch 2006). Whichever the case, as members of the ethnic community in question, the Roma have priority in deciding how to call themselves.

The arguments from analogy with attitudes towards and treatment of the Roma in the Western European press or with the situation of the Roma in Western European states are particularly compelling. They possess a special rhetorical force, culturally explicable by the unfaltering Romanian admiration for Western/EU values and norms: ‘If they use the term, surely it must be all right for us to use it, as well’. Again, *JN* does not dwell upon a series of relevant factors. Spanish Gypsies, for example, who no longer speak the Romani language, and who are better situated than Eastern European Roma in terms of rights, do not perceive this ethnonym as pejorative (Oleaque 2011). At the time of the *JN* campaign, the Italian press had given in to right-wing excesses and xenophobia and could hardly be elevated to the position of role-model (in other articles, *JN* does not miss the opportunity to stress the distance it takes from racist practices). Moreover, the Western European press in general, especially the newspapers with conservative readerships, displayed a pronounced tendency against economic migration from poorer EU member-states (as signalled by *JN* on other occasions), and did not step back from using negative stereotypes to portray migrants.

In my analysis of the argumentation schemes employed by *JN*, I started from the understanding that deliberative rhetoric is not automatically fallacious – as may be assumed from a negative view of rhetoric – and that it is possible (and acceptable) to use an argument in order to persuade others that a certain course of action is right (a situation frequently encountered in the media), provided that the argument is kept open for the purpose of identifying the best course of action for all the parties involved. As shown above, the *JN* arguments are not rationally persuasive, since they fall short of reflecting and addressing a wide range of standpoints and commitments. It is true that the opinions of the Romani and human rights organisations, and of other Romanians who opposed the campaign, were expressed in the newspaper (e.g. a press release from the National Council against Discrimination, the

viewpoint of Romani leaders, a protest signed by 33 Romanian academics, a retraction from a Romanian sociologist, etc.). Nevertheless, *JN* did not modify its line of argumentation as a result of engaging with such opinions, nor did it accept that its claim had been successfully refuted. Its main response was to agree with the National Council against Discrimination, by resorting to disclaimers and establishing its credibility as ‘a true friend of the țigani’ (based on the newspaper’s past actions), and to use arguments from inconsistent commitment against the Romani representatives. The campaign is a perfect illustration of ‘derailed’ strategic manoeuvring (Van Eemeren 2009: 84), aimed at legitimising the perpetuation of a Romanian national identity that marginalises the Roma, and the maintenance of the latter in a position of disempowerment. It does eventually fail at its task, which confirms the existence of discerning audiences, animated by different values and commitments. Yet, it creates fertile ground for the campaign to be subsequently picked up again, and it brings the debate to the centre of the mainstream public sphere.

4.2 Intertextuality and Interdiscursivity

The campaign articles draw upon two main, opposing discourses, through which a particular Romanian collective identity and a particular Romani identity are construed and negotiated. The premises in support of the campaign’s principal claims and conclusion tap into a discourse that represents Romanianness as fully tuned in to European values and norms of civilised behaviour (‘we’ are not thieves, rapists, bullies, beggars), and committed to a long historical tradition that consecrates it among other European nations. It is a collective identity that proclaims the right to self-determination for itself, but paradoxically denies it for other ethnic groups. The Roma are welcomed into the construct only as ‘țigani’ (to mark symbolic borders) and on condition that they can demonstrate a similar commitment to the values embraced by Romanians, and, implicitly, EU citizens. Ironically enough, this position aligns Romania with other European nations that seek to reaffirm their national identities by excluding migrants and fuelling racist attitudes (see Reisigl and Wodak 2001; Wodak et al. 2009). A more positive outcome, what the newspaper strategically aims for, can be considered the promotion of a ‘Gypsy’ identity built around positive, ‘romantic(ised)’ stereotypes: good singers and dancers, good craftsmen, travellers, etc. In other words, the ‘țigani’ have many positive cultural values, acknowledged by the Romanians, and there is no need for them to redefine themselves as ‘Roma’. This *JN* objective remains, however, undesirable, as it may prevent the Roma from demanding reparation, equality, and justice.

The opposing discourse, which reappropriates the Romani identity and history for and in the name of the Roma, is constantly undermined as inauthentic (with respect to the Romanian and the ‘Gypsy’ tradition), as serving foreign interests, or as a tool in the hands of a few NGOs and political instigators who do not have the best interests of the Gypsies at heart, but their own material advantages (translated into EU funding). This discourse occupies less space in the economy of the campaign and its sources and proponents are cast in an unfavourable light or discredited. A political figure

that stands out is that of King Cioabă, who enjoys some notoriety in the Romanian press, and can be easily sensationalised:

European to the core, the *țigani*, represented by Florin Cioabă, have found solutions for dealing with the problems caused in Romania and abroad. 'We, the Romani leaders, are going to identify those who spoil our image. We shall then summon the Gypsy Tribunal and distribute justice and we may even go so far as to exclude from our community those we find guilty.' *Asked how exactly this would affect them, Florin Cioabă clarified things for us:* 'Well, in that case, the Romani communities will no longer provide shelter for the criminals and will hand them over to the police.' *So we see!* (Tomozei 2009, my translation, my emphases)

In the discursive articulations of the two main worldviews prominent in the campaign, a special place is assigned to the Romani opinions inclined towards accepting the traditional ethnonym of 'țigan', as a way of counteracting the perceived negative effects of group rights actions. The implications of such articulations, revealing a consensus between the Romanian and the Romani positions (based on an overlap of interests) are twofold. First, they demonstrate a lack of solidarity among the Romani groups, which derives from the belief, held by some of them, that the socioeconomic integration of the Roma, and their full acceptance within the (nation-)states where they belong, constitute a better strategy for solving their problems. In this respect, the campaign empowers Romani citizens to voice their plight and to point to the malfunctioning noticeable at the level of Romani organisations:

[I'm] marginalised and discriminated against because my traditional smith's trade is no longer needed. That's why I think our leaders mock us. Instead of helping us with our problems, our MP, Nicolae Păun, is fighting for our right not to be called *țigani*? How does that help me? (letter from Ion Ciucur, *JN* 2009, March 11; my translation)

This is a highly significant (and positive) aspect of the campaign, which could be more fully developed, together with an assessment of the Romani group rights politics in Romania and of the causes why, in spite of *numerous* EU programmes and actions (unfolding at present), and supporting legislation, discrimination is still rife and socioeconomic progress is limited. The focus on the ethnonyms precludes what could have been an illuminating debate on these issues.

Secondly, the occasional folding into each other of the Romanian and the Romani worldviews may also be interpreted as a moment of 'discursive collaboration', when the subject and the object of negative representation become 'co-conspirators in its assignment of meaning and value' (Hammond 2004: xvi). Collaboration here takes multiple forms: Romanians do not contest the stigmas in the Western discourse on the Balkans (Todorova 1997; see also Hammond 2004; Woodcock 2007), but attempt to transfer them onto the Roma and to build their identity around a glorious European history and tradition. The Roma, in their turn, strategically accept some of the negative stereotypes they are attributed. Thus, the chain of discrimination is self-sustained (it is important, however, not to reduce this discussion entirely to mechanisms of discursive construal).

5. Conclusions

The examination of the *JN* campaign with the help of CDA methodology has revealed that the deliberative, civic role taken on by Romanian journalists does not, in this case, reach its objective of watching out for the rights of all Romanian citizens. In spite of the newspaper's claims to advance the interests of both Romanians and Roma, the arguments employed speak mostly from the commitments and values of a national Romanian identity, and do not stand up to critical questioning that would require new evidence and further debate. The collective identities construed in this process are shaped by the multifaceted interplay between EU generated pressure, Romanian interests and reactions to group rights politics, and Romani interests and disagreement internal to the Romani community. Against a background of crisis and instability, the dramatic shifts and transformations within the European Union result in outbursts of nationalism and enhanced discrimination against Eastern European migrants, which ripple into an Eastern European backlash against the Romani population. The Roma have intensified their efforts to refashion themselves as a 'European nation'. Yet, through the converging actions and practices of old European nations, they are constantly excluded from the very Europeaness they reclaim in the name of justice and reparation.

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