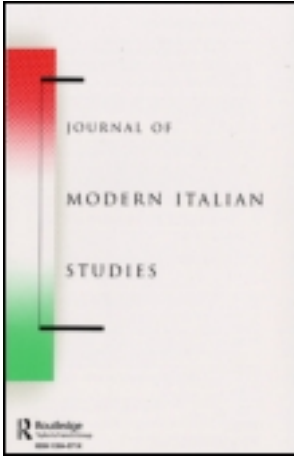


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Welcome 'in'. Left-wing Tuscany and Romani migrants (1987–2007)

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Abstract

Although the Italian left was one of the largest popular movements for social change in Western Europe, at the end of the 1980s the Tuscan left-wing regional council imposed the construction of fenced camps for Romani immigrants supposedly in order to give Roma the possibility of developing their own traditional habits. By contextualizing the local political context within the post-1989 changes of left-wing politics vis-à-vis migrants in Italy, the paper discusses the rationale behind the construction of nomad camps. It examines the texts of the first two regional laws addressing Roma – passed in 1988 and 1995. It then compares that analysis with the ethnographic data collected in 2007 and 2008. In the conclusion it is put forward that the conditions of material and symbolic segregation that have been affecting Roma in Florence for more than twenty years are a consequence of specific culture-based strategies adopted by policy makers.

Keywords

Roma migration, Italian Left, Tuscan politics, political anthropology.

Introduction

In Italy since the beginning of the 1990s several xenophobic groups, manifestly against non-European migrants, have raised their voice (Dal Lago 1999; Mura 1995; Petrillo 1999). Unlike the classic model of 'neo-nationalism' (Gingrich and Banks 2006), radical xenophobic discourses in the Italian context were neither predicated upon the integrity of the nation, nor sustained by pan-national narratives. Rather, they mostly emerged through a discovery of local identities and the reaffirmation of 'localist cultures', eliciting what has been named 'neo-localism' (Stacul 2006). Largely reinforced, if not induced, by conservative political forces, first and foremost by the Northern League (Tambini 2001), this phenomenon can be seen as one of the consequences of the early 1990s collapse of the national political system. Since then, left-wing discourses on migrants progressively shifted from being class-based to being culture-based (Però 2007).

Until recently, this 'culturalist turn' in immigration politics in Europe had been analyzed as a distinctive right-wing discourse, viewing culture as a force

capable of merging individuals in homogeneous entities and thus producing incommensurability between cultures (Hannerz 1999; Stolcke 1995; Wright 1998). One of the most important differences between the right-wing and the left-wing discourse on 'new migration' seems to be the Left's less explicit politics of exclusion. This discourse tries to persuade by rhetorical references to the idioms of social inclusion of migrants and equality between migrants and majority societies. In the next sections, I show that the initial left-wing political discourse about Roma was instead imbued by exclusionary statements based on cultural difference.

This article is an in-depth analysis based on my ethnographic fieldwork focusing on the political imagination behind the first policies that welcomed Romani migrants 'into' entrenched and segregated camps in Florence, one of the most '*rosse*' ('red') Italian cities.¹ Looking at the first two regional laws dealing with Roma, this paper aims to answer the following question: 'What were the representations of Romani migrants that drove the first regional policies addressing Roma, and to what extent have they impacted present-day political representations?' This dual question seems worth asking for three reasons.

First, owing to a lack in Italy of integrated national policies vis-à-vis Roma, regional ones are highly relevant. Apart from a few exceptions (e.g. Brunello 1996; Piasere 2006; Sigona 2002, 2005), analyses of the ways in which representations of Roma have shaped regional policies are absent from the scholarship on Roma in Italy. Second, the contemporary violent public campaign against Roma in Italy that began in May 2007 (Colacicchi 2008; Picker 2010) is largely predicated upon the validity of segregated areas for Roma being a practical solution to the problem of urban insecurity in periphery areas.² Therefore, shedding light on the cultural logic behind the decision-making process of policies concerning Roma and its continuities with the ongoing situation today can help us understand the social conditions for the persistence of such devices of social control. Third, to frame a discussion about the rationale behind the construction of nomad camps within the local political culture of Tuscany, together with the history of the Italian Left, is helpful in making sense of the pervasiveness of perceptions of Roma. In fact, traditionally, mass political movements and parties in Italy have not only promoted political values, but also shaped individual's lives by creating real cultural 'worlds', the two largest ones being Communists and Catholics.

After introducing the theoretical framework, I discuss the left-wing management of the 'new immigration' to Italy and the social conditions of Roma. Against this background I then analyze the text of the first two regional laws in Tuscany (1988 and 1995) and show continuities in the representations of Roma up to 2007.

Theoretical framework

Romani social life in Europe has largely expressed itself by remarkable adaptation to the changing political and economic conditions of nation-states

(Bancroft 2005; Okely 1983; Piasere 1999). Since the birth of the nation-state, such existential processes were almost universally predicated upon the asymmetry of power between Roma and *Gagé* (non-Roma) in the definitions of common rules and rights of access to citizenship. Willems's (1997) narrative tells of the Roma adaptation throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as largely induced by the disciplinary political power of the state, imposing definitions of 'the true Gypsies' for the sake of control and discipline. This explanation is an invaluable point of theoretical departure for detecting and then analyzing the uses of certain representations and their links with political ideologies.

Dan Sperber (1996), drawing both on anthropological and psychological sources, through the concept of 'epidemiology of representations', explains macro-phenomena at the demographic level such as epidemics by the aggregation of the micro-processes both inside individuals and in their interaction. Cultural representations are in this view a 'fuzzy subset of the set of mental and public representations inhabiting a given social group' (Sperber 1996: 32). Sperber claims that ever since Durkheim, representations have been considered within an autonomous ontological realm, one that is essentially a social vacuum outside space and time. However, considering them anchored to both mental and social processes allows us to give them a concrete shape. This seems to be an implicit assumption, for instance, in work by Gail Kligman (2001) which empirically examines the variety and rootedness of representations of Roma in Romania. In order to scrutinize the 'work' and the consequences they have in terms of policies, I also draw on Bourdieu's (1991) insightful discussion of the ways in which identities become crystallized:

struggles over ethnic or regional identity [which] are a particular case of the different struggles over classifications, struggles over the monopoly of the power to make people see and believe, to get them to know and recognize, to impose the legitimate definition of the divisions of the social world and thereby, to *make and unmake groups*. What is at stake here is the power of imposing a vision of the world through principles of di-vision which, when they are imposed on a whole group, establish meaning and consensus about meaning, and in particular about identity and unity of the group, which creates the reality of the unity and the identity of the group (Bourdieu 1991: 221).

Assuming that politics and culture are two interpenetrating domains, it can be argued that the 'epidemiology of representations' not only has consequences on policy and policymaking, but can also be elicited by policy makers' representations and in general by those who hold the power of defining the social world. Therefore, in both Bourdieu's and Sperber's terms, before getting to the stage of 'epidemics', representations are elaborated, set out and imposed by the political power.

'New immigrations' and the Italian Left during the 1980s

In Italy in the early 1970s, for the first time the rate of immigration exceeded the rate of emigration. National leaders were complacent, and only in the mid-1980s did they began to face up to the phenomenon by establishing an official immigration policy. The 943/1986 law extended equal rights to non-EC immigrants, followed by a series of amnesties until 1990. In that year, the 39/1990 law, called *Legge Martelli*, covered issues like political asylum and regularization of immigrants. How did the Italian Left face this new phenomenon? To answer that question it is useful to sketch out the main changes on the egalitarian side of the political spectrum during the 1980s.

The Italian Communist Party (PCI) underwent important changes after the death in 1984 of Enrico Berlinguer. These culminated in 1989 when then leader Achille Occhetto publicly announced the need for the party to 'move ahead with the same courage demonstrated in the Resistance' (qtd in Kertzer 1996: 3). Three years later, the PCI was transformed into the Democratic Party of the Left (PDS), which in 1998 became Democrats of the Left (DS).³ This change profoundly impacted the lives of party members. In fact, the Italian Left was not only a political force in the 'professional' realm of politics, but also one of the most powerful ideological and organizational systems shaping the everyday life of its members and sympathizers (Shore 1993). This is the way the PCI always went about constructing its identity, particularly in opposition to the Christian Democrats the other major political and social force characterizing Italian postwar history. As Pratt (2003: 82) put it,

Until its demise, the communist identity was generated in a narrative of who 'we' were and who 'we' were opposed to, located in a growing history of intervention in Italian political life. [...] There were still subtle and pervasive metaphors constructing political divides in terms of *progress*: the workers and their party were nearest to future, the most advanced sector of society. (emphasis added)

Following the important transformations in Italian politics at the end of the 1980s, people's main social identities became detached from such political loyalties.⁴ An understanding of this 'everyday influence' of the two mass political parties and its progressive demise provides a critical background enabling us to analyze the ways in which new immigrants were seen, framed and thus constructed by national and local authorities. Before the fall of Communism, immigrants were defined by the European and the Italian Left by deploying social class categories, that is as disadvantaged subjects who were forced by the exploitative capitalist system to flee their own countries (mostly in southern regions) in search of better jobs (Però 2005, 2007). The shift from the socialist to the post-socialist Left was accompanied by the rise of identity politics, namely the struggle around 'gender', 'ethnicity' and other cultural

manifestations, which replaced the accent that the Left traditionally put on class. Since the late 1980s, in Europe this transformation has also vividly occurred in relation to the ‘new immigrants’.

The political management of Romani groupings in Italy

The first significant influx of Romani migration to Italy occurred in the second half of the 1970s, when the crisis of the Yugoslav economic model began to be evident, and just a few years before that the first attempts politically to regulate immigration were being carried out. Owing to the novelty of this phenomenon, and the related lack of institutional experience to face it, there has never been an integrated national policy vis-à-vis Roma. Instead, since the mid-1980s a number of regional laws have been passed.⁵ Almost always in these cases the knowledge of Romani social life used to design the law has been provided by ‘experts’ – civil society groups working with the Roma, more often referred to as ‘nomads’.

The most influential of such organizations was Opera Nomadi (Charitable Organization for Nomads – ON), which was founded in 1963 and which within two years became the main and stable interlocutor of the national government on issues concerning Romani groupings (Marta 2000). Being in such a position of power, ON contributed to coining institutionally the idiom on Roma circulating in the first legislative texts about them. In particular, the first initiatives of ON aimed to provide a place where ‘nomads’ could stop and could regularly attend classes in schools. These places, called *aree sosta* (stop areas) or *centri sosta* (stop centers), started to appear in the peripheries of big cities in the late 1960s. They were conceived as places throughout the country where ‘nomads’ could stop during their ‘nomadism’, and in doing so not lose their own ‘culture’. ‘Culture’ was viewed by ON as

a set of rites, customs, uses, elaborated within an idealized past. These elements [were] considered at risk of extinction in industrial and capitalist society. A culture-tradition which [seemed] to be alternatively the cause of the ‘delay’ [in the process of development] of Roma or as a system from which to choose which elements to preserve and which to reject. (Bravi and Sigona 2007: 865; my translation).

Studies of the material living conditions of Roma and their position in the symbolic social hierarchy in the cities of Bologna (Però 1999), Rome (Clough Marinaro 2003; ERRC 2000) and Florence (Colacicchi 1996; Szente 1997) demonstrate a routine pattern since the end of the 1980s – a permanent status of segregation and fear induced by city authorities. Police actions of various kinds, both authorized and arbitrary, such as evictions, controls, and stopping and searching cars driven by Roma, have frequently occurred. Interestingly, these three cities have a long history of left-wing politics, and those studies were

carried out when each of them was governed by a left-wing mayor,⁶ under whose administrations Romani migrants were given ‘nomad camps’ as housing solutions. To dig deeper into the links between left-wing politics and Romani migrants I narrow my focus here to Tuscany and its main city, Florence, where the camp population of Roma in 1994 was about 1100, but declined to about 600 in 2006. Tuscany since 1970, the year in which Italian regions became elected administrative bodies, has been constantly governed by the Left (PSI; PCI and PDS/DS).

The regional laws 17/88 and 73/95. Drawing cultural boundaries

In the fall of 1987, some inhabitants of the Castello neighborhood at the semi-periphery of Florence organized a roadblock protest. They were concerned about approximately one hundred people living in and driving around in damaged caravans without a fixed residence. On 13 October 1987, the local authorities ordered ‘the transfer of those nomads to an open-air area owned by the local council located in Via Omatello, at the extreme periphery of the city.’⁷ A few months later, the Omatello area was enclosed by a concrete wall, within which prefabricated huts and caravans were located. Little by little the local council, using the legal framework of the first regional law addressing Roma, introduced utilities in the camp and established rules for those living there. The first nomad camp was thus established.

On 12 March 1988, the 75/88 law entitled ‘Interventions for the protection (*tutela*) of Roma ethnic (*etnia Rom*)’⁸ was passed. In the text it was never mentioned that Roma were migrants or foreigners. Rather, the law was framed within a discourse on ‘nomadism’. It is important to analyze this discourse and its political context, considering both the particular text of the law and the debates around its approval.

In April 1987 the bill was proposed by G.N., a regional councilman who belonged to the Christian Democrat party (DC). It received unanimous approval from the voting councilmen. During his speech to the regional council, G.N. justified the bill by referring to the ‘protection of nomads’ as an ethnic and linguistic minority whose needs should be taken into account; he underlined that such protection was currently neither on the national nor the regional legal agenda. According to G.N., the ‘nomads’ faced a range of difficult problems:

- (1) We see, including in big cities like Florence, informal camps without essential services such as water, hygienic utilities, with consequences to the health conditions of the inhabitants.
- (2) In addition to these disadvantages, difficulties stemming from lack of work are also present,
- (3) illiteracy as a consequence of lack of education [. . .] and this situation represents a risk for young people and their behavior which is sometimes at the margin of the legal framework. (Regione Toscana 1987: 1; my translation)

Further, G.N. states the goals of the law:

- (1) To promote the implementation of camps (*campi sosta*) for sedentary people (*sedentatizzati*) and transit areas (*aree di transito*) [for those who travel], and set up health and social assistance interventions for the guests.
- (2) To safeguard the positive values of the nomadic culture, especially folk arts and crafts, through:
 - ad hoc initiatives aimed at the development and production of handmade goods;
 - financial support for the creation of handcraft work activities within the camp.
- (3) To provide school education for persons below 18 years old, and combat illiteracy. (Consiglio Regionale della Toscana 1987)

After defining the problems and declaring the intention to solve them, G.N. closes his speech by focusing on the local regional community by referring to ‘the civic tradition which has always characterized Tuscany’ (qtd in Rossa 1995: 43; my translation).

As was the case in many other regional councils, ON was the organization that participated in most of the decision-making gatherings.⁹ One such occasion was an 8 October 1987 meeting of the regional council when the fourth commission on ‘Health and Social Care’ consulted several civil society organizations that routinely dealt with issues related to Roma. The whole discussion was articulated in view of a clear goal: to allow the cultural preservation of this ‘ethnie’, through (1) education, (2) housing and (3) social services (Regione Toscana 1987). The rationale of the discussion was to reinforce the legitimacy of the incommensurable dichotomy between a sedentary culture or way of life and a nomadic culture. That such a dichotomy existed was taken as unquestioned conventional wisdom by all participants in the meeting. The following dialogue between one of the consultants and the commission president clarifies this interpretation:

Consultant: One of the fundamental dimensions of the Gypsy way of life is a nomadic style. It is important to state this, also because [...] there are [in the text of the law] some elements in favor of those who decide not to be nomadic any more, and thus by this, not giving enough guarantees to those who are still nomad. The latter do not carry out a nomadic way of life just because they are less developed, but because this lifestyle belongs to their fundamental dimension (Consiglio Regionale della Toscana 1987: 14).

President of the Commission: This law is a product of our culture, and it could not be otherwise. Thus, drawing on this consideration we can say that the fact that it is a product of our culture does not mean that it should overwhelm other cultures that are currently in our region (Consiglio Regionale della Toscana 1987: 28).

This dialogue suggests a deep irreconcilable difference in patterns of behavior between Roma and non-Roma. It could thus be argued that it represents an 'insurmountable barrier to do what comes naturally to humans, in principle, namely, communicating' (Stolcke 1995: 8). Another further element of such a 'barrier' is its sense of a privileged position, of distance; Roma were not consulted beforehand, nor were they present during these discussions. A closer look at the presentation of the law in the Regional council can advance the analysis.

One of the most common practices carried out by local authorities, having built the camps, was the organization of surveillance and control of residents. These exceptional measures were only for Roma, that is people who the regional authorities consider cultural subjects characterized by a peculiar, nomadic, way of life. In July 1991, two councilmen from the regional council proposed a discussion concerning the necessity of setting rules for the camps. The proposal was articulated around five key points: a census of all the persons living in the camps; the obligation for children younger than fourteen to attend school; a medical check for all persons living in the camps; twenty-four-hour surveillance of the camps; and DNA testing in case paternity needed to be established. This proposal highlights the political context within which the issue was gradually formulated and legitimated. In November 1991, the mayor ordered the removal of all nomads who were illegal immigrants from the Olmatello camp.¹⁰ The motivation for this order was the assumed necessity of getting rid of 'excess nomads'. It is evident that at the time the idiom of nomadism was the only one in everyday use.

In 1992, at the beginning of the Bosnian War, many more Roma fled the Balkans and found shelter in Italy. After arriving in Florence many went to the Poderaccio area, an isolated field on the far western periphery of the city. This was a real shanty town, as Szente (1997) reports, where the precarious and poor housing conditions were entirely inadequate when confronted with the arrival of so many new Balkan immigrants. At that time, research on the social conditions of Roma living in the camps in Tuscany was being carried out by Fondazione Michelucci,¹¹ a Florence-based private research foundation. Michelucci's key finding was that only a handful of the Roma in Tuscany were still pursuing a nomadic way of life (Marcetti *et al.* 1993). This discovery that the majority were not nomads provoked strong reactions in the regional council where, in September 1993, a new bill concerning Roma was proposed. The 73/1995 regional law is entitled 'Interventions for the Roma and Sinti peoples'. The most important difference with the previous law is the linguistic shift from 'camp' to 'equipped residential areas' and 'furnished transit areas' (*Aree attrezzate residenziali* and *Aree attrezzate per il transito*). Councilmen began to ask for a census of the population living in the camps. A group of them decided to go and visit the camps in order to 'concretely implement projects which could answer to the needs of the inhabitants of the camps' (Rossa 1995: 94).

The Michelucci research is an incisive critique of the camp as a good housing solution for Roma. The entire document is organized around a binomial principle: on one side there is 'Romani culture' (*cultura rom*), and on the other there is 'urbanism', which can alternatively draw on a refusal (*rifiuto*) or reception (*accoglienza*). The researchers' agenda appears to be to provide evidence of the fact that the camps are not an appropriate housing solution, because they do not fit 'Romani culture'.¹² Stemming from this analysis the document concludes with the proposal that little houses be constructed for the Roma, not at the margins of urban areas but within them. Different patterns of houses are proposed according to the exigencies of the local host society and the 'Romani culture'. The research represents the first attempt to understand Roma's requests and claims authentically. In effect the 75/1995 law partially removes the barrier between Romani immigrants and regional authorities: although the idiom of nomadism was used in the first law it is not the only one used in the new law. However, the text of the 1995 law does not employ a different idiom than the culturalist one, and this is the most fundamental element of continuity between the first and the second law. A closer look at the 1995 law illustrates this point in detail.

The first section of the 75/1995 law is titled 'Interventions for the Roma and Sinti Populations' and the first article states:

This law dictates the norms for the preservation of Roma cultural patrimony and of Roma and Sinti identity, in order to facilitate the communication between cultures, to grant the right to a nomadic life, to religious practice, to stop and to stay within the regional territory. Moreover the right to enjoy access to social, health and school services is granted.

This excerpt suggests that with the second law there is a renewal of the culturalist standpoint. Since the influential Michelucci Foundation stressed the importance of adequate housing solutions for 'Romani culture', this element can be seen as attaching a new importance to the territorial dimension. Therefore, in everyday practice, in the political construction of the Romani issue 'culture' assumes a strictly territory-based meaning. In other words, while the 1998 law was wrong in identifying all Roma as nomads (as the Michelucci research revealed), in the 1995 law it is nevertheless upon a difference of territorial and housing habits from the majority population that the 'Romani culture' is assumed to be based.

In sum, the passage between the first and the second law shows that the idiom with which Romani immigrants were framed by the left-wing Tuscan authorities was predicated upon culturalist fundamentalism. In the first law (17/1988), the culturalist idiom was exclusively related to nomadism, and in the second law (75/1995) it was still related to the link between people and territory, specifically housing habits recognized as somehow peculiar and partially different from the ones of the local society/culture.

Left-wing policy and its legacy

The culturalist idiom spread in Tuscany as the main factor of the local ‘epidemiology of representations’ (Sperber 1996) aiming at defining who Roma are. Although the third and last law concerning Roma in Tuscany (12/2000) openly recognizes the necessity of including Roma in every decision-making process (Scioscia 2009), thus granting them the status of ‘political subjects’, the culturalist idiom today remains the most pervasive and dominant. Its main implication can be identified in the concrete persistence of camps for Roma at the extreme periphery of Florence up to the present. A clue about the tenacity of the idea (at least until 2007) that residents of the two camps for Roma in Florence are exclusively nomads, and must be educated and adapt to a normal sedentary way of life, emerges from my fieldwork. I carried out twenty-one semi-structured interviews with civil servants in Spring 2007, two of whom worked in one of the two districts where the camps for Roma are located. The president of one of the districts explained to me the major problems that he and his colleagues face while dealing with Romani immigrants living in the camp in ‘his’ district:

If a social worker provides social care to a family for twelve years, after which that family does not do anything, and the result of those twelve years is that the family sits down and waits for help, I come and I say: ‘Stop!’ I say ‘No!’ to the excess of assistance: people must act by themselves [*darsi da fare*]. This is real welfare [i.e. when people act by themselves]. I’ll give you an example. The assistance period lasts one year, and then we propose [...] a project [...] well, Roma too must do something! I found you [i.e. Roma] a job, and what do you do? You abandon it just because you live ten kilometres [away] from your workplace? You cannot do this!! Some of them [Roma] abandon their jobs. Of course, I understand, *they are nomadic people!* I do understand this. But there are also such great workers among Roma. (emphasis added).

The civil servant responsible for the camp situated in the other district spoke about one of the most significant events she came across during her usual activities inside the camp:

Once I was struck by something a Roma living in a camp told me. He said: ‘if I don’t get a job, I will go away’, and he left for Germany. I would never be able to leave like that, from one day to the next. This is the point: maybe they have this travelling sense (*senso girovago*) in their blood, according to which they can easily travel.

Although not all the civil servants I interviewed had the same opinion about the Roma’s supposed nomadism, I frequently encountered such

representations. In point of fact, Roma who have lived and/or are still living in camps in Florence have never carried out a vagrant way of life.

Conclusion

In this paper I outlined the imposition of the very first idiom officially to define Roma in left-wing Tuscany. There has been a process of ‘epidemics’ (Sperber 1996) of representations of Roma intended as pure cultural subjects. This ‘epidemics’ has been at work since the end of the 1980s and continues today, where its traces can be found among civil servants dealing daily with Roma in Florence, Tuscany’s main city. Interestingly, cultural fundamentalism has not been supported by a right-wing cultural politics, but rather within a regional context in which left-wing political culture traditionally was and remains the everyday dominant political force.

I contextualized this process within the Italian Left’s progressive shift from a class-based to a culture-based definition of migrants. I highlighted in the analysis of the first two laws addressing Roma (i.e. 75/88 and 75/95) the persistence of a culturalist idiom predicated upon a difference between ‘locals’ and ‘newcomers’. While this concept no longer officially prevents communication between the two parts, it still functions as a mechanism of constructing cultural and spatial boundaries. As Verena Stolcke (1995: 8) argues, ‘instead of ordering different cultures hierarchically [as classical racism does], cultural fundamentalism segregates them spatially, each culture in its place’-). To be sure, what Stolcke calls ‘cultural fundamentalism’ is not the mere recognition of cultural difference of a particular grouping. Far more than that, it is the use of such recognition as a way of denying possibilities of fair dialogue with ‘us’, those who belong to ‘another cultural group’. Therefore, drawing on the anthropologist’s analysis of the essential contemporary rhetoric of migration in Europe, it can be argued that the Tuscan institutions’ behavior vis-à-vis Roma can be considered a case of ‘soft’ ‘cultural fundamentalism’.

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Notes

- 1 Fieldwork was conducted in the context of my Ph.D. dissertation (July 2009), titled ‘Romani/Gypsy groupings in the making. A comparative study of ethnicity and citizenship between ‘Eastern’ and ‘Western’ Europe. The cases of Florence, Cluj-Napoca and Pescara’, Department of Sociology, University of Milan-Bicocca,. Although highly interdisciplinary, my dissertation as well as this article theoretically and methodologically draw on anthropological sources.

- 2 See in particular the two pacts signed in May 2007 by the Ministry of Interior and the mayor of the two largest Italian cities, Milan (*Patto per Milano sicura*) and Rome (*Patto per Roma sicura*). Texts of the pacts are available online at: <http://www.prefettura.milano.it/varie/prot/patto20070518.pdf> and at http://www.interno.it/mininterno/export/sites/default/it/assets/files/13/2007_05_18_Patto_per_Roma_sicura.pdf [Accessed 13 June 2010].
- 3 The PCI was also turned into Partito della Rifondazione Comunista (Party of Communist Refoundation), and two other left-wing parties were created – I Verdi (The Greens) and La Rete (The Net).
- 4 With the 1989 geo-political changes, the Italian political landscape went through significant transformation, in a moment in which the state stopped being the main social and political and ideological context for people's lives (see Diamanti 1999).
- 5 In Italy Roma are not recognized as a national minority. Laws concerning Roma were passed by several Regional councils, which promoted the construction of various kinds of camps. These have been established in Veneto (1984); Lazio (1985); the autonomous province of Trento (1985); Sardinia (1988); Friuli Venezia Giulia (1988); Emilia Romagna (1988); Tuscany (1988) and several other regions as well.
- 6 In Bologna (1994–1995), Mayor Walter Vitali; in Rome (1997–2000), Mayor Francesco Rutelli; in Florence (1995–1997), Mayor Mario Primicerio. In 1993 the first national law for the direct election of mayors by the city population passed; this can provide some evidence of the political affiliation of the majority of each urban population at the time.
- 7 Municipality of Florence, Ordinanza 2631, dated 13 October 1987.
- 8 The text of the Law is available online at: http://www.rete.toscana.it/ius/ns-leggi/?Mival=pagina_2&ANNO=1988&TESTO=NIENTE&TITOLO=NIENTE&MATERIA=512&ANNO1=2007&NUMERO=17&YEAR=1988 [Accessed 13 June 2010].
- 9 An in-depth analysis of ON activities and ideological references is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it can be argued that ON's main political and ideological affiliations were with the Left.
- 10 Municipality of Florence. Ordinanza 3529, 9 November 1991.
- 11 Founded in 1982 by Giovanni Michelucci, a prominent Florentine architect and intellectual, the foundation has always been at the foreground as policy consultant for issues concerning urban planning, with a focus on socially marginalized places such as prisons or indeed nomad camps.
- 12 Romani culture is described in the document in terms of several typical characteristics, such as a peculiar understanding of time; stealing not being perceived as immoral; and a general flexibility of lifestyle. Accordingly, the research puts forward several settlement solutions (*soluzioni abitative*) as alternatives to the existing nomad camps.

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