

Shifting to the “Gadžo question”:

The role of racialized sexuality in the biopolitical consolidation of Czechoslovak collectivity.

By

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Abstract

Subjugation of Roma in the region of the Central and Eastern Europe has been deployed as a long-term power mechanism. A large body of scholarship focuses on the history of the presence of Roma within the region and describes the tactics that are specific to this time and space. However, because they do not conceptualize these tactics in a biopolitical perspective certain nuances are left unexplored. In my thesis, I approach ‘normalization’ (1968-1989), the period of late communism in Czechoslovakia, as a biopolitical episode which manifested through the selective population control in the form of coercive sterilization of Roma women. I focus on the discursive mechanisms of othering and marginalization put into work within the discursive field of the "Gypsy question". I analyse sources dedicated to the social and educational work with Roma minority, published between years 1968-1989, to trace discursive mechanisms of racialization through differentiation and hierarchization of human subjects. I particularly focus on the construction of the Roma sexuality within those discourses to explore the role of sexuality in the process of national identity building as well as the implication of the racial logic within it. In building on the scholarship exploring the possibility of insights of the critical race theories and postcolonial studies I deepen an understanding of the role of particular discursive constructions of Roma in the process of constituting the whiteness of the Czechoslovak collectivity. I propose, that the practice of sterilization of Roma women during the period of ‘normalization’ is the outcome of the biopolitical mechanisms of racialization which constituted Roma subjects as unable to fulfil hegemonic sexual and gender norms. Further, I propose, that the whiteness of the Czechoslovak citizens is developed as a moral category through the assignment of racialized meanings to the realm of sexuality. My analysis offers new insights and opens space for asking questions about the role of the whiteness in the national projects of countries of Central and Eastern Europe as well as it considers the potential of queer theories to the scholarly field of Critical Romani Studies.

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My friends for ...

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of original research, it contains no materials accepted for any other degree in any other institution and no materials previously written and/or published by another person, except where appropriate acknowledgement is made in the form of bibliographical reference.

I further declare that the following word count for this thesis are accurate:

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Introduction

The biopolitical subjugation of Roma within the region of Central Eastern Europe (CEE) has been deployed as a long-term power mechanism enacted by a variety of technologies of power. The control of migration through the prohibition of nomadism, particularized passports in form of the ‘Gypsy Identity card,’ special censuses, spatial marginalization, and forced dispersion¹ are all manifestations of the effects of biopolitical regimes. Modes of producing a variety of classification and sampling mechanisms have persisted throughout Roma presence in the European and the Central European region dating as far back as the 14th century (Law 2016: 38). This presence has, up until now, been marked by persecution, marginalization and discrimination, illuminating the racial anxieties rooted in nationalist projects (Law 2016, Imre 2005).

Exemplary of this is the practice of sterilization of Romani women in Czechoslovakia during the period of late communism, so called ‘normalization’ (1968-1989). Against the backdrop of general population policies during ‘normalization’ implemented to increase longstanding low fertility rates, the control of the reproduction of Roma minority reached a new high in the form of the sterilization of Romani women. Broad body of scholarship framed it as coercive (Cahn 2015, Tritt 1992, Zoon 2003). Following such understanding this situation indicates the legitimacy of attack on the autonomy of a specific group. When approached through the lens of biopolitical theories it also shows the presence of a protection logic that reacts to a perceived threat while remaining veiled in narratives of necessary defence (Esposito 2013, Foucault 2003). To put it differently, the practice of sterilization was imbedded in a logic that sees the need for the defence of the prosperity of the particular social body if it seems threatened.

¹ Discussed in wide range of scholarship on Roma for detailed discussion of particular mechanism read: Barnay (2002), Law (2016), Sokolová (2008), Surudu (2016)

I chose this practice as a focal point of my thesis because it is located at the intersection of the regulatory and disciplinary mechanisms of power, working on the level of population as well as affecting individual bodies and therefore indicative of biopolitical power mechanisms in Foucauldian sense (Foucault 2003). The continuation of the practice after the fall of the regime suggests that the technologies of power and production of meaning which legitimized such actions are embedded in widely circulating discourses, and they cannot be attributed only to the effects of the ‘totalitarian’ communist regime. Moreover, the communist rule should not be seen as something that was imposed from the outside; rather it was aligned with the historically established political tradition of liberalism in the country. The ideational connection of communism to the domestic political traditions and their affiliations to the communist regime should not be overlooked (McDermott 2016: 16). This raises questions about the nature of the relationship between non-Roma collectivity and Roma, as this relationship during communism can unveil important insights for the current situation of Roma in CEE. It can illuminate racial dimensions of such constructions and manifest its importance for the contemporary racial project of Czech and Slovak societies. The period of communist regime is insufficiently explored in discussions about the Eastern European nationalisms as well as the role of the racialized hierarchies within them (Imre 2005: 97). Situating my analysis into time frame of ‘normalization’ will therefore contribute to the critical scholarship on communist regimes and nationalisms in CEE.

Strategies of marginalization of Roma changed and evolved over time and were particular to specific governments or states in CEE. Developments within the CEE region after the Second World War also significantly shaped the relationship of the majority and state officials towards Roma. The strategies and mechanisms to address the Roma situation varied in particular countries, but on a more general level, they were all motivated by the idea of assimilating the Roma into the general population. Such attempts were forcefully enacted primarily through the

demonization of Romani culture, the elimination of ethnic specificities, and racialized proletarianization (Law 2016: 38-39). The utopian ideal of communist regimes, which promoted a unified and equal society of proletariat based in the notion of universal emancipation, strengthened the significance and value of societal norms as a basic organizing principle of social life. Nevertheless, such utopian ideals were racially biased. This can be framed through what Ian Law (2016) termed “red racism”. The ideological relevance of these norms and normalcy, powered by the socialist utopian vision, shaped the modernization project of the Eastern Bloc. The communist modernity project was built on the values of progress and development, rooted in the European Enlightenment, and on the idea of socialism’s² moral superiority over capitalism (Koleva 2012: xv). The racialized dimension of proletarianization, enacted through violence against Roma, was shrouded by the ideological promotion of social progress and the alleged high morality of socialist ideals.

In Czechoslovakia, Roma were seen to be the biggest threat to the state's centralized efforts of social engineering. Assimilation enacted through the suppression of perceived cultural specificities of Roma was seen as the only apparent remedy (Barnay 2003: 124). Some authors show that, during the communist regime in Europe, such framework can be considered as outcome of essentializing iconography of deviance and otherness shaped by the imperialistic gaze (Kóczé, Trehan 2009: 52). The differences of the minority were translated into narratives about backwardness, deviance, and pathology (Law 2016: 48). These discursive mechanisms of Roma inferiorization and their separation from the Czechoslovak population, was further used to represent the state in a positive light and to legitimize any kind of intervention under the veil of acting in the interests of Roma by helping them reach socialist standards (Law 2016: 48). The suppression of the cultural specificities of the Roma minority should therefore be

² I will use the term socialism to refer to the broader ideological paradigm. The term communisms will more address political regime, particular way in which the socialist ideas were enacted and institutionalized in Czechoslovakia.

understood as a mechanism to produce racialized meanings under the guise of claims to universal equality.

In my thesis, I aim to deepen the understanding of the biopolitical regime, utilizing mechanisms of selective population control, such as coercive sterilization, in order to protect the supposedly threatened collectivity. I will focus on the discursive field constructing Roma bodies in particularly sexualized and racialized ways. To elaborate on this I will ask the following questions: What discursive mechanisms inflicted such conditions, where the need for protection was enacted? What was seen as threatening the social body of Czechoslovaks? What can these discourses tell us about the reasons why sterilization, as a defensive tool, became prevalent in the period of ‘normalization,’ and why were such disciplining mechanisms targeted towards the bodies of Roma women? How was the divide between the non-Roma and Roma groups reiterated and reified? What discursive mechanisms were used to reiterate the distinction between those groups? I will look for answers to these questions by tracing the productive mechanisms of biopolitical power regime during ‘normalization’ through the discursive technologies of the "Gypsy question".

Throughout my thesis, I will show how, in the context of ‘normalization’ in Czechoslovakia, heteronormativity was infused with racial meaning. I will first present the framework of my analysis, showing how my methodological choices influenced my data selection. In the second chapter I discuss my conceptual and theoretical framework which allows me to ask the “Gadžo question” or in other words, the framework which guides my understanding of the role of whiteness and sexuality in processes of the subordination of Roma. I position myself in the field of existing literature on the sterilization of Roma women in CEE, scholarship engaging with the mechanisms of discursive production of the Roma subject and finally scholarship bringing insights from postcolonial and critical race studies in discussions of Critical Romani Studies. In my theoretical framework, I discuss the possibility of using ‘race’ as analytical category in

the biopolitical theoretical tradition and within the context of CEE. I also discuss how I frame the solidification of the national collectivity through biopolitical lenses and emphasize role of sexuality in the process of racialization of non/national bodies. I will follow by briefly introducing the reader to the historical development of Czechoslovakia with particular focus on the position of Roma within the society. Further, I will explore the politics behind the changes of sexual and gender regimes during ‘normalization’ to show how they worked to frame the realm of proper, normal, docile citizens as members of the Czechoslovak collectivity. I do this to unpack mechanisms which constituted a particular form of sexuality as the guarantor of privilege and moral superiority of whiteness of the Czechoslovak citizen.

Setting the framework and context, I will move towards an analysis of primary sources. In the third chapter I explore main discursive mechanisms of differentiation of Roma and Czechslovak collectivities within sources focusing on the educational and social work with Roma population, which is set to deal with the “Gypsy question”. I trace the discursive production of the figure of the Gypsy and her relation to and role in the process of consolidation of Czechoslovak collectivity. In the fourth chapter I explore the role of fear in the process of racialized and sexualized construction of Roma bodies. I show how the racial dimension of established social structures was manifested through the expulsion of Roma from fulfilling the hegemonic gender and sexual ideals as Roma were constantly, through the circulation of discourses, reiterated as deviant or failed subjects.

My analysis offers new insights into the construction of the national collectivity in Czechoslovakia. Focusing on tracing the racialized meaning of sexuality illuminates the link between whiteness and morality, as it was established in this particular context, and further describes how whiteness as a hegemonic moral category was used to establish the Czechoslovak national identity as well as the concurrent effects of this hegemony on the racialized- Roma-subject.

Analytical framework

Methodology

The aim of my thesis is to uncover the mechanisms of power which helped to reinforce and maintain particular relationships of domination of white Czechoslovaks over the Roma minority. To trace the discursive reproduction of hierarchies and inequalities which legitimized the interventions violating Roma, I will follow the framework of Critical Discursive Analysis (CDA) as defined by Van Dijk (2001). Language is in this conceptualization understood as a one of the power mechanisms helping to maintain hierarchies of power, legitimize social practices and produce social realities. CDA is dedicated to unpack power relationships defining social stratification and inequalities. This methodological approach is in tune with my theoretical base which understands knowledge as productive forces imbedded within the field of power relationships (Foucault 1998). The knowledge accumulated through the initiatives dealing with the "Gypsy question" is generative in the Foucauldian sense (Foucault 1998), meaning that it is not only used as a tool of repression but also produces the subject it strives to control. In my thesis, I will approach language and circulating discourses as channels of racialization.

Choosing primary sources

Reflecting on my understanding of knowledge as channels for production of meaning and subjectivities I approached the process of selecting the primary sources as the first step of my analysis.

In the process of data collection, which took place from the summer 2016 until January 2017, I assembled publications published between the years 1969-1989, which frame the period of 'normalization' in Czechoslovakia. All sources are written in Czech or Slovak language, therefore, whenever I use quotes from these sources in my thesis, they have been translated by

me. Primary sources were gathered in different institutions, mainly libraries such as: University library in Bratislava, Moravian Library in Brno, Central University Library of Masaryk University and the library at the National Roma Museum in Brno. I focused on the materials which were published as scientific accounts on the Roma minority in the country initiatives which were framed in the period as the “Gypsy question”.

Along the collection of data I started my primary analysis in order to define and clarify my framework. I first reviewed the journal of *Demography: revue for research of population* (Demografie: revue pro výzkum populace), to see how the “Gypsy question,” control of population in general, and practice of sterilization in particular were described in the scholarship about population during ‘normalization’. Based on this, together with my review of the secondary sources written about the situation of Roma in communist Czechoslovakia, I identified fields of social work and education as regarded with high importance and therefore I made them the focus of my analysis.

I gathered articles, engaging with the “Gypsy question,” published in the following journals: *Enlightenment work* (Osvetová práce), *Social Politics* (Sociální politika), *Pedagogy* (Pedagogika), *Defektology* (Defektologie). I also collected publications, monographs or collections, manuals, reports published by: *Enlightenment Centre* (Osvetové centrum), *National Pedagogical Publishing House* (Národní pedagogické nakladatelství), *Institute for Cultural-Education Work* (Ústav pro kulturně výchovné činnost), *Czechoslovak Academy of Science* (Československá akademie věd), which were dedicated to the development of the programs and interventions targeting Roma population.

The variety of sources reflected the seriousness with which the regime approached the so called “Gypsy question”. State run institutions such as the *Governmental commission for the question of gypsy citizens* (Vládní komise pro otázky cikánského obyvatelstva) were formed as an advisory organ, organizing knowledge production which was used as a base for suggestions and

development of the mechanisms helping to solve the “Gypsy question”. The legitimacy and importance of the knowledge produced in the fields of social science and humanities, specifically social work, demography, and education, indicate that the sources I gathered play an important part in the mechanisms of meaning production about Roma in Czechoslovakia during ‘normalization’. In order to better contextualize these sources I also collected regularly published reports by the *Ministry of Work and Social Affairs* (Ministerstvo práce a sociálních věcí) and *Ministry of health* (Ministerstvo zdravotnictví) which recorded the changes of policies and therefore served as good guidelines for understanding the changes happening during the period. They also reflected the framework within which other sources worked such as definition of the problem, development of the tools which were utilized in the process of dealing with these problems, and actors involved in these processes.

Conceptualization of terms

Throughout my thesis I will be using the terms Gypsy/ Roma, “Gypsy question” and the “Gadžo question”. I use these terms as they were used in the sources while quoting them. I also use them throughout the text. As I understand that these terms are loaded with meaning I will now clarify the way I understand and conceptualize them.

Gypsy: The term ‘gypsy,’ in the way I use it, reflects my understanding of this category as discursively produced within the framework of this specific biopolitical episode. I decided to use this term within the text in order to indicate and emphasize the working of biopolitical regime and its racializing effects. I understand it as a category, produced through the scientific practices and knowledge production and not as a representation of the ‘general truth’ about Roma or their subjectivities as a product of the drive of the “will to knowledge” (Foucault 1998). Further, I understand this category as a figure, which was utilized in the process of solidifying the boundaries of collectivity of non-Roma (or Czechoslovak which excluded Roma). I conceptualize Gypsy as what Ahmed (2000) called “the figure of Stranger”, whose proximity

is integral to the processes of establishing particular collectivity. The figure of the Gypsy is not a stranger in the sense of being unknown, but is recognized as different, and in the same way as the figure of the stranger is for Ahmed, it is produced as a category within knowledge (55).

“Gypsy question”: I use the term “Gypsy question” to refer to the discursive mechanisms used in the process of construction and production of the figure of the Gypsy, reflecting productive effect of power leading to the accumulation of knowledge making recognition of 'gypsy difference' possible. It is kind of discursive cloud which followed from the productive effects of power-knowledge technologies producing the ‘truth’ about Roma. I understand this discursive cloud as a generative mechanism of power, which produces the subject it seeks to control (Foucault 1998). I also use it to refer to the discursive mechanisms used in the processes of sexualization and racialization of Roma. I do this by identifying terms which circulated in this discursive clouds to refer to gypsy, and to describe the gypsy question. By this I intend to trace the ways in which ethnically neutral terms were infused with racial meanings.

Roma: I use the term ‘Roma’ to address community and individuals which were (and still are) subjugated to the identification as Gypsy through the mechanisms of sexualization and racialization. Emphasizing the constructed nature of the specific ethnic group I do not intend to deny or negate the subjectivities of people who identify as a member of the group nor the material and embodied consequences of such construction. On the contrary, I want to emphasize the connection of these two levels as the experiences of the Roma as shaped by the discourses, produced through the practices of knowledge production.

Gadžo question: The title of my thesis states the shift towards the "Gadžo question". The word Gadžo is a Romani term for a white person. The word choice, which is mine, is supposed to indicate the racialized dimension of the construction of Czechoslovak collectivity. The shift I mentioned is mainly conceptual. By focusing on the processes of racialization of Roma I intend to uncover processes of construction of whiteness of Czechoslovak collectivity. “Gadžo

question” is a kind of an analogy to the “Gypsy question,” as it reflects the interest followed by knowledge production of particular kind. It also indicates that by processes of racialization of Roma, whiteness as a racial category was also installed in the context. However, I recognize that this analogy is not perfect as the outcome of the interest in the construction of whiteness does not have the discriminatory, violent and marginalizing outcomes as the whiteness is hegemonic category. I intend to analyze the role of the whiteness in the processes of subjugation of Roma.

Chapter 1. Shifting to the "Gadžo question"

This part of the thesis engages with the scholarship dedicated to the position of Roma within CEE. I will map the sources which were most influential in the process of conceptualizing my research and which my theoretical framework, presented later in this chapter, is based on. I contend that there remains a need to engage with systems of power organized along the lines of sexuality and race in scholarship pertaining to the Czechoslovak context as well as in field of Romani studies. Scholarship analyzing socialist gender and sexuality regimes in Czechoslovakia (Bren 2010, Havelková 2004, Lišková 2016a,b Oates-Indruchová 2012) largely disregards the racial dimension, which can lead to a distorted idea of universality through the ways in which they represent experiences. Although they offer insight into the constitution of hegemonic gender and sexual norms and emphasize the need to contextualize these in specific moments of socialist regimes, they do not examine the relationship of these norms to racializing processes and the specific effects they have on subjects embodying different positions within racial(ized) structures.

1.1. Scholarship on Roma within Central Eastern Europe

Sterilizations of Roma women:

Cases of the sterilization of Roma women in the region of CEE are discussed in a wide range of literature, mainly human rights reports and legal analysis (Lamačková, Zampas 2011; Tomasovic 2009). The sources show particularities of the practice in Czechoslovakia. The still prevalent anti-Roma racism takes a myriad of forms as the racist project of different countries have their own particularities and even though the cases of sterilization of Roma women were also reported in Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania, the Czechoslovak case outnumbers the rest as its practice was more systemic (Tomasovic 2009:767).

Scholarship focusing on the position of the racialized- Roma- subject during socialist Czechoslovakia expanded after the fall of the regime. Publications such as these (Tritt 1992, Zoon 2003) were produced mainly to assure the recognition of the oppression which Roma were subjugated to. Underlined by the intersections of gender and ethnicity and embedded in the framework of the human rights paradigm, these accounts brought voices of Romani women to the forefront in collecting evidence of their experiences. The topic of coercive sterilization of Roma women became a locus of negotiation in the post-socialist progress of Czechoslovak society. The West saw recognition and reparation of women subjected to such violation as a necessary step towards entering the European Union. However valuable the findings of this scholarship is, it should be seen within the specific ideological context within which it was produced. This raises the need for criticality towards the assumptions about the centralized model of power and reifying Roma as passive subject. Following Foucault's (1998) perspective, such conceptualization overlooks the complexity of the processes in place.

Testimonies of the Romani women who underwent sterilization during 'normalization' show the active role of the medical staff and social workers in urging Romani women to undergo procedure (Sokolová 2008: 212). This encouragement was also supported by following policy changes such as official one time financial incentives (Cahn 2015: 58). According to the human rights reports (Tritt 1992, Zoon 2003), women who underwent sterilization during the period of 'normalization' were often insufficiently informed about the consequences of the procedure or about the fact that the procedure was enacted. In some cases, sterilization of Romani women was done during cesarean sections without previous request, planning, permission of the sterilization committee or written protocol, all of which were designated as necessary by the law. Such practices of violent discrimination against a particular group of citizens were not recognized as contradicting the state ideology of universal equality nor as a violation of the legal framework, which made claims to protect all Czechoslovak citizens.

Without disavowing the violence Roma women were subjugated to I do not want to uncritically reproduce narratives of victimhood and reify Roma as passive subjects. I understand the political necessity to name the practice of sterilization during ‘normalization’ as coercive to emphasize structural inequalities and uneven differentiation and distribution of power as an outcome and tool of the reification of the racialized differentiation of the populations. However, as my theoretical home base is in biopolitical scholarship I am wary of the limitations of an understanding of the working of power as centralized and as oppressive. Further I do not want to condemn the possibility of sterilization as a valid choice of birth control and life strategy for Romani women. Regardless the relatively great number of cases of sterilizations of Roma women signal a presence of the racial thinking during the biopolitical episode of ‘normalizaion’. The cases of the coercive sterilizations motivated me to pursue this project as I understand them as manifestations of the racialized hierarchization of human subjects.

Nevertheless, as I mentioned, this scholarship is centered on experiences of Roma women and as such offers valuable knowledge about the practice of sterilizations and the network of actors and measures which were utilized in the processes. They offer insights which are necessary for a better understanding of the official rhetoric, present in the sources assured by state organizations, as they show how distorted the official narratives of universal equality compared with the lived experiences of individuals. The legal analysis (Cahn 2015) also offers a description of the processes of discrimination and sheds light on the racist ideology and conceptual links to the eugenics ideology embedded within the social structures shaping the society, but even in its’ more descriptive nature it does not offer explanation for prevalence of the practice of sterilization. This scholarship fails to engage with the possible mechanisms which co-constitute categories, and therefore treat such divides as non-problematic and naturalized. Furthermore, the fields of scholarship concerning ethnicity, gender and sexual regimes remain largely disparate. This exposes a significant gap in understanding not only the

specificities of the period of late socialism in Czechoslovakia in particular but also the intricate relationship of biopolitical mechanisms of racialization and regulation of sexuality in general.

I approach biopolitical episode of ‘normalization’ manifested through the implementation of specific and racially biased population control, from a specific theoretical position. By shifting the focus to the construction of whiteness in order to deepen the understanding of racializing processes and their intertwined relationship to sexuality, I hope that this analysis can help to deepen an understanding of why these particular mechanisms of control were put into action and what reflections about the racial politics and whiteness it can show us. This conceptualization allows me to shift towards the “Gadžo question,” to explore the role of the whiteness in the processes mentioned above and offer new perspective on the practices of sterilization of Roma women in Czechoslovakia.

Discursive production of Roma subject:

Vera Sokolová’s (2008) book *Cultural Politics of Ethnicity: Discourses on Roma in Communist Czechoslovakia* is an important work which treats the complexity of the problem with greater sensitivity. Framing her analysis as a critique of the cold war paradigm which homogenizes experiences under the communist regime in Eastern Europe, Sokolová offers an analysis of extensive archival sources to map the development of the official and popular discourses which constituted the construction and production of ‘gypsy’ as an ethnic category embedded in the racist project of Czechoslovak society. Through the book, she explores the ways the “Gypsy question” was related to the particular structures of meanings, reflected in the variety of discourses developed throughout communist regime. Her approach therefore takes the practice of coercive sterilization of Roma women as specific to the space and time and not as symptomatic of the ‘oppressive communist regime’. However, her intersectional approach, even when focused on the processes of meaning production, centralizes the figure of Roma women and therefore reifies the utterly oppressed subject, the ultimate Other, and disregards

how the normative/hegemonic subjects are constituted and regulated by the same systems of meaning.

Sokolová concludes that: "[p]olicies became discriminatory within the space of discourse, precisely because the ways Roma were depicted and talked about in public entered into way policies were interpreted and implemented" (260). In her understanding (legal) norm is racially neutral. In the same manner she claims that "Gypsy" was constituted as socially and sexually deviant object rather than ethnical subject (217). In my thesis I would like to complicate this understanding by focusing on the racialized dimension of the norms, to show how the notion of the deviance is itself racialized. I will follow her well contextualized analysis and take it further through a more thorough engagement with biopolitical theories in order to bridge the gap between two bodies of scholarship which for now focus separately on the sexual and racial oppression. I intend for this to capture the processual and relational negotiation of sexual and racialized categories to see also how the particular ways of construction of normative-Czechoslovak- subject is produced next to the Othered-Roma- subject.

As I understand knowledge-production as a political project which reinforces performative production of reality, I also align myself with approaches which conceptualize Roma as an outcome of the reiteration of professional discourses and expert knowledge. In the book *Those who count: Expert Practices of Roma Classification*, Mihai Surudu (2016) offers a conceptual framework of the study of processes of politicization of Roma as a research project to address the ways Roma groupness was constructed through various disciplines. Surudu offers an overview of the mechanisms through which researches on Roma produced notions about their collectivity. The knowledge produced through this research, which is centralized on Roma as a research object, has not only a descriptive function but plays a role in legitimizing and maintaining particular structures of representation. One of the main mechanisms of producing the particular meaning about Roma is, according Surudu, an approach and conceptualization of

ethnicity not in terms of belonging but as a racialized category, signified as easily identifiable by the knowers or “Those who count” and therefore constructed through research practices (41). He engages with a wide variety of scientific and policy papers to manifest how are these involved in the reification- i.e production and stabilization- of racialized meanings. I will use this book as a guide while approaching my data, which consists of texts written and published as expert knowledge on Roma. In same way that Surudu claims his book is not about Roma but rather “about the history of their classification and about their classifiers” (Surudu 2016: 1) I intend to analyse the ways Roma as category was conceptualized and classified within expert discourses during the period of ‘normalization’.

Roma as postcolonial subject:

Additionally, I intend to apply scholarship which utilizes post-colonial approaches to this context in order to shift the conceptualization of the Roma/ white population relationality. This scholarship brings the analytical category of ‘race’ to bear on the situation of Roma and the construction of the “Gypsy question” in Eastern Europe (Kóczé, Trehan 2009, Imre 2012). I will do so to uncover processes of cultural production of racialized categories in order to decentralize the category of whiteness which remains unquestioned as hegemonic norm within the region. Kóczé and Trehan (2009) argue that focusing the analysis on a better understanding of Roma can help map diffused forces of power and their function in the creation of racial-hierarchies. Informed by postcolonial critiques and theoretical insights about ‘race’ and ‘whiteness’ they analyze Roma activism in Eastern Europe, in order to offer better understanding of the complexities of anti-Roma racism and as they frame it “Romani subalterity” (51). They trace the history of the region back to the Habsburg monarchy³ to show how the histories of Roma in the region were infused by violence in the name of the ‘civilizing

³ Habsburg monarchy was in 18th century empire spread over multiple Easter European countries such as: Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia

missions' and modernist projects. Authors claim that these histories have impacted the current mode of representation of Roma. These conceptualizations will guide my analysis which focuses on the construction of Roma through their discursive representation. This analysis can provide new insights about the construction of race and notions of whiteness and constructed hierarchy of human subjects within which Roma have been positioned as the Other.

In her analysis Aniko Imre (2012) argues that white supremacy is utilized as a core tool to legitimize nationalist claims in post-socialist Eastern Europe and that the analytical categories of race and whiteness are not only applicable but also highly useful in this context. Even though her analysis was contextualized within the context of post-socialist Hungary, Imre suggests that the Eastern European communist regimes should be a fruitful soil for investigating the discursive practices saturated by colonial representations within which particular nationalist projects were embedded (98). I intend to follow and explore the possible contributions of such approach. I will do so to uncover the processes of cultural production of racialized categories, through mechanisms of meaning making and notions of difference which were widely and repetitively used. I aim to de-centralize the category of whiteness, which remains unquestioned as the hegemonic norm within the region, especially in former Czechoslovakia, to uncover the processes which constituted national identity as ethnically/racially homogeneous. In doing so I will fill the gap in research by exposing the process through which politics and aesthetics of whiteness were constructed as a hegemonic and shaped moral systems of values.

The lack of the engagement of these studies with sexuality creates yet another gap. I understand sexuality as an important locus of production of subjectivities and political struggle and therefore a valuable analytical approach in the analysis of process of racialization of Roma in general, but in the context of Czechoslovakia in particular. In order to uncover another dimension, another nuance, of the political oppression of Roma, embedded and enabled by particular gender and sexuality regimes, I will conceptualize my analysis in framework of

sexuality studies. Following Gayle Rubin (1998)⁴ I understand the sexual realm and sexuality as sites of political struggle and product of human actions. According to Rubin, political sexual regimes are constructing specific hierarchies of sexual values which sort specific acts and desires as acceptable or not and further legitimize and help to maintain social stratification and legitimize sexual oppression (108).

Using sex as an analytical category will bring new aspects to the notions of population politics of the state and role of the sexual oppression in the creation of specific perceptions of racialized and gendered effects of discourses of socially undesirable behavior. This approach can help to articulate the sexual oppression of Roma which was used as a tool of social exclusion and to map political and ideological influences behind these processes. I follow Foucault's (1988) conceptualization of sexuality as an outcome of the productive effect of power rather than reflection of 'natural desires' (103). As sex, produced through discourses and imbedded in diffused power relations, was for Foucault central to the both axis organizing politics of life (145), his understanding will guide my thinking about mechanisms of population control, working as well on the level of groups as well as individual bodies. In an effort to bridge the sexual and racial dimensions of the taxonomical drive of biopolitical regimes (Foucault 2003), I will trace the construction of Roma sexuality as 'deviant' and therefore undesirable through the processes of knowledge production, in order to uncover processes through which Czechoslovak national identity was built on the racialized notion of white, desirable sexuality.

1.2. Can we talk about 'race' in CEE? : Biopolitics and racial norms

In his lecture, "Society must be defended," at the Collège de France presented in 1976, Foucault (2003) describes the rise of a new technology of power, which was established to address mass-as-body, man-as-species which he calls biopolitics (242). According to Foucault, people are understood by this power as a mass, which can be defined by quantifiable characteristics such

⁴ The essay "Thinking sex: notes for a radical theory of the politics of sexuality" was originally published in 1984

as births, death or other identifiable aspects. Foucault distinguishes this form of power from the formerly developed anathomopolitics, where power was thought to center on the individual body in order to discipline it. The ‘massifying’ impulse conceptualized people in terms of population. Foucault describes this impulse of biopolitics as a desire to gain control over the human race as a species and understands the concept of population as a political problem and therefore a concern for the state power (2003: 245). The main goal of biopolitics is as asserted: “...to establish a sort of homeostasis, not by training individuals but by achieving an overall equilibrium that protects the security of the whole from internal dangers” (249). Interest in population control is the principal outcome of the biopolitical regime.

However, focusing on the population does not mean that individual lives and bodies are not affected by the regulatory practices of power, as the concerns of biopolitics are closely related to behaviors, such as procreation, which are highly corporeal and therefore, also highly individual. Consequently, it becomes necessary to understand the development of biopolitics as not necessarily substituting the older technique of power nor its disciplinary practices. They coexist, and it is manifested exactly in the cases of regulating these processes, which are highly individualized as well, such as sexuality. For Foucault, sexuality represents a marked point of intersection where regulation and discipline meet, and where the connection between the body and population is established (2003: 252), and as he discusses in the first volume of the *History of sexuality* (1998), the main transfer point of power (103). This link is very important for my analysis, as it creates a sense of responsibility for individual actions towards the future development of the population. Particularly, it creates a space where sexual activity, particularly the ideal kind, procreative and marital, by its importance to the desired development of the population, becomes a moral imperative.

I evaluate the impact of the changing social policies and legal definitions in Czechoslovakia which I describe in the following section, with emphasis on the dimensions conceptualized in

Foucault's perspective. The first dimension becomes the need to regulate the population and its development, mainly by boosting fertility rates through pronatalist politics. The second level is carried out on the lives of individuals. I will show how changes in the gender and sexuality regimes go hand in hand with the changes in political culture. According to Foucault (2003), norms are the established channels for communicating both regulation and discipline. Foucault calls this state of organization a normalizing society within which: "technologies of discipline on the one hand and technologies of regulation on the other, succeeded in covering the whole surface that lies between the organic and the biological, between the body and population" (253). Regulation of the population in this way was established through disciplining individuals, mainly women, within the private sphere and thereby creating family-oriented citizens. Utilizing population politics during the 'normalization' period in Czechoslovakia and re-traditionalizing gender norms concomitantly served to control population as well as the bodies of individuals.

However, as Foucault further explains, disciplined individuals are not always considered as uniform parts of the mass; in other words, the population is not a coherent group. The sense of the distinction, separation of groups within the population, the disruption of the field of the biological, which is at the center of the regulatory effects of biopolitics, inevitably leads towards a fragmentation of the population. This fragmentation, according to Foucault (2003), creates: "the distinction among races, the fact that certain races are described as good and that others, in contrast, are described as inferior..." (255). Creation of sub-groups within the population and its hierarchization is, therefore, one of the effects of biopolitics. These notions of difference and values introduces a break which distinguishes those who must live and those who must die in order to make population better and purer (254-255). This is how, according to Foucault, racism works on a biopolitical level.

A Foucauldian perspective understands racism as a mechanism which legitimizes the exercise of sovereign power. This legitimization follows from the fragmentation and bifurcation of the biological continuum of humanity, which in turn produces the distinction between groups worthy of protection, and conversely those damned to be repudiated (Foucault 2003: 256). I will rely on this notion of racialized distinction to better understand the mechanisms of population control and the management of sexuality. However, I am critically approaching Foucault's conceptualization of race and racism and will bolster my argument with the critique of Alexander Weheliye (2014) who claims that Foucault's Eurocentrism and lack of interest in the process of constitution and the production of racial and ethnic categories maintains the fictitious naturalness of racial categories, stabilizing them instead of treating them as an outcome of the biopolitical regime (62). Weheliye draws from the context of US racism, contextualizing his analysis in the history of slavery and therefore responds to specific developments. However in reacting to Foucault's understanding of racism, Weheliye states that biopower of communist regimes as well relies on the mechanisms of "racializing assemblages" (60). This allows me to bring Weheliye's understanding of race and racializing assemblages to my analysis.

By placing race at the center of the productive effects of biopolitical regimes of power, Weheliye engages with a tradition of critique of Foucault's conceptualizations by post-colonial scholars such as Laura Ann Stoler. Stoler (2000) in her book *Race and the education of desire* offers a post-colonial reading of Foucault's *History of Sexuality* (1998) and proposes a model within which race, as well as sexuality, come to shape the logic of biopolitical control of populations and the production of the modern subject. As such, Stoler (2000) understands race and racism, as well as sexuality, as important formative forces of "modernity". The construction of the modern subject becomes, therefore, embedded within racialized and sexualized meanings. For Stoler, racial meanings are not merely the outcome of the biopolitical regimes

but shape the forms biopolitical regimes can potentially take. The biopolitical mechanisms of regulation, such as sterilization as a technique of selective population control, not only reflect the hegemonic sexual and gender norms, but help to establish them.

One of the main conceptual challenges, and at the same time a point of promise, of my approach is the determination to give prominence to race as a category of analysis, which has hitherto been neglected in the CEE region. The reservation, or perhaps refusal, to politically engage with issues regarding the category of race can be partially attributed to reactions towards the atrocities of the Second World War. The re-establishment of the notion of civility, and the construction the Western world as its fostering cradle, was built upon the notion of the self as non-racist within the collective imagination (Lentin 2008: 488-489). By framing the history of racism through almost exclusive reference to the Nazi regime, Europe managed to produce a cultural amnesia of its colonial past, foregoing the larger racial politics which gave rise to National Socialism. Nazism became a stain upon an otherwise unproblematic history, or so mainstream historiography would have us think. According to Lentin (2008): “Simply by refusing to see race, by covering it over with alternative signifiers and therefore, most crucially, blinding itself to its consequences, Europe sends a message: race is not our problem, it is not ours” (500).

The cultural and ethnic conceptual shift in understanding difference had a contradictory effect; instead of overcoming the totalizing and essentializing properties of race, this shift silenced the meanings attached to race, whilst concomitantly masking structures which were organized along racialized lines. The displacement of racism and race within Europe helped to reinforce the idea of Europe as foregrounding the civilizing mission. Academia has not gone unscathed by this silence and masking, and the cultural shift towards the use of the category of ethnicity should be understood within this context. However, rhetorical abandonment of racial categories, as a strategy to move away from essentializing biology-informed understandings of

difference within the sphere of the human, did not diminish the effect of racial hierarchies and polarities in the process of constructing cultural difference and: “are therefore inseparable from the cultural features attributed to different groups” (Ong :1999 287). According to Aiwā Ong, analytical engagement with the conjunction of culture and race can provide a deeper understanding of the processes of marginalization as they occur within modern societies (286). However, concerns about the role of the category of race in reproduction and essentialization of differences are legitimate and I do not intend to disavow them. I follow Imre’s (2005) claim of the usefulness of the strategic use of the category of race in the process of unpacking racialized meanings which are attributed to the ethnic categories by hegemonic discourses (85-93). I do not conceptualize Roma as racial category but rather, following Weheliye’s (2014) understanding of race, as a set of political and social practices. I discuss racialization and racial ideology in order to decode how the understanding of the ethnical division in the region became coded through racial meanings.

Giving analytical importance to the implication of race within cultural narrativizations opens up space for engaging with the processes of racialization within the context of communist countries, the context within which the terminological and ideological rejection of race was direct and explicit (Weitz 2002: 4). The conceptual move towards understandings of race as constructed and a process, helps to assuage concerns about reinforcing the essentializing effects of using race as a category, without ignoring the fact that race, as system of hierarchization of human difference is still: “a central ordering principle of modern western societies” (Lentin 2008: 492). The modernization project of the Eastern part of Europe under communist regime is not, and should not be, understood as simply mirroring the cultural and political project of development and progress in Western Europe. During the Cold War both actors developed their own competing understandings of the civilization process, which in both cases was embedded within a racialized understanding of progress (Hong 2012: 158).

This supports the understanding that, although defined in different terms, such as in the Western European countries, the imperial project of communism, based on the civilizing mission of certain ethnicities, was utilizing the same colonial techniques of power to educate and cultivate the “backwarded” (Wielitz 8-9). The rejection of Western European-ness, reinforced by the critical view of past imperialist projects, helped to obscure Eastern Europe’s own entanglement in, and advancing of, an imperialist project which endeavored to establish their own notion of civility. The claims of race as unimportant within the Eastern European context helped to disguise the ruling hegemony of white supremacy, and its role in the construction of collective identities within the region (Imre 2005). Based on this body of scholarship I claim that the CEE region in general, and Czechoslovakia in particular, must be included within the discussion of racial politics and racialization in order to deepen the understanding of the organization of sociability within the context. In my work I turn my attention to mechanisms of racialization, and the effects of hierarchizing human difference to see how the distinction between Czechoslovaks and Roma was produced and maintained.

Following Weheliye (2014), I understand racialization as a processual enactment of socio-political relations which, through constant enactment and reiteration of meanings through institutions and discourses, constitute hierarchies of differences which produce the non-white subject outside of the realm of human, and as an outcome of this dehumanization, more susceptible to political violence (4). These processes are representational of the mechanisms of power which are deeply rooted within the sexualized and gendered structures organizing the sociability of a particular society which define notions of selfhood and boundaries delineating which group of people belong within those boundaries, and those which do not (3-5). The role of whiteness in these processes is defined as a: “series of hierarchical power structures that apportion and delimit which members of the homo sapiens species can lay claim to full human status” (19).

Whiteness this way stands as an organizing principle of the moral and social structures of hegemony, and positions subjects considered as embodying it, as exemplary of the desired norm (Weheliye 2014: 42). Racializing assemblages constitute non-white subjects as unable to fulfil this norm. The gender and sexual deviations of the racialized subject, as represented through discourses, are manifestations of their expulsion from the realm of the proper human (42). Whiteness, for Weheliye, works in the logic of Foucault's (1998) understanding of the 'power over life' by attributing different values to the living through already existing norms (144). Such norms, according to Foucault, can be applied to discipline the body as well as to regulate populations. But going further, Weheliye claims, norms are already defined in racialized terms. In this way, normalizing society (Foucault 2003: 253) is using whiteness as a regulatory as well as disciplinary mechanism of power. Such an understanding will guide my analysis of primary sources as I explore the mechanisms of population control.

Using Weheliye's conceptualization of racializing assemblages, and his understanding of humanity as a relational whole, will equip me with the means to draw conclusions about the construction of whiteness in the context of 'normalization' in Czechoslovakia in my analysis of the discourses of the Gypsy question which, as I intend to show, became a tool to racialize Roma.

1.3. Immunizing the social body: building of the national collectivity

In his discussion of the 'negative' impulses of biopolitical regime of power which is directed to eliminate certain populations, Esposito (2013) uses paradigm of immunity to explore, what he calls, a paradox. Esposito, in his article "Community, Immunity and Biopolitics," describes two poles of the biopolitical organization of collectivities. On the one side, there is community, which is organized to be radically open to others and surrenders all characteristics of individual identity (84). On the other side there is immunity which, according to Esposito is: "necessary to the preservation of individual and collective life" (86). The preservation of individual or

collective life is assured by building barriers of individual identity as a reaction to threatening elements (85). Such a conceptualization shows how the need of protection and the following securitization is connected with the processes of re-building identity.

Esposito (2013) writes: "if community breaks down the barriers of individual identity, immunity is the way to rebuild them, in defensive and offensive forms, against an external element that threatens it" (85). Based on Esposito's insights on immunitarian dynamics, I approach identitarian social organization, such as, the national collectivity as constituted by the immunitarian dispositive. This dynamic focalises on a particular community which determines what collectivity is to be defended and which one is to be attacked. I want to draw these insights into the context of the construction of the national collectivity during 'normalization' in Czechoslovakia.

One of the main characteristics of biopolitics is the production of different groups within the population (Foucault 2003: 256). Such production of differences within national states has to be connected with the production of the national population as a specific group of population within the territory of a state. How can I grasp processes and mechanisms through which the national collectivity in Czechoslovakia during 'normalization' was produced along the norm of whiteness? And how is the process of building of a national collectivity interpreted through the biopolitical prism? I will answer these questions in my analysis. To understand the specificity of the biopolitical mechanism of selective population control in the process of building of the Czechoslovak national collectivity, I need to understand how the boundary, or in the terms of Esposito "protective wall of identity" (85), separating Roma from Czechoslovaks was produced and how such division was created in the racialized terms.

Balibar (1991) states that: "In the case of national formations, the imaginary which inscribes itself in the real in this way is that of 'people'"(93). For the nation to exist, people produce themselves as belonging to this community which results in the naturalization of the particular

social organization (94). The notion of the collectivity, the nation, is constituted through the encounters with the strange, with the ‘other’ (Ahmed 2000: 95). The proximity of the ethnic others and their permanent presence, therefore, defines the nation space and the establishment of the national imaginary (95). This notion of the peoplehood, which is embodied by the national ideal, is not automatically organized along ethnic lines. The notion of ethnicity, as a form of collectivity, is produced as an outcome of the nationalization of particular sociability.

This “fictive ethnicity”, as Balibar describes it, is a constitutive product of the national formation where: “The naturalization of belonging and the sublimation of the ideal nation are two aspects of the same process” (1991: 96). Fictive ethnicity allows for the imagination of the basis of a state on the idea of formerly existing unity. The cultivation of different ethnicized groups is used as a mechanism for further state-centered population control (96). Through the processes of the production of differences of the Gypsy population, the notion of Czechoslovaks as a particular group is established as well. The fictive ethnicity of Czechoslovaks is constituted at the same time as the category “gypsy citizens” is put into discourse. This production of difference of the ethnicized group is necessary to produce the imagined unity of Czechoslovaks as a group, which is *“at-home,” “in-place”* (Ahmed 2000: 46). Naturalization of this belonging and the privilege of the group which can claim it, however, is not fulfilled only by ethnicization of different groups.

The naturalization of the imagined ethnicity, as described by Balibar (1991), is solidified through different systems of exclusions. One of these systems of exclusion, helping to constitute ethnicity as a stabilized identity, is the ideal of a common racial origin (99). The symbolism of a racial origin, as the basis for the historical unity of ‘a people’, helps on the ideational level to equate race and ethnicity (99). The idea of belonging to the same ethnic group, is therefore based not only on shared cultural practices but also on the notion of the same origin- explained in racialized terms. The racialized community dissolves differences and inequalities in a

specific way, which: “ethnicizes the social difference which is an expression of irreconcilable antagonism by lending it the form of a division between the ‘genuinely’ and the ‘falsely’ national” (100). Or in words of Sara Ahmed (2000), naturalization of imagined ethnicity produces the 'stranger' and bodies which are 'at-home'.

The discussion Balibar (1991) introduces on the role of racial thinking in the process of the production of the collectivity fits within Weheliye's logic. The process of naturalising ethnicity, of stabilizing the identity boundary, is a process of racialization which produces subjects that are considered as a part of national collectivity and subjects that are not. Membership in the national collectivity in this case endows individuals with immunity, protecting them from the supposed threat posed by strangers. Offensive mechanisms posed upon bodies recognized as strangers are justified by the notion of the danger. Selective population control and coercive sterilization of Roma women therefore can be conceptualized as what Esposito (2013) called "forms of devitalization", a security mechanism triggered by the immunitary dispositive reacting to the demand of protection (88).

Balibar's discussion of naturalizing fictive ethnicity in the process of constructing the national community or 'the people' can be read as an example of the immunitarian character of biopolitical regime. The nationalization of the collectivity is performatively constructed through the stabilization of the boundaries between what is considered ethnic groups. Reproduction of national collectivity is possible through building of the protective wall of identity. In my thesis, I will be using the immunitarian paradigm as an allegory for the process of national identity building. However, Balibar's insights do not completely cover Esposito's understanding. In order to analyse the immunitarian character of the 'normalization' biopolitical episode, I need to conceptualize how fear works in the mechanisms I just described. I will further focus on the role of sexuality as one of the mechanisms constituting fear.

1.4. Fear of the Queer: role of the sexuality in the national crisis

The protective wall of identity is, according to my reading of Esposito (2013), built in order to protect a particular (social) body “against any external element that threatens it” (85). The notion of threat, therefore, is at the core of the constitution of identity. Such understanding can be aligned with Sara Ahmed’s discussion about political economy of emotions (2004) in which she elaborates on the idea about ‘what emotions do’. According to Ahmed, emotions work to performatively assign meaning to particular bodies in order:” to materialize the surfaces and boundaries that are lived as worlds” (2004: 191). Ahmed’s understanding of ‘how emotions work’ resonates with the biopolitical production of differences within population. In her discussion about affective economy of fear she points out how: “through the generation of ‘the threat’, fear works to align bodies with and against ‘others’” (72). For Ahmed, fear does not protect the border of the collectivity but rather helps to produce it (67). Identifying the work of fear during the period of ‘normalization’ will help me to understand how the boundaries of the Czechoslovak collectivity were (re)produced.

Fear is produced through the announcement of a crisis (Ahmed 2014: 67). Such a crisis mobilizes feelings of vulnerability, openness to the outside world, which: “involves a sense of danger, which is *anticipated as a future pain or injury*” (69)⁵. Fear is therefore built around border anxiety, around the possibility that (in the future) the bodies from outside could blend in with ‘us’ (68). Fear, therefore, works with the notion of proximity to the other, established through the reiteration of stereotypes in order to establish and secure what Ahmed calls: “‘apartness’ of white bodies” (63). The figure of the stranger, the body out-of-place, which is the necessary ontological condition for establishing the national collectivity, is therefore suitable to be transformed into the object of fear.

⁵ Italics in the original

What is missing from Esposito's conceptualization of biopolitics is a discussion about sexuality, which so central to Foucault's (1998, 2003) understanding. Therefore, I will discuss the role of queerness in the production of threat and the solidification of racialized boundaries of the national collectivity. This discussion allows me to analyse how hierarchies of sexual value (Rubin 1998) divide sexual acts into categories of 'good' and 'bad' and constitute the transgression of proper sexual behaviour as a possibly leading to chaos (110). Following this, I can investigate how these hierarchies work together to produce sexually normative, desirable, and white subjects through production of the racialized subject threatening the social order and security of society by their perverted sexuality.

The main theoretical inspiration for my analysis is Jaspir Puar's (2007) *Terrorist Assemblages*. In her book, Puar analyses the discursive construction of Muslim sexuality within counterterrorist discourses. She focuses on the analysis of rhetorical construction of the terrorist and the role of the sexuality within it, to show how the fear of the queer non-normativity became displaced from the figure of the homosexual. She applies queer perspective, conceptualized as assemblage rather than identity signifier, to show their raced, gendered and sexualized dimensions as well as their role in the production of the bodies of the "others" and normative bodies of the proper U.S. citizens. This definition of queerness according to Puar: "underscores contingency and complicity with dominant formations" (205). The terrorist is constituted, in part, by its queerness. Terrorist bodies are perceived as threatening because of their unknowability and the impossibility to contain them within well-defined categories. This unknowability is a source of anxieties that generate fear through the notion of danger to national boundaries and reinforce the status of citizenship as heteronormative privilege (221).

Puar's analysis is applied to a very specific context and it would be simplifying to look for the direct applicability of her findings into my analysis. However, I will borrow her conceptualization of queerness as a mode of racialization and conceptual connection between

the national crisis and production of sexual deviances (XIII). Queerness for her works as a mechanism of racialization, helping to produce and maintain differences between populations and helps to discipline them (XIII). Following her approach helps me to dissect queerness from the non-heterosexual subject and to explore how gender and sexual deviances, produced as dangerous to the wellbeing (and futurity) of the properly (hetero)sexual Czechoslovak national society, were embodied in the figure of the Gypsy. Further, it helps me to establish how this constitution helped to legitimize the practice of coercive sterilization as a legitimate mechanism of biopolitical control and subjugation.

As my case of the regulation of the Roma population was enacted through the disciplinization of the bodies of Roma women, I will also engage with the Magnet and Mason (2014) discussion about the female queer terrorist. In their article "Of Trojan horses and Terrorist Representations," they discuss how the Orientalist perception of Islamic culture produces the notion about Muslim women and men as gender and sexually deviant. The queerness of the female terrorist is established through the reversal of the heteronormative imperative of the national project or as they call it: "reversal of the reproduction of the state" (11). A symbol of Muslim culture, the veil, came to symbolize anxieties around racial and queer deviancy. In my thesis, I will trace discursive mechanisms through which the sexuality of Roma women was understood as dismantling the stability of the heteronormative national project. I will argue that the Gypsy family became the signifier of Roma culture and the locus of anxieties about the racialized, gendered and sexual deviances which were produced through imperialist ideology and the colonial gaze. I will show how this signifier of anxieties was utilized within the discursive field of "the Gypsy question" to produce notion of the civilized Czechoslovak collectivity and its properly sexual and gendered subject by which proclamation of their whiteness was reiterated.

By bringing these perspectives to my analysis, I hope to explore the role of sexuality in the constitution of the hierarchy of human subjects during ‘normalization’ in Czechoslovakia, which legitimized the biopolitical mechanism of sterilization of Roma women. My analysis will show how the national collectivity of Czechoslovaks during ‘normalization’ was constituted as white and heteronormative. I will bridge the conceptual gap of discussing whiteness and the racial organization of socialist societies, persistent in the scholarship critically engaging with the period, with the potential to discuss such an organization in the post-socialist context. Setting the theoretical and conceptual framework I will now turn to the analytical part of my thesis.

Chapter 2. Background of the “Gypsy question” during ‘normalization’

In this chapter I set context within which sources analysed sources were produced. Both parts, discussing developments of the position of Roma within communist Czechoslovakia and changing sexuality and gender regimes reflect racial and sexual power mechanisms of biopolitical regime of ‘normalization’ and therefore set important context for my analysis, conducted in next chapters.

2.1. Roma in communist Czechoslovakia

Institutionalization of communist rule in Czechoslovakia started in 1948, when the Communist party gained the dominant position in the country and became the only party in power (McDermott 2015: 21). The regime’s preoccupation with the project of universal equality soon affected Roma as well. In order to distance the newly established regime from the previous political organization, which was accused of exploiting the Roma minority, communist Czechoslovakia abolished previous discriminatory legislation in 1950 (Law 2016: 48). However, Roma were denied the status of national identity and were recognized as ethnic minority, which delineated the possibilities for rights claims as well as state programs targeting Roma. Cultural specificities were seen as a necessary target for elimination because ethnic belonging, according to the Marxist-Leninist paradigm, was de-prioritized via the emphasis on class belonging (Barnay 2003: 112) The goal of all initiatives was to limit cultural specificities in order to achieve complete assimilation (Barany 2003: 110).

In light of the paradigm of socialism, the new government defined the problem of the Roma minority as rooted in socio-economic inequalities and developed measures according to this premise (Law 2016: 44). Using the label of the “Gypsy question”, the government, in collaboration and with the support of professionals and the scientific community, expressed a commitment to improving the disadvantaged position of Roma. Improvement of the quality of

housing, education and employment of Roma became the goals of communist government policies in the early years after World War II. Dissatisfaction with the development and failure of actual development of the living condition of Roma⁶ led to the employment of the: “punitive, segregationist, racially discriminatory policies as a means to achieve the official goal of assimilation⁷” (49). The main framework for actions taken in order to improve the Roma situation in Czechoslovakia was the 1960s program of forced dispersion, which through the systemic resettlement of Roma was supposed to lead towards the elimination of settlements (45).

The 1960s represent a turbulent period for Czechoslovak socialism. Orthodox communists had to deal with the disruption of the Leninist form of communism, as the victims of the political purge of the 1950s slowly started to be rehabilitated in society as a manifestation of gradual democratization (McDermott 2016: 92). This impulse towards ‘de-Stalinization’ came from the Khrushchev-induced turmoil within the Czechoslovak communist party as well. This political radicalization and drive for liberation, a phenomenon that spread globally during the period of 1960s, also influenced the Czechoslovak political scene and culminated with the events of the Prague Spring (122). The government, under the leadership of Alexander Dubček and his liberal reforms, tried to build specific ways of governing society. This idea was labeled as ‘Socialism with a human face,’ and was seen as a way to ‘improve’ socialism to build a new form of polity aligned with the humanist and democratic and modernist ideals (123).

Prague Spring, as an effect of this political shift, was a series of civil disobedience actions and disruptions of public life, which caused a temporary state of crisis and problematized socialist ideals about the role of the individual in the public sphere. Push back from Moscow came in

⁶ According to the Ian Law (2016) in the middle of the 1960s the survey of Roma made by Statistical Office showed that the numbers of Roma living in the, at the time, 1027 settlements was much higher than was originally expected and planned at the beginning of the 1950s (Law 2016:49).

⁷ Ian Law uses the term assimilation to indicate mechanisms of the suppression of the cultural specificities. Diminishment of the cultural differences was perceived as necessary in the process of integration of Roma.

the form of invasion by the Warsaw Pact troops⁸ and was followed by political and ideological changes that were allegedly supposed to restore the order of previous periods. The following two decades came to be recognized under the term ‘normalization’. Turmoil of the Prague Spring of 1968 afforded the Romani community with greater cultural freedom and opened space for the mobilization of the Romani leadership.⁹ However, the invasion of the Warsaw pact troops lead to a suppression of these efforts (Tritt 1992: 13).

During the period of late socialism, projects aimed at solving the “Gypsy question” were defined in terms of integration and management of the cultural specificities of the Roma minority. At the beginning of the 1970s, the government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic established the *Governmental Commission for the Question of Gypsy Citizens*. One of the roles of the commission was to instigate and coordinate programs and initiatives, and its function was defined, in the official report of the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs as: “... merging satisfaction of the legitimate specific needs of the gypsy population with broader social needs and interests with the goal of gradual integration of backward gypsy families into the socialist society” (Hemerník 1971: 5). The goal of the commission was to develop a “complex solution to the question of the gypsy population” (6). This was meant to be accomplished with a variety of educational programs and social work interventions to ensure integration through teaching the gypsy population: “to acquire the right relationship towards work, family, nutrition and education of children, culture of housing, hygiene and health care, culture, behavior on public and the way of life in general” (7). The way to reach this goal was imagined through designing the program to “deepen the social and educational influence on backward families” (7). The commission also formulated suggestions for scientific research and resolution of the ‘Gypsy

⁸ Warsaw pact was a collaboration of a Soviet union and countries of Central and Eastern Europe to organize their military power as a tool of protection of the region

⁹ Romani intellectuals used the loosened control and cultural upbringing to establish Romani union in 1969 which enabled for example the publication of a magazine in Romani language. Further, they formulated requirements for the change of the status of Roma to national minority. The union was dismissed shortly after the Prague Spring in 1972. To read about political organization of Roma during ‘normalization’ look at Sokolová (2008).

question' (Dem. 1971: 175). Institutionalization of the efforts to solve the 'Gypsy question' meant widespread financial and symbolic support from the state and allowed for a broad collaboration with other state organizations.

2.2. Family is political: changing sexuality and gender regimes

Temporary state of crisis, caused by the events of the Prague Spring, problematized communist ideals about the role of individuals in the civil sphere, as public citizens came to be seen as a potential source of opposition and resistance. Pauline Bren (2010) describes this transformation of the political and ideological culture as a shift towards privatized citizenship¹⁰ (149). In her understanding, privatized citizenship was a system in which personal acts and morals, especially connected to the organization of family life, favoured the private sphere as a: "... site for acting out citizenship ..." (159). This process resulted in the privatization of social life and attributed constituting power over citizenship to "personal acts and values, especially acts originating in or directed toward the family sphere..." (149). In such environment, the functions of citizenship were weakened, even though family sphere was perceived by many as a potential source of agency and escape from the controlled public sphere. This contradiction was managed through state interventions as the public sphere took on an active role in creating this illusion (149). Regime's ideas about gender equality during 'normalization' reflected shifting needs and interests, women became glorified as ultimate caretakers and: "counterweight to political dissent and social chaos" (176). By centralizing family to the ideological project of the late communism in Czechoslovakia together with the traditional understanding of the gender roles, afforded women with the sense of the empowerment, understanding contradictory to the formulations of struggles of Western women (176).

¹⁰ Bren draws an analogy to Lauren Berlant's (1997) concept of infantile citizenship which describes the collapse of the political and personal and transformed public sphere into an intimate, in the context of the Reaganism's conservative politics within which: "citizenship is turned inward and played out with the family sphere..." (Bren 2010: 149)

This shift serves as evidence against the understanding of the socialist regime in Czechoslovakia (and elsewhere) as a unified and coherent historical period, with a consistent and unchanging ideology, as well as the notion of historical development as progressive and linear. The rise of a family sphere and privatization of citizenship show the complexity of ideological work and its intersection with various political goals, whose ever-changing discourses can alter meanings. One of the spheres where such a change is evident is the transformation of understanding gender equality and its role in socialist society, which further informed and shaped the gender and sexuality regimes of the period. Such changes can be reflected in multiple spheres, including the legal one. In her article “Three Stages of Gender in Law” Barbara Havelková (2014) shows the interconnectedness of the ideological and legal understanding of women’s role in society. She describes the transformation of the regime through changing social, population and health policies. The progressive gender politics of the Stalinist era, according to Havelková, were substituted by the traditional gender regime of ‘normalization’ (31).

The content and the discourses of the policies in the 1950s defined women as workers and citizens, thereby constituting their gender roles in terms of their participation in the public sphere (32). The idea of a seemingly progressivist regime shattered in the 1960s when pronatalist sentiments dragged the family to the centre of attention (41). Reactions to the longstanding low rates of fertility led to limiting the autonomy and privacy of women through limiting access to abortion. The establishment of the abortion committees with the possibility of involving the responsible men (father of the child or the legal guardian) was one of such obstacles. Further, pronatalism of state ideology is reflected in the changes of the Labor Code from 1968, which aimed to support pregnant women and mothers by constituting obligations to create public childcare facilities, which were also followed by the institutionalization of various forms of financial support for mothers (Havelková 2014: 42-43).

The domain defining the role of ‘women’ shifted from the areas of work and citizenship towards the domestic sphere, emphasizing the meaning of motherhood for ‘socialist women’. Emancipatory projects of communism, constituting women as public agents, the workers, were during ‘normalization’ seen as legitimate only under condition of the fulfilling the role of the mother as well. According to Oates-Indruchová (2012) this shift in moulding of the desired and normative gender ideals was possible within the framework of universal equality through a combination of two competing discourses, which she defines as residual patriarchal discourse and discourses of women’s emancipation through work where “the image of socialist superwoman so prevalent in the previous period of regime was sugar-coated with traditional feminine imaginary” (Oates-Indruchová 2012: 378). This way the emancipatory communist project and rhetoric, prevalent in the regime’s discourses, was translated so as to affirm the re-traditionalizing shift driving policy changes.

This trend of increasing of the symbolic value of the private sphere was intensified throughout the period following 1968, when the state Long term decrease in the birth rates took on a slightly different meaning after Prague Spring. The ‘normalization’ government conceptualized the redress of the disturbed order by centralizing interest on the family and emphasizing role of women as a caretaker. During the First Communist Party Convention in Czechoslovakia after Prague Spring, held in 1971, agenda for policies exceeded the usual framework of economic measures and enunciated the necessity for development of the program which was supposed to ‘increase the social esteem of parenthood’ (Lišková 2016a: 63). The category of ‘social esteem of parenthood’ signals the responsibility of individuals in the family sphere toward the social or public realm. In accordance with this plan, the Ministry of Work and Social affairs of CSR added ‘increasing the social esteem of parenthood’ to its own agenda to assure the fulfilment of the responsibilities between spouses, parents and children because unfulfilled responsibilities were seen as a hindrance to the impact of the instruments of pro-natalist policies. It was also

supposed to address a wide array of topics concerning health education, child-rearing or pre-marital guidance¹¹ (Brablecová 1972b). As captured by Lišková (2016b) the narratives of equal partnership and love between spouses were substituted by a discourse where: “Precedence should be given to duty over love” (19). The advisory board for the education towards parenthood was established as a part of a board for population politics (Brablecová 1972b). Its main goal was to coordinate the development of the educational programs, a form of what would nowadays be called a sexual education¹².

After the Prague Spring, gender-conservative regulations, which were put into effect already at the end of the 1960s, gained more space and even more authority. The previous pronatalist policies that focused mainly on the role of women in reproduction, as described by Havelková (2014), were intensified by the change of political culture during ‘normalization’, particularly by its move towards privatized citizenship (Bren 2010). As family legislation changed, conditions for divorce became more difficult than ever before. These obstacles led to a fortification of marital normativity, establishing life-long marriage as the most desired form of relationship (Havelková 2014: 45). The notion of gender equality was suspended for the good of a well-functioning family, and it became the duty of women to maintain the desired environment.

Developments which were created supposedly with the goal of emancipating women, such as financial support, legal institutionalization of maternity leave or developments in housing, with special focus on flats for young families, measures, which were said to enable women to participate in the public sphere, were in fact used to bound them even closer to their family roles and regulate their sexuality to utilized in the process of fulfilling the public interest. The

¹¹ The pre-marital guidance was very important in this connection of education toward parenthood. The sign of it is establishment of the network of the premarital counselling offices dispersed across the country.

¹² Head of advisory board became MUDr. Jozef Hynie (Brablecová 1972a), which at that time was a head of a sexological institute in Prague. This emphasizes the entanglement of the sexuality in the demarcation of the meanings of the citizenship during 'normalization'.

policy tools were not aimed to enhance the autonomy of women as individuals, but were rather defined in terms of furthering public needs and collective interests through emphasizing the ‘social esteem of parenthood.’ These reproductive policies were highly mobilized instruments of the ideological work regarding reproduction; this complicates understandings of them as contributing towards reproductive rights, as: “...many apparent legal guarantees of individual rights were limited by the corrective of ‘collective interest’ ” (Havelková 2014: 46).

Ideological preoccupation with pronatalism, the private sphere and respective shifts in policies constituted an understanding of the role of women and family in a way which was particular to the Czechoslovak model of late socialism (Bren 2010: 168-169). According to Lišková (2016a) the intention of driving citizens from the public sphere and tying them closer to their families, by emphasizing the importance and necessity of it, was supported by the state’s desire for “more docile, more easily governable” citizens (64). This impulse towards “extreme familization”, term which Lišková uses to describe shift of mode of subjection from work to family, had two-fold outcomes (49). On the one side this drive offered a refuge from one’s always persistent visibility in the public sphere, and on the other side the familial drive of the ‘normalization’ era, with its impetus on the normativity and docility of the citizens, put a spotlight on the ‘sexual deviations’ (64). During ‘normalization’ etiology of sexual deviations was traced to the family environment the primacy was given to the environmental rather than biological explanations (Lišková 2013: 43). It was in this framework of ‘normalization’ that deviations became more visible, understood as a threat to the social order (Lišková 2016a: 51). ‘normalization’s’ effects in shaping the private sphere melded families into “normalized” docile agents, organized along the lines of gender hierarchies and discipline, with the family as a tool to fulfil one’s own responsibility towards society. The ‘normalcy’ of the family became seen as a factor ensuring the ‘normalcy’ of individual (Lišková 2012: 43). The entanglement of sexuality with the idea of the normal individual came to be embodied through the family organization. Defined strictly

through the realm of the nuclear family, sexuality and gender order became discursively strongly linked and dependent on each other.

Important to the understanding of these developments is also the second National Demographic Conference which was held in the 1970. The main focus of the conference was to discuss "problems of the future population development" (Dem. 1970: 289). The conference was organized in two thematic blocks, one of which was dedicated to the economic and social aspects of population development, the other was dedicated to the biological and medical aspects of population development a field which was not considered a part of the scientific field of demography. It was stated that the quantitative growth of the population is still one of the main concerns of the population policies however, attention to the "qualitative" development of population was framed as necessary as the growing number of: "citizens with physical or mental impairments" (299) was seen as damaging to the qualitative composition of the population. It was proposed, this field of demography should be interdisciplinary and incorporate knowledge of the genetics in the development of the population policies. Such infusion of knowledge was viable on the grounds that: "both fields aim for the rational regulation of the population development" (Černý 1970: 317).

This further allowed the link between regulation of the fertility and health of the population (Vojta 1973) which was to be assured by a promotion of the 'social esteem of parenthood'. Optimal population development was seen as outcome of the planned and controlled reproduction, assured by families with three kids, family model which became desirable (Kučera 1973: 97). Families with multiple kids were in these discourses framed as "socially weak" with higher number of individuals with physical or mental impairments. Further, five children in the family was seen as outcome of the "uncontrolled sexuality" (Vojta 1973: 344). In this light, docility of the families described by Lišková (2016a) is linked to the planned

parenthood¹³. As one of the articles in Demographic journal stated: "planned parenthood, in our understanding, is leading towards developing and forming conscious socialist human" (343). Politicization of sexuality in the period of 'normalization', produced categories of planned, healthy, controlled, desirable sexuality and emphasized the role of individual for the well-being of whole population.

Novelization of the sterilization law, enacting changes in 1972, should as well be conceptualized within this framework of extreme familization, privatized citizenship, re-traditionalization of the gender regime and the emphasis on individuals' responsibility towards population development and notions of its desirable development. According to the discourses of officials the law was adopted in order to protect citizens from ill-informed sterilization (Sokolová 2008: 207). Interpreted on the backdrop with the aforementioned changes in sexual and gender regimes, it was a move towards reinforcing the importance of biological reproduction in the lives of individuals as highly important and defining their social as well as gender roles in terms of parenthood.

Changes in the law made access to the whole procedure more complicated. According to the law, a written request by the patient or her legal guardian, approval of the sterilization committee (composed of the chief medical officer, chief officer of hospital and specialized doctor) and a specific health checkup, as the health condition of the patient could be a reason for refusing the procedure, was necessary before granting the permission. Parts of the process comprises a written protocol which describes the whole process and is signed by all members of the sterilization committee. Permission was granted in the cases when the pregnancy could

¹³ I decided to use a term planned parenthood (literal translation of the original *plánované rodičovstvo*) instead of the family planning which is the more common translation. I decided for this word choice to indicate possible links to the Planned Parenthood and its racist history (for more details read Angela Davis (2003) "Race Birth Control and Reproductive Rights"). This way I want to emphasize racialized dimensions of the western understanding of the choice, freedom and emancipation that are so central to discussion about reproductive rights.

threaten the life of a woman, or there was probability of fetal degeneration based on the health conditions of the parents.¹⁴

According to Sokolová (2008) there are no official statistics concerning the sterilizations, however she claims that almost third of the women sterilized between the years of 1972-1990 were Roma even though Roma constituted merely two percent of the whole population (208). The aftermath of this law, which resulted in the illicit sterilizations of a particular group of women, also reveals that beyond serving patriarchal and paternalistic ideologies of the state and its institutions (one of such is also a law), the consequences held a racialized and/or racist dimension. In this sense the ethnically neutral wording of the sterilization decree could be saturated by racialized meaning. This exemplifies the entanglement of the racial and sexual imaginaries in shaping the biopolitical regimes and boundaries of collectivity which “must be defended” (Foucault 2003).

Baring this context in mind I will now move on to the analysis of my collected data.

¹⁴ For the list of medical indications in English read Cahn (2015).

Chapter 3. Racializing cultural differences: constructing figure of the Gypsy during ‘normalization’

In this chapter I will analyse mechanisms of constitution of the “Gypsy question”: how it came to signify a “problem”, proposals of possible ways of dealing with this problem, establishing, reiterating, and reifying the distinction between the Czechoslovak and Roma population. Throughout these I will examine how this distinction coincides with the racialized hierarchy of human subjects, as understood by Weheliye (2014) in order to show how racialized hierarchy is established through the Eastern European imperialist project of “civilizing backwardness”. This racialization posited Roma on the lower stratum of this hierarchy of humanity, necessarily affording the Czechoslovak population, which excluded Roma, the superior position, as a civilized and modern community.

I will do this through the analysis of the following themes which I have identified as important in this process: 3.1.the construction of the figure of the Gypsy as morally inept; 3.2.the notions of the "Gypsy way of life" constituting a specific notion of 'cultural citizenship' (Ong 1999); and 3.3. Narratives about the past of Roma producing the ‘gypsy pastness’ (Wallerstein 1991). I will focus on the processes and mechanisms of differentiation and subsequent hierarchization of these differences to show constitution of the notion of the ‘people’ (Balibar 1991). I will do this by tracing the ways differences between Roma and Czechoslovaks were discursively reiterated, which according to Ahmed (2000) produces proximity of the stranger, the constitutive element of the national collectivity (95). To do this I will analyse sources which were dedicated to the conceptualization of the educational and social work programs targeting the gypsy population in general. I will do so in order to see how, within the discursive field of the "Gypsy question", aspects of difference between the Czechoslovaks and Roma were perceived as problematic. This will help me to explore discursive mechanisms of the

biopolitical regime regulating and disciplining bodies of Roma women through practices of sterilization.

3.1. Gypsy vs Czechoslovak values: constituting “Gadžo” hegemony

One of the divisive mechanisms producing differences between Roma and Czechoslovaks was what was framed in the analyzed texts as a “system of values”. The figure of the Gypsy was constituted as ‘morally inept’, as what was perceived as system of values of Roma was considered not just different but ‘wrong’, compared to the one followed by Czechoslovaks within socialist society. As I discussed in the section about ‘normalization’ gender and sexuality regimes, the period after Prague Spring installed a new set of values (Bren 2010: 33). This system was embedded within notions of a desirable family model and responsible parenthood, where the family sphere gained new symbolic meaning as an outcome of extreme familization (Lišková 2016a) and a shift towards privatized citizenship (Bren 2010). The aim of my analysis in this chapter is to trace the use of these categories as rhetorical tools in the process of differentiation and racialization.

The framework of the programs which were developed to deal with the "Gypsy question" was set within the attempts for ‘integration’. All initiatives organized under the goal of solving the problem were, as stated in the documents, to integrate Roma into the Czechoslovak socialist society. As the following quote describes:

It is clear that the goal of all endeavors in solving the gypsy question is the social integration of Gypsies. This mainly means that the socio-legal, cultural, moral, aesthetic, hygienic and other norms, binding for all our citizens, are supposed to become regulatory factors of human action for gypsy citizens as well (Pollak 1979: 186).

Defined this way, integration implies that the Roma population needed to learn and acquire the norms of society. This process is described as one-directional, the responsibility of the majority is not questioned and neither are the established structures and systems of norms. The

enumeration of the kinds of norms serves as an indication of how broad-scale the ‘gypsy problem’ was seen, which serves as support to the stated need of intervention. The quote describes the spheres in which the figure of the Gypsy is considered deviant. Enumerating the groups of norms next to each other as parts of one group also implies their logical connection. They are all subsumed by the perceived deviance of the figure of the Gypsy. Including "and other norms" at the end of the list keeps the possible ways of transgression of norms open-ended. The figure of the Gypsy is therefore constituted through, and from the outset understood as the embodiment of the transgression of the norms. The notion of the deviance of the figure of the Gypsy is constituted by what Sara Ahmed (2014) calls stickiness, through which particular bodies become to be associated with certain properties as the discursive links are created and reiterated (13).

The authority of norms is constituted by the fact that they "are binding to all our citizens". The idea of society, and the conditions for its existence, is defined in terms of holding together its citizens through a system of norms. The function of the norms is identified as regulation. Regulation, as a main technology of the biopolitical mechanism of power, aim to maintain order, protecting the population from disruption (Foucault 2003: 249). It is only on the backdrop of the idea of norms that the deviations come to be recognized. And it is only through the particular idea of the norms, defining the period of ‘normalization’, that the deviations from the norm could be seen as anti-systemic elements (Lišková 2016a). The difference between ‘gypsy citizens’ and ‘all our citizens’ is constituted through the stated different relationship to the norms. As the norms are “binding for all our citizens”, the Czechoslovaks are constituted as following the stated norms, however, in the case of Roma this relationship is seen as a matter of futurity: they are ‘supposed to become regulated’. This way, even though address in the quote as “gypsy citizens”, Roma are excluded from the general citizen body.

As the integration implies the existence of recognizable and distinct elements the relationship of these two categories is at the center of the “Gypsy question”. Such an understanding is also reflected in the following quote, where the difference of Roma, constituted as deviation, was defined as a main source of the tension between Czechoslovaks and Roma and as a main cause of the problems associated with "Gypsy question".

This disjunction of two different value systems and ways of life is the basis of the so-called “gypsy question” because it is an area of collision and source of tension... Addressing the so-called “gypsy question” is in the end dealing with the problem of cohabitation of two different cultures... From these cultures, our own is historically more developed, more complicated and in relation to the culture of gypsy ethnicity also stronger. ... We should point out here, that if we are talking about cohabitation, we of course do not mean accepting the gypsy culture without reservations, or toleration of the negative anti-social characteristics ... (Scheinost 1976: 89-90).

The quote indicates the idea of different and separate groups whose coexistence produces conflict. This is indicated in the text by the words "disjunction", "collision", "tension". Furthermore, it reflects a clear idea about the hierarchy of those groups, which positions Czechoslovak socialist culture as superior, hegemonic norm which needs to be followed. From this position it is claimed that the “negative anti-social characteristics” of “gypsy ethnicity” would not be tolerated, therefore indicating that they need to be diminished, as they are identified as a reason for the conflict. This conflict, which is internal to the population living in Czechoslovakia, functions as a locus to reify the existence of two separate groups. Use of the pronouns ‘We’ and ‘our own’ is a rhetorical tool to indicate the notion of the collective and community. According to Ahmed (2000) proximity of the other (ethnic group) is necessary condition for the constitution of the collectivity. Without proximity of the other, proclamation of 'We' would not be necessary (95).

The category of “negative anti-social characteristic” is seen as the root of the problem and tension. In the setting where the norms were perceived as binding citizens together, inability to fulfill norms is not only seen as negative or deviant but also as a threat to the social system and therefore constituted as ‘anti-social’. The term ‘anti-social’ is used in the text without further explanation or definition. This vagueness then allows us to understand any digression from the norm as potentially anti-social and therefore threatening. The always present emphasis on the difference of Roma from the rest of the population helps to establish a symbolic link between anti-social and the figure of the Gypsy. These are, in their ability to stick together, constituted as metonymy, whose function according to Ahmed (2014:76) is to create a link between those two terms which is not merely temporal and is reinforced without literal articulation of a direct relationship between them. This way, the terms “gypsy” and “anti-social” can be used interchangeably.

The tension and conflict which is described in the quote is utilized in order to solidify the idea of ‘a people’ (Balibar 1991), a group which recognize self through a sense of the shared form of belonging (93). In analyzed sources, relationship to this norm was a referential point in the constitution of belonging to a particular group as well as the delineation of the boundaries of these categories, and therefore was constitutive of the notion of a ‘people’. Such a division is understood in ethicized terms. The “Gypsy question” can henceforth be seen as a locus for the reiteration of ‘a people,’ the Czechoslovaks, as the problem is caused by “two different value systems and ways of life”. The acknowledgement of the difference helps to constitute and reinforce the problem which needs to be solved. Solving the problem through integration helps to establish the hegemony of “our own culture”, which is in the quote described as stronger, more developed. Narratives of “our own culture” are manifestation of what Balibar (1991) calls naturalization of the imagined ethnicity. They express an understanding of what Czechoslovak culture is. The exclusion of Roma from what is considered as ‘our own’ is reassured by what

Esposito (2013: 85) calls “barriers of individual identity”, built as a reaction to the threat posed which was in the analysed case defined as “negative anti-social characteristics” in order to protect the ‘own culture’. This goes along with Ahmed's (2000) understanding of the constitution of the national collectivity through encounters with the strange, with the 'other', whose proximity is necessary condition in this process (95).

The paternalistic tone in which my sources were written further expresses the hierarchy within which the notion of the two different values systems were implied. As following quote shows:

The main goal of social care for gypsy citizens is to cultivate and stabilize an active relationship of the gypsy citizens towards the improvement of the quality of life and improvement of the social position of the families towards better ways of solving the social problems and life situations with the goal to accomplish their social integration (Brablková 1977 3).

Roma are portrayed as lacking the relationship or the interest in improving their lives as this relationship needs to be "cultivated" and "stabilized", and therefore suggests the indifference of the Roma population towards the values of socialist Czechoslovak society. The term ‘stabilize’ implies that the desirable subject, which can be integrated into society, is a subject that is predictable, wholesome and docile, or in other words a subject that solves social problems in particular - ‘better’ - ways. It also indicates that the instability or unpredictability is what prevents integration and causes disruption. Both tasks are constituted as a "goal of social care for gypsy citizens", which indicates that this is directed from outside and imposed on Roma. The threat of unregulated subject legitimizes the interventions of social and education work. These interventions were utilized to maintain and reinforce hegemonic structures. The norms, or ways of acting that Roma had to appropriate were described in terms of betterment and improvement to indicate a value judgment and constitutes Czechoslovak value system as hegemonic. The framework of cultural and educational work with the “gypsy population” also

discursively reinforces the hegemony of the Czechoslovak value system through the formulation of main goal as:

To teach gypsy citizens to use accordingly what is offered to them by our socialist society in the best interest to improve their social conditions and their overall cultural level and betterment of their life as a whole. They, themselves, have to participate, by work and cultural activities which are beneficiary for public. Only this way will be their lives happy and fulfilled (Holečko 1988: 36).

Integration was understood as a way to uplift Roma from their low social position caused by their own alleged backwardness. The norms were considered as not only the right choice but also as the way to reach a happy and fulfilled life. The assertion about how to make someone's life "happy and fulfilled" - the quote suggests that it is only possible through the adoption of hegemonic social norms - reiterates the moralistic judgments about the Roma population. Constructing Czechoslovak society or "our socialist society" as morally superior is also implied in terms of offering something to "gypsy citizens" as well as having "the best interest to improve their social conditions" and "overall cultural level". The actions of offering and having the best interests are stated as already given, which implies that the conditions for the improvement of the lives of "gypsy citizens" are already in place and now is the turn to teach Roma how to use it in the 'right way'.

The tools which are considered necessary for "the improvement of life" are seen as already existing, as they have been already "offered", and therefore the gypsy question is not treated as a structural problem. This creates space for blaming Roma, or their insufficient knowledge of how to use "what is offered to them" for their own position within social structures. This can further facilitate the legitimization of the claim that it was not enough to offer help, but also necessary to ensure the right way of using the resources. Providing Roma with social assistance was considered insufficient, which established the possibility of further interventions. This

paternalistic tone and relationship toward Roma, reflecting the constitution of the figure of the Gypsy as infantilized and needing to be told what to do, together with the constitution of ‘self’ as civilized and morally superior, could explain the role social workers played in the process of practice of coercive sterilization described in the scholarship and human rights reports (Cahn 2015, Tritt 1993, Zoon 2003).

The constitution of Czechoslovaks and Roma as distinct groups, which are defined in terms of their relationship to norms, leads to what Balibar (1991) describes as the translation of a social difference into ethnicized terms in the process of nationalization of the social collectivity (100). I will now turn my attention to another category, “the gypsy way of life”, used in this process to deepen the understanding of the mechanisms of racialization of Roma.

3.2. ‘ Way of life’

As I have shown, the "Gypsy question" was not treated as structural problem but was rather the category of what was considered as cultural specificities of Roma, framed as “the way of life” which was identified as a source of the problem, causing conflict with "Gypsy population" and other citizens:

...serious social problem, which is, in socialist Czechoslovakia, the backwardness of the part of the gypsy population from the level of our society. These citizens need individual care mainly in current times ... The way of life of some Gypsies, in these new features [of the new social order], are causing conflict with the rest of the society (Holečko 1988: 17).

The rhetoric used in the quote, which is in alliance with previous ones, indicates an understanding of the separation of groups, “our society” and the Roma. This separation shows that the figure of the Gypsy was constituted as outsider from what was imagined as “our” - socialist, Czechoslovak - society. The “new features” mentioned in the quote could address what was considered as a modern and rational organization of society, directing the organization of lives of individuals. One such feature of modern life was considered to be planned or

responsible parenthood, which was defined as a “social problem of modern societies” (Zelenková 1969:7). Being able to plan a family, which was defined as being able to fulfill the ‘normalization’ family ideal, could afford an individual with the status of modern subject. The binary of modern versus traditional (Czechslovak versus Gypsy) structured narratives about the way of life. Such a hierarchy of difference was embedded in the racialized imaginary and helped in the process of what Balibar (1991) names naturalization of the imagined ethnicity:

...the process of integration is linked to the regression of the traditional way of life of Gypsies. The retreat of specific ethnic elements in favour of the international ones, common for whole, big, geographical regions and varied ethnic communities is within civilized countries as unavoidable phenomenon and even gypsies will not avoid it (Horváthová 1989: 27).

In the texts I analysed, the imaginary of the ‘traditional’ used to describe the “way of life of Gypsies” indicates large families living in cramped conditions. These conditions were allegedly backward, unhygienic, unhealthy, dirty, and overcrowded. The iconography of “Gypsy way of life” was signified through stereotypes about settlements, an environment understood to solidify these “traditional habits”. The discursive logic within my source texts linked “Gypsy way of life” with historically developed habits. As one of the texts mentions: “The strongest fixation of habituated way of live with all negative features is exactly in huts, in gypsy settlements” (Farkaš 1988: 40). The iconography and stereotypes attached to these settlements stick to the figure of gypsy. Further, the “traditional way of life of Gypsies” could not be overpowered by changing the environment to flats, which was considered modern and civilized. As one of the authors stated: “...not every gypsy family which lived in a backward environment (a hut, settlement or ramshackle family house), can adapt to the new environment of a flat.” (Bubelíny 1988: 54). These narratives reproduced differences between Roma and Czechoslovaks through stabilization of the ethnic categories and consequently reinforced naturalization of social organization.

The logic supporting correlation between integration and suppression of the traditions or backwardness defined the discursive field of the "Gypsy question". Widely used classification of 'gypsy citizens' was also embedded in it. The Ministry of Work and Social Affairs of CSR presented the classification of the "Gypsy population" based on the evaluation of the way of life as an indicator of the level of the integration. This classification was created in order to standardize and further specify the work of the *Governmental Commission for the Question of Gypsy Citizens*. The categories of the classification, presented in the 1972 bulletin of the *Ministry of Work and Social Affairs*, were defined as follows: one group was defined as approaching social integration, living among the rest of the population. They were perceived as following "basic principles" and habits defined as child caring, employment and domestic culture, but they were "not consolidated enough yet" (Brablcová 1972a: 5). The second group was defined as a group which was: "Trying to break out from the backward way of life but sometimes their honest efforts [was] slowed down or even suppressed by their living environment" (Brablcová 1972a: 5). The third group contained "the most backward gypsy citizens", who do not try to break out from their environment, and the last one was described as a group that often changed the place of their living (Brablcová 1972a: 6). According to the bulletin this group did not work and: "take child support, which is, considering the high number of kids, high and is often a source of a nourishment for the bigger kinship community" (Brablcová 1972a: 6).

Defined as such, the mere change of the socio-economic condition was seen as insufficient to change the social position of Roma, or the change of social position was not sufficient for Roma not to be considered a gypsy. The outcome of the solidification of ethnic categories, or naturalization of the imagined ethnicity (Balibar 1991), was the impossibility of moving away from 'gypsy status,' which complied with the meanings of backwardness and deviation from the norm. This initiates imagining other solutions for the "Gypsy problem" rather than

education or social work assistance because: “Even the environment of the highest quality is not able to automatically change the way of life of gypsy family” (Bubelíny 1988: 54).

The evaluation of the “way of life” is based on observable characteristics. This way the allocation within the scale as well as the membership within the “ethnic group of Gypsy” was assigned from outside. Based on these classifications, no matter what the position of the person within society, in the case of the Roma, belonging to the group was assigned by outsiders and is not overcome even after accommodation to the norms. Integration is defined in a way which requires diminishing the specific cultural signs which are defined as negative, but even after, based on the definition of the group considered as integrated, the individual is still considered to be a gypsy, and therefore backward. To become a member of the community, as described by Esposito (2013), the specific group needs to get rid of its own “identity characteristics” (85). However, this would only be possible if the borders between the groups were permeable. The impossibility of becoming part of the community means that the specific signifiers of identity are considered adhesive. The process of racialization, naturalizing and reifying differences between groups, solidifies the boundaries between groups located in different positions in the spectrum of humanity and assures the impermeability of the identity boundaries.

One of those signifiers of identity, in the aforementioned classification, was family organization. If integration was a manifestation of overcoming backwardness, then in the logic of the classification the organization of “gypsy family” can be seen as a signifier of 'backwardness'. Using family organization as a way of indicating the level of integration has a significant implication to the understanding of the construction of Roma sexuality, specifically for the context of ‘normalization’. Within the period of ‘normalization’ the shift towards privatized citizenship (Bren 2010), in which the family became the main space for the negotiation of citizenship, meant that the private behaviour and the moral system of values of the individual came to symbolise social status. The not-so-private private sphere was charged

with political meaning, and life within the family was translated into the political and public sphere. In analysed sources, family organization was used in the process of naturalization of the difference between Czechoslovak and Roma population. The “way of life of gypsies” was discursively linked to the ‘traditions’ which were seen as in conflict with the ‘socialist way of life’. This way the ‘traditional’ and ‘gypsy way of life’ were only understood in terms of what deviated from the desired hegemonic socialist norm and prevented the process of social integration. Their elimination was also constituted as a necessity, as the socialist way of life is constituted as civilized, modern, rational, and thus irreconcilable with the ‘pre-modern traditional organization of life’. As was already mentioned, ‘normalization’s’ family also became the main field of negotiation of sexual meanings (Lišková 2012). Following from this, ‘gypsy way of life’ must have been infused with sexual signification.

Constituting “gypsy way of life” as a specific category implies its recognisability. In this way, Roma came to be recognized from outside of the group; their own assertion of ethnic identity was not necessary in order to recognize someone as ‘gypsy.’ This recognisability is yet another mechanism of racialization as it implies that the category can be imposed on the individual from the outside. So even though Roma were considered as an ethnic category, self-assertion was not a mechanism of determination, but ascription was considered as sufficient. As discussed by Surudu (2016) Roma are in this sense the product of the perception of “those who count”. This ascription is presented in the following quote, which describes how the commissioners had to evaluate “specific signification of individuals” in order to account for who is Roma in the process of national census, which was held in 1980:

Counting commissioners should base this labelling mainly on the evidence of the permanent residence of gypsy citizens ... in case of counting outside of the place of permanent residence they should have based their judgement on general knowledge (characteristic way of living in multigenerational families,

usually lower culture of housing and insufficient knowledge of the language of society where they live) (Srb 1984: 161).

This quote implies that it is “general knowledge” - and therefore widely recognized - that people living in “multigenerational families” and having “lower culture of housing and insufficient knowledge of the language” are signifiers of belonging to what is considered to be an ethnic community. This “general knowledge” is what produces the figure of the Gypsy. The knowledge is constitutive of the signs differentiating Roma from the rest of the population, just as for Ahmed (2000) the ‘stranger’ is recognizable from the ‘we’ and is central to the formation of the community (55). This case of the ascription of the category of gypsy citizen to the specific social and cultural conditions is what Balibar (1991) calls the ethnicization of social difference, which is an outcome of the constitution of ethnicity as a stabilized identity (99-100). Although it is not explicitly clear from reading the quote, family is the main locus of the racialization; the background of the ‘normalization’ for the establishment of the causal relationship between family environment and normalcy of the individual makes such a claim possible. This way the “insufficient knowledge of language” and “lower culture of housing” can be, in the symbolic logic of ‘normalization’, traced to the deviations of the family and ‘improper’ family environment. Following Weheliye (2014), this has impact on the construction of the gender and sexuality of the racialized subject, which is constituted as failing to fulfil the hegemonic norms, and it is through gender and sexual deviances that they are banned from what Weheliye describes as full human (42). According to this logic, “gypsy family” is therefore constituted not only as a deviant, but as a place where non-normative gender and sexual norms and roles are being enacted. Even more, it is the presence of these non-normative elements which ensure the deviance.

The process of racialization by no means impacts only one group and does not exclude any part of humanity as it creates a relational whole (Weheliye 2014: 21). This means that by the

production of the meaning around deviance, the norm – whiteness - is produced and solidified alongside. This relationality is also captured by Ahmed's (2000) figure of the stranger. The identification of a person as Gypsy was intertwined with the process of recognition of difference. As the knowledge about the stranger is constituted through the same gaze which one uses to look at the self, the figure of the Gypsy, the same way as the figure of the stranger, according to Ahmed (2000), is constituted only through the narcissism of the one who produces the knowledge (56). Asserting the recognisability and therefore stability of the boundaries of the gypsy ethnic group in the census therefore implies an imaginary about the stability of Czechoslovak collectivity, mirrored in the ideas about the Czechoslovak family and Czechoslovak sexuality, which were specific to the period of 'normalization' (Lišková 2012). Coming from "within" (the knowledge and recognition of "self"), the figure of the Gypsy embodies the difference which is based on the idea of what can be labelled as "Czechoslovak" and at the same time is used to solidify the boundaries of this group. The importance of the family and implied normative 'normalization's' sexuality within this process is partially explanatory of why it was that the practice of sterilization that was put into action in this particular period in Czechoslovakia.

The category of "general way of life" was used to describe difference of the Roma from the 'rest of the population'. The differences were framed in terms of cultural habits. The category of "Gypsy citizen" can be understood as framing a specific group of 'cultural citizenship' (Ong 1999), a group which is considered as having different referential point of cultural belonging. But it is important not to overlook the continuous role of racial hierarchies and binaries in informing those differences as it is impossible to separate racial thinking from the way cultural specificities were seen as attributes of different groups (Ong 1999: 287). In the same way as Balibar (1991) and his description of the process of the naturalization of fictive ethnicity, Ong (1999) points out how the notion of common culture and narrativization of the past, framed in

terms of 'being different from,' may lead to the stabilization of cultural meaning and of the cultural categories which are attributed to different groups and consequently lead to their racialization (Ong: 264).

Reflecting these theoretical insights in analysed sources, the category of 'way of life' was conceptualized as an outcome of the long socio-historical development of the group and seen as: "deeply rooted deformations in certain areas of way of life and value orientation" (Horváthová 1989: 31) and "specific forms of life, which they created throughout the history" (Holečko 1988: 18). Therefore it is important to turn attention towards the narratives of the past of the Roma to better understand the implications of the category way of life. According to the discursive logic of the "Gypsy question", the different past of the Roma significantly influenced their cultural specificities and therefore can be understood as a mechanism of naturalization of the differences and racialization. In following section I will analyse narratives of the past of Roma in order to uncover another dimension of the naturalisation of the imagined ethnicity.

3.3. Pastness

"During multiple millenniums cultivated habits became a natural way of life"
(Horváthová 1989:23).

Immanuel Wallerstein (1991) describes how the notion of the past is used to legitimize certain political claims and actions. It can be used as a tool to maintain or change current social structures. "Pastness", as he calls it, and its effect on the present, is central to the particular organization of sociability, and helps to produce the notion of collectivity and group solidarity or, in Wallerstein's words, peoplehood organized around notions of race, nation or ethnicity (Wallerstein 1991: 79). Defined this way, pastness should be understood as: "... pre-eminently a moral phenomenon, therefore a political phenomenon, always contemporary phenomenon" (79). Narratives about the past of different groups are therefore sites of political negotiation and not a mere reflection or representation of historical truths. They can offer us insights into the

political struggles of society as well as the interests of the groups in power to shape the narratives of pastness. Understanding pastness as one of the aspects producing, maintaining and legitimizing social organization can offer analytical insights about biopolitical processes of differentiation, such as processes of racialization, within the population.

The narratives of the perception of Gypsy pastness can unveil mechanisms reflecting the role of racial politics within the constructing of the peoplehood – the Czechoslovaks – and legitimization of the interventions or particular solutions to the “Gypsy question”. These narratives are interesting especially because of the ideological context, where the prevailing paradigm of civilization development was defined as strictly linear and progressivist and where the Marxist theories of socio-political development constituted socialism as the desirable social formation and as a goal of this social development (Lišková 2016 b: 219). The emphasis on the role of conditions of socio-historical development on the level of development and civility, or stages of cultural development which is conditioned on social and material conditions, is the organizing principle of the Marxian understanding of social development (Alymov 2014: 125).

The narratives explaining the social position of gypsies within society fit into the framework of civilization development:

Cultural and educational work with the gypsy population has some specifics which are objective results of different historical development of this group of citizens. This is mainly a qualitatively lower level of social, economic and cultural development of this group as a whole in comparison to the rest of the population of [Czech Socialist Republic]. This different, historically conditioned level of civilization maturity is an outcome of the exploitative nature of the former social systems (Scheinost 1976: 107).

The level of “civilization maturity” which is defined as “qualitatively lower” is an outcome of the past and the history of exploitation of the group. The stage of the development of the Roma group is defined as lower in relation to the society and population of the Czech Socialist

Republic. Again, Roma are not considered part of the collectivity of Czechoslovaks. This differentiation of groups is now based on the notion of different historical development, or “pastness” (Wallerstein 1991). These narratives should not be considered as a representation of the history of group, but rather as politically saturated and discursively constructed. The narrativization of Roma pastness is implied within ideological power structures and therefore it is important to interpret it in relation to the specific framework of ‘normalization’. Once again, Roma were constituted as unable to embody the desired norm of modern, civilized Czechoslovak citizens. Weheliye (2014) says that failure of non-white subjects to fulfil the norm defined and embodied by white subject is an outcome of the mechanisms of racializing assemblages (42). Consequently pastness is yet another mechanism of racialization of Roma.

Reference to the “exploitative nature” of past regimes framed most of the narratives about Roma pastness. The discrimination of Roma was framed as an issue of the past which was framed in relation to the Second World War: “The end of the war meant also the end of discrimination and beginning of a new phase of the life of Gypsies” (Horváthová 1989: 22). The efforts to deal with the “Gypsy question” in this background can therefore be understood as a manifestation of the superiority of socialism in general and the civilization maturity of Czechoslovaks, as they were portrayed as able to follow the socialist ‘standards’, in particular. This moral superiority and civilization is constructed not only in relation to Roma, but also in relation to the previous regimes. As following quote says:

Our socialist society is, as one of the first in the history, offering Gypsies a helping hand, as to the fully-fledged citizens of this state and trying to ensure their equal participation in life and events in our state and society (Scheinost 1979:90).

This comparison and differentiation of ‘our’ Czechoslovak socialist society from the systems of discrimination serves as a displacement of racial politics into the past or to the place of

“somewhere else”, to the other societies which did not align to socialist norms. The construction of the self as ‘different from the oppressive regimes’ helps to reinforce the idea of the desirability of the Socialist establishment. It further helps to position it as a frontier of modernity (Weitz 2002). Fulfilling the ideas of socialist, and therefore 'civilized' 'egalitarian' society, goes along with the liberal traditions of the, especially Czech, national imaginary (Feinberg 2006). Further, the rhetorical refusal of racism helps to conceptualize difference in terms which reinforce and naturalize these distinctions (Weheliye 2014: 62). Roma pastness, constructed through the rhetoric of the gypsy question, is logically aligned with a socialist understanding of progress, which as discussed by Hong (2012) is rooted in racialized imaginary (158). The rhetorical rejection and distance from discrimination of Roma together with the rhetoric of universal equality is an important discursive tool in legitimization of the interventions developed to solve the “Gypsy question”. The racialized hierarchies of the understanding of development not only displaced racism as an ideology incompatible with socialist Czechoslovak ideology but also allowed for the construction of the Roma as ‘backward’.

Narrativization of the past is one of the mechanisms involved in the process of producing the notion of the common origin and representation of the notion of essence, and therefore an important source which can help uncover and see particular constructions of self and other (Lentin 2008:493). One of the main narratives framing Roma pastness was the history of their migration from India. These narratives, embedded within the ideological colonial system of meanings of what Anne McClintock (1995) calls the “Family Tree of Nations”, constructing pastness with Asian roots as underdeveloped and pre-civilized, help reinforce the racialized hierarchy of the subjects. At the same time, by emphasizing the idea of the different origin, they help solidify the Czechoslovak collectivity as white. The notion of the different racial origin, constructed through the narratives framing Roma as migrants, reinforced the idea of the unity of ‘people’. In the words of Balibar (1991), it naturalized the imagined ethnicity and reinforced

the idea about ‘genuinely’ and ‘falsely’ national (100). The figure of the Gypsy was constituted as, to use words of Ahmed (2000), a body out-of-place. The national ideal of Czechoslovaks was in this way constructed as white and civilized in opposition to the racialized figure of the Gypsy. Furthermore, the images of the Indian roots of gypsies were an imperialist imaginary of sexuality.

The reason for migration from India was described in terms of the pattern of biological reproduction. Migration of the ‘gypsy ancestors’ was caused by the fast growth of the members of the group, when the fast population growth of the groups forced some of them to move further, and that is how they reached Europe. As the quote below describes:

Until the group was less in numbers, it moved in certain space, which was used for nourishment. When the group grew too much in size during two-three generations, the ensued situation was resolved in a way that part of the group was segregated and looked for a new nourishment area (Horváthová 1989:6).

In the quote, migration was described as spreading caused by the need to inhabit new areas. The reason for migration was the overpopulation of the given space. These narratives have specific meaning, as in the period discourses of overpopulation were pervasive on a global level.¹⁵ The countries of the ‘third world’ were seen as problematic areas because of the population growth patterns. Western countries, seen as ‘modern’ and ‘civilized’ and ‘developed’ on the other hand, were usually portrayed as having the opposite problem of decreasing population (Escobar 2011: 35). The symbolic connection of biological reproduction and the spreading over new territories, together with discourses linking ‘past habits’ with ‘traditional way of life of gypsies’ during ‘normalization,’ constituted ‘falsely national’ gypsies

¹⁵ Third Global Population Conference was held in Bucharest in 1974. The conference was dedicated to the discussion of the link between the population growth and development. As an outcome countries of the United Nations developed World Population Plan dedicated to dealing with the perceived threat of overpopulation. The year 1974 was also declared World Population Year which reflected the intensity with which population became a highly important public issue (Johnson 1987: 81-89).

as a threatening element to the national population, as the high fertility rate of the Roma population outnumbered the Czechoslovak one. Esposito's (2013) discussion about the immunitarian paradigm can give us further insights into the logic I just described.

The "immunitary dispositive" with its defensive and offensive mechanisms allows, in the name of protection, destruction (Esposito 2013:86). In the case of Czechoslovakia during 'normalization' it would mean that the sterilization of Roma women was an offensive mechanism in order to stop the 'spreading' of the population which was threatening to the community. Constituting the danger through the discussion about reproductive patterns, and reinforcing this threat by emphasizing the fixity of the 'habits developed in the past', can explain the biopolitical mechanisms of selective population control which were used in the context of 'normalization'. It also reflects Balibar's (1991) understanding, where the cultivation of the different ethicized groups is further used as a one of the mechanisms of population control (96). However, its connection to sexuality needs to be explained more. I will turn to that in the following chapter.

As I mentioned in previous part of the chapter, settlements were seen as one of the manifestations of the traditional way of life. This idea was also reinforced by the appearance of topics of gypsy settlements in narratives about gypsy pastness. The roots of Roma were traced to the lowest caste in India – or, as described in one of the analysed texts, "untouchables" -who had to live at a distance from the other social groups in isolation (Horváthová 1989: 5). According to Horvathová, the isolation reinforced the group's inclination towards endogamy, which became problematic in later time periods. The following quote is from the context of discussing the history of Roma in the region, an example of the 'Project of emancipation of Gypsies' which, according to Horváthová (1989), was organized in the 18th century. Horváthová states that: "The most important regulations [took place] so that Gypsies would live at the same place in proper houses among the rest of the inhabitants of the village. Every family

was supposed to live apart, in order to limit loud disagreements and especially sexual intercourse among close relatives” (1989: 18). The settlements, which were in the period of ‘normalization’ constituted as an iconography of backward family organization, through the narratives of pastness also came to symbolize habits of sexual perversion. The figure of the Gypsy, through the discursive mechanism of pastness, was constructed as sexually perverted already at the moment of entering the discourse in the texts produced during ‘normalization’. And as their sexual perversion was also connected to their virility with a potential to take over space, it was constituted as threatening.

In this chapter, I showed how the main issues in analysed sources dedicated to the educational and social work with the Roma population framed the "Gypsy question". By focusing on three main areas of the discursive mechanisms - value system, Gypsy way of life and Gypsy pastness - I showed how the problem framed by the "Gypsy question" was defined as tension caused by cultural specificities of the Roma population. The notion of the cultural specificities of the Roma, necessary for the constitution of the imagined hegemonic Czechoslovak collectivity, also functioned as a locus of exclusion. Such mechanisms of differentiation and exclusion led towards stabilization of ethnic differences and solidification of the Czechoslovak collectivity or 'people', and they cannot be separated from racialized thinking.

My analysis showed how the reiteration of the discourses about Roma difference, within the discourses around the "Gypsy question", produced and reinforced understanding of the Czechoslovak (Gadžo) collectivity as more civilized, modern, superior in contrast to the traditional, backward uncivilized Roma population. Discourses about the "Gypsy question" within the social education and social work fields showed how the reinforcement of the boundaries of the Czechoslovak collectivity was enacted with the help of mechanisms which racialized Roma. I showed how biopolitical mechanisms of differentiation and exclusion constituted the figure of the Gypsy as anti-systemic and deviant subject. Such constitution could

be used for the legitimization of the regulatory and disciplining biopolitical tool of sterilization. Perceived recognizability of Roma and 'gypsy way of life' help to stabilize cultural specificities of Roma as well as what it means to be Czechoslovak, a proper citizen. Such mechanisms are embedded in racialized meanings. Solidification of the Czechoslovak collectivity was further advanced through the narratives of the Roma past, by producing an imaginary of the common racial origin

Chapter 4. Explosive population and perverse sexuality

In the previous chapter I showed the mechanisms of circulation of discourses which co-constituted the Czechoslovak and Gypsy collectivity as separate and different entities. I showed how discourses of the gypsy value system, gypsy way of life and gypsy pastness were put into effect in order to (re)enforce superiority of Czechoslovaks and how these, constituted as the norm, were aligned with its specific modernity project. Through the processes of racialization, the establishment, enforcement and solidification of identity boundaries are built (Esposito 2013). The repetition of these discourses, and the stereotypes which they constitute, represent the proximity of the figure of Gypsy. According to Ahmed (2014: 63), such proximity of the figure of the Other is "crucial to establishing 'apartness' of white bodies". I showed that the distinctiveness of the figure of Gypsy from Czechoslovak population was encoded as anti-social and infused with sexual meanings.

In this chapter, I intend to show how such proximity of figure of Gypsy was imbedded in an affective economy of fear in order to explain how the need for building the protective wall of identity (Esposito 2013) was triggered. In other words, I will examine the role of fear in the solidification of the boundary of national Czechoslovak collectivity. I will do this by tracing discourses about Roma sexuality which circulated as a reason for high fertility rates of Roma. I plan to show how these are connected to the categories discussed in the previous chapter (gypsy values, gypsy way of life, gypsy pastness.). I will discuss how they were re-inforced through discourses of sexuality of figure of the Gypsy, for its threat to the national project, constituted as a figure of a queer terrorist as it is described by Magnet and Mason (2014). By taking a closer look at the discourses about Gypsy sexuality within the framework of population crisis I will unpack the mechanisms put into play by the economy of fear (Ahmed 2014) to uncover the affective dimension of the construction of the Czechoslovak collectivity and to trace how the crisis was put into place in order to secure a hierarchy of human subjects. By

doing this I hope to trace discursive mechanisms which justified practice of coercive sterilizations of Roma women.

4.1. Population explosion

Fear establishes someone as fearsome insofar as they *threaten to take the self in*. Such fantasies construct the other as a danger not only to one's self as self, but to one's very life, to one's very existence as a separate being with a life of its own. Such fantasies of the other hence work to justify violence against others, whose very existence comes to be felt as a threat to the life of white [social] body, but which as a threat to life, may *come to give rather than take life* (Ahmed 2014: 64).¹⁶

The quote above is from Sara Ahmed's (2014) discussion about the affective politics of fear. I found this quote fitting for the discussion of role which of the category of the Gypsy in the Czechoslovak population crisis. According to Ahmed, fear works, along with other economies of emotions, to establish particular collectivities. Fear works in a specific way as it, under the threat of some object, aligns some bodies - bodies which need to be preserved - and distances them from others (72). The specificity of fear lies in its paradigmatic orientation towards the future, where the possibility of injury to a (social) body constitutes a particular object as fearsome because, through the possibility of disrupting the boundaries of a body, it threatens to endanger "one's very existence as a separate being with life of its own" (64). In the parts that follow, I want to explore what is at stake in the constitution of the figure of Gypsy as fearsome, through what discourses is the white social body - Czechoslovak collectivity - defined as endangered.

I want to argue that this fear is based on anxieties about the permeability of racial boundaries and that the constitution of Roma as fearsome is based on the discursive construction of Gypsy

¹⁶ Italics in original

sexuality as queer, here meaning dangerous to the national project.¹⁷ Along this discussion, I want to explore the gendered dimensions of these mechanisms to better understand the practice of sterilization of Roma women. I will start with an analysis of the population crisis and the implications of the shift of the discursive framework, reinforcing role of the women as caretakers, which happened during 'normalization'. I will also analyze discourses which framed discussions about the reasons for high fertility rates in the Roma population, as described in primary sources.

As I discussed in the section on 'normalization' sexual and gender regimes, the Second Demographic Conference, held in 1970, is an important moment in the course of understanding the biopolitical regime in Czechoslovakia during 'normalization'. The entering of the category of 'quality of population' into the discourse of population development and its influence on the sexual regime through establishing the link between planned parenthood and the health of the population, as well as the production of categories of 'undesirable reproduction,' shaped the notions of proper matrimonial (sexual) behaviour of Czechoslovaks. However, the conference also touched upon the topic of Roma reproductive behaviour and fertility rates. In what follows, I will discuss the implications of the discourses about Gypsy fertility within the framework of population crisis.

The conference allowed the infusion of the field of demography within other scientific fields. An example of this trend was the contribution of Vladimír Černý, who under the title "Perspectives of the Use of Genetics in Population Politics" discussed trends considered important to the quality of population. His concerns about the decreasing level of the quality of Czechoslovak population were summed up as follows:

¹⁷ Such links between stigmatized sexuality and perceived threat to the national project was discussed by Magnet and Mason (2014), and Puar 2007.

We could denote the following point as the main disproportional moment of our population development:

Population explosion in the part of gypsy population (violation of balance between populations and increment of insufficiently integrated individuals from gypsy families) (Černý 1970: 318).

According to Černý, the lack of regulation of these trend could lead towards:

-Decreasing qualitative composition of the population from the point of view of medical examination (further increase of numbers of some of inborn defects, chronic illnesses, feeble-mindedness)

-worsening of the qualitative composition of population from the point of view of mental skills)

He further writes:

Until social development will keep heightening the demands on qualitative composition of population, current trends indicate that the extent of this trend will be limited. The conflict between social need and population development will probably enforce radical solutions. (Same as population explosion is enforcing solutions in developing countries) (Černý 1970: 318).

The reproductive behaviour of the Roma population was framed with the highly charged metaphor of 'explosion'. The word choice is very important here to understand the economics of emotions (Ahmed 2014). 'Explosion' does not indicate mere replication (biological reproduction), but it suggests its fast, violent and uncontrollable nature. The supposed force and strength of the vital ability of Roma population, deduced from the fertility rates which were higher in comparison to the Czechoslovak population, is connoted as dangerous and in its effects injurious to the Czechoslovak population. Such a framing of a biological reproduction goes against normative understanding, as it was constructed in Czechoslovakia during 'normalization'. Shifts in legislation described by Havelková (2014) aimed to further the 'collective interests' through the promotion of the 'social esteem of parenthood' the main tool of

the population control, defined gender roles of individuals, mainly women, through the role of parenthood. This has particularly gendered dimensions, as women were understood and defined primarily through their role as mothers. On the other hand, the role of father in this process was invisibilized (Bren 2010: 172). Biological reproduction was defined as a mechanism for satisfying the 'collective interest' in order to assure the stability of the national collectivity. In such an environment, women became not only biological but also symbolic bearers of reproduction, reproducing not only life but also a state and nation.

Framing biological reproduction as threatening and injurious, as in the case of the Roma 'fertility explosion', suggests a kind of exemption from the logic I just described. It is a force which bears life but in that process is constituted as a threat to the life of the national body. This understanding of reproduction as danger reverses the role of procreation in the process of maintaining stability and solidifying the boundaries of national collectivity. This reversal of the role of reproduction and its effects on the understanding of Gypsy sexuality inevitably implied in it, suggest not only the pathologization of Gypsy sexuality, but also gender deviations which follow from the logic of the hegemonic sexual and gender regime during 'normalization'.

Such a configuration of pathological sexuality and gender as posing a threat to the national wellbeing could be a base for labelling the Roma woman a queer terrorist. If I understand queerness not as an identity signifier but rather as a locus of power mechanisms perpetuating racialization through stigmatization of particular sexualities, as Puar describes in her terrorist assemblages (2007), this will allow me to understand the conflating role of race and sexuality in the process of population control in general, and sterilization of Romani women in particular. The queerness of the female racialized figure is assigned through the fundamental challenge of gender norms in "their reversal of the reproduction of the state" (Magnet, Mason 2014).

As for Puar, queerness as a form of pathologizing sexuality linked to various national crises is one of the technologies through which power operates to produce, maintain differences between

and discipline populations (XIII). The figure of the Gypsy woman is constituted as a queer terrorist exactly during the population crisis during 'normalization' which reflects the anxieties about the sovereignty of the Czechoslovak national collectively. Comparing Roma fertility to an 'explosion,' a very telling word choice, and attributing it the ability to de-stabilize and cause harm therefore constitutes it as a terrorist figure, signalling both orientalist and racist logic in the construction of the other as dangerous in her difference.

Another important implication of the term 'explosion' is the potential for destruction and the violent transgression of a barrier which was supposed to be protected. In the ability to disrupt the boundary and make it permeable, what is feared is the ability of the other "*to take the self in*" (Ahmed 2014: 64)¹⁸. It is this permeability which threatens openness to the outside. In Sarah Ahmed's discussion of the economy of fear, (2014) this openness indicates the possibility of blending of different kinds of bodies and worlds and is thereby defined as dangerous (69). As she writes: "the openness of the body to the world involves a sense of danger, which is *anticipated as a future pain or injury*" (69)¹⁹. The future injury, which is anticipated, is a decreasing quality of population. Figure of the Gypsy is becoming dangerous as the possibility of influencing the quality of population in the future is articulated. It threatens to blend in the bodies of Roma and Czechoslovaks, and by this endanger apartness of white bodies.

The population crisis can therefore be understood as a boundary anxiety, a boundary which as I described in the previous chapter was built in the process of racialization by repetition and reiteration of discourses constituting Roma and Czechoslovak collectivities as separate and different. It is interesting to imagine the spatial dimension of such mechanisms. Similarly, to the discourses of the pastness of Roma discussing their migration, the biological reproduction is again framed as taking over space, spreading. This potentiality of taking over space is at heart

¹⁸ Italics in the original

¹⁹ Italics in the original

of the boundary anxiety and is manifested through the anxiety of the possibility of the disruption of the boundary of white Czechoslovak collectivity as an effect of this 'explosion'. Fertility control, preventing the 'explosion' from happening, is another way of controlling the movement. As the fertility of Roma is discursively linked to the ability to spread over space, sterilization of Romani women can be understood as a control of movement in order to protect the national body by assuring an impermeability of the boundaries of national collectivity. First Roma 'spread' into the region considered as white European space. Border anxieties caused by this notion could be reflecting the biopolitical mechanism of control which historically took the form of the prohibition of the nomadism, particularized passports for Roma and programs of forced dispersion²⁰. During 'normalisation' border anxiety was translated into the terms of population crisis. Here, the 'explosion' threatens to disrupt the boundary and consequently cause injury to the white social body. It is the anxiety of a possible threat to the whiteness of the Czechoslovak population which, as a result of the 'explosion', is opened to the 'invasion' of the racialized other.

The hierarchy of human subjects, which is an outcome of racializing processes (Weheliye 2014), is in this case installed by making a clear distinction and delineation between bodies which are harmful and bodies which need to be protected. The high fertility rates of Roma are not considered a trend which could help resolve the problem of decreasing population growth, but are rather understood as a threat to the quality of the population. The first option would mean that Roma are considered as a part of a Czechoslovak collectivity. As I showed in the previous chapter, the protective wall of identity (Esposito 2013) positioned Roma outside of the national collectivity. Consequently, Roma were constituted as outsiders or strangers (Ahmed 2000). From this position of not belonging, of being out of place is stranger constituted

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as able to approach, which is constitutive element of the fearsomeness of the object (Ahmed 2004: 65).

Very important in this process is the establishment of an analogy of the figure of the Gypsy with the racialized other from the 'third world', by emphasizing that such 'explosions' are happening also in another (very specific)²¹ place and making the suggestion that what is happening in the case of Roma population in Czechoslovakia is of the same kind. The 'fertility explosion' is constituted as a problem and signifier of racially Othered populations and bodies. This link sends a message, which conflates the Roma population in Czechoslovakia with the 'populations in the third world' and fulfils the same function as do discourses about migration - emphasizing the otherness and non-Europeanness of Roma. Such a comparison cannot be understood outside of the colonial imaginary and logic of hierarchization of the human subjects and therefore signals another discursive mechanism of the racialization of Roma. Emphasizing that this certain form of reproductive behaviour is an attribute or characteristic of the 'third world', a category constructed to signify backwardness and non-civilization, contributes to the establishment of Czechoslovaks as a civilized and modern population. High fertility rates of Roma, seen as one of the main differences between the Czechoslovaks and Roma, are used to signify their inferiority, as the ability to plan a family was considered the ultimate manifestation of modernity and civilization for a group or individuals - the proper Czechoslovaks.

The injury caused by the 'explosion' of Roma fertility is not only a metaphorical device but should also be understood as having physical effects on the population, embodied in the

²¹ According to Law (2016) Soviet Union had developed imaginaries and attitudes towards Africa and Africans which were imbedded in paternalistic racial logic (21). Young-sun Hong (2012) explains how the Cold war anti-imperialistic rhetoric of Soviet Union, framed in narratives of supporting de-colonial struggles of African countries was actually part of the imperialistic project of Soviet Union. Further, modernist projects of West and Soviet Union both produced ideas about progress and own role in helping countries in Africa and Asia to follow it. Although Soviet union offered different modernist project than capitalist west, both blocks ignored sovereignty of the "third world countries" (158). To read about particular manifestation of the imperialist project of the Soviet Union in form of the exchange programs of African students to USSR look at Matuchevich (2008 a, b).

potential of an increasing number of 'inborn defects', 'chronic illnesses' or 'feeble-mindedness'. Such an understanding creates a slide between the procreation of the Roma population and the spread of illness or decrease in health. The image of the transgression of boundaries as an effect of explosion and its consequent effect on health also aligns with biopolitical discussion of immunity. 'Explosion' tears down the protecting walls of immunity. The main function of immunity is to ensure the health of an organism. Without this protective mechanism, the (social) body is more susceptible towards illness. As is suggested in the above quote, certain measures need to be taken in order to ensure the health and desirable level of "quality of population." The language framing these solutions as reacting to needs and being "radical," intensifies the threat posed by this 'explosion' and the pain or injury it can cause in the future if measures are not taken.

The National Demographic Conference was important in that it announced the crisis (population crisis which was constituted as national one). This state of crisis produced the image of Roma fertility as dangerous. Such fantasies about the other, according to Ahmed (2014), work to justify violence against them (64). In this light, the measures of selective population control could be understood as measures taken in order to restore the security of the future development of Czechoslovak population. It is implicated in this logic, that in order to protect the (social) body from what causes it harm, measures (enhancing fertility control) should reassert the impermeability of the distorted boundary to establish the 'apartness' of the white population. As in the case of weak immunity, it seeks to control foreign agents causing harm by assuring their ineffectiveness, in this case the control of fertility in the Czechoslovak social body. This all was framed as a protection of social needs and development. These measures should be taken for 'for the good of public' to solve the "the conflict between social need and population development". The control of reproduction of the Roma population therefore was understood as an inevitable measure to safeguard the ability of the Czechoslovak population to

follow social development and demands on individual bodies (in keeping up with being civilized and modern) required by this development. Controlling fertility of the Roma population in order to secure desired development in the future is what Esposito (2013) called form of devitalization, mechanisms of subjugation and control developed as a reaction to the demand for protection (88).

4.2. Morality, health and bodies of sexually deviant:

Link between Roma fertility and threat or the perceived lack of control of reproduction and increase of health impairments came to be central in the discussion of Roma parenthood, Roma family, Roma children as well as direct discussion of Roma sexuality. As Sokolová (2008) showed, during ‘normalization’ the preoccupation with the alleged deficient environment of Roma families and parenthood, became signifier of the "Gypsy question" (187).

One of the discourses described mental capacity deficiency as a reason for high fertility rates. Such discourses could be framed as following:

Around 20 percent of families are still holding on to a backward way of life and do not have any interest in changing it. It cannot be concealed, that part of members of this families is to different extent mentally retarded. Unfortunately, particularly these families have the highest population growth. (Horváthová 1989: 32).

In this quote, alleged “mental retardation” is put into a positive correlation with the number of children in the families. Discourses as such linked “inborn imperatives” with family size. In this way, the family organization became to determine mental abilities of its members. Recognizing the production of such a link is very important because family organization, most often in terms of multiple member families, was recognized as a signifier of the alleged backward gypsy way of life and values, as I already showed in the previous chapter (family organization used as a sign of a gypsies for the census).

Such family organization is also linked in this quote to the indifference or lack of 'interest' of its members in changing their own social position and leave behind 'backwarded' way of life. This indifference to the norm (social norms of conduct as well as values of modernity and 'civilized life') and following deviation from the norm and 'backwardness' is again, as I also showed in previous chapter, a sign of the anti-sociality and anti-systemic force. As Lišková (2012) writes, the function of the 'normal' (docile: controlled and planned) family during 'normalization' was to assure the (sexual) 'normalcy' (43). Discourses about the number of the kids in the family and rising number of health impairments of the gypsy new-borns indicates that this function of normalcy was, according to the discursive logic of the quote, linked to health as well. This was only possible within the framework of the population crisis, which opened the biological and medical discourses to establish links between the notion of planned parenthood and the health of the population (Vojta 1973: 343). In discourses as such, the "spontaneity" of reproduction behaviour, seen as irrational, was defined as against the need and interests of society. It was also seen as a manifestation of backwardness.

It is important to mention that the effects of the privatization of citizenship (Bren 2010) accorded the family with the symbolic power of attributing individual's moral status. In light of the aforementioned link between the docility or 'normalcy' of the family and the health of individual, it follows that a connection is implicit between the notion of morality and health. As I show in previous chapter, the allegedly different Czechoslovak and Gypsy value systems were considered as signifiers which delineate boundaries and therefore difference between Czechoslovaks and Roma. Establishment of the link between morality and health means that this difference is understood as well in biological terms. In other words, the value systems became constructed as embodied by the bodies of individuals. Such a presentation of value systems as embodied characteristics is a representation of the way in which power mechanisms work on the level of population as well as on the level of the body, as Foucault (1998: 146)

showed in the first volume of *History of Sexuality*. Sex as a technology of power, according to him, is therefore aimed at the populations which need to be regulated as well as the bodies which need to be disciplined. Health came to represent the moral status of an individual's body and as such became coded in biological terms: Whiteness as a sign of morally superior, civilized health and Gypsiness as the backward, morally inept unhealthy. This is how affective economy (Ahmed 2014) circulating in the discourses of the population crisis attributed fear to the Roma bodies as their 'unhealthiness' was designated as a cause of the decreasing quality of population and therefore cause of the population crisis.

Logic, where moral characteristics are perceived as embodied, sets a specific framework for the interpretation of the sterilization decree, which was issued with no direct mention of ethnic categories. However, discursive mechanisms linking 'mental retardation' with higher number of kids in the family, together with discourses making 'the high number of kids' a signifier of the Gypsy family, creates a slide of metonymy, where 'mentally retarded or unhealthy, dangerous for health' could be used interchangeably with or as a signifier for Gypsy. Ahmed (2014) shows how such metonymies can be further used to generalize the possibility of this link to other bodies (76). This means that even if the quote mentioned only twenty percent of the families, in conjunction with other discourses in place, every Gypsy could be considered as 'sick, mentally ill or having health impairment' and therefore eligible for sterilization. This generalization also functions in the discursive mechanisms which were used as regulatory power techniques to produce docile families. As the sexual regime during 'normalization' boosting the 'esteem of parenthood' produced the categorization of families with three kids as the embodied model of planned, controlled and desirable sexuality (Kučera 1973: 99), this regime also produced, on the other hand, the definition of families with five children or more as uncontrolled, damaging the health of population and therefore undesirable fertility (Vojta 1973: 344). Such a system of intelligibility produces the separation of sexual act to the

categories of licit and illicit or desirable and undesirable, organizing “sexual value system” (Rubin 1984: 110) and their link the size of a family.

Such categorization is an example of the biopolitical productive force which helps to create new categories and produce knowledge, understood as a representation of the 'truth' about individuals classified under its label. It also functions to produce 'deviant' subjects seen as in need of regulation and discipline, which it claims to describe, as Foucault described regulative mechanisms of power (1998). It is also indicative of the racialized logic of the biopolitical regime of ‘normalization’. Even though the discourses about Roma during socialism acknowledged the centrality and importance of big families for Roma, the sexual regime of ‘normalization’ was defined in such a way which refused the possibility that individuals might plan to have five children. The desired model of matrimonial sexuality was therefore coded with racial meanings. This way, every case of a family with 'too many' children was considered as an outcome of uncontrolled fertility (and sexuality). Practices around sterilizations of Roma women, some of them showed as coercive, are therefore the outcome of a regime, which was shaped by the racialized notions of the deviance and normalcy. Henceforth it is applicable what Stoler (2000) points out, race along with sex are both transfer points of power of biopolitical regimes and logics of population control they entitle. More concretely, the biopolitical regime within which sterilization of Romani women was a legitimate source of regulation and disciplinization of particular bodies, was possible because of the understanding of the superiority of a white Czechoslovak subjects and difference of the Gypsy population.

Deviance and normalcy became to be received as signs marking the bodies. In other words, the acts individuals engaged in were seen as leaving traces and therefore, the ‘truth’ about individual was dissectible from reading their bodies. This was understood also as connected directly to the particular sexual activities individuals engaged in.

Very alarming is a situation that the number of mentally retarded gypsy children is growing... Among the reasons of higher number of mentally handicapped new-born gypsy kids we can, in the present consider predominantly excessive consumption of alcohol, sexual looseness, young age of mothers, sexual intercourse between relatives, morbidity and other (Horváthová: 1989: 25).

As this quote suggests, there is an existing link between health, referred to through the categories of: 'mental retardation', 'morbidity', 'consumption of alcohol' and morality indicated by reference to incest (sexual intercourse between relatives), sexual abuse (young age of mothers), promiscuity (sexual looseness) and alcoholism ('excessive').

Such descriptions discursively creates supposedly logical link between the health of an individual and sexual encounters she or he engages in. Particularly it creates link between 'mental retardation' and incest, promiscuity, sexual intercourse under the influence of alcohol, sexual abuse. The category of morbidity, or bad health, does not directly signify particular sexual act, however it makes every sexual activity possibly leading towards procreation as dangerous, possible channel of spreading bad health. This link is logical extension of above mentioned logic of embodiment of morality, as the sexuality and sexual acts are not positioned outside of power realm and therefore necessarily divided between good or bad, licit or illicit which makes them to carry moral dimension. Based on those links I want to suggest that the Gypsy and Czechoslovak became identities, or 'kinds of people' whose whole identity and intelligibility can be traced to the realms sexuality. This as Foucault (1988) discuss, effects of biopolitical power mechanism which constituted understanding, that sex and sexuality is the entry point to the knowledge about every modern subject. Sex became to be a carrier about the truth about individual (Foucault 1988: 156). In this way, sex was telling 'truth' about Gypsy and it was also constituted as the fearsome, lying at the bottom of what causing harm to the population.

Such structures construct the figure of the Gypsy as always sexually deviant. Structures were set in a way that expelled the figure of the Gypsy from the realm of normal sexuality. In the configuration of population crisis and fear produced by discourses around it, understanding of the normalcy as a necessary for assuring stability of society and linking the planned fertility to the healthiness of population together with stereotypes about gypsy way of life and value system, sexuality of Roma were used as a locus of mechanisms of racialization. To emphasize notion about prevalence of a problem, or its extension it is described as “Very alarming situation”. This phrase is use to intensify the potency of a problem in order to sustain the fear circulating in discourses. Fear about the quality of the population can be understood as such power knowledge mechanism where the knowledge produced in order to regulate the whole populations. This regulation is enacted through the disciplining of individual bodies. Such as, in order to protect the quality of Czechoslovak population, regulation of the Roma population, was enacted through the bodies of Roma women. Such gendered nature was effect of a sexual and gender regimes of ‘normalization’, which re-established procreation as a responsibility of a women. This was reflected in the framework of the programmes of family planning which solely targeted, and were directed to women and therefore completely disregarded responsibility of men for the planned parenthood. In the course of this, sex and sexual activities became central legitimizing mechanisms of this disciplining.

4.3. Why so many children?: Discourses about reasons of high fertility rates of Roma

The following quote is from the journal *Social politics* dedicated and mostly written by the professionals working directly with Roma communities. The article discusses, reflects upon, and question the usefulness of the programs developed and tools ‘offered’ to Roma communities in order to integrate them to Czechoslovak society. The quote is from the part of article named “Thinking about the future,” and it discusses the role of environment within

Gypsy families as a reason for maintaining a ‘low’ level of integration, as the high fertility rates of Roma were assumed to lead towards a growing number of un-integrated individuals. This quote is indicative of the great number of discourses about Roma sexuality circulating within the discursive field of ‘normalization’:

Around 7000 gypsy kids are born annually in Slovakia. What is alarming is, that kids are getting born to “kids”. On average 250-300 gypsy kids are born to gypsy girls, which are 16 years old or younger. These “mothers” do not know how to take care of their kids. Partners, with whom they got pregnant, are mainly unidentifiable. They are often “blood” family or close relatives and they procreate kids usually in strong alcohol intoxication. Most of them come into the world with mental or physical medical impairment. In addition, gypsy communities almost always creates “conditions” for the perpetrators of moral abuse of gypsy girls, making paternity identification impossible. “Mothers”, because they want to enjoy the “pleasures” of life, do not provide care for their children. National committees are placing their children to child care facilities (Prokop 1987:256).

This quote encompasses a number of discourses constructing Roma sexuality which circulated in my primary sources, reacting to what was considered high fertility rates of Roma. These discourses included the spontaneity of the Gypsy indifference towards planned parenthood, sexual deviations, moral deviations and lack of emancipation of Roma women. All of these discourses can be related to the categories of differentiation between Gypsy and Czechoslovak collectivities: the way of life and value systems and Gypsy pastness. Seeing such a link brings to light the way in which sexuality was central to all projects related to the constitution of the “Gypsy question.”

Quote is written with a very intense tone of voice. Use of the words as ‘alarming’, ‘strong’, ‘most of them’, ‘often’, ‘mainly’, ‘impossible’ functions to intensify quantity and emphasize the message carried by the quote. Intensifying works to emphasize the danger Roma fertility poses

and therefore emphasizes that the figure of Gypsy as to be feared. This intensification functions as a legitimization for intervention, control and as a justification for violence against the object of fear (Ahmed 2014: 64).

Significant is a use of a square quotes in the quote. The term conditions framed by square quotes indicates judgement and is used to emphasize perceived perversity or deviance of the figure of the Gypsy. As the following part indicates: “gypsy communities almost always create “conditions” for the perpetrators of moral abuse of gypsy girls”. This quote implies that 'moral abuse of gypsy girls' are common to the Roma communities and that such behaviour is not perceived as problematic. Author poses judgement onto the situation where the community does not recognize such activity as violation, as he addresses it as problematic and condemn it. Function of this quote is to emphasize the discrepancy of the 'gypsy value system' and 'Gypsy way of life' with the norms of the Czechoslovak society.

The phrase, "they want to enjoy the "pleasures" of life" indicates an underlying normative understanding that what is pleasurable to Roma women is in fact perverse. In this way the figures of the Gypsy "mother" and "child" are constituted as perverse. The use of square quotes with these words points out a value judgement and follows judgement about Roma women and girls which are, through such discursive mechanisms, constructed as unable to make sound judgements, or their value system is distorted as they do not recognize the illicitness of their "pleasures". The deviance of the figure of the Gypsy "mother" is also emphasized by portraying them as choosing "pleasures" over children. She is portrayed to disregard childcare, the responsibility and main role of women during ‘normalization’, and therefore such a deviation leads to her expulsion from the category of a properly gendered subject.

Use of the terms "children" and "mothers" implies that labels of child and mother are inappropriate when it comes to Roma girls and women, as their performance of these gender roles is considered questionable. Such a rhetorical tool functions to create a new category of

human. A biopolitical mechanism produces new subject who are subsequently subjugated to disciplining and regulatory power. Putting into discourse new categories, such as "mothers" and "children" discursively produces subjects that need to be regulated. These subjects are constructed not only through sex as a main transfer point of power (Foucault 1998) but are also highly coded with racialized meanings (Magnet and Mason 2014, Puar 2007, Stoler 2000 Weheliye 2014).

Roma girls and women are constituted as gypsy "children" and Gypsy "mothers" by their perceived gender and sexual deviations. It is a violation of hegemonic social norms and values which positions them to this category. One of them is age of consent. This age limit constitutes children as asexual and making sexuality as the 'business of adults' (Waites 2005). By engaging in sexual activities before this age²² and therefore engaging in illicit sexual acts, Roma girls are repudiated from the sphere of "children" which they are supposed to inhabit, according to (racialized, hetero) normative understanding. This transgression of an age appropriate (non)sexual behaviour is seen, in analysed texts, as one of the reasons, for high fertility rates of Roma population indicated by the social work and education professionals.

In the case of category of "mother", it is lack of childrearing skills: "they do not know how to take care of their kids". Further: "because they want to enjoy pleasures of the life" and the government is "placing their children into state care facilities" gypsy women are perceived as deviating from a hegemonic system of values, which defines the relationship between mother and child in a specific way, mainly through the responsibility of a parent towards their child, through which, during the 'normalization', she was supposed to enact responsibility towards the society as well. This constitutes Roma women as irresponsible and indifferent towards the normative role she should strive to embody, and therefore constitutes Roma women as

²² Age of consent in Czechoslovakia during 'normalization' was 15 years

endangering public interests. Their Hyper-sexualisation is at the core of the racializing process which repudiates them from the category of mother that is in this discursive logic constituted as a 'properly' reproducing national interest. The irresponsibility and indifference constitutes them as a viable subject for discipline. Indifference towards desired model of reproduction therefore constitutes them as viable subject to sterilization, which discipline body, in order to achieve the regulation of population.

Perceived sexual and gender perversion is a product of a (biopolitical) system which established norms in a specific way- only in relation to the properly sexualized and gendered mother could Roma women have been constructed as "mothers". It is this specific organization, which co-constituted and produced subjects as normal and deviant. Moreover, it is in relation to this norm- that is both sexual and racial- that Roma are constituted as racialized subject, which as Weheliye (2014) noted, cannot claim status of a full human.

The sexuality of Roma men is also implicitly mentioned. In this quote, without being directly mentioned, the sexuality of the figure of Gypsy men is constructed through the reference to 'moral abuse of gypsy girls' which constitutes Gypsy men as sexual predators. The inability to identify the fathers of children is not caused only by of the promiscuity of Roma girls and women but also it is implied that Roma men are irresponsible individuals who do not care about children or their partners. This reflects the understanding of Gypsy family as backward, traditional, and patriarchal, a family within which women have only limited access to power. The figure of the Gypsy man, however, was left abstract and never directly discussed within my primary sources. Even as the notion of the men's superior position within family was seen as one of the reasons for high fertility rates, it was always women who were targeted by social work and education programs of planned parenthood. Such a construction of Roma men as a sexual predator is based on the understanding of the Gypsy family as patriarchal, in contrast to Czechoslovak socialist families. Such a picture constructed Roma women as victim of a

patriarchal regime and the high number of kids as an outcome of the oppression of Roma women by men.

As it is presented in following quote:

Let's further think about, why people who wish to have two-three children, later in real life have 10 or even more. If we will take into consideration inclination to affective reactions in expense of rational assessment of situation, considerable impulsiveness in sexual life and we add to this lack of awareness, fear of birth control, emancipation problems in marriages, where opinion and plans of women can be diminished by patriarchal status of husband, we will not be surprised that original wish is very little congruent with real situation (Pollak 1979: 187).

Reasons for high fertility rates are here defined as results of affective, not rational and impulsive behavior. Such understanding constitutes figure of the Gypsy as uncontrollable, and irrational. In this sense Roma are perceived as unable to control and plan their fertility, which further implies their backwardness and incivility. Backwardness of the figure of the Gypsy is also reflected by pointing out the "lack of awareness" and "fear of birth control" which indicates, in quote already mentioned, "expense of rational assessment of situation". This description goes against the ideal of the socialist Czechoslovak citizen- modern, rational civilized and as Lišková (2016b) pointed out docile. "Emancipation problems in marriages" and "patriarchal status of husband" is also listed among the reasons and therefore again construct men as oppressors which diminish plans of women. Such discourses were also supported by researches of 'population climate of Gypsy women' (Finková1977), which linked the discrepancy between planned and real number of children to the lack of control and patriarchal organization of family. This contradict the 'normalization's' idea, promoting domestic sphere as source of the power and agency and empowerment for women (Bren 2010: 176). In such discursive field, sterilization can be perceived as potentially emancipatory for Roma women. In emphasizing

alleged victimhood of Roma women such practice can be understood as help. In a paternalistic manner this helps to reiterate Czechoslovaks as morally superior, 'always willing to help' and in tune with socialist ideal of supporting emancipation of women.

Sexual abuse of children, incest, promiscuity, substance abuse, impulsiveness. This all was identified, and widely circulated in discourses, as indications of the deviant sexuality of the figure of the Gypsy. This all suggests alleged discrepancies between the sexual value system of Gypsy and Czechoslovak collectivities, as it is by the author framed as problematic or alarming. The quote framed such sexual activities as a reason for the fearsomeness of the figure of the Gypsy. One of the ways of heightening the feeling of fear is the constitution of unpredictability and unknowability of the figure of Gypsy. Incest, promiscuity and sexual abuse were all perceived to be approved by 'Gypsy community.' Together with the use of alcohol, these fail to meet the criteria for the picture of desired fertility, which was framed as being controlled, planned, and regulated.

Gypsy sexuality in the quote is defined as not being bounded by the regulatory norms of Czechoslovak society. This 'sexuality out of control' is causing an environment within which paternity identification is 'impossible'. This unknowability causes an inability to define family members, as they are constituted in a heteronormative understanding, clearly delineating the relationships between members within the family, as well as members of the family with the rest of society. It is impossible to distinguish between parents and children, siblings and relatives, and the rest of community. As the family became so central in the political system during 'normalization', this particular understanding of sexuality of the figure of Gypsy, which is un-identifiable through the prism of heteronormative family, is unintelligible for the system, which produced notions about Czechoslovak citizens. In this understanding, the Gypsy family can never fulfil the standards according to which its members could reach the status of full and normative subjectivity and, therefore, the status of full humanity. This is exemplified on the

production of categories of “mother” and “children” as well as the non-existence of the figure of the father, which is unrecognizable.

In the previous chapter, I showed how the category of the ‘gypsy way of life’ was used as a signifier of deviations from the civilized, modern norms of the Czechoslovak state and therefore deviation from the hegemonic norms of whiteness. According to Magnet and Mason (2014) such a signifier—like in the case of the queer Muslim terrorist, the veil—is used to support anxieties about the deviant gender of those hiding underneath (18). In the case of ‘normalization’ Czechoslovakia, ‘gypsy way of life’, manifested through the organization of family, dimmed the ability to classify or recognize Roma through the subject’s grid of intelligibility of that period. Their perceived queerness was used as a mechanism of racialization and was used as main locus of their de-humanization in the discourses of “Gypsy question”.

In this chapter, I showed how the Demographic Conference put discourses into circulation, which produced the population crisis and notions of the decreasing quality of the population during ‘normalization’. I further explained how racial anxiety of Czechoslovaks manifested in the formulation of Gypsy sexuality as fearsome through the framing of their fertility in the metaphor of ‘explosion’. In this context it becomes interesting to think about the positioning of the quote discussing the sexual deviance of the figure of Gypsy in the section named “thinking about the future”. As I already mentioned, orientation towards the future is an important element of an affective economy of fear as the anxiety about future injury is directed towards a particular object (Ahmed 2014). The sexuality of Roma was understood to disrupt the stability of the population which, according to Magnet and Mason (2014), reversed the logic of the heteronormative imperative of the nation to constitute Roma as queer. The control of reproduction of Roma population, the mechanism of “devitalization” (Esposito 2013: 88), was constituted as inevitable to assure the desired development and assure the future progress of

society by reinforcing the impermeability of the racialized boundary between Czechoslovaks and the Roma population.

Because the link between morality, sexual acts, and the health of the individual was constituted through circulating discourses, sterilization of Romani women could be understood as a necessary regulatory and disciplinary power mechanism of the biopolitical regime of 'normalization'. In this process, sexuality, similarly to the way it is discussed by Foucault (1988), became the locus revealing the 'truth' about the individual (56). The 'truth' about the figure of the Gypsy, as it was produced through discourses of sexual deviation, impulsiveness, indifference, unpredictability, illegality of sexual acts, was used to constitute the figure of the Gypsy as unable to fulfil heteronormative family roles. As a consequence, followed the exclusion from the general body Czechoslovak citizens and the participation in the development of the national collectivity. Queerness of the figure of the Gypsy was the main locus of the racialization of Roma.

Conclusion: The “Gadžo” futurity and racialized queer Other

My aim in this project was to deepen the understanding of the biopolitical regime of ‘normalization’ which was so prevalently manifested in cases of coercive sterilization of Roma women. I set out to conduct this analysis in a theoretical framework built on scholarship of Critical Romani Studies utilizing post-colonial and critical race theories (Imre 2005, Kóczé Trehan 2009), however I add to them in centralizing my focus on the sexuality. To uncover the mechanisms of Roma racialization I chose to conduct Critical Discursive Analysis of scholarship written between the years 1968-1989, framing the period of ‘normalization’, to see how lived realities of violence were produced through discursive reinforcement of power relations. I combined this approach with the biopolitical perspective of how selective population control works to regulate the entire population as well as to discipline individual bodies. I assembled those approaches in order to be able to ask the “Gadžo question.”

In the Chapter 3, by analysing sources dedicated to educational and social work with Roma, I showed how discourses framing the “Gypsy question” constituted hierarchical differences between Roma and the ‘rest of the population’ and how the perceived cultural specificities were imbedded in racialized meanings. The “Gypsy question” was one of the frontiers reflecting the modernist project of the Czechoslovak society embedded in ideas of progress and desired development which was specific to the period of ‘normalization’. Political and ideological turmoil after the Prague Spring transformed sexual and gender regimes in Czechoslovakia. Shift towards privatized citizenship and extreme familization constituted biological reproduction as the individual's responsibility towards public interest, ensuring the prosperity of the society. Racially informed norms about proper and desired sexual conduct framed as ‘responsible parenthood’ constituted Roma as morally inept and contrasted the ‘backwardness’ of the ‘gypsy way of life’ with the modernity and civility of a ‘socialist way of life’.

In the fourth chapter I showed that the sexuality of Roma, even though biologically suited to fulfil the heteronormative family model, nonetheless produced the figure of the Gypsy as always gender deviant. In this way, gypsy “mothers” could never be “real” mothers and their “children” could not embody or symbolize the (white) heteronormative figure of the child. This constituted the figure of the Gypsy as unintelligible for the (white and hetero) normative grid and expelled Roma from the realm of the subject of proper Czechoslovak citizen. By bringing in the concept of queer female terrorist (Magnet, Mason 2014) I showed that the figure of the Gypsy is perceived as disabling the future of Czechoslovak collectivity, by threatening its desired social development. Their queerness is discursively constructed as antifuturistic and dangerous.

My analysis showed that the desired model of social development, the national project of Czechoslovak collectivity, was defined through ideas about heteronormative and docile sexuality as tools of progress, installing citizenship as white heteronormative privilege. I showed that the fixity of characteristics appropriated to the ethnic groups, Balibar (1991) called the nationalization of social organisation, worked to solidify the boundary between Czechoslovaks and Roma. In this logic the figure of the Gypsy was predestined to stay fixed in her own ‘deviance’. This fixed deviance consequently constituted Roma population as unwanted in participating in the future of the national collectivity. In this way, sterilization of Roma women during ‘normalization’, disrupting their futurity, is a consequence of defending the ideal future of the “Gadžo” social body.

This brings me to my understanding of the role of the whiteness in shaping the biopolitical regime of ‘normalization’. One of the answers for the “Gadžo question,” the way I posed it in this thesis, uncovers the role of whiteness in production of the ‘sexually deviant’ Roma subject. In this light, the disciplining of bodies of Roma women, through sterilization, was an outcome of racialized understanding of the ‘proper’ heterosexual subject and her role in fostering the

development and progress of Czechoslovak collectivity, continually fulfilling ideal progress installed by the specific modernity project of ‘normalization’ aimed at maintaining own whiteness.

Due to the way I conceptualized my analysis I focused on the discursive production and constitution of the figure of the Gypsy as the othered, racialized and queer subject without further exploring the possibilities for agency of this subject. This delineates one of the limitations of my project. Because my analysis could be interpreted as reifying passivity and otherness not only of Roma in particular but queer subjects in general there is a risk it could reinforce racialized notions of passivity. However, I consider this project as an important part of the responsibility of academia to anti-racist interventions. That is, because it contributes to an understanding of the complexities of racial politics and destabilizes the neutrality of whiteness in the region as well as it initiates an exploration of an under researched connection to sexuality. My thesis adds to the particularized debates about communism in CEE and Critical Romani Studies by proposing to consider race as a valuable analytical category as well as to find ways to conceptualize the role of whiteness in the nationalist projects of CEE. Moreover, it suggests to re-think the universality in application of biopolitical theories and to de-centralize Western centric views by emphasizing the multiplicity of the modernist projects. Showing the centrality of the family and the link of the biological reproduction to the constitution of a queer subject also offers space to imagine alternative ways of queer resistance. Thus I hope that my project highlights the necessity to further foster and develop approaches and possibly overcome the limitations stated above.

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