

ROMANI STUDIES IN THE AGE OF COVID-19: ETHICS, METHODS, ENGAGEMENT AND THE FUTURE

Workshop convened by

Martin Fotta (Czech Academy of Sciences) and Paloma Gay y Blasco (St. Andrews)

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The Covid-19 pandemic is having a devastating effect on Romani communities worldwide. The emergency has fed on the fragility of Romani lives, exacerbating already existing patterns of disenfranchisement—racial scapegoating, national security spectacles and a closing-off of Romani neighbourhoods. Scholars have engaged with the challenges of this moment, collaborating with relief efforts, engaging the media, writing dispatches and op-eds. These activities have been new to many, blurring the borders between activism and scholarship, between action and reflection. The field and the questions scholars ask have shifted, existing forms of knowledge production have been questioned, and new forms of solidarity have emerged.

We are looking for contributions—papers, pre-recorded interviews, videos, and the like—from scholars in humanities, arts, and social sciences, whether based in academia or not, to reflect upon ways the pandemic has impacted Romani-related scholarship. We are especially interested in examples of concrete practices and activities. Contributions could explore some of these questions:

- How has the pandemic impacted ongoing or planned research projects? How were they adapted? How have the constraints (e.g., travel bans, lockdowns) made one attentive to new dynamics and seeded novel methodological approaches?
- How has the pandemic changed theoretical conceptualisations? How has it led to directions not imagined at the outset? What new questions have become relevant and meaningful?
- What forms of engagement in ‘the field’ has the context of the pandemic demanded from researchers? What new forms of collaboration have emerged? How will they shape the future scholarship?
- How is research in the context of the pandemic shaped by demands to decolonise scholarship (even in Central and Eastern Europe) and by the need to support the struggle of communities against anti-Gypsyism?
- How can social science shape priorities in the post-pandemic world? How do scholars help ensure that voices of affected Romani communities are represented and their needs visible?

Collaborative contributions with Romani interlocutors, contributions from scholars of Romani background, from doctoral students, and from early career researchers are especially welcome.

The workshop will take place online. Each contribution should not be longer than 10 minutes. Significant space will be dedicated to discussions.

Please send your submissions by 22 April 2021 to Martin Fotta (fotta@eu.cas.cz) and Paloma Gay y Blasco (pgyb@st-andrews.ac.uk).

All submissions should contain:

1. Name
2. Email and institutional affiliation of the author, if applicable
3. Title of contribution
4. Abstract of 250 words
5. If applicable, description of the envisaged multimedia content

The workshop is organised by the Institute of Ethnology, Czech Academy of Sciences, and the Prague Forum for Romani Histories at the Institute of Contemporary History, Czech Academy of Sciences. If you have any questions and/or inquiries regarding the workshop, please contact the conveners.