

Table of contents – Summar – Fall 2014

Table of contents – Summar – Fall 2014

Table of contents – Summar – Fall 2014

THE VISIBILITY OF THE ROMA PRACTICES OF CONTEMPORARY IMAGE PRODUCTION AND RECEPTION

André Raatzsch – Klahn K. Marett: Where are the good gardeners? About the (in)visibility of Roma and of “the others”

András Müllner: The bracket as the ironic image of the ghetto: On the possibilities and criticism of ethnical art, in the light of the performative act of the Sostar?/Why? {Roma} artgroup

Andrea Pócsik: Making it visible. The theory and practice of analyzing the representation of the Roma

Árpád Bak: The double time of the nation: contemporary art interventions at national memorial sites

Júlia Gottfried: Travelling metaphors: Nomadism and the artistic representation of the Roma in the 20-21st century

Anna Lujza Szász: Filmic representation of the Roma holocaust

Angéla Kóczé: Construction of Romani male and female bodies by racist gaze and discourse in the media

Veronika Munk: How does the Gipsy get to the title page? Producing stars in Hungary and the role of Roma celebrities

Albert Atkin: Reconstruction, Recognition, and Roma

Huub van Baar: Homecoming at Witching Hour: The Securitization of the European Roma and the Reclaiming of Their Citizenship

Mike Sell: Avant-garde/Roma: A Critical History of Bohemianism and Cultural Politics

Ethel Brooks: Reclaiming: The Camp and the Avant-Garde

Student's Workshop

Kristóf Somody: Invisible racism: thoughts on the media representation of the success of a Roma mayor

Márton Fogl: On the Road

ABSTRACTS

**André Raatzsch – Klahn K. Marett: Where are the good gardeners?
About the (in)visibility of Roma and of “the others”**

The article at hand addresses the types of the (in)visibility of Roma and the conditions that frame and influence the processes of becoming visible. In the majority of cases “the” Roma are made visible as “the others”: A socially constructed group which is serving the pervading power relations and regimes of representation. Aiming at the problematization of this construction which conceptualizes “Roma” as a static category, this article identifies manifold ways in which the Roma’s equal appearance and participation is made impossible. Particular attention is paid to Toni Morrison’s work *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*, in which the author analyses the age-long accepted practice of concealment and not-noticing of “Africanist presence” in the American literature and narration, which is preventing the self-expression and equitable existence of African-Americans in the US. In a comparative perspective, these theories are related to the (in)visibility of Roma in Europe. With regard to the context of the article, it is striking and important to mention that the authors write as Roma (André J. Raatzsch) and as Non-Roma (Marett K. Klahn), with different backgrounds and approaches to the complex topic focused on.

András Müllner: The bracket as the ironic image of the ghetto: On the possibilities and criticism of ethnical art, in the light of the performative act of the Sostar?/Why? {Roma} artgroup

As the third element of the program series *Intersections I-III*, on January 10 2014 the exhibition of the a Sostar?/Why? {Roma} artgroup opened in the open office of tranzit.hu. Within the frames of the exhibition, the Roma ethnical identity was commercialized through several contracts. Within their performative act entitled *{Roma} – Sales contract on ethnic identity*, the group “sold” the

adjective {Roma}, and those who “bought” it agreed individually to bear the responsibility of wearing it. The act was absurd in the sense that selling and buying ethnic identity sounds nonsensical, at the same time it was gravely serious, since it evoked memories of repressing minorities based on “contracts”. The study attempts to analyze the contract formulated within the performative act in the ethnical (Roma) artistic context, the criticism of which is embedded in the act itself. I emphasize the graphic image of the adjective, which in my opinion reveals the critical attitude of the group against art defined by ethnic origins, and this is why it makes it impossible to regard the sales contract as a simple reiteration of historical instances of “contracted” submission. I regard this open performative act to be a provocative, parodic replay of the colonizing methods of the majority’s aesthetic terrain, far from being independent of the content of individual contracts. Additionally, it rephrases the discourse on the criticism of ethnical art. In order to continue with this discourse, it is inevitable to reveal the orthographically coded difference between Roma – {Roma}.

Andrea Pócsik: Making it visible. The theory and practice of analyzing the representation of the Roma

This essay examines how critical theories suitable for analyzing Roma representation may be applied in practice. The main issue is how the reconsideration and re-interpretation of the overused terms in language and thinking might burst the traditional frames of higher educational and cultural practices. I argue that methodological change is urgently needed since the texts that ought to represent the Roma (used in a broad sense involving media products and results of academic research) cover and blur the power relations determining them. In case these relations are neglected or failed to be revealed, the knowledge production, recognition and appreciation of Roma cultural achievements cannot fulfil the role that is necessary for changing the present social circumstances.

The laboratory work introduced and analyzed in this essay can be described with features that ought to meet the requirements of cultural resistance and engaged scholarship. The anthropological image interpretation, the method described with the broadened terms used in theories of Ian Crawford, visual anthropologist, results in creating *visibility*, the construction of the post-Other. It is one possible way to achieve the goals described above: the essay aims to show the process through which we accumulated academic and social experiences necessary for it.

Árpád Bak: The double time of the nation: contemporary art interventions at national memorial sites

The interventions implemented by the three works examined – András Kállai: *Untitled*, Antony Gormley: *One & Other*, Yael Bartana: *And Europe Will Be Stunned* – at national memorial sites reflect the “double and split” temporality that Homi Bhabha assigns to the narrative of the modern nation and which, according to him, “leads us to question the homogenous [...] view associated with the nation’s imagined community.” The three contemporary artists utilize the “principle of double identity” associated with Pierre Nora’s concept of *lieu de mémoire*, that is, the fact that a site of memory is simultaneously rooted in the past and the present, always subject to new readings. As Nora observed, *lieux de mémoire* “thrive only because of their capacity for change, their ability to resurrect old meanings and generate new ones along with new and unforeseeable connections.” Bhabha’s dual temporal orientation introduces a similar instability into the narrative of the nation: it creates an ambivalent movement between the pedagogical temporality, which describes the nation in *a priori* terms, drawing on an essentialist view, and its performative opposite, which locates the people in the present by the differentiated reiteration of the national sign. For Bhabha and the three artists, the “repetitious, recursive strategy” of the performative makes it possible to articulate the heterogeneity of the nation retrospectively as well.

Júlia Gottfried: Travelling metaphors: Nomadism and the artistic representation of the Roma in the 20-21st century

In 2011 the Venice Biennale gave room to the Roma Pavilion for the second time. That year one of the central installations was made by a Dutch situationist architect, Anrout Mike. His work entitled *Design for a gypsy camp*, interpreted the model of Constant Nieuwenhuys. The aim of this project was to reflect on the lifestyle of the sinti community living at the North-Italian temporary camp. The fact that this situationist installation was exhibited at the Roma Pavilion shows that contemporary art has returned to the topics of nomads and mobility, originally discovered as fascinating by the urbanism of the 60s. This return can be traced on the iconographical motives as well. The topos of the nomad/traveler gypsy is prevalent both in representations of the Roma as well as their self-representations. This paper explores the actualization of the situationist artwork and the ways the installation fits the goals of the exhibition – the deconstruction of the stereotypes and the pre-determined image of the Roma. In more general terms: this paper reviews the meanings which have been attached to the nomadic lifestyle and explores the application of these

meanings in works from diverse artistic periods.

Anna Lujza Szász: Filmic representation of the Roma holocaust

The text primarily focuses on three films which explore the memory of the Nazi genocide of the Roma. All three were made in a different socio-historical environment, in diverse aesthetic regimes, with different ethical-political concerns and with diverging motivation. How are archival materials used in the films? What is the logic of archivization that can be detected? How does the survivor narrative change throughout the films? What roles does the narrator occupy? Is there a specific aesthetics of the Roma genocide?

Angéla Kóczé: Construction of Romani male and female bodies by racist gaze and discourse in the media

Relying on specific examples, the paper examines the way racist and sexist gazes and discourses construct and objectify Romani women and men in the media. In order to understand the perceptions and mechanisms of the media, I need to apply a theoretical framework not used generally in the research on the media representation of the Roma. I apply theoretical concepts from various schools, such as feminist and gender studies, as well as cultural and postcolonial studies. These theoretical frameworks explain and expose the complex hierarchical mechanisms behind media representations that are registered but not explained by empirical data. What is characteristic of the gaze of the media, what are the assumptions which construct representations of the Roma?

Veronika Munk: How does the Gipsy get to the title page? Producing stars in Hungary and the role of Roma celebrities

My paper has two foci, the first one is the Hungarian celebrity industry: the way this industry works, the decisions required that someone become the best known person of mainstream media. The second focus is Roma stars and celebrities and the way their ethnic origin affects celebrity industry. I made semi-structured interviews with Hungarian stars and celebrities, TV personalities, tabloid journalists, editors, and a producer to research this topic, and I have found that there is no

open and general prejudice against the Roma in this industry. At the same time “ethnic otherness” (like any other “otherness”) is widely used and emphasized by journalists and editors as a main factor of stardom of Roma stars and celebrities.

Albert Atkin: Reconstruction, Recognition, and Roma

Albert Atkin draws upon personal experience and theoretical and philosophical reflection to explore one conceivably fruitful way to envisage the future for Roma. Atkin focuses on the importance of recognizing the intrinsic difference between Roma and gaje society which is crucial for the struggle to define themselves and for the struggle to be recognized. According to Atkin Roma need *Positive Recognition* which is the awareness, appreciation, and accommodation of distinctive cultural values, practices, and perspectives. Atkin emphasizes that instead of *Popular* and *Official Definition* a *Reconstructive Definition* should be used to define what Roma means. The Reconstructive Definition is not just defining who Roma are, but also the struggle to make it recognized by the gaje society.

Huub van Baar: Homecoming at Witching Hour: The Securitization of the European Roma and the Reclaiming of Their Citizenship

In his article Huub van Baar – a researcher at the University of Amsterdam – investigates the relationship between the European Union and the Roma from the perspective of general European mobility, and the post-Schengen Europe with no national borders. The author raises awareness of the new types of European borders that have emerged in the past decades instead of the removed national borders of member states. These new types of borders are often used for the securitization of minority groups and immigrants (especially the Roma) and for actively criminalizing their activities and lifestyles, making their free movement within the EU problematic. Through the example of Damian and Delaine Le Bas’ thought-provoking public art installations and other relevant projects, the author demonstrates the discriminative workings of domopolitics, the strong presence of historical stereotypes, and the strengthening ranks of neo-racist political parties and ideologies – all this in the free and officially borderless European Union.

Mike Sell: Avant-garde/Roma: A Critical History of Bohemianism and Cultural Politics

This paper examines the question how Roma lifestyle became a cultural strategy of the bohemian identity in the 19th century. It claims that the cultural turn of technocratic avant-garde was implemented by marginalized groups of bohemia using Roma cultural patterns. The text discusses the appropriation of Roma lifestyle by bohemian dissidents on the basis of performative language and exoticism. Next, it examines Roma representation and bohemian performance within the black-and-white representational system. Finally, it suggests that we need to understand the cultural turn around Roma as a racialized turn by which Roma can take their rightful place in history.

Ethel Brooks: Reclaiming: The Camp and the Avant-Garde

Through the demonstration of the diverse meaning of the camp – related to “Gypsy” camp, the slave quarters, the concentration camp, the refugee camp – the article offers a rereading of the terms *camp* and *encampment*. Discussing diverse iconic representations of the various forms of camp and encampment, it offers examples of the practice as a new model of making place, as a scholarly move, an artistic proposition of imagining, a political statement, a form of remembrance. It calls for the reclaiming of the camp as an alternative archive, as the possibility not only for a rereading of Roma history, but as a model for other ways of being.

Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung and Regina Römhild: The Post-Other as Avant-Garde

The text inquires into the contemporary moment of the emergence of the post-Other through the unmasking of the colonial and postcolonial politics of Othering and the critical description of the relation between majority society and minorities, between centre and margins. By demonstrating the subversive potentials in the status of the post-Other and its resonance within artistic articulations, the text draws attention to the possibility of “speaking nearby”, to the necessity of showing solidarity with other experience and thought without colonizing it. As the ability of art to represent the world otherwise and to experiment with yet unknown futures through shifts in perspective is exposed in the text, the authors, Regina Römhild and Bonaventure Soh Bejeng

Ndikung invoke the possibility of a different world and alternative futures.

Kristóf Somody: Invisible racism: thoughts on the media representation of the success of a Roma mayor

This paper aims to discuss some questions about the media representation of gypsies on online platforms, via the example of village Cserdi and its nationwide known mayor's social prevention program. The main topic of this essay is the non-intentional racism: it attempts to draw attention to the dangers of essentialist discourse and the responsibility of the media. The analysis of selected representational patterns tries to reveal the effects of indiscernible stereotypes in connection with the Hungarian gypsy communities and also wants to highlight the problems of media representational practices.

Márton Fogl: On the Road

My paper is about travelling gypsies, Travellers of Great Britain, and New Travellers, while its specific object is Tom Lloyd's 2008 film, titled *Live Before You Die*. Lloyd takes an anti-capitalist stand through the presentation of a New Traveller group. I try to answer why it is possible to use nomadism for this, as a romantic idyll compared to the life integrated in the settled majority society. I find a cultural archetype in the figure of the travelling gypsy, a recurring motif of European history of the aesthetics of motion. This Roma-image has political aspects, it expresses, among others, rebellion, change and diversity, the rejection of materialism. It partly explains why New Travellers have chosen the travelling lifestyle associated with gypsies. There are also negative Traveller-stereotypes, identifying them with criminals – this, among others, leads to various instances of discrimination against Travellers and New Travellers. It also offers an explanation of the language used by Tom Lloyd in his film resembling advertisements, with which he wishes to forward cultural recognition through the aesthetisation of the "gypsy" lifestyle. In searching for facts behind prejudices, I position this lifestyle with the term *non-place*, in the reality of locality-based dominant culture. Travellers are economically dependent on the surrounding society, and that makes them move necessarily in non-places designated by the majority. However, New Traveller lifestyle is inspired by the withdrawal from mainstream society. This makes me see their status analogous to some extent with the status of people in a Protracted Refugee Situation; majority society's need for the totality of control makes both groups captives of non-places.

