The Refugees of Illiberalism:

Capitalist crisis, rightwing populism, and social reproduction through the prism of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada

By Sara Swerdlyk

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Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology

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Supervisor: Dr Prem Kumar Rajaram

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Statement

I hereby state that this dissertation contains no materials accepted for any other degrees in any other institutions. The dissertation contains no materials previously written and/or published by another person, except where appropriate acknowledgment is made in the form of bibliographical reference.

Abstract

This dissertation is a critical history of contemporary Romani asylum-seeking from Hungary to Canada. Since the start of the postsocialist era in the 1990s, more than 25,000 Roma have left Hungary and moved to Canada to file for refugee protection, making them one of the largest groups of asylum-seekers in the Canadian refugee system. Here this movement is analyzed by locating it within struggles of work and social reproduction connected to contemporary capitalist crisis. The dissertation examines the dynamics of postsocialist capitalism that have resulted in a crisis of social reproduction in Hungary, in which Hungarian Roma have become a racialized surplus population, both excluded from labour markets and targeted by rightwing populists. The dissertation analyzes the labour history that forms Romani asylum-seeking, emphasizing that the history of Romani asylum-seeking to Canada is deeply intertwined with histories of work and social reproduction in both Hungary and Canada. Overall, I study the experiences of Romani refugees to develop and advance a general theory on neoliberal capitalism, social reproductive crises, and the rise of rightwing populism. The central argument of the dissertation is that Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking has emerged as a social reproduction strategy and gendered form of work born from the conditions of postsocialist neoliberal capital accumulation. The emphasis is thus on the local and individual choices made as Romani refugees respond to large-scale historical global changes, framing surplus populations as agents of history engaged in their own forms of subsistence and struggle against capital. The dissertation is based on two years of multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork in Miskolc, Hungary, and Toronto, Canada, and employs a Gramscian ‘ethnographic Marxism’ that uses local oral histories of economic transformation to build a critical history of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada.

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Chapter 1
Introduction:
Refugees, surplus populations, and social reproduction

Introduction

The Hungarian language is a regular feature of the soundscape at Culture Link, a publicly-funded service centre in the west end of Toronto where recently-arrived immigrants to Canada can go to find migration resettlement assistance. On any given Friday - the main operational day for the Toronto Roma Community Centre (RCC) housed at Culture Link - the lobby of the centre can be found spilling over with Romani families spanning generations: children squirming off the fading polyester chairs, teenagers scrolling on their smartphones, and elderly women passing around homemade *pogásca*. Roma from the postsocialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe mingle with Nigerians fleeing armed conflict, Tibetans displaced by military occupation, and Syrians who have escaped the bombing of their neighbourhoods, all trying to sort out the various bureaucratic next steps in navigating Canada's immigration policies as displaced people or 'newcomers' to Canada.

Since the end of state socialism in Hungary, over 25,000[1] of the country's Roma have come to Canada as asylum-seekers, a movement that continues steadily today as evinced by the unremitting flow of Hungarian families arriving at the doorsteps of the RCC every Friday. For four of the past twenty years, Hungary has ranked as the number one source country for asylum-seekers in Canada, of all countries globally: in 2001 and for the three consecutive years between 2010 and 2012. The majority of Hungarian Romani refugee claimants arrive from Hungary's northeast region, and the city of Miskolc in particular, which once served as the centre of Hungarian socialist industry and has since experienced a marked postsocialist deindustrialization and economic decline. These 'refugees from democracy' - as they were described by Canadian media upon their first arrival in the mid-1990s while fleeing the newfound liberal democracies of the former Eastern Bloc - signify an unexpected scenario:

[1] This figure and what follows in this paragraph are based on my own data analysis of the statistics on Canadian refugee claims, which I have taken from the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada database (IRB 2022b), the UNHCR refugee database (UNHCR 2022), and the Government of Canada's annual Country Reports on refugee claims (IRB 1998-2014). I discuss these databases in greater detail later in this chapter and in Chapter 5.

that some of the most represented asylum-seekers in Canada today are a group of people fleeing a democratic, albeit nominally, country within the European Union: not a war zone, totalitarian society, or failed state, but rather a nation-state identified within Canada's own asylum laws as a 'safe' country.

The streets of Parkdale, a historically working-class immigrant neighbourhood in west Toronto, have become the new home for many of these Romani families from Miskolc. Their presence is readily observable with a stroll through the Dufferin Shopping Centre, the neighbourhood mall where Romani teenagers are overheard exchanging colourful Hungarian swear words. Along the streets of Parkdale, elderly Romani men and women are found sitting outside in the front yards of their Canadian-style townhouses, gossiping and smoking cigarettes. For those who can recognize it, the Hungarian language can be heard across west Toronto: on the public busses, in the Tim Hortons coffee shops, and along the sidewalks crowded with pedestrians. Parkdale's legal aid centres and health services have hired Hungarian interpreters; its schools and libraries have stocked up on Hungarian dictionaries. On my own street in west Toronto - where I lived for the duration of my fieldwork - I counted four Romani families within just a five minutes' walk from my front door. Nearly every day I overheard the Hungarian language while living in this neighbourhood and doing my day-to-day activities, whether buying groceries or riding the subway.

Why have Hungarian Roma, who have arrived in the thousands in the neighbourhood of Parkdale, become one of the largest groups of refugee claimants in Canada? What global channels and dynamics have connected so deeply the streets of west Toronto with the northeast Hungarian city of Miskolc? How do Romani refugees live once they settle in Canada, and what might their experiences between Hungary and Canada reveal about the general conditions of this current historical moment? It is the contention of this research that their presence on the streets of west Toronto alludes to a history of class dispossession, social reproductive crisis, and capitalist transformation. By way of telling this history, my dissertation offers a general examination of the contemporary conditions of capitalism, social reproduction, and rightwing populism, from the vantage point of an excluded people made into a 'racialized surplus population' in the grand sweeps of the end of history. While the politics of refugee protection and citizenship appear the domain of the state, border regimes, and political persecution, the argument advanced here frames Romani asylum-seeking as a matter of capitalist transformation and, especially, the changing dynamics of work and social

reproduction under the crises of financialized capitalism. In seeking to explain and historicize Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, my research uncovers a history of labour, transforming under new forms of capital accumulation and relations of social reproduction.

This dissertation traces the emergence of Romani asylum-seeking to Canada alongside the emergence of Hungarian rightwing populism and illiberalism and, above all, their connections to changes in capital accumulation. In doing so, I put forward two key arguments and contributions to the study of social reproduction and contemporary capitalism. Firstly, I argue that Roma who now file for refugee protection in Canada experienced a 'double dispossession' during the postsocialist implementation of neoliberalism in Hungary and the crisis of social reproduction it provoked: losing simultaneously their inclusion in the labour economy as well as their belonging in Hungarian society; becoming victims of both neoliberalism and the rightwing populism that ensued neoliberal reforms. In other words, the 'making of the Romani refugee' should be understood as the historical 'unmaking of the working class' in postsocialist Hungary. Through this 'double dispossession,' Roma were made into a racialized surplus population, by which I mean a group of people permanently locked out of the labour economy and targeted by racially-motivated violence.

Secondly, I argue that in the context of postsocialist economic transformation and its aftermath, asylum-seeking to Canada has emerged as a social reproduction strategy and a form of gendered work for Hungarian Romani families eking out a livelihood within a landscape shaped by the contemporary conditions of capitalist crisis. Here I refer to the Marxist-feminist understanding of the term social reproduction, which describes the unwaged, familial, and communitarian activities involved in maintaining life. I use Marxist-feminist theories on social reproduction to 'make visible' the labour of Romani asylum-seekers, emphasizing the world of unwaged and informal work of refugees. I thus stress the urgency to embed analyses of migration and asylum within the histories of capitalism, labour, and social reproduction. In arguing that Romani asylum-seeking to Canada is a social reproduction strategy, I place emphasis then on the ways in which Romani refugees 'make themselves' as much as they are made and 'learn' to be refugees within the current historical moment, in which 'the making of the Romani refugee' is simultaneously a historical production and a daily negotiation.

In analyzing Hungarian Romani refugees as a racialized surplus population responding to the crisis in social reproduction provoked by contemporary capitalist transformation, I develop here a general theory on the relationship between contemporary capitalism, rightwing populism, and social reproduction. To do so I draw from the work of Marxist-feminists working on social reproduction theory, particularly Nancy Fraser and Tithi Bhattacharya, putting them into conversation with Marxist sociologists and anthropologists of labour and political economy. This theoretical framework underscores that social reproduction is as crucial to capitalist social relations as is the domain of production and waged work, but, moreover, I emphasize here the urgency to expand social reproduction theory to include the unwaged work of surplus populations. Throughout this dissertation I thus craft an expanded arena of analysis for understanding social reproduction by centering the experiences of surplus populations engaged in unwaged work, and, in doing so, sketch out a new view for understanding the connections between social reproduction, rightwing populism, and capitalist crisis. Part of this work is employing a methodological approach for analyzing social reproduction ethnographically: within my research I develop an 'ethnographic Marxism' that takes inspiration from Gramscian anthropology and pays attention to how subaltern people narrate and understand their worlds and histories. These theoretical and methodological considerations are unpacked in the following sections.

Theoretical framework and literature review

My dissertation builds upon literature across three bodies of scholarship: work within migration and citizenship studies, particularly studies of refugee politics and forced migration; political economy perspectives in anthropology, particularly work within the anthropology of work, capitalism, and postsocialism; and finally feminist theories on social reproduction, particularly research within the Marxist tradition studying gender and work. Each dissertation chapter that follows involves a substantive review of the literature in these disciplines: Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 review and build upon the scholarship within the anthropology of political economy and postsocialism, particularly with regards to Hungarian illiberalism and Romani marginalization; Chapter 4 offers a deep engagement with social reproduction theory and anthropological debates on surplus populations; Chapter 5 provides an engagement with literature on migration studies and particularly work on Romani migration to Canada; and Chapter 6 gives a detailed literature review on the anthropological

scholarship on work and labour, putting these works into conversation with social reproduction theorists.

Initially my dissertation builds upon debates within literature examining and problematizing the dynamics of citizenship, borders, migration, and asylum in the current political moment (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013, Casas-Cortes 2015, De Genova 2017, De Genova and Peutz 2010, Balibar 2012, Rajaram and Grundy-Warr 2007). A major preoccupation of this literature relevant for my work with Romani refugees is the meaning of citizenship, starting from the premise that citizenship is more than the legal status of member of a national political community (Lazar 2013): I have taken inspiration from works that examine and theorize on citizenship as enactment and practice (Isin and Saward 2013), the development of post-national and denationalized citizenships (Sassen 2002), the formation of citizenship in local, urban-based contexts (Lazar 2013), the contradictory and evolutionary pattern of European citizenship as a reaction to real and imaginary effects of globalization (Balibar 2002, 2004, 2009, 2015) and immigration as a key site of struggle over citizenship (De Genova 2002, 2010, 2013). Throughout my dissertation I reframe citizenship by placing it alongside dynamics of social reproduction and class: in detailing how thousands of Roma apply – many of them successfully - for refugee status in Canada, I contribute to these understandings of citizenship by showing the ways in which Roma are excluded from Hungarian national belonging, even while holding formal citizenship, due to intersecting social relations connected to work and racialized accumulation.

Moreover, I engage work from the literature that specifically analyzes refugees, or what Arendt termed "the most symptomatic group in contemporary politics" (Arendt 1951: 277). Critical approaches to studying displacement problematize the tendency to see asylum-seeking as localized in the 'Third World' instead of as "a global or world-systemic phenomenon" (Malkki 1995, 1992), arguing that asylum must be placed in wider analyses that recognize that "involuntary or forced movements of people are always only one aspect of much larger constellations of sociopolitical and cultural processes and practices" (Malkki 1995: 496). Hence these approaches challenge representations of refugees that disembed individual experiences of displacement from their political and historical context, emphasizing that refugee movements must be recognized as inescapably political phenomena (Rajaram 2002, Rajaram 2013). I build on these works by looking at the social relations of political economy, work, and social reproduction as the setting around which Roma negotiate

while maneuvering between their exclusion from Hungarian citizenship and their treatment at the hands of what I term the Canadian asylum regime.

Much of the scholarship on refugees and citizenship draw from and elaborate upon political theories that seek to explain the relation between the citizen, the state, and political rights: Agamben's notion of 'bare life' and its meaning for contemporary citizenship, Foucault's framework of governmentality, Arendt's brief but incisive elaborations on statelessnesss, and Ranciere's analyses of the rights of man are informative in these approaches. However, my approach to studying migration is to place it within the analytical rubric of political economy, framing it alongside the histories of capitalism and labour. The work of Lem and Barber has been decisive for examining migration in relation to global capitalism (Lem 2007, Lem 2012, Lem 2013, Lem and Barber 2010, Lem and Barber 2013, Lem and Barber 2014, Barber and Lem 2018). Their approach is premised on the acknowledgement that "migration is crucially a salient force in the many different iterations of capitalism" (Lem and Barber 2013: 358). While capitalism drives migration, migration too is fueled by capitalism: therefore, Lem and Barber foreground an analysis on the dialectics of migration, bringing forth an anthropological point of view to studying the relation between border regimes and capitalist transformation. As citizenship continues to be reworked under the imperatives of neoliberal capitalism, Lem and Barber stress an obligation "to embed the analyses of migration in an examination of the processes of differentiation, accumulation, dispossession, and exploitation and to link such processes to the formation and transformation of capitalism across space and time" (Lem and Barber 2014: 14).

Here I take up the call of Lem and Barber to place studies of migration alongside economic transformation and the history of capitalism, adding to this political economy perspective by analyzing the dynamics of refugee politics and surplus populations. Namely, throughout my dissertation I build an argument that the history of Romani asylum-seeking to Canada is usefully understood not merely as a history of political and ethnic persecution, but, moreover, as a history of changing class dynamics and work under the exigencies of financialized capitalism. Hence, in employing the lens of labour history to piece together a history of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, my work contributes to this literature by urging anthropological political economy to pay attention to non-workers such as refugees and Roma and to do so through expanding our understanding of work and class struggle through the framework of social reproduction.

Political economy approaches within anthropology emphasize capitalism as the wider field of force that shapes local communities and global dynamics (Kasmir and Carbonella 2014, Carrier and Kalb 2015, Kalb and Tak 2005, Neveling and Steur 2018, Nonini and Susser 2020, Smith 2004, Smith 2014). At the heart of analysis is an attentiveness to capitalist processes and an aim to capture at the local level of ethnographic work what capitalism entails, how it functions, and the consequences it has on human actions. As Lem and Barber explain, "As a distinctive conceptual framework, Marxist paradigms in anthropology begin and end with deciphering the logics of capitalism and its effect on ordinary people in the world around us" (Lem and Barber 2013: 358). Anthropological political economy thus provides a corrective to the common assumption in classic anthropology that the primary opposition in societies is one between tradition and modernity, rather emphasizing that the key relation is one of oppressor and oppressed (Crehan 2002). Emphasizing the larger economic, global, and historical movements within local dynamics, anthropological political economy represents an "attempt to place anthropological subjects at the intersections of local and global histories" (Roseberry 1988: 179). I take inspiration from definitive monographic works in this tradition (Wolf 1982, Mintz 1985, Willis 1977), which piece together their anthropological approach by investigating the social history of capitalist development within localized spaces; these approaches emphasize the historical specificity of contemporary developments in their employment of "a marxism that uses a historical materialist framework to grasp the 'innermost secret' of social structures" (Roseberry 1997: 25).

Anthropological political economy's commitment to social history and ethnographic insights provides useful conceptual tools for the scholarly task of investigating the 'making of the Romani refugee.' The goal, as Wolf elucidates, is to "delineate how the forces of the world impinge upon the people we study without falling back into an anthropological nativism that postulates supposedly isolated societies and uncontaminated cultures" (Wolf 1990: 587). The task for ethnography then is to show how everyday personal experience can provide "a well-framed window from below on the mechanisms, consequences, and emergent possibilities and contingencies of large-scale historical and spatial change" (Kalb and Tak 2005: 113). My research builds in particular off the work of anthropologists working on the political economy of postsocialism in Central Europe (Scheiring 2020a, Scheiring and Szombati 2020, Szombati 2018, Ghodsee 2021, Kalb 2009, Kalb 2019), which draw attention to the myriad ways the postsocialist transformation, characterized by the implementation of neoliberal capitalism

across the region, intertwines with the rise of rightwing populism and authoritarianism. My research contributes to these discussions by using Romani asylum-seeking to Canada as a prism for viewing contemporary conditions of capitalist crisis, rightwing populism, and the changing social relations of work and social reproduction in these grand-scale historical transformations. In doing so, I study the logics of capitalism and populism from the vantage point of an excluded group, building on debates within anthropological political economy about surplus populations (Li 2010, Smith 2011, Smith 2022, Kaminer 2022), particularly the framing of "refugees as a surplus population" (Rajaram 2016, Rajaram 2018). I argue that an adequate framework for clarifying the relationship between capitalist crisis, rightwing populism, and the role of surplus populations is social reproduction theory and an expanded understanding of labour.

Finally, my research involves a sustained engagement with theories on social reproduction and gendered labour (Bhattacharya 2017, Davis 1981, Federici 1975, Federici 2020, Federici 2021, Ferguson 2020, Dowling 2021, Mies 1997). As Bhattacharya explains, social reproduction theory "seeks to make visible labor and work that are analytically hidden from classical economists and politically denied by policy makers" (Battacharya 2017: 2). It was only through my fieldwork with Romani asylum-seekers that I began to understand, beyond migration literature and the scholarship on anthropological political economy, the ways in which contemporary conditions of capitalism and the experiences of refugees and 'surplus populations' require an expansion of our understanding of work and class struggle. In other words, through my fieldwork, I became confronted with the necessity of using social reproduction theory to 'make visible' the labour of Romani refugees, which could then adequately capture the contours of contemporary capitalist crisis as well as the emergent possibilities for political intervention. By paying attention to the various activities of unpaid work in which 'non-workers' tend to their everyday needs, subsistence, and survival, I aim to reframe the thinking on refugees, workers, and subaltern people surviving and resisting capitalism.

In particular the work of Nancy Fraser has been formative and heuristic in the arguments I develop here (Fraser 2013a, 2013b, 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2017, 2018a, 2018b, 2019, 2022). For Fraser, it is necessary to understand capitalism as an 'institutionalized social order' permeating all social relations beyond the world of waged work, pointing to "the crucial role played in capital accumulation by unfree, dependent, and unwaged labor" (Fraser 2018a: 25).

Importantly, Fraser's work using social reproduction theory to study capitalist crisis has been a crucial framing for my research. While analyses centered on capitalist crisis have been dismissed as reductive and passé in the post-Cold War era, Fraser argues that today social theorists cannot avoid capitalist crisis in their critiques:

> With the global financial system teetering, worldwide production and employment in freefall, and the looming prospect of a prolonged recession, capitalist crisis supplies the inescapable backdrop for every serious attempt at critical theory (Fraser 2013a: 308).

Drawing from Polányi and Marx, she argues that capitalism is fundamentally a crisis-prone system (Fraser 2014b, 2013b, 2018b), and that crisis should be understood as a social process: for Polányi, "capitalist crisis was less about economic breakdown in the narrow sense than about disintegrated communities, ruptured solidarities, and despoiled nature" (Fraser 2013a: 310). As "untrammeled marketization" endangers the environment, political stability, social bonds, as well as the economic system, Fraser emphasizes the need to connect how the various contemporary crises occurring currently that characterize this historical moment – political, economic, environmental, social reproductive – can be traced back to a singular source: capitalism, with its inherent design as a social formation that is inherently primed to 'cannibalize' society (Fraser 2022). I build on these ideas to clarify the relationship between capitalist crisis, rightwing populism, and social reproduction through illuminating the role of racialized surplus populations in these dynamics. Importantly, I ask: when we acknowledge 'capitalist crisis' as 'the inescapable backdrop' for Romani asylum-seeking, what insights emerge? Studied through the prism of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, how does connecting the rise of rightwing populism with the crisis of care build a new understanding of conditions of life under capitalism today?

Threading together these literatures, my dissertation offers new contributions to the fields of migration studies, political economy, and social reproduction theory. My research seeks to reframe studies of refugee movements by anchoring them in questions of capital accumulation and the dynamics of surplus populations; I argue it is necessary to see the history of Romani asylum-seeking to Canada as a labour history entailing the making of a racialized surplus population. Furthermore, I argue that by situating refugee histories within the histories of capitalism and work, it becomes possible to understand the ways in which asylum-seeking and migration are shaped by political economy and capitalist crisis. One of

the main contributions of my dissertation is to argue that social reproduction is of key relevance for understanding the lives of refugees and other surplus populations. In analyzing the forms of work that have emerged amongst Roma between Hungary and Canada, I urge both social reproduction theorists and anthropologists of labour to consider how refugees as a surplus population engage in forms of labour and class struggle. My research thus stresses that surplus populations, particularly refugees, relegated outside formal labour and citizenship regimes, engage in social reproduction dynamics that allow them to build livelihoods within their historical conditions. Consequently, I argue that migration and asylum-seeking can be framed as social reproduction strategies as people respond to the changing conditions of contemporary capitalism with which they are confronted. These particular theoretical contributions are advanced most substantially in Chapters 4 and 6 of the dissertation.

Overview of case study: Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada

Since the end of Hungarian state socialism, more than 25,000 Hungarian Roma have filed for refugee protection in Canada, arriving in three waves, as illustrated in Graph 1. Starting in the mid-1990s, Roma began to arrive in Canada from postsocialist countries in Central and Eastern Europe and, upon arrival, would apply for refugee protection (Lee 2000). While Roma from across the postsocialist region have sought refugee protection in Canada in the past three decades, the largest number of Romani refugee claimants in Canada have arrived from Hungary (Levine-Rasky 2016).[2] Romani asylum-seeking peaked in the early 2000s, then once again one decade later, and, in more modest numbers, in the mid-2010s. For the sake of my analysis, then, I have categorized Romani asylum-seeking to Canada into three periods: the first wave taking place from 1996, when postsocialist Hungarian asylum-seeking first began, to 2007; the second wave taking place from 2008 until 2012; and the third wave taking place from 2013 until the present, documented here until 2021. The success rate[3] for

[2] As discussed in Part 2 of this dissertation, there is an ongoing history in Canada of Romani refugee claims originating from postsocialist countries besides Hungary, in particular Czechia and Slovakia. There are more modest numbers of Romani refugee claims coming from Bulgarian and Romanian Roma. More recently, Ukrainian Romani refugee numbers have risen.

[3] The refugee claims success rate is calculated by dividing the number of accepted claims by the number of all claims finalized in the given year (accepted, rejected, abandoned/withdrawn). As such, the *success* rate is a conservative number compared to the *acceptance* rate, which is a comparison between acceptance and rejection solely.

Hungarian refugee claims has varied widely, reaching as low as 1.1 percent in 2009 and peaking at 82.9 percent in 2021, which is visually represented in Graph 2.[4] While many Romani refugees remain in Toronto today, thousands have been deported or returned after their refugee claims were rejected, withdrawn, or abandoned.[5]

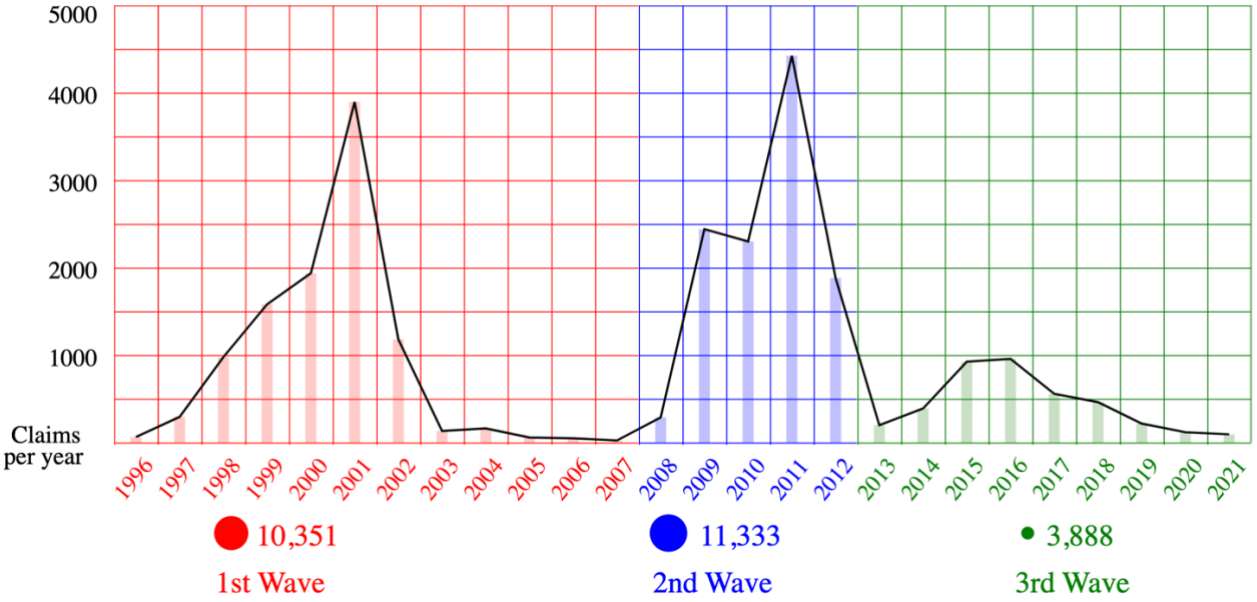
The majority of Hungarian Roma who come to Canada originate from Miskolc and its surrounding villages, and the tendency is to arrive as a family unit, usually encompassing several generations. Roma who arrive in Canada often settle in west Toronto in the Parkdale neighbourhood, though this trend has changed in recent years as forces of gentrification have made the area of the city less affordable for low-income households. Increasing Roma have moved to the suburban areas on the outskirts of Toronto, such as Scarborough and Etobicoke, while some have moved out of the city to nearby Hamilton. The particular dynamics and conditions of Romani asylum-seeker life in Canada are unpacked in Chapters 5 and 6.

Romani asylum-seekers' claim to refugee protection is legally premised on their experiences of ethnic persecution. As many different academic studies have illustrated, the position of Romani minorities across Central and Eastern Europe deteriorated significantly after the collapse of state socialism in the region: the introduction of the market economy in these countries impoverished many Romani communities while simultaneously sparking renewed racist sentiments held by non-Roma (Kóczé 2016, Kóczé 2018, Kóczé and Rövid 2017, van Baar 2013a, Fekete 2018, Sigona and Trehan 2009, Caglar and Mehling 2013, Majtényi and Majtényi 2015, Ladányi and Szelényi 2006, Cahn 2004, Grill 2012, Kemény 2005). Under these conditions, in an increasingly neoliberalized European space, Romani populations have come to represent both the despised foreigner/suspected non-citizen and the welfare scourger/unproductive destitute as they become caught between neoliberal economic policies and increasingly right-wing rhetoric on immigration and the nation (Fekete 2014).

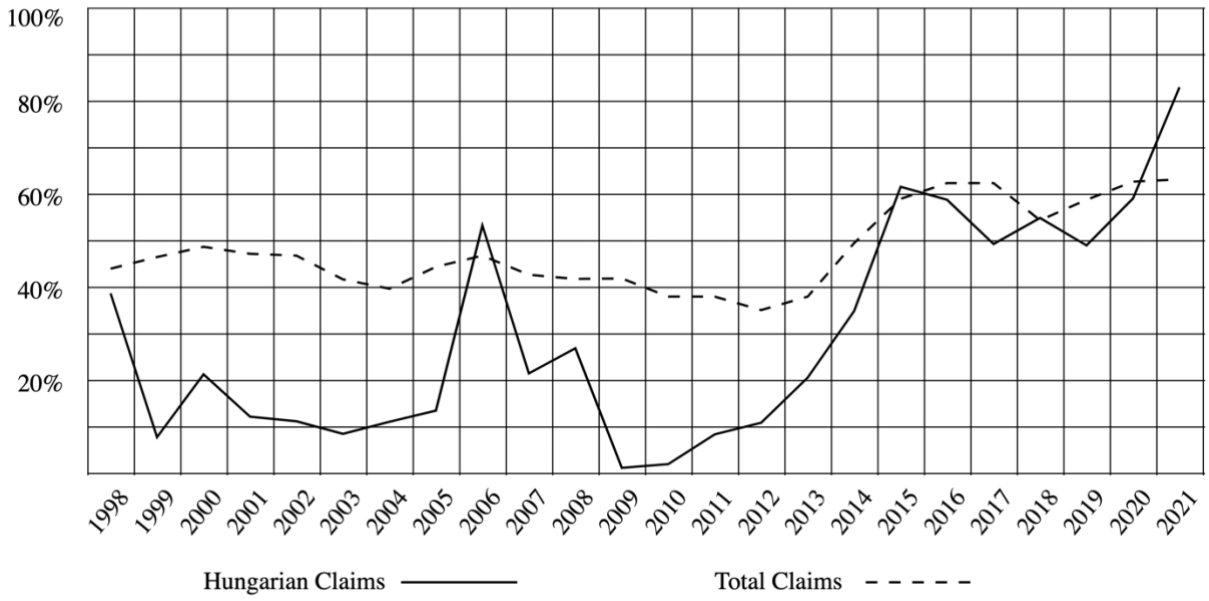
[4] The reasons for the fluctuation in success rates are complex and analyzed in detail in Chapter 5.

[5] Thousands of Romani refugee claims were withdrawn or abandoned in the years between 2008 and 2014. These dynamics are discussed in Chapter 5.

Graph 1: Total Hungarian Refugee Claims Filed in Canada, Three Waves 1996-2021



Graph 2: Refugee Claims Success Rates in Canada



Despite being formally included within EU laws, Roma remain generally regarded as 'second-class' and 'failed' citizens in their countries of origin, a formulation intertwined with their class position. As van Baar explains, the implementation of neoliberal austerity in postsocialist East-Central Europe resulted in "a situation where Roma who are formal citizens do not enjoy basic rights because their marginalized and second-class work position, rather than their official citizenship status, determines their living conditions" (van Baar 2012: 1300).

In Hungary, Roma are the largest ethnic minority, comprising approximately three to eight percent of the country's population, depending on statistical estimations, which number Hungary's Romani population to be between 300,000 and one million (ODIHR 2016). Romani communities are most concentrated in the northeast region of the country, particularly in the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county, where Roma make up minimally 10 percent of the total population (ODIHR 2016) and where one third of Hungary's Romani population lives (Durst 2013). This region began to see a rise in rightwing political organizing in the early 2000s, which took aim at 'Gypsy criminality' and put blame on Romani minorities for the worsening postsocialist living conditions (Szombati 2018, Feischmidt et al 2013, Feischmidt and Szombati 2017). At the same time, the Hungarian government, governed by the Fidesz party since 2010, has adopted self-proclaimed 'illiberal' policies and rhetoric, with conservative and nationalist politics targeting refugees, migrants, Roma, and LGBT communities. In asking why Roma are seeking asylum in Canada and why the majority of them come from northeast Hungary, this dissertation identifies the specific and historical ways in which the dynamics of rightwing populism and Hungarian illiberalism are connected to Romani asylum-seeking. In building an explanation for why thousands of Roma have come from Hungary as refugees during this time period, I have sought to capture the dynamics of capitalist crisis and social reproduction within the rise of rightwing populism and the making of Roma as a racialized surplus population. Chapters 2 and 3, in particular, historicize Romani asylum-seeking by placing it alongside the historical conditions of political economy in Hungary in the postsocialist era.

A few explanatory notes on figures for refugee statistics and the mechanics of applying for refugee status in Canada are required at the onset of this study. The total number of Hungarian Roma who have come to Canada during this period is difficult to calculate with

precision due to a few methodological limitations. Firstly, asylum-seekers are filed according solely to their nationalities, and no data is collected on other aspects of their identity, such as their racial or ethnic background. Hence data about Romani asylum-seekers from Hungary in Canada is classified under the general category of Hungarian nationals. Previous statistical work by Beaudoin et al (2015), in which they examined a random sample of Hungarian refugee claims, suggests that about 90 percent of claims filed by Hungarians are Roma escaping ethnic persecution[6] (Beaudoin et al 2015: 27-28).

Furthermore, databases categorize refugee claims and collect statistics based on different methods and definitions: I have used data from the UNHCR refugee database, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) database, and the annual Country Reports on refugee claims compiled by the Refugee Processing Division of the IRB. The UNHCR, for example, which is the database I have relied heavily on in compiling my figures, documents only first-time claims, while the IRB's database on refugee statistics group together both first-time claims as well as claims that are being evaluated for a second time or more due to appeals processes. Additionally, the UNHCR database is limited as it tracks publicly statistics about asylum-seeking starting only in the year 2000. Moreover, it does not provide a detailed breakdown of the outcomes of each claim, while the database and annual Country Reports of the IRB indicates the number of claims in any given year that were 'referred' (i.e. filed), 'finalized' (i.e. processed), 'accepted' (i.e. successful), 'rejected' (i.e. unsuccessful), and 'abandoned/withdrawn' (i.e. also unsuccessful).

Therefore, for the purposes of my research I have combined and triangulated statistics based on the UNHCR database and IRB databases as well as the findings of previous research on Romani refugee claims in Canada made by Levine-Rasky et al (Levine-Rasky et al 2013) and Beaudoin et al (Beaudoin et al 2015). Chapter 5 provides a detailed breakdown of the figures I've determined based on these sources, with Table 1 listing the total number of Hungarian refugee claims in Canada for the twenty-five-year range between 1996 and 2021, Table 2 detailing the numbers of New System Claims, and Table 3 providing an overview of Legacy Claims statistics.

[6] The remaining 10 percent are Hungarian nationals seeking refugee protection on other eligible grounds. During my fieldwork I encountered a small handful of Hungarians who had received refugee status not on the basis of being Roma. One, for example, was a woman fleeing domestic abuse who was able to successfully argue that she was facing persecution on grounds of her gender and that the Hungarian state could not adequately provide her with state protection.

A final note is required on the process of applying for refugee status in Canada and how Romani refugee claimants differ from the general approach. There are a few different ways to become a refugee in Canada, the most common method involving seeking refugee status outside of Canada, often from a refugee camp abroad, and then participating in Canada's Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program, which is administered through the UNHCR. This is not the method used by Roma. Roma who seek asylum in Canada do so from already within Canada, at either a port of entry, such as an airport, or at an inland office, which is an office of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRB 2022a). It has thus historically been during times when Canada does not require a tourist visa for Hungarians that Roma have been able to come to Canada and, when in the country, apply for refugee protection.

Romani asylum claims are thus framed as 'unusual,' occurring due to what some call a 'loop-hole' in Canadian immigration policies: unlike asylum-seekers in war-torn regions, whose passport does not permit them to enter Canada and who must therefore apply for Canadian refugee protection before arriving, Roma as Hungarian nationals are permitted to travel freely to Canada. The disappearance of border controls for EU nationals has made it easier for Roma to travel to Canada, where upon arrival, they can then request asylum, thus circumventing traditional channels of seeking refugee status. For this reason, critiques of Romani asylum claims have pivoted on this peculiar arrangement, arguing that "the Roma are gaming the system, jumping on a plane while Syrians in faraway refugee camps wait for their applications to be processed" (Hune-Brown 2014). However, for the past three decades, Canada has received anywhere between 15,000 and 45,000 refugee claims annually in this manner, from citizens of all nationalities, in addition to Roma.

Upon arrival in Canada, a claim for refugee protection is made by speaking to an officer from the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) at the port of entry or at the inland office (IRB 2022a). The officer decides whether the claim is eligible to be "referred" to the IRB.[7] If the claim is eligible, it is sent to the Refugee Processing Division (RPD) of the IRB to start the

[7] Some people are not eligible to claim refugee protection in Canada due to very specific reasons: if the person is a refugee in another country to which they can return; if the person arrived via the Canada-US border (Canada has a Third Country Agreement with the USA); if the person has made a previous refugee claim that was rejected by the IRB; if the person abandoned or withdrew a previous refugee claim; or if the person is not admissible to Canada due to security grounds, criminal activity or human rights violations.

claim for refugee protection processing. While in Canada waiting for their claims to be processed, Roma are hence considered refugee claimants or asylum-seekers.[8] Roma who apply for refugee status in Canada do so as potential Convention refugees, who, according to the definition, have "a well-founded fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group" (IRB 2022a). The RPD hears and decides claims for refugee protection made in Canada: refugee protection can be given in Canada if the RPD determines that the claimant meets the United Nations definition of a Convention refugee, which has been incorporated into Canadian law, with the refugee definition under section 96 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Decisions about refugee claims for Roma pivot on the concept of persecution because of their race and ethnicity, which has been a complicated issue, historically lacking consistency in the outcomes of refugee claims from Roma. In their asylum applications, Roma must show that their experiences amount to persecution - "serious mistreatment that violates core human rights" (Beaudoin et al 2015) and not just discrimination. The length of processing time for an individual claim has varied depending on specific Canadian immigration policies, and the living conditions of refuge applicants awaiting decision on their claims also has varied over time; these details are discussed thoroughly in Chapter 5.

Research methods and methodological considerations

The dissertation is based on data collected primarily through a multi-sited ethnography, combined with archival research, policy analysis, media discourse analysis, and extensive literature reviews. The ethnography consisted of two years of fieldwork: four months of fieldwork in Miskolc, Hungary, taking place off and on throughout the years 2016 and 2018, and twenty months of fieldwork in Toronto, Canada, occurring between early 2017 and early 2020.[9] For this fieldwork I engaged in participant observation at the Toronto Roma Community Centre (the RCC), the Roma self-government in Miskolc, the homes and neighbourhoods of Romani families in Hungary and Canada, and Roma-related events in Miskolc, Budapest, and Toronto. I also conducted interviews with Romani families and the community workers who help them, in both Miskolc and Toronto. In Toronto, I spent a large

[8] The IRB uses the terms refugee claimants, asylum-seekers, and asylum claimants interchangeably to refer to individuals who request refugee protection upon or after arrival in Canada.
[9] My fieldwork at the Toronto Roma Community Centre concluded abruptly in March 2020 at the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

part of my fieldwork assisting Romani asylum-seekers with translation and making arrangements in Canada for social assistance, housing, legal representation, schooling, and health care.

My fieldwork in Hungary consisted primarily of visits to Miskolc, a city in the northeast of Hungary, while I was living in Budapest, where I conducted some participant observation at Romani-related protests and public events while pursuing my doctoral studies at Central European University. My visits to Miskolc consisted of participant observation at the office and events of the Miskolc Romani self-government, where I spoke at length with the activists who worked for the organization. With the help of this organization, I was able to visit schools and neighbourhoods populated primarily by Romani families and to meet Roma who had lived in Canada or were planning to go. I am still in contact with a handful of these people who continue to live in Hungary. The interviews and daily time spent with my research informants was organized in an informal manner. While I did not engage in specifically structured questioning with any of my interlocutors, despite my attempts, due to the atmosphere of the setting, I did guide our casual discussions as much as I could to a consideration of history and what have been the decisive factors in bringing about the movement of Roma to Canada. I have been studying the Hungarian language since 2011 and thus was able to conduct my fieldwork, with some translation assistance, in Hungarian.

From January 2017 until July 2018, and then again in the fall of 2019 until spring of 2020, I conducted my Toronto-based fieldwork, which took on a number of dimensions. Primarily I engaged in participant observation at the RCC, where I volunteered as their secretary for their twice-weekly drop-in office hours and was able to offer translation assistance for visiting Hungarian families. During my time at the RCC, my tasks ranged widely - from organizing public events to helping newcomers to Canada file their paperwork for their refugee claims. I organized and taught a weekly English-language class for Hungarian Roma; I tutored teenagers with their high school homework; I recruited friends to dress up as Santa Claus for the Centre's annual Christmas party. Through the RCC, I attended and assisted in organizing various events for the Romani community in Toronto including celebrations for International Roma Day and the annual commemoration of the WWII Roma genocide. I also conducted semi-formal interviews with Canadians involved with support services for Romani families in Toronto: these included teachers, refugee lawyers, refugee resettlement officers, social

workers, Church leaders, Romani activists, community organizers, academics, and officers of the law. I continue today to be an active volunteer with the RCC.

It is through the RCC that I made connections with families that I later interviewed as well as numerous Canadians involved in advocating for or assisting Hungarian Romani refugees. I established close and long-term relationships with six Romani families in Toronto, who I visited in their homes, assisted with their legal or medical appointments, or tutored their children. For my fieldwork with Romani families in Toronto, I made myself available to assist Roma however they needed. For one family, I joined them weekly at the community health clinic that served undocumented and non-status migrants, where their son was being treated bi-weekly for a heart condition. For another family that required support in arranging their social assistance payments, I called the welfare office and attended meetings with their case workers. One family that I originally met in Hungary arrived in Canada a few months after I began my fieldwork in Toronto. They called me from the airport to tell me they had arrived and made it safely through the border checks. The next day I met them with two bags of groceries and a list of phone numbers for refugee lawyers in Toronto. For another family that did not have a credit card, I helped them apply for a work permit using my personal bank card. One daughter of a Romani family I worked with was experiencing challenges with becoming pregnant, and I ended up taking her and her husband to a fertility clinic to translate for her a consultation with a reproductive doctor - a true test for my intermediate Hungarian language skills. My fieldwork with Romani families in Toronto thus varied widely. The chapters of my dissertation rely heavily on my fieldwork for which I engaged in participant observation visiting Romani households in Toronto and the informal conversations I had with Romani individuals about their experiences in Hungary and their motivations for coming to Canada.

While conducting fieldwork in Hungary, I found that Roma were especially interested to meet and speak with me, as a Canadian in Hungary: they had very specific questions for me about how the Canadian immigration policies worked; they wanted to explain to me in detail what their experiences were like in Hungary, as if by testifying to and convincing me as a Canadian, I could somehow grant them refugee status. Most of the people I spoke with, whether or not they had already been to Canada, voiced intentions and wishes to make a move to Canada in the near future. During this phase of my fieldwork, I communicated frequently with refugee lawyers in Toronto to convey legal questions and try to be helpful

collecting information for the Roma I met in Hungary, sometimes wondering if anything I was doing could be construed as human trafficking or if I was causing any harm by unintentionally misunderstanding Canada's complicated refugee policies. Nearly all of the Romani people I met in Hungary expressed a desire to live permanently in Canada one day, and many of them were actively planning a trip to Canada in the future. Quickly it became clear to me that their motivation in speaking to me was tied to their desires and aspirations of being in Canada one day, which raised concerns for me about how to ensure that my research did not exploit these vulnerabilities and marginalities.

Consequently, ethical questions and debates were at the forefront of my mind when conducting my fieldwork. On the one hand, I struggled with identifying and meeting the responsibilities I had to my informants, particularly as many of them were on the move, between Canada and Hungary. On the other hand, I reflected on my own data collection, ensuring that I had ongoing and informed consent for my research amongst my interlocutors, whose potential exposure to abuse and manipulation, as people living in very precarious conditions, felt especially heightened to me. These questions were crucial to ask given the legacy of academic work, the ways in which anthropology in particular has historically reinforced the negative representations of Roma, and the histories of academic knowledge production predicated on the exploitation of marginalized people. These dynamics are analyzed in detail in Chapter 7.

Paying attention to the 'tumultuous politics of scale' (Susser and Nonini 2020) within anthropological and ethnographic work, the dissertation shifts between global, national, and local scales to connect the movement of Roma from Hungary to Canada with the urban struggles of the city of Miskolc and the transformations of Toronto's Parkdale neighbourhood. The dissertation thus is a methodological exploration of the role of a globally-oriented ethnographic method (Burawoy et al 2000) in large-scale historical transformations, in pursuit of what I elaborate in later chapters as a methodological approach rooted a Gramscian 'ethnographic Marxism' (Crehan 2018, 2011). Collecting oral histories in pursuit of a history of Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, I develop an approach to 'ethnographic Marxism' that rests on the premise that experiences of Romani refugees are the ultimate source of new, potentially transformative, political narratives. Emphasizing the importance of oral history, I ask: how do Roma themselves who leave Hungary as refugees experience and understand these historical changes and their places within them? These

questions about research methods and ethics are unpacked more explicitly in the chapters that follow, particularly in discussions about methodological choices, such as Chapter 3 and especially Chapter 7.

Organization of dissertation

My dissertation is structured in two parts. The first part – Chapters 2, 3, and 4 – focuses on Hungary and historicizes Romani asylum-seeking to Canada by placing it within wider developments taking place in Hungary, the region of East-Central Europe, and the world more broadly throughout the postsocialist era. These chapters advance an understanding of the historical conditions that have shaped Roma migrating to Canada and pay attention to how Romani refugees themselves understand historical change and their movement within it. The second part – Chapters 5, 6, and 7 – then turns to the Canadian context and analyzes the experiences of Hungarian Roma with the Canadian asylum regime. These chapters give a detailed overview of refugee claims statistics for Hungarian claimants, the communities of work and social reproduction that form the Romani diaspora in Toronto, and the continuities and ruptures between Romani experiences in Hungary and Canada. Both parts tell the story of contemporary Romani asylum-seeking to Canada through the prisms of social reproduction, labour history, and capital crisis.

More specifically, Chapter 2 contextualizes Hungarian asylum-seeking to Canada by analyzing Romani experiences in Hungary in a postsocialist era shaped by rightwing populist politics and Hungarian state illiberalism. The chapter pieces together a broad historical explanation of contemporary Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada from the regional and national scale. In this chapter I historicize the rise of anti-Gypsyist rightwing populism by placing it alongside the changes in capital accumulation in postsocialist Hungary. I analyze the reconfigurations of Romani class status and national belonging as rightwing populism has upscaled to state illiberalism and neoliberal forms of capital accumulation have been eclipsed by an emerging authoritarian capitalism. The main argument of this chapter is that Romani asylum-seeking arose as a response to the crisis of social reproduction experienced in Hungarian society in connection to neoliberal economic restructuring. I argue that Roma in Hungary experienced a ‘double dispossession’ in the aftermath of postsocialism due to the changes in both their class and citizenship status. This chapter relies primarily on

my ethnographic fieldwork with Romani refugees in Toronto and Hungary and uses their stories to build on the literature about the political economy of Hungarian illiberalism.

Chapter 3 pieces together a social history of Miskolc, the northeast city from which the majority of Hungarian Romani refugees originate, as a method for historicizing Romani asylum-seeking to Canada. Shifting scales from the national level to the local level, this chapter connects the emergence of Romani asylum-seeking to urban struggles around social reproduction; I argue that local struggles around poverty, homelessness, unemployment, school segregation, and healthcare discrimination have formed the everyday conditions for thousands of Roma to file for refugee protection in Canada on the grounds of racial persecution. Tracing the history of Romani refugees who were once socialist factory workers at the now defunct Lenin Steel Works and became a permanently unemployed surplus population reliant on municipally-organized workfare schemes, the chapter demonstrates how the making of Romani refugees has simultaneously been a historical process of the unmaking of the working class in northeast Hungary throughout the country's transformation from state socialism to neoliberal capitalism. The chapter relies primarily on my ethnographic fieldwork with the Romani self-government in Miskolc, including interviews with Romani activists, participant observation in two segregated Romani neighbourhoods, and attendance at various Roma-related events throughout the city. Drawing from oral histories told to me by Romani residents about the history of the city, this chapter builds a 'peoples' history' of Miskolc from Romani perspectives and experiences, locating this history in the urban struggles of the city from socialism to postsocialism.

Chapter 4 is primarily a theoretical intervention that sketches out a general theory on the relationship between rightwing populism, capitalist crisis, and social reproduction. Such an analysis is undertaken by framing Hungarian Roma as a 'surplus population' formed at the intersections of class dispossession and citizenship displacement and excluded from both Hungarian labour markets and the Hungarian nation's cultural register. In building a theoretical framework on surplus populations, I combine the ideas of Karl Polányi and Karl Marx with feminist social reproduction theorists such as Nancy Fraser, Tithi Bhattacharya, and Silvia Federici. My main theoretical intervention into these literatures is to argue that the rise of rightwing populist politics requires making sense of historical changes to social reproduction wrought by contemporary financialized capitalism and, importantly, how these changes in social reproduction relate to surplus populations and dynamics of racialization,

nationalism, and far-right politics. Following surplus populations in the search for understanding work and social reproduction under contemporary conditions of capitalism requires a expanded understanding of whose labour is productive, valuable, and visible.

Chapter 5 turns to the context of Canada, providing a detailed overview of Hungarian Romani experiences with the Canadian asylum regime. Here I document the legal processes, social welfare institutions, and networks of solidarity that Romani asylum-seekers navigate upon arrival in Canada. This chapter outlines the experiences of Roma filing for refugee status in Canada and looks specifically at the case of three Canadian refugee lawyers who were disbarred for their mistreatment of Romani refugee claimants. As a whole the chapter is a detailed documentation of the history of Hungarian Roma maneuvering through the various institutions that comprise what I term here the Canadian asylum regime, including border services, law offices, community organizations, neighbourhood police, and school boards and teachers. The chapter emphasizes the individual actions of people maneuvering large-scale global and historical processes and the networks of mutual aid and social reproduction that have filled in to assist Roma in the face of cold neoliberalism of the Canadian asylum regime. The chapter draws from my time conducting ethnographic fieldwork at the Toronto Roma Community Centre (RCC) and working with Romani families living in Toronto. I combine my ethnographic research with an analysis of Canadian government legislation, legal proceedings, immigration statistics, and newspaper articles spanning between 2008 and 2021.

Chapter 6 turns specifically to questions of social reproduction and work amongst refugees through an analysis of Hungarian Romani livelihoods in Toronto. This chapter looks at how refugees as a surplus population engage in emerging forms of labour, paying particular attention to gender and the dynamics of ‘women’s work’ amongst Romani refugee families in Toronto. The chapter builds on the work of feminist social reproduction theorists and anthropologists of labour by analyzing the intersections of work, social reproduction, and citizenship. I explore two main questions: What happens to citizenship, race, and nationality as changes in capital accumulation and labour markets provoke crises in social reproduction? How do refugees, as a surplus population, engage in gendered life-sustaining strategies when they are excluded from both wage labour and citizenship regimes? The main argument of this chapter is that Romani asylum-seeking to Canada should be understood as a social reproduction strategy and a form of gendered work that has emerged as a result of the

changing forms of capital accumulation in Hungary. I argue that the survival strategies of Romani refugees - who were permanently locked out of the Hungarian labour market in the postsocialist economic transformations of the 1990s - are embedded in gendered divisions of work in which gaining access to state social support and filing for refugee status in Canada are regarded as an extension of domestic labour, typically done by the maternal figures of the family. In exploring these questions, I contribute to the literature on new forms of work emerging during financialized capitalism, the gendered relations of social reproduction tied to them, and the politics of citizenship and refugee protection in an era of capitalist crisis.

Chapter 7 is a self-reflective essay on the prospects and pitfalls for creating social change and emancipation through ethnographic research. Specifically, the chapter examines the dynamics of social reproduction within fieldwork, research praxis, and social action, asking: how does thinking about social reproduction and the social totality of capitalist relations reanimate discussions on research and social action? In reflecting on my experiences conducting ethnographic research about social reproduction, rightwing populism, and capitalist crisis, I use this penultimate chapter of my dissertation to draw lessons from my own research process and theoretical work to imagine an emancipatory research methodology shaped by an 'ethnographic Marxism' that takes social reproduction as its foundation. I propose a form of political engagement through ethnography that is centered on social reproduction and care work and argue that engaging in care work as ethnographers can be a form of emancipatory research. Paying attention to social reproduction can push ethnographers to, on the one hand, reimagine the intent and activities of their fieldwork, and, on the other hand, reassess their relationships with their interlocutors.

Chapter 8 provides a conclusion to my dissertation. This chapter uses an in-depth ethnographic vignette from my fieldwork with Romani families living in Toronto to provide an overview of my dissertation's main research questions and themes. In following the Lakatos family from Hungary to Canada, I explore how a contemporary history of capitalism is revealed within individual oral life stories. By examining in detail the experiences of this Romani family as they navigate both the rise of illiberalism in Hungary and the neoliberal asylum regime in Canada, this chapter is premised on the argument that the lived and personal experiences of individuals can offer important insight into large-scale historical, global, and societal dynamics. In this particular case, the Lakatos family's life story demonstrates the interconnectedness between rightwing populism, struggles around social

reproduction, and capitalist crisis. The chapter further serves as a space to consider new avenues for research opened up by my ethnographic work, including the ways in which recent developments, such as the global COVID-19 pandemic and the 2022 re-election of the Fidesz government, may impact future Romani asylum-seeking to Canada.

Chapter 2
The Making of the Romani Refugee: Hungarian Roma between rightwing populism and authoritarian capitalism

Introduction

"You too are part of the nation!" This slogan was the rallying cry at the 2018 Roma Pride Day in Budapest. Jenő Setét, one of the Romani activists who organized the annual event celebrating Romani culture in Hungary, announced to the hundreds of people gathered for the rally that the slogan was the most important message of the day and asked everyone to chant it with him. Speaking over large speakers on a stage set up in Fővám tér, one of the city's main squares located next to the Danube river, he repeated the phrase over and over in the Hungarian language, the words "*Te is a nemzet része vagy!"* reverberating across Budapest's art-nouveau architecture. Setét then went on to list the different kinds of jobs that Roma do in Hungarian society: picking up garbage, doing construction work, labouring as factory workers, artists, and activists. Not only are there over 50,000 Roma who participate in the government's state workfare program, working eight hours a day to receive less than minimum wage, he shared, but there are also thousands of Roma who are skilled workers and highly educated across Hungary. Setét was the leader of the Romani organization *Idetartozunk,* which translates into English as 'We belong here,' another phrase repeated throughout the day's festivities.

Standing in the audience and attending the event as part of my dissertation fieldwork, I was struck by the political messaging of these sayings. Stressing Romani belonging in the Hungarian nation and highlighting Romani contributions to Hungarian society, the chants intertwined seamlessly national belonging with the social relations of work and labour. The declaration that 'We belong here' recalled to me a similar pronouncement I had seen posted on the walls of a Romani organization in the northeastern Hungarian city of Miskolc, which simply asserted, 'We are staying in Miskolc.' As a researcher studying the exodus of tens of thousands of Roma from Hungary to Canada, I was intrigued by this perceived necessity to

make such avowals and the social relations these political movements were formed around. These affirmations hinted to me a defensive posture, alluding to a former displacement in terms of both lived citizenship and class status: an ongoing protestation to remain, to have a rightful place, and to be apart. It is the history of this displacement and its connections to Romani asylum-seeking that I seek to unpack in this chapter.

This chapter is a broad analysis of the historical conditions that have produced Romani asylum-seeking to Canada. In this chapter I trace the emergence of Romani asylum-seeking to Canada alongside the emergence of Hungarian rightwing populism and state illiberalism in the postsocialist era. I piece together an overview of the historical reasons leading to the contemporary wave of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, weaving together the individual experiences of Roma with a wider historical telling of the postsocialist transformation in Hungary. This historicization of Romani asylum-seeking is analyzed from a national and regional scale that contextualizes the movement of Romani refugees as an outcome of the rise of Hungarian rightwing populism and how this has affected Romani experiences of citizenship and national belonging.

Furthermore, I analyze how anti-Gypsyism and rightwing populism are connected to the changes in capital accumulation taking place in Hungary and the postocialist region. Building on the works of political economists studying the rise of Hungarian rightwing populism and illiberalism (Szombati 2018, Scheiring 2020a, Szombati and Scheiring 2020, Bartha and Tóth 2021, Feischmidt and Szombati 2017, Kalb 2018, Kalb 2019, Kalb 2020, Kalb and Halmai 2011), I emphasize that laying beneath the rightwing violence and racism that has led to thousands of Roma filing for refugee protection in Canada is a large-scale economic transformation spanning the postsocialist era in Hungary. As Hungarian rightwing populism 'upscaled' from a fringe movement in the northeast of Hungary in the 2000s to becoming the model of illiberalism pursued by the Hungarian state in its consolidation of authoritarian capitalism since 2010, I ask how state illiberalism and authoritarian capitalism have been experienced by the country's Romani people and how it factors into their movement to Canada. I further identify new forms of work, social reproduction, and citizenship that are arising alongside Hungarian illiberalism and analyze their connections to ongoing asylum-seeking to Canada by Hungarian Roma.

The main argument advanced in this chapter is that the emergence of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada can be understood as the result of the crisis in social reproduction wrought by neoliberal economic restructuring in Hungary and the efforts on behalf of Roma themselves to respond to these changes. The 'making of the Romani refugee' – to borrow from EP Thompson (1967) – is a historical process rooted in the class dynamics and social reproduction regimes that have emerged alongside the rise of rightwing populism in postsocialist Hungary. I argue that Hungarian Roma who now seek asylum in Canada experienced what I term here a 'double dispossession' following the end of state socialism and the resulting reconfigurations in relations of social reproduction: in becoming a racialized 'surplus population,' they lost both their place in the waged labour economy as well as their place in Hungarian national belonging; hence Roma experienced a 'double dispossession' due to changes in both class and citizenship relations in the postsocialist era.

The chapter is a historical framing of the rise of contemporary Hungarian rightwing populism from the vantage point of Hungarian Roma who have left Hungary to apply for refugee protection in Canada and how they make sense of their reasons for coming to Canada. This research thus analyzes the crisis of social reproduction under neoliberalism from the positionality of the excluded: those made into a racialized surplus population by neoliberal economic restructuring, while also becoming targets for rightwing populist backlash. In piecing together a historical understanding of Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, I analyze the particular racialized, gendered, and localized effects of rightwing populism and illiberalism, and, above all, their connections to changes in capital accumulation. Such an analysis explores the ways in which neoliberal economic restructuring has reshaped class dynamics and citizenship regimes in Hungary, specifically for the country's Romani minority. Importantly, the chapter documents how Roma who leave Hungary as refugees experience and understand these reconfigurations, asking: how do Roma themselves make sense of these large-scale transformations? As such the chapter is an analysis of the social relations that come under large terms like 'dispossession' and 'transformation,' thinking through how these terms become realized and made durable through social processes and relations. My contribution to political economy perspectives is thus to elaborate on the politics of social reproduction that surplus populations undertake in these large-scale transformations and how political and economic transformations are relayed through social relations.

The chapter first outlines the emergence of Romani asylum-seeking to Canada in connection with the rise of rightwing populist violence taking place in northeast Hungary in the 2000s. Here I explore how Roma make sense of this time period and connect it to their understanding of citizenship, work, and national belonging. I then contextualize the rightwing violence experienced by Roma by placing it within the changes in capital accumulation that took place in the postsocialist aftermath in Hungary, connecting rightwing populist politics to neoliberal economic restructuring and the shaping of Roma as a racialized surplus population. Finally, the remainder of the chapter explores the transformations in citizenship regimes and relations of social reproduction that have taken place once Hungarian rightwing populism 'upscaled' to state-led illiberalism and authoritarian capitalism. I make sense of Hungarian illiberalism in relation to its impacts on Romani experiences of exclusion, in particular the gendered and racialized dynamics emerging from Hungarian state-led definitions of the family and Hungarianness, which operate to consolidate the 'double dispossession' Roma experience by being excluded from waged labour and state support. Ultimately, this social history of Hungarian Roma leaving for Canada underscores the linkages between capitalist crisis, rightwing populism, and social reproduction.

Romani asylum-seeking and the rise of the Hungarian Right

As outlined in the dissertation introduction, Romani asylum-seeking from Hungary to Canada has seen three distinct waves, peaking in the early 2000s and again in the early 2010s, and continuing in more modest numbers to today. Prevailing explanations for these waves require further explication. Conservative politicians in Canada and Hungary have looked to stereotypes about Roma as nomads and welfare profiteers to make sense of their movement (Government of Canada 2012a, CBSA 2014), whereas Canadian liberal media and refugee advocates blame 'democratic backsliding' and the communist legacy of Hungary for the rise in rightwing nationalism (Westhead 2012, Brown 2013). The dominant explanation given for this timing by Canadian policymakers is Hungary's accession into the European Union, which led to Hungary's inclusion in the Schengen Zone as well as international trade agreements, thus changing the visa requirements of Hungarian nationals to Canada (Beaudoin et al 2015). Ahistorical accounts have been echoed in academic investigations into Romani asylum-seeking in Canada, which emphasize a 'culture of migration' amongst Roma people (Durst 2013, Vidra and Virág 2013).

While all these explanations differ in their historicization of Romani asylum-seeking, they require further supplementation with an analysis of the crucial links between capitalist transformation, social reproduction, and citizenship dynamics that have led to Hungarian Roma seeking refugee protection in Canada. The historical conditions that have formed Romani refugee claims are usefully understood by drawing attention to the formation of rightwing populist politics in Hungary and the recent consolidation of authoritarian state rule. By now there is a significant body of scholarship on rightwing populist movements in Hungary and Central Europe more broadly (Dean and Maiguashca 2020, Graff and Korolczuk 2021, Grzebalska and Pető 2018, Kalb 2009, Kovats 2018, Milner 2019, Rogers 2020). The Hungarian 'backlash' to European neoliberal hegemony has become a trending topic, as scholars document the increasing prevalence and tolerance of far-right speech and activity, the acceptance of paramilitary organizations in the country, police indifference and impunity, and activities of extreme-right groups that are characterized as "out of control" (Fekete 2014: 64).

Importantly, rightwing populist politics in Hungary are no longer on the fringes: under the tutelage of Prime Minister Viktor Orban, leader of the conservative Fidesz party who has coined the term 'illiberalism' to describe his approach to governance, the Hungarian state has come to be the champion of rightwing populism within the European Union: campaigning against migration and LGBT rights, promoting traditional families and Christian values, protecting working Hungarians with chauvinist state support, and pushing back against the 'liberal elites of Brussels.' What started off as a rural grassroots movement of rightwing populists in Hungary's deindustrialized northeast region has arisen to become the main political force in state power since 2010, demonstrating what can happen when reactionary populists hold government long enough to make substantial changes to the legal and constitutional institutions of a country (Szombati 2018, Scheiring 2020a, Feischmidt and Szombati 2017, Kalb 2018, Kalb 2019, Kalb 2020).

While Hungarian illiberalism has become a rich topic of study amongst scholars of rightwing populism and the region of East-Central Europe, one aspect of this story requiring analytical attention is the phenomenon of thousands of the country's citizens responding to this intensifying political climate by moving to Canada and filing for refugee status. In the same manner that analyses of Romani asylum-seeking fail to connect the movement to the

contemporary history of Hungary's political economy, those studying Hungarian rightwing populism have yet to connect it to the movement of Roma to Canada. An important aspect for fully understanding the ramifications of Hungarian illiberalism is that today Hungarian nationals represent one of the largest groups of refugee claimants within the Canadian asylum system. Hence, fleshing out the ways in which rightwing populist politics in Hungary have shaped Hungarian asylum-seeking to Canada is an analytical task useful for both scholars of illiberalism and policy-makers making sense of Romani refugee claims.

When speaking with Romani families during my ethnographic fieldwork, the most common reason I was given about why Roma decide to make the move to Canada was the rise of rightwing violence and populist nationalism, as demonstrated in the growing presence of nationalist organizing in the late 2000s in northeast Hungarian villages. Numerous accounts of racially-motivated violence were shared, in which Romani men were targeted by far-right thugs; these attacks formed the cornerstone of many Romani refugee claimants' story when seeking asylum. The rise of anti-Roma violent attacks in Hungary during this time period is well-documented in academic, policy, and media sources (Amnesty International 2010, ERRC 2011, ERRC 2012, FXB 2014).

In particular, the presence of paramilitary rallies and protests connected to the far-right political party, Jobbik, was regularly referenced by Romani asylum-seekers. One key example cited often was the large-scale and well-known example of paramilitary marching targeting Roma that took place in the village of Gyöngyöspata, a small village one hour east of Budapest, in March 2011 when far-right troops set up a 'neighbourhood watch' and training camp next to the village protesting 'Gypsy crime.' This action led to the Red Cross evacuating 277 Romani women and children due to concerns for their safety (ERRC 2011, CBC 2011). According to the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, 45 Romani children and 22 adults from Gyöngyöspata left for Canada within six months of this incident (Pidd 2012). Another key referent for the Romani families I spoke with in their historicization of Romani asylum-seeking is the series of murders of Roma that took place in villages in northeast Hungary between the years of 2008 and 2009. In a spree of racist violence taking place over a 14-month period, a gang of at least four neo-Nazis engaged in nine assaults of Romani families, murdering six Roma, including a four-year old boy, and wounding at least 50 more Roma (Rorke 2018, Subert 2017, Subert 2019, Levine-Rasky 2016: 92-95).

In November 2016 I attended a memorial event for the serial Roma murders held by the Roma self-government in Miskolc and hosted in their office. The self-government office is a local organization for Roma established as part of Hungary's Minority Self-Government system, which recognizes the right of minorities living in Hungary to make decisions about language, traditions, and culture. Today there are approximately 1,118 local Romani self-governments across Hungary (OSCE/ODIHR 2006). The mood of the memorial event at the Miskolc Roma self-government office was very somber, and men as well as women wept quietly while reflecting on the history of the 'Roma murders' and what they meant for Roma today living in northeast Hungary. Romani community members stood up and spoke, with tear-streaked cheeks, recollecting where they were at the moment when they heard the news and describing the shock they felt that someone could be killed 'just for being Roma.' Attendees shared that they felt like neo-Nazism was on the rise in Hungary, describing what they perceived as an increasing normalization of extremism and anti-Gypsyism in Hungary. One woman said she felt like everything began after the regime change and that things were different for Roma during state socialism. Gábor Varadi, the President of the Romani self-government, explained that it felt like a war was taking place against Roma in Hungary; he said, gesturing to the presence of a Canadian researcher in the room, that the fact that Roma seek refugee protection in Canada is evidence that Hungary does not view Roma as Hungarians. The event concluded with the reading of a piece of writing by a Romani poet from Miskolc, entitled *I Want to Go Home,* a symbol-heavy conclusion to commemorate the lives of a people whose movement is too often misrecognized as a 'culture of nomadism' instead of the result of an unrelenting cycle of displacements, evictions, dispossessions, and deportations.

What this memorial made clear to me was that while the incidents of rightwing violence were individual cases and proportionately not numerous, the psychological impact they had on the Romani community in northeast Hungary was severe. As Feischmidt et al describe, "Obviously, it is not all Roma who suffer attacks, but individual cases also contain a warning against all Roma by creating the impression that they are *persona non grata*" (Feischmidt et al 2013: 174). My research informants echoed this understanding, explaining to me that these hate crimes caused a spread in panic amongst Romani communities and describing the time as a wholly frightening and intimidating period for Roma in northeast Hungary.

For example, one family I met in Canada arrived in Toronto in the early 2010s. The mother, Melinda, explained to me that they left Hungary in 2010 due to the growing presence of paramilitary marches taking place in their segregated neighbourhood on the outskirts of Miskolc, which created psychological stress for the children of the family. Melinda explained it to me that when the 'Roma murders' took place, everyone was afraid everywhere because you just didn't know if they were coming for your village next. Melinda's family left for Canada during this time, and for Melinda she believes that many Romani families went to Canada in this time period because of the psychological torment and fear, even if the odds of danger were comparatively small. Melinda shared with me that in Canada her children were happy to be going to school, where no one recognized them as 'Gypsies.' She explained that people at this time were selling everything, risking everything, to escape the looming danger and flee to Canada. It is thus crucial to contextualize Romani asylum-seeking during this time period by understanding the rise of rightwing populism and far-right political organizing in northeast Hungary, as Roma became the targets of rightwing violence at the hands of Hungarian extremists.

Anti-Gypsyism, neoliberalism, and social reproduction

It is not sufficient to underscore the linkages between Romani asylum-seeking and Hungarian rightwing populism without connecting the emergence of rightwing populism in northeast Hungary and its specific form of anti-Gypsyism to the changes in capital accumulation in the region following the end of state socialism. As Hann (2019) argues, the region of Central and Eastern Europe became "a laboratory for neoliberal experimentation" throughout the1990s, which Kideckel (2002) argues led to 'the unmaking of the working class' in postsocialist countries. Hungary in particular experienced a rapid implementation of neoliberal economic restructuring, including mass privatization of state industries accompanied by massive layoffs, abrupt downsizing of social services, and the integration of the national economy into the European system of free trade shaped by a globalizing financialized capitalism. Hungary's postsocialist 'transition' resulted in sudden unemployment: between 1989 and 1992, Hungary lost more than one-third of its jobs; in a labour market of four million, more than 1.5 million jobs vanished in these first three years of the postsocialist decade; and unemployment jumped to almost fourteen percent (Kalb 2018: 313; see also Bartha and Tóth 2021)

Scheiring's research into postsocialist deindustrialization in Hungary stresses the dramatic level of deindustrialization that occurred:

> Deindustrialisation in Hungary was massive by international standards… In Hungary, over a few years after 1988, employment in manufacturing fell by 40 per cent cumulatively on average nationwide. Thus, the scope of deindustrialisation in Hungary is comparable to the worst regional cases in the north of the UK and the Midwest of the USA, albeit at a much faster pace. This deindustrialisation amounted to a massive social shock leading to an increase in unemployment, mortality and a decline in population (Scheiring 2020b: 1164).

Several key studies about Hungarian postsocialism point to the ways in which the postsocialist transformation led to the disintegration of whole communities and workers' identities (Bartha and Tóth 2021, Scheiring 2020b, Szombati 2018, Kalb and Halmai 2018). These studies describe the ways in which "most working-class communities in Hungary suffered greatly in the 1990s" (Bartha and Tóth 2021: 1728). For Bartha and Tóth, this damage was felt especially in the northeast region, which had served as the central hub of socialist industry in Hungary: "in centres of formerly prestigious heavy industries such as Miskolc and Ózd, the destruction of working-class communities was catastrophic" (Bartha and Tóth 2021: 1729).

Research on Romani experiences of neoliberalism highlight the particularly racialized dimensions of the introduction of neoliberalism into Central and Eastern Europe (Kóczé 2016, Kóczé 2018, Sigona and Trehan 2009, van Baar 2012, Sardelic 2015, van Baar 2013a, Caglar and Mehling 2013). As the low-skilled workers in Hungary's factories, Romani workers were generally the first to lose their employment positions with little recourse for replacing them with new jobs. The labour market position of Roma in Hungary suffered a greater-than-average deterioration during this period. For Hungary's Roma population, unemployment rose to 80 per cent and has little improved since. A 2003 national representative survey of Roma found that only 38 percent of Romani men and 20 percent of Romani women between the ages of 15 and 49 were employed, compared with respective figures from the time of the postsocialist transformation when 85 percent of Romani men and 53 percent of Romani women were employed (Husz 2013: 34). According to Husz, Roma in

northeast Hungary survive through a mix of informal work, public works, and social assistance (Husz 2013).

As Feischmidt et al explain,

> Exclusion from the labour market in the post-socialist period, which in most cases has become a permanent feature of Roma lives, destroyed the prospect of social mobility, which the socialist regime had offered Roma in exchange for their cultural assimilation into the majority. This sudden and irremediable loss, together with the ensuing hopelessness, constitutes the most painful grievance of Roma citizens not only in Gyöngyöspata, but all around the country (and wider region). Although the material and psychological damage caused by capitalist structural transformation cannot be attributed to any concrete individuals, Roma citizens live with the suspicion that members of the majority have deliberately chosen to exclude them from the 'new post-socialist deal'. Their suspicion finds confirmation in discriminatory acts of ethnically biased employers. (Feischmidt et al 2013: 179-180)

Unemployment in the postsocialist era for Hungarian Roma became more entrenched as the years passed: "the exclusion of Roma from the labour market has a history of three decades and affects at least two generations" (Kertesi, quoted in Zolnay 2012: 29). Today of all the postsocialist countries, Hungary has the highest level of labour market exclusion for Roma (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 108). This 'ethnicization of poverty' characteristic of postsocialism means that the transition to neoliberalism resulted in the making of Roma into what I call a 'racialized surplus population' locked out of waged labour and excluded from societal belonging: as they experienced a dramatic deterioration in their class status, they have become a permanently unemployed "ethnic underclass" (Ladányi and Szelényi 2006).

At the same time that Roma were contending with becoming permanently locked out of the Hungarian wage labour economy, they were confronted with further strife in the form of emerging rightwing populism rooted in anti-Gypsy politics. As political economy analyses explain, the sudden economic and social changes following the end of state socialism

combined to spread a profound sense of popular dispossession and abandonment amongst white male Hungarian workers and peasants (Feischmidt and Szombati 2017, Feischmidt et al 2013, Scheiring 2020b, Scheiring and Szombati 2020, Bartha and Tóth 2021, Hann 2018, Kalb 2009, Kalb and Halmai 2011, Szombati 2018). This body of work argues that the introduction of neoliberalism into the region of Central and Eastern Europe sparked the spread of anti-Gypsy political mobilization and violent manifestations: from this perspective, the erosion of working-class political weight with the transition from socialism to capitalism left workers "susceptible to neo-nationalist populism" (Bartha 2011). As Bartha and Tóth describe,

> Communities, factories and collective farms all disintegrated, while new, nationalistic identities have been promulgated with the ostensible aim of protecting society from the ills of globalisation and reckless marketisation (Bartha and Tóth 2021: 1728).

Throughout the postsocialist region, as austerity has been implemented across Central Europe "and the hope of its citizens for full employment, decent living standards and greater security is eroded" (Fekete 2012: 3), rightwing populist groups instrumentalizing racist rhetoric have become more attractive.

Hungary in particular has seen a dramatic backlash to the neoliberal EU consensus: as Scheiring argues, "Hungary has witnessed the most severe nationalist backlash in the region" (Scheiring 2020b: 1160). Rightwing populist movements became most pronounced in the northeast, where tens of thousands of Hungarians were employed as socialist factory workers at the Lenin Steel Works, which shuttered its doors in the 1990s. Starting off as fringe movements in this area of rural Hungary, rightwing populists gained traction through appealing to Hungarian peasants' grievances about neoliberal economic restructuring while simultaneously critiquing a perceived "liberal special treatment" of minorities such as Roma (Szombati 2018). Discontent with neoliberalism consequently became couched in racist and neo-nationalist terms: Szombati's work (2018, 2017) in particular is instructive, detailing the crucial link between the rise of anti-Gypsyism and the crisis of social reproduction suffered by the rural population as a result of capitalist transformations connected to global economic trends and more particularly Hungary's accession to the European Union. For him, students of racism tend to misrecognize contemporary anti-Gypsyism as sentiments enduring since time immemorial. Instead it is necessary to understand how contemporary anti-Gypsyism and

the rise of Hungarian rightwing populism resulted from the economic changes implemented during Hungary's postsocialist transition.

According to Szombati, throughout the 2000s rightwing actors began to campaign against the welfare regimes and the policy of Roma inclusion while spreading moral panics about "gypsy criminality." Rightwing populism in Hungary thus emerged from struggles over welfare and social reproduction in the context of EU-driven neoliberal austerity, in which Romani people became a racialized surplus population. In northeast Hungary, a coalition of post-peasants, working classes, and property-owners

> allied in rejecting the cosmopolitan outlook of a transnational capitalism served by comprador bourgeoisies and cosmopolitan governmental classes in the capital cities, in favor of a national capitalism led by a provincial national bourgeoisie supported by an illiberal welfare state that champions the deserving working class and the working poor of majority stock against the threats from above and below (Kalb 2019: 218).

Szombati's work underscores the crucial link between the rise of anti-liberal politics and the crisis of social reproduction suffered by particular segments of the rural population as a result of Hungary's integration into global channels of accumulation. In this context, rightwing populism came to represent an 'anti-colonial' attitude, perceived as resisting the economic and cultural imperialism of the European Union (Korolczuk and Graff 2018).

Alongside the neoliberal overhaul of the Hungarian economy, liberal social policies were implemented, such as de-segregation in education and social welfare for the Romani minority in Hungary (Szombati 2018). Introduced as part of Hungary's 'democratic transition,' these policies were administered by a pro-EU liberal Left, which simultaneously oversaw the execution of the economic restructuring (Kalb 2018, Szombati 2018). Postsocialist liberal-leftists tasked with the postsocialist transition hence became quintessential representatives of what Fraser terms 'progressive neoliberalism' (Fraser 2019): advocating for liberal policies with one hand while enforcing neoliberal austerity with the other. Across Central and Eastern Europe, social policies rooted in liberal equality came to be seen as synonymous with neoliberal economic restructuring enforced by the EU, replacing more militant forms of socialist and state communist social movements (Ghodsee 2020). Moreover, Bartha and Tóth note that the declining status of Romani people further exacerbated their stigmatization:

> The ensuing creation of social ghettoes set the ethnically Hungarian population against the Roma poor, who, after being the first to be laid off, were then stigmatised as 'lazy' and 'welfare-dependent' (Bartha and Tóth 2021: 1729)

This historical overview of the postsocialist economic transformations usefully contextualizes the flow of Hungarian Roma seeking refugee protection in Canada. It is important to recognize that the northeast region of Hungary that suffered greatly through the aforementioned rapid deindustrialization – today's Hungarian 'rustbelt' - is where the majority of Romani refugees originate. In Tóth's analysis of Hungarian Roma migrating to Canada since the early 1990s, it is suggested that "the ethnicisation of poverty and the Roma issue have been the most prominent political features" of Hungary's postsocialist era (Tóth 2010: 9). From Tóth's perspective, Romani migration to Canada is explained as part of a greater transformation within labour markets arising from the fall of communism in Hungary. With these analyses a question remains: what does this crisis in social reproduction and the rise of rightwing populism look like when told from the vantage point of those made most vulnerable by these large-scale transformations: the ones who became the biggest victims of the neoliberal reforms as well as the targets of the rightwing populism emerging alongside said reforms? And as Hungarian rightwing populism consolidates a new regime of authoritarian capitalism, what dynamics of social reproduction emerge, particularly for surplus populations? The remainder of the chapter seeks to answer these questions.

Authoritarian capitalism and illiberalism for surplus populations

With the electoral victory of the Fidesz party in 2010 and onwards, rightwing populism "conquered unprecedented power over the state" (Kalb 2020), moving from a fringe movement of rural rightwing political organizations and Jobbik supporters to taking hold of the Hungarian state and its governing party, Fidesz (Szombat 2018). As rightwing populism 'upscaled' in Hungary (Kalb 2018, 2020), growing from a rural movement to become the main governing logic of the Hungarian state, observable is a shift from financialized capitalism to a new form of capitalism realigned along authoritarian politics, or what Scheiring and Szombati describe as "authoritarian re-embedding, which combines pre-emptive repression with authoritarian populism" (Scheiring and Szombati 2020). Orbán's

Fidesz, which swept to power in the surge of rightwing populist politics in postsocialist Hungary, has been ruling for more than a decade as "an illiberal welfare state that champions the deserving working class and the working poor of majority stock against the threats from above [the liberal elites of the EU] and below [the undeserving Roma]" (Kalb 2019). In this context, rightwing populism has now developed the capacity to influence state structures and alter Hungarian political economy (Szelényi 2016, Rogers 2020, Scheiring 2018). The result is a reconfiguration of accumulation to create a capitalism along authoritarian lines.

Scheiring argues that the Hungarian illiberal state has gradually implemented a new form of capital accumulation, enabled by a "right-wing populism in power long enough to achieve fundamental change in socio-economic relations and institutions" (Scheiring 2020a: 29). His research on the rise of illiberalism within the Hungarian state urges that students of populism cannot ignore "the economic fundamentals of illiberalism" (Scheiring 2018). He notes,

> These actors are not dismantling democratic institutions because they are 'bad.' Instead, they are building a new regime of accumulation… Orbán's authoritarianism cannot be separated from the model of capitalism he builds (Scheiring 2018).

In other words, authoritarian illiberal governance has been implemented as the best method for maintaining power while accumulating wealth. For him, Hungarian illiberalism has led to a new form of capital accumulation, what Scheiring calls authoritarian capitalism (Scheiring 2020a). Being in power for the past decade has allowed Orbán's political party, Fidesz, to reorganize the state to the advantage of the national bourgeoisie while projecting themselves as the defenders of the "good, worthy native folk" (Szombati 2018), in a quintessential example of what Fraser calls 'hyperreactionary populism' (Fraser 2019).

The experiences of Roma in particular make clear the ways in which the consolidation of authoritarian capitalism through illiberal state practices is creating new struggles around social reproduction. As Stubbs and Lendvai-Bainton's research shows (Stubbs and Lendvai-Bainton 2019), the Hungarian state under the leadership of Orbán has transformed Hungary's rights-based constitution and welfare state into an "illiberal national workfare state" pursuing "a renewed heteronormative familialism, repatriarchialization, national and ethnicized demographic renewal, and anti-immigrant sentiments" (Stubbs and Lendvai-Bainton 2019: 541). In particular, Fidesz's electoral success "hinged on their offer to transform the neo-

liberal state in an anti-egalitarian direction with a view to rewarding 'worthy' citizens" (Szombati 2017). Citizenship belonging and the social supports of the state are hence becoming extended solely to 'good' citizens and families, with social rights targeting those who belong to the dominant ethnicity and religion; punitive workfare is provided for the remaining 'undeserving,' and especially Roma as an ethnicized surplus population (Szikra 2014, Szikra 2018).

As a result, the past decade has seen the Hungarian government implement neoliberal reforms to its poverty alleviation programs and state services with immediate and direct consequences for Romani populations. In recent years, the Hungarian state has embarked on a shift in government policy and discourse that sets aside the welfare model to create a new 'workfare society' with "increasingly anti-poor tendencies explicitly targeting Roma" (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 189-197). Concretely, for Roma, these policies have included the disciplinary public works schemes that were introduced in 2011, a significant reduction in social assistance, and a freezing of family allowances (Vidra and Virág 2015:140-150, Majtényi and Majtényi 2016).

Contemporary analyses of Hungarian political economy emphasize that the Orbán regime's 'work-based society' has been built through the employment of various financial instruments that have increased employment in Hungary in the past decade, including tax incentives for large employers and a public-works program for poor people that has created hundreds of thousands of below-minimum-wage jobs. The increase in employment has been coupled with tax policies and boosts to wages that have had an effect of increasing the personal purchasing power of average Hungarians. The minimum wage has increased annually until it matched the minimum subsistence level in 2018. Most recently, leading up to the last Hungarian election, the Orbán government boosted the minimum wage by 20 percent, which directly benefited one million workers (Szikra and Orenstein 2022), exempted young people from paying income taxes, and paid retirees an additional month's pension (Scheppele 2022). Additionally they "protected Hungarians from the inflation that is racking the globe by freezing mortgage interest rates, food prices and fuel costs" (Schepelle 2022). As Schepelle (2021) notes, "economic coercion is everywhere in Hungary" (Chotiner 2021). Szikra describes this process as giving "welfare for the wealthy" (Szikra 2018). These are the contours of social reproduction under authoritarian capitalism.

The flight of Roma from Hungary should thus be placed alongside this greater transformation within national labour markets and government social policy arising in Hungary, particularly in the post-2010 political landscape carved out by a Hungarian government governed by the Fidesz party. This form of Hungarian authoritarian capitalism is "delivering a radical new vision of social reproduction and fundamental differentiations in terms of access to social citizenship" (Stubbs and Lendvai-Bainton 2018: 540). Moreover, media narratives reliant on stereotypes about Roma justify the abandoning of their social rights and social protection (Kóczé 2018). These social policies serve an economic purpose in building an authoritarian regime of capital accumulation: while the Fidesz party indulges rhetoric denouncing 'EU economic imperialism' and purports to stand up for working Hungarians, its policies have continued to pursue neoliberalization and exacerbated wealth inequalities while enriching businessmen close to the government. Anti-gypsy racism becomes a necessary pillar of authoritarian capitalism because it creates a potent tool for valorizing the insecure working class while also disciplining the surplus population. Hungary's illiberal workfare state can thus be understood as a way of managing both the new class formations and social reproduction dynamics of authoritarian capitalism.

During my first visits to Miskolc, I met a Romani woman named Erika, who was one of the main activists with the Romani Civil Rights Movement in northeast Hungary. Erika sat down and spoke with me on three occasions as I visited Miskolc multiple times throughout 2016. When I eventually asked her, very plainly, why Roma were coming to Canada as refugees, she explained it like this:

> You need to understand that Roma are refugees in a different way than Syrian refugees. There are many ways to be a refugee: there is the kind where there is war and violence, and there is a kind where the violence is slow and subtle, where a person bleeds out slowly. This is how it is for Roma in Hungary: first they take away their work, then their home, then their children. It is very hard on mothers, it is very hard to see how the Hungarian state tears apart Romani families.

Erika's remarks underscored the ways in which rightwing populism is a lived experience for Hungarian Roma intertwined with social reproduction. To me, her commentary explained what it means to be a refugee of illiberalism for Roma who go to Canada.

While violent incidents by far-right extremists, particularly in the peak years of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, are the most striking explanation for Romani asylum-seeking, analyzing the historical conditions and social relations at play uncovers a reality of anti-Gypsyism and first-hand experiences of rightwing populism that were more mundane and pervasive, centered on everyday struggles for social reproduction. Throughout my fieldwork, Roma described constant worries about having their children taken away by state services and institutionalized; they lived in fear of being evicted or having their homes demolished and becoming homeless; their children faced segregation and racist treatment in schools, which caused psychological distress in the family; almost everyone described racist, bordering on traumatic, treatment by doctors and healthcare professionals; and many individuals described a persistent demoralizing inability to find work.[10] These experiences meshed together the lived material reality of being excluded, from both the national imagery as 'Hungarian' and from the labour market.

In sum, as a surplus population in Hungary's illiberal society, Roma have had to face an exclusionary nationalism that limits access to basic citizenship rights and creates struggles around social reproduction. This kind of citizenship regime becomes a necessary pillar of authoritarian capitalism because it creates a potent tool for valorizing the insecure working class while also disciplining the surplus population. Hungary's illiberal workfare state can thus be understood as a way of managing both the new class formations and social reproduction dynamics of postsocialist Hungary as well as the contours of citizenship. This shift to a workfare society, rooted in a conceptualization of citizenship that excludes Roma, shaped many of my research informants' understanding of where they stand within Hungarian society and why they came to Canada. Two key aspects of Hungarian illiberalism were especially emphasized throughout my fieldwork: the gendered and racialized ways in which Roma experienced Hungary's 'anti-gender' family policies, and, secondly, the varied dynamics of how Roma experienced the Hungarian state's campaign against migration, which aided in constructing Roma as 'migrants' and 'foreigners' like the refugees being demonized by Hungarian government propaganda. These two aspects are discussed below and raise pertinent questions about the changing dimensions of citizenship and social

[10] Chapter 3 analyzes in more detail these social reproduction struggles around unemployment, homelessness, and evictions at the local scale of Miskolc.

reproduction in the emergence of state illiberalism and authoritarian capitalism as a form of capital accumulation.

'Gender Ideology,' illiberalism, and anti-Gypsyism

A key political dynamic impacting Romani motivation to seek asylum in Canada rests at the intersection of gender politics and anti-Gypyism within Hungarian illiberalism. Literature on gender and populism in Central Europe stress the ways in which illiberalism intersects with anti-feminist politics (Korolczuk and Graff 2018, Graff and Korolczuk 2021, Grzebalska and Pető 2018, Corredor 2019, Kovats 2018), for which feminist politics become rhetorically framed as 'gender ideology.' As Grzebalska and Pető explain, "using the concept of 'gender ideology' as an enemy-figure has allowed illiberal actors to unite under one umbrella term various issues attributed to the liberal agenda, among them reproductive rights, rights of sexual minorities, gender studies and gender mainstreaming" (Grzebalska and Pető 2018: 2). Like political economy perspectives, these feminist analyses of Central European rightwing populism link the newfound opposition to 'gender' and 'gender ideology' to neoliberalism, arguing that "antigenderism is in fact a political movement, which results from and responds to the economic crisis of 2008" (Korolczuk and Graff 2018: 799). Drawing from Nancy Fraser's critique of the affinity between feminism and neoliberalism, these analyses contend that 'anti-genderism' has arisen in the postsocialist era as a backlash against EU-led neoliberal projects that coupled liberal politics, such as feminism, with neoliberal austerity (Ghodsee 2021).

To understand fully the contours of Hungarian illiberalism and its impact on Hungarian Roma, it is necessary to unpack its 'anti-genderism.' Its opposition to feminist politics is especially evidenced in Hungarian pro-natalist family policies. As studies of Hungarian 'anti-gender' politics have shown,

> a major key tenet of the illiberal project in Central Europe has been familialism — a form of biopolitics which views the traditional family as a foundation of the nation and subjugates individual reproductive and self-determination rights to the normative demand of the reproduction of the nation (Grzebalska and Pető 2018: 4).

Hungary in particular has made a reputation for its pro-family stance and generous family benefits for women who give birth, making increasingly evident the gendered nationalism of Hungarian illiberalism (Kovats 2018). As Szikra (2014) outlines, here the family is framed as 'the basis of the nation's survival,' and government policy has been shaped around this familialism: along with Orenstein, Szikra argues that Orbán has "built his popularity on family policies that, while far from being just, provided unprecedented levels of public resources to families with children" (Szikra and Orenstein 2022). These policies have included personal income tax exemption for families with three or more children as well as grants and loans for the purchase of cars and houses. In 2010, the Hungarian government increased paid parental leave from two years to three years.

At the same time, "Hungarian family and social policies favor those better off. Thus, generous tax benefits are inaccessible to the poor" (Grzebalska and Pető 2018: 4). Most of these policies exclude unemployed people, people working in the public sector, and workers in the informal economy. As such, these 'anti-gender' state policies impact Roma much differently than average Hungarians and plays a major role in motivating Roma to leave Hungary for Canada. The pervasively gendered nature of the Hungarian illiberal workfare state in shaping the lives of my Romani interlocutors became apparent to me during my conversations with Romani families in Toronto.

For example, early in my research a Romani woman I met told me the main reason she fled Hungary for Canada was because of the traumatic experience she had giving birth in a Hungarian hospital. Ildi is a mother of four who grew up in the Hungarian city of Miskolc, living in a predominantly-Romani neighbourhood on the outskirts of the city called "the Numbered Streets." I first met Ildi while visiting Miskolc during some pilot fieldwork I conducted in the fall of 2015. We ran into each other again in Toronto a year later, when her family first arrived in Canada and became fast friends, since I was one of the only Canadians Ildi encountered who spoke even a modicum of the Hungarian language. Ildi would have me over for dinner in her home in the west end of Toronto, treating me to Hungarian delicacies such as *langos*, cabbage rolls, and plum dumplings. I would help her daughter Zsofi with her high school homework and do translation work for her husband who was looking for construction work.

While drinking coffee one afternoon in Ildi's kitchen, Ildi asked how my research into Romani refugees was going, and then, without pausing, went on to insist with a strong tone that I should describe the experiences of Romani women in Hungarian hospitals. She asserted that the "most terrible thing about being Roma in Hungary" is what happens to pregnant Romani women in the hospitals while in labour. Normally, Ildi recounted, Romani families have to pay the doctors a bribe in order to get any medicine and a room to have the baby. If they cannot pay, as was the case with Ildi's fourth pregnancy, the women are put in a room with the other Romani women and only attended to at the final moments. Ildi recalled how her baby was almost born on the floor because the assistant wouldn't come when she was yelling that the baby was coming. She said the doctors and nurses used racist slurs against her, stating that "all gypsies do is have babies." Ildi was afraid the doctors would let her or her baby die because the hospital staff kept stating that "there are already too many gypsy babies in Hungary." Shortly after this conversation, I looked into what Ildi told me and found several reports from the European Roma Rights Centre corroborating Ilid's experience as a wider systemic issue: various documents describe the discrimination and violent treatment Romani women receive in hospitals during childbirth (ERRC 2020, Izsák 2004).

Ildi's experience stood out to me as a first-hand experience of what it felt like to live through the dynamics of Hungarian illiberal family policies, but as a woman in Hungary who is also Roma and poor. It is important to understand her encounter with the Hungarian hospital as a pregnant Romani woman as the other side of the coin of Hungarian anti-gender illiberalism. Ildi's experiences demonstrate that the dynamics of anti-genderism and familialism within Hungarian rightwing populism can only fully be understood by paying attention to how familialism intersects with ethnicity and race: in the Hungarian context, anti-Gypsyism. While white Hungarian women are encouraged to give birth through maternity support and child benefits, Romani families are systematically excluded from these social policies due to their discriminatory qualifications, which depend largely on employment status and duration.

Thus, while it may be the case that illiberalism is "a deeply gendered political transformation which is reliant on a certain gender regime" and that anti-genderism "transforms the meanings of human rights, women's rights and equality in a way which privileges the rights and normative needs of families over women's rights" (Grzebalska and Pető 2018: 1), it is necessary to analyze the ways in which the gender politics of the Hungarian state affect Romani women differently than white Hungarian women. What Hungarian anti-genderism

looks like for Roma then is government spokespeople and rightwing political actors expressing demographic anxieties about "big Gypsy families" living off state benefits and how "their baby booming threatens the national budget" (Mi Hazank, as quoted in Rorke 2019a). Romani experiences of the intersections of familialism and illiberalism are characterized by instances such as the frequent threats of having their children taken away and institutionalized by the state; this intersection manifests in far-right calls for "limiting childbearing" of Romani families (Mi Hazank, as quoted in Rorke 2019a). This is the other side of the 'anti-gender' family politics of Hungarian illiberalism. It is hence important to emphasize that the 'anti-gender agenda' of illiberalism manifests in the lives of Romani families along racialized lines and is a motivating factor in their move to Canada.

Double dispossession: 'Am I not Hungarian?'

One of the key reasons anti-gender politics operate neatly with anti-Gypsyism is due to the convergences of anti-Gypsy politics with the anti-migrant ideology that has become especially observable in Hungarian society since Europe's 'summer of migration' in 2015. It is not analytically sufficient to analyze rightwing populism in Hungary without understanding how all three of these ideologies - anti-genderism, anti-migration, and anti-Gypsyism - intersect. For example, in May 2015, the Hungarian Minister of Justice asserted, 'Hungary cannot take any economic refugees since we already have 800,000 Roma to catch up/integrate.' As Kóczé and Rövid describe, in their analysis of Hungarian state discourse on migration, "by comparing Romani-Hungarian citizens to refugees, they became detached from the Hungarian nation and relegated to the category of disposable alien" (Kóczé and Rövid 2017: 689). As such the 'anti-gender' politics of the Hungarian state take on a different meaning for Roma, who are detached from notions of the Hungarian nation.

During the period of my ethnographic fieldwork, which started in mid-2015, the topic of refugees and migration was on the minds of many Hungarians, including the Romani activists and families I spoke with. In my fieldwork, many Roma noted that the 'Refugee Crisis' of 2015 in Hungary and the years that followed were felt as a relief amongst Romani communities: Roma were for once ignored because there was a new target for rightwing hate and a new enemy for the government to instrumentalize in its propagandic fear-mongering. For example, I recall visiting a family in their home in a segregated Romani neighbourhood

on the outskirts of Miskolc in 2016 during the time when the Hungarian government had just launched a "national consultation" on the issue of migration and the European Union. The mother had been following the Hungarian state's campaign against refugees while watching TV that morning. Amidst serving me a cup of cola and some cheese pogacsa, she remarked to me, "The government says that they can't take refugees in because they can't even take care of us Roma here, but I do have sympathy for the refugees: they just want a good life for their children." This family had been to Canada in 2012; their refugee claim had been rejected by Canadian immigration, and the family was deported a year later. Sometime later that afternoon in the same conversation, the mother said to me, "But if Hungary takes in the refugees, does it mean there will be less state benefits for us Roma? You know, they don't even call us Hungarian, just Roma. Am I not Hungarian?" The refugee crisis thus led to uneasy solidarities, competitions, distancing, and shared experiences in Romani experiences of citizenship.

"Am I not Hungarian?" was a common rhetorical question that arose in my conversations with Roma in Miskolc and Toronto while discussing Romani experiences leading to their refugee claims - a poetic parallel to the question posed by Sojourner Truth in her speech "Ain't I a Woman?". A staff member at the Romani self-government in Miskolc, for example, told me one day while I was conducting participant observation that just that morning he was told to "go back to India" while he was riding the tram to work. 'Am I not Hungarian?' he asked me. Another Romani activist from Miskolc who I interviewed reflected on the national consultation about migration and said to me, "Roma are called 'migrant' too by these people [who dislike refugees coming to Hungary]. But we Roma have been here for 1000 years. People say we are like the refugees coming now, they compare us; but we Roma have been in Hungary for a long time. Am I not Hungarian?" It is clear that Roma understand the ways in which their citizenship is constructed as 'foreigner' and 'migrant' within Hungarian illiberalism. In my discussions with them we discussed how Roma have been instrumentalized in anti-refugee politics, used as an example of why integration doesn't work and why Hungary should not be forced to take refugees. As Kóczé and Rövid explain, these intersections of anti-migrant and anti-Roma politics are a process of citizenship formation: "the political citizenship of Roma also became (dis)articulated. Roma, who were born and have lived for many centuries in European countries, possess legal citizenship but, by being racialised and less worthy from a neoliberal perspective, their political citizenship is not recognised, it is questioned and (dis)articulated" (Kóczé and Rövid 2017: 693).

One demonstrative example of these dynamics is Viktória Mohácsi, a Romani woman originally from the Hungarian village of Berettyóújfalu, who has been living in Toronto since the early 2010s. An elected member of the European Parliament between 2004 and 2009, Mohácsi left her home in 2011 to seek refugee status in Canada on the grounds of ethnic persecution and fear of far-right violence due to her political work. In her essay reflecting on her changing identity as once an "activist in Hungary" and now an "asylum-seeker in Toronto" (Mohácsi 2017: 108), Mohácsi describes "how I have been surviving as a European Roma refugee in Canada" (Ibid: 111). She relates the difficulties Canadians have in making sense of her as a refugee claimant 'from Europe' and a person 'without a country':

> It is very hard to imagine a group of people arriving from Europe but who do not have a country. When asked if I was Hungarian, the answer was complex. I was born into a country where White Hungarians create differences between themselves and us. Even if I had wanted to be a Hungarian-Romani woman and feel that I had a home country, I had difficulty doing so (Mohácsi 2017: 113).

As a former European lawmaker turned asylum-seeker, Mohácsi's experiences accentuate the peculiarities, tensions, and contestations of what it means to be "European" for Romani refugees caught between Hungary and Canada and the ways in which the severe economic dispossession experienced by Roma in the postsocialist era has been coupled with an exclusion from national belonging. Mohácsi's experiences demonstrate the ways in which the twin processes of class and citizenship displacement come together in what I term here a 'double dispossession.'

Throughout my field work, Roma spoke of being once socialist factory workers, then permanently unemployed following neoliberal restructuring, and then finally targets of rightwing violence – enduring a series of compounded injuries. They described this experience as being survivors of what I term here a 'double dispossession:' that of losing their livelihoods as well as their *de facto* inclusion in Hungarian national belonging. My informants would tell me, "You know, gypsies are Hungarian too. My citizenship is Hungarian" or ask "Am I not Hungarian?" when describing their experiences of unemployment and access to state supports. These comments made clear to me that Roma understand the change in their class position under postsocialism as simultaneously a change

in their inclusion within Hungarian definitions of citizenship. Taking inspiration from Harvey's (Harvey 2003) concept, accumulation by dispossession, I conceptualize as a form of dispossession the postsocialist loss that Roma experienced in becoming excluded from *de facto* Hungarian citizenship and national belonging. As Smith argues,

> David Harvey's (2003) "accumulation by dispossession" seems especially well suited to describing a great deal of the political tensions that arise in the attack and defense, not just of livelihood but of the spaces where it is made possible… While coerced spatial dispossession is a frequent and very visible form of what Harvey is talking about, he wants us to think of dispossession across a wider spectrum. This would include the conversion of collective goods such as healthcare, public urban spaces, and nature (Moore 2015) into sources for the extraction of surplus value (Smith 2019: 135).

To understand the broad historical contours that have led to Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking, it is incumbent to understand their expulsion from both the waged economy and Hungarian national belonging resulting from the postsocialist crisis of social reproduction. Tracing the emergence of Romani asylum-seeking alongside the changes to capital accumulation in Hungary since the 1990s makes visible this 'double dispossession.'

In sum, Romani Hungarians' claim to refugee protection is legally premised on their experiences of ethnic persecution living in Hungary, but this ethnic persecution cannot be separated from their class status following the postsocialist economic transformation. The transition to neoliberalism in Central Europe resulted in the making of surplus populations, and Roma, the region's largest minority, especially experienced a dramatic deterioration in their class status. At the same time, they became the target of an "angry working class" that was experiencing its own declining class position. Rightwing discourse emerged explaining the postsocialist deteroriation of living standards for Hungarians as a result of 'gypsy criminality' and liberal 'special treatment' towards minorities - not the effect of integration into the channels of global capital accumulation. As a result, Roma became targets both of far-right paramilitary groups while also becoming a permanently unemployed 'ethnic underclass.' In other words, at the same time that their class status declined due to postsocialist reforms, their *de facto* inclusion in relations of Hungarian citizenship was curtailed, and this "double dispossession" placed Roma in the position of a racialized surplus

population, leaving the option of going to Canada as an attractive last resort to live a life of dignity.

Conclusion:
Refugees of postsocialist social reproduction

The chapter has pieced together a broad historical explanation of contemporary Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada by tracing the rise of rightwing populism in relation to the changes in capital accumulation in Hungary. The main argument of this chapter has been that Romani asylum-seeking arose as a response to the crisis of social reproduction experienced in Hungarian society in connection to neoliberal economic restructuring ensued during Hungary's postsocialist transformation, in which Roma experienced a 'double dispossession' in becoming a racialized surplus population. I have analyzed the changing dynamics of citizenship and anti-Gypsyism as rightwing populism has upscaled to state illiberalism and neoliberal forms of capital accumulation have been eclipsed by an emerging authoritarian capitalism. The chapter has analyzed stories from my ethnographic fieldwork with Romani refugees in Toronto in light of contemporary studies on the political economy of Hungarian authoritarian capitalism.

Importantly, paying attention to Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada offers new insights to our understanding of citizenship and social reproduction, particularly in terms of how these dynamics are transforming under an emerging form of authoritarian capitalism. In piecing together a social history of Romani asylum-seeking, we can see beyond the ways in which neoliberalism has reshaped citizenship to how class dispossession interacts with regimes of national belonging and racism and how migration becomes a strategy to escape the new social reproduction realities of authoritarian capitalism. As Hungarian illiberalism consolidates its new political and economic regime, I have identified new and emerging forms of social reproduction and work, emphasizing the need to contextualize Romani refugee movement as borne from these specific postsocialist economic transformations.

Liberal commentators interpret Hungarian illiberalism as a regression related to its communist legacy, its authoritarian state policies interpreted with Cold War rhetoric suggesting that its progression towards Western liberal democracy has been disrupted (Gagyi

2016). However, by focusing on the relations of social reproduction under authoritarian capitalism, we can see how Hungarian illiberalism is not a regression to the past but perhaps rather the future awaiting all countries that opt to solve the social reproductive contradictions of financialized capitalism by indulging a hyperreactionary populism, sacrificing democracy and the freedoms of marginalized segments of society. However, and more importantly, in this Gramscian interregnum where neoliberal hegemony is in crisis, there remains a fundamental openness of what may appear on the horizon. As Fraser (2013a, 2016, 2017, 2022) explains, all regimes of capitalism harbour a fundamental crisis of social reproduction within them: authoritarian capitalism does not solve these inherent contradictions of care and capital; authoritarianism itself is unstable and unlikely to be sustained in the long-term. In this capitalist crisis there are competing attempts to re-order society, and authoritarian capitalism is not inevitable, nor invulnerable. It is the contention in the proceeding chapters that struggles around social reproduction may hold the potential for building a world beyond both capitalism and rightwing populism.

Ultimately, a social history of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada reveals that the 'making of the Romani refugee' has been the historical 'unmaking of the Hungarian working class.' This history gives a glimpse at the specific connections between transnational processes of dispossession, the crisis of social reproduction, and the patterns of capital accumulation, underscoring that aspiring struggles against illiberalism and capitalism must also be fought on the terrains of citizenship and social reproduction. The following chapter interrogates this framing further, using the urban history of the northeast city of Miskolc to analyze the interconnections between labour history and histories of asylum-seeking.

Chapter 3

Urban Displacements and Social-Reproductive Struggles: Historicizing Romani asylum-seeking to Canada through oral histories of a post-industrial Hungarian city

Introduction

In May 2017, the Research Directorate of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) authored a report on housing developments and evictions taking place in the northeast Hungarian city of Miskolc (IRB 2017). Using information provided to the IRB by the Hungarian Embassy in Ottawa and the Hungarian Ministry of Human Capacities, the report provides a detailed account of the situation of one particular neighbourhood in Miskolc: the 'Numbered Streets,' a settlement on the outskirts of the city, populated primarily by Romani residents. Employing a detached legalese, the report delineates a recently amended city by-law: in 2014, the municipal assembly of Miskolc passed a decree on "eliminating outdated segregated areas" and had decided that the Numbered Streets "should be eliminated" (IRB 2017). The IRB report charts out the official compensation available to those evicted, the rights evicted residents have for appealing administrative decisions, and the recourse available for seeking any necessary redress. While the report documents that several human rights advocacy NGOs filed a common petition to the ombudsman about the Miskolc City Council's by-law amendments, it goes on to quote the Hungarian Ministry of Human Capacities, which asserts that "[t]here is no direct discrimination or aggression against the Roma, the people who lived or live in the numbered streets area are not homogenously Roma" (IRB 2017).

The report is a compelling artifact signaling the Canadian state's curious interest in Hungarian urban affairs: attesting to the fact that the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada had been following the housing situation in Miskolc closely. To understand the reasons for Immigration Canada's interest in the neighbourhoods and eviction struggles of

Hungary's fourth largest city, a glance at refugee claims in Canada is revealing: in the early 2010s during the peak of Romani asylum-seeking to Canada from Hungary, approximately 40 to 50 percent of Canada's Hungarian asylum claims originated from Miskolc (Keung 2013). The IRB report hence concludes by stating that "this Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection" (IRB 2017). Yet the everyday struggles around housing were relevant for Immigration Canada because they had made the connection: the more evictions in Miskolc, the more Romani refugee claimants in Canada.

The aim of this chapter is to piece together a social history of this city of so much interest to Immigration Canada: Miskolc, the city from which the majority of Romani refugees in Canada originate. I chronicle this social history by centering the vantage point of Romani residents who leave Miskolc for Canada, linking their struggles over postsocialist unemployment, housing, and segregation to questions of citizenship, social reproduction, and class. As such, this chapter shifts scales from the national and regional level, as discussed in the previous chapter, to the local and urban level to historize Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, analyzing the dynamics of Miskolc and how they have shaped the everyday conditions that have led Roma to leave. In drawing from oral histories told to me by Roma about the history of the city and their communities, this chapter builds a 'peoples' history' of Miskolc from Romani perspectives and experiences. Telling Hungarian urban history from Romani perspectives uncovers a narrative about how large-scale historical transformations are felt, lived out, and responded to in the everyday lives of a society's marginalized people.

This 'people's history' locates Romani experiences in the urban struggles of Miskolc from socialism to postsocialism. Miskolc is an urban centre in northeast Hungary, a city formerly the beating heart of Hungarian socialist industry that underwent a dramatic deindustrialization following Hungary's transition from state socialism in the 1990s. Today, Miskolc's once heavily polluting industrial plants are now rusty empty factories littering the city's skyline and its residents contend with one of the highest unemployment rates in Hungary (ODIHR 2016). Roma are the largest minority living in both the city and the wider county of Borsod-Abaúj Zemplén, making up more than ten percent of the total population (ODIHR 2016).

Since the mid-2000s, Roma have continued to leave the city of Miskolc in waves to file for refugee protection in Canada. The IRB's "Government Information on Evictions in Miskolc" report was not the only time that Immigration Canada had taken an interest in Miskolc (see also IRB 2018). "About 40 percent of refugee claimants from Hungary are coming from a city called Miskolc," Canadian Minister of Immigration was quoted saying in a Toronto newspaper in 2013 (Keung 2013). That year, news headlines across both Hungary and Canada reported that the Canadian government had launched "an unprecedented billboard campaign" that was "trumpeting Canada's rapid expulsion of failed asylum seekers" throughout Miskolc, "the home of many Roma refugees" (Keung 2013). A $3,000 CAD advertising campaign consisting of six billboards erected around the city, the billboards stated in the Hungarian language:

> Message from the Canadian government: in the interest of preventing abuses, the Canadian Refugee system has changed. Those people arriving with unfounded refugee claims will be sent home faster.[11]

Canadian media labeled the billboard campaign a failure and Miskolc "a region the government has targeted with fruitless information campaigns" (Boesveld 2012). Conversely, the then Mayor of Miskolc, Ákos Kriza, responded with outrage to the billboard campaign: not because of the billboards' discriminatory tone, but because Canada expected Miskolc to welcome back the Romani refugee claimants upon being deported from Canada. A conservative politician with a reputation for anti-Gypsy politics, Kriza was quoted as saying in Hungarian media, "Canada cannot send anyone back to Miskolc" (Rorke 2019b). As the European Roma Rights Centre writes,

> In the 2013 controversy over Roma seeking asylum, then Fidesz mayor Ákos Kriza told the Canadians that failed claimants could not return to Miskolc. Not only would he do anything to prevent "these criminals from settling in the city" but would "drive out those criminals currently residing in Miskolc." He further threatened returning Roma parents that the authorities would take their children away and place them in state institutions (Rorke 2019b).

[11] I have translated this message into English from the original Hungarian myself based on a photograph of the billboards published widely in Canadian media. See, for example, Keung 2013.

This chapter is an ethnographic attempt to survey and scrutinize these various historical developments linking Canada with the Hungarian city in the northeast corner of the country; in piecing together a social history of the city of Miskolc from the perspective of Romani residents, I connect these urban struggles around housing and racism to the emergence of asylum-seeking to Canada. I argue here that the history of Romani refugees in Canada can be traced back to the socialist era, its proletarianization of Roma, and the proceeding postsocialist transition: when the city's Roma were once factory workers at the Lenin Steel Works in socialist Miskolc and subsequently in the postsocialist era became a permanently unemployed and geographically segregated group – a racialized surplus population – reliant on municipally-organized workfare schemes. The chapter thus demonstrates how the making of Romani refugees has simultaneously been a historical process of the unmaking of urban working classes in northeast Hungary: a history of Romani asylum-seeking told through the lens of labour history. Importantly, I examine the historical and large-scale changes discussed in the previous chapter in light of how Hungarian Roma themselves make sense of their place within them, in their everyday lives and the choices they make as they navigate them. Ultimately this social history underscores the ways in which Romani refugees 'make themselves' as much as they are made, and 'learn' to be refugees within the current historical moment, in which 'the making of the Romani refugee' is simultaneously both a historical production and a daily negotiation.

The chapter relies primarily on my ethnographic fieldwork with Romani activists and families from Miskolc, including interviews with the Romani self-government, participant observation in two segregated Romani neighbourhoods, and informal conversations with Romani refugees, most of whom now live in Toronto. In the first two sections, I describe the dimensions of my fieldwork and engage in a methodological discussion about oral history and the framework of 'ethnographic Marxism.' The remainder of the paper is broken down into two sections: firstly, I chronicle a history of the city of Miskolc in terms of how my Romani informants narrated their understanding of life under socialism and the subsequent postsocialist transformation; and, secondly, I focus in on two contemporary Romani settlements in Miskolc and the Romani residents' struggles around evictions, segregation, and homelessness. Overall these historical narratives are pieced together to tell the broader story of how the city of Miskolc transformed into the hub of Romani asylum-seeking to Canada in

the postsocialist era: I argue that these urban struggles formed the historical conditions that have combined to produce the movement of Roma fleeing for Canada.

Research data and fieldwork

This chapter is primarily based on ethnographic fieldwork I began in Miskolc in 2016, which started as a pilot project for my doctoral research, taking place off and on throughout 2016, during which I visited Miskolc for multiple week-long visits while living in Budapest studying for my PhD. I later moved to Toronto in early 2017 and continued to do ethnographic work with Romani refugees who had left Miskolc and were now located in Canada. Thus, while my investigation into Miskolc history from the perspective of its Romani residents began with my fieldwork in Hungary, the connections I made during this time shaped my following fieldwork in Toronto, which took place from early 2017 until early 2020. Therefore, this social history of Miskolc has been pieced together by years of speaking with Roma both in Canada and Hungary. I continue to this day to have contact with several of the people I met in Miskolc, and in the years since my initial fieldwork in Miskolc, I have met in Toronto in person five families I initially encountered during my first visits to Miskolc.

My ethnographic fieldwork in Miskolc consisted of interviews with Romani activists, participant observation in two segregated Romani neighbourhoods, and attendance at various Roma-related events throughout the city. I conducted open-ended interviews and engaged in participant observation with two main groups. The first group consisted of Romani families who had previously lived in Toronto, filed for asylum in Canada, and were now back in Miskolc after their refugee claim was unsuccessful. For the most part, I encountered these families in the 'Numbered Streets,' the segregated neighbourhood where the majority of them lived, where I visited with them in their homes and discussed their experiences in Hungary and Canada over tea, cigarettes, and *pogácsa*. The second group of my informants consisted of Romani activists, volunteers, and workers in Miskolc with Romani-focused NGOs. I spent the majority of my time working with the activists at the Miskolc Roma self-government (*Miskolc Megyei Jogú Város Roma Nemzetiségi Önkormányzata*), who allowed me to spend my days doing participant observation at their office, attend their public events and staff meetings, and be given tours of local schools, social service organizations, and segregated

Romani neighbourhoods. During my visits to Miskolc I often spent a few hours of my days becoming a part of the daily activities of the organization, discussing various topics with the Romani activists who work there and the Romani community members who dropped in. Because one of the tasks of this particular office is to issue documentation certifying to someone's Romani ethnicity, a document[12] that is often used by Hungarian Roma in refugee claims in Canada, during my time there I encountered several people who were making imminent travel plans to leave for Canada. I also visited a handful of times and spoke with organizers of the Roma Civil Rights movement in Miskolc (*Roma Polgárjogi Mozgalom*).

My research informants were eager to explain the background and history of the developments taking place in the city; many of them were directly affected by the developments I discuss throughout this chapter, whether as former factory workers or people living in the Romani neighbourhoods on the outskirts of the city. These discussions and oral histories were extremely informative for me. I have supplemented this ethnographic work through collecting and studying archival, scholarly, and journalist material about the city of Miskolc, including government reports, newspaper articles, Hungarian historical and sociological scholarship, and other official public documents by Romani organizations, such as press releases. In piecing together a history of Miskolc anchored in the experiences of Roma, I compare this archival and scholarly material on Miskolc with the experiences relayed to me by the Roma people I worked with.

Some methodological considerations

I have made several intentional methodological choices in piecing together this 'Romani people's history' of Miskolc. Grounded in the experiences of Roma living in a large urban city, this ethnographic work emphasizes the scholarly value of urban fieldwork, contrary to the general disciplinary bent of ethnography and anthropology. As Smith discusses, "traditionally social anthropology has had a rural bias," which could be considered its "distinguishing feature" as a discipline (Smith 2020: 153). The "rural bias" in ethnographic

[12] The Canadian refugee processing system encourages the submission of a certificate of Romani ethnicity alongside Hungarian nationals' refugee claim; as Romani claims to asylum are legally rooted in their ethnic persecution, it is necessary to demonstrate that a claimant belongs to an ethnicity that is not majority Hungarian. Romani organizations in Canada also issue certificates of ethnicity for Romani refugee claimants, a process discussed in Chapter 5.

work can be said to be particularly pronounced in research on Romani communities, which is in part rooted in the definitional dilemmas of how Romani identity has been framed historically. As Ladányi and Szelényi's work (2006) shows, perceptions of who is considered Roma tend to be influenced by outsider impressions of someone's class status and relationship to poverty: to be Roma and to be poor have been treated as synonymous. Here I aspire to build upon ethnographic work that makes visible Roma living in urban settings, once participating in waged work and co-habiting the city spaces alongside white Hungarians (Kemény 2005, Lengyel 2009). My fieldwork introduced me to Romungro Roma from Miskolc who viewed themselves as former factory workers, city dwellers, and a once-integrated, albeit differentiated, part of 'modern' Hungarian society. The question that has motivated this research approach of mine is what Hungarian history might look like when told from the perspective of these urban, ex-working, proletarianized Roma: what understandings of postsocialist urban transformation become distilled through the histories of Roma living and working in cities, and what sort of labour history emerges from the point-of-view of a group made into a racialized surplus population.[13]

Secondly, in writing a historical account of the city of Miskolc through the personal oral histories of my interlocutors, my fieldwork can be considered as employing the method of oral history (Ritchie 2015, Sommer and Quinlan 2018, Mahuiki 2019), though here I think through oral history from a political economy perspective. As Ritchie explains, oral history as a research method collects memories and personal commentaries of historical significance (Ritchie 2015: 1). For historians engaging in oral history as a method of collecting data, Ritchie cautions that oral history is "limited by the fallibility of memory and interpretation" (Ritchie 2015: 15). Yet here I aim to stress that how history is remembered, and how those memories change as contemporary changes impact surroundings, is precisely the process worth analyzing: to understand how contemporary conditions shape memories and historical testament. Such memories can reveal as much about the present as they do about the past, as Michael Burawoy's historical analysis of Hungarian postsocialism concluded, "for many in Miskolc, the past does indeed look more radiant every day" (Burawoy and Lukács 1992: 33). Here I look at that 'past made more radiant everyday' from the position of Romani

[13] The nuances of Romungro identity, particularly in contrast to traditional Romani sub-groups in the Romani community in Canada, is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6 of this dissertation.

experiences: how present conditions reshape history for Romani narratives about Hungary and postsocialism.

Throughout my fieldwork I spoke with individuals about their life stories and sought to document people's understandings and memories of work and social reproduction in Miskolc, the history of the Romani neighbourhoods, and their personal commentaries on the changes that have taken place in these communities in the past 30 years. There has been some modest yet inspired scholarship engaging in oral history with Romani communities in Hungary, namely Daróczi and Bársony's research (2008) into the Romani genocide during the Holocaust, and Bernáth's work (2002) on the forced sanitation campaigns of the Hungarian socialist state. What these works show is that oral history as a research method can capture Romani epistemologies, allowing Roma to tell their own stories. Oral history can thus address Bogdan et al's call (2015) for research on Roma to have "nothing about us without us." My research builds on these works by adding a perspective of how urban working Roma understand the large-scale economic transformations wrought by postsocialist neoliberalism. What I am engaging with here is the validity of orality as a way of telling history and capturing the ways in which capitalism has shaped peoples' lives and understanding of history.

My approach takes inspiration from Wolf's foundational work urging anthropologists "to discover history" (Wolf 1982): in his groundbreaking work *Europe and the People Without History,* Wolf takes to task "the tacit anthropological assumption" that marginalized and subaltern people lack historical experiences of significance (Wolf 1982: 18). Arguing that "the common people were as much agents in the historical process as they were its victims and silent witnesses" (Wolf 1982: xvi), Wolf's framework for historical anthropology is grounded in the demand that anthropologists "need to uncover the history of 'the people without history'" (Wolf 1982: xvi). Wolf's historical anthropology anchored around political economy sets a foundation still relevant today for investigating the relationship between the economic foundations of society and its social and cultural processes: for studying the relations of power that mediate the social organization of labour in society.

Wolf's approach to history responds to the tendency within academia to make invisible subaltern voices. Common ways of doing history are often designed in a way that marginalized groups such a Roma are not able to voice by themselves their histories; as

Spivak's work has shown, "the question of veridicality" and "the evidentiary status of testimony" pose a dilemma when telling history from the perspective of subaltern people (Spivak 2005: 475). For Spivak, subalternity "cannot be generalised according to hegemonic logic. That is what makes it subaltern. Yet it is a category and therefore repeatable" (Spivak 2005: 475). Spivak's framework can help us think through how oral history can be told from Romani perspectives and what subaltern historicization looks like. Echoing Wolf, historians have had a tendency to hold the belief that "Roma are a people 'without history'" (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 2); Romani epistemologies are erased or regarded as non-existent or invalid. Majtényi and Majtényi ask how we can write a 'counter-history' of Roma in Hungary: "to uncover the memories of oppressed and excluded groups and to criticize state power" (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 4).

While these questions of representation are important in history-making, I am interested in returning to Wolf's political economy approach and exploring how oral history can help to uncover the dynamics of life inside capitalism that are ideologically erased in conventional historical accounts. As McCarthy has cautioned, Marxist approaches to ethnography have tended to indulge nationalist perspectives, rooted in white male working-class culture:

> When we look at the work of Richard Hoggart, or Raymond Williams or E.P. Thompson, or later Paul Willis and Dick Hebdige, we find an ethnographic Marxism alloyed to a visceral nationalism, an ethnic particularism and wish fulfillment which it denies (McCarthy 2015: 88-89).

By centering the subaltern perspectives of urban Romani workers, my research approach attempts to divorce itself from ethnographic frameworks rooted in nationalism, asking what workers' history and 'ethnographic Marxism' could look like from the perspective of a racialized surplus population, from the people 'without history.'

To develop more properly what I mean by a kind of oral history rooted in political economy, one that documents the history of people 'without history,' I turn to the work of Gramsci, particularly Crehan's work on Gramsci and anthropology (Crehan 2002, 2011, 2018). For Crehan, rooting oral history in a Gramscian epistemology means adopting "an ethnographic sensibility, which is always determined to seek out, and take seriously, the narratives others use to make sense of their world and navigate their way through it" (Crehan 2018: 133).

Crehan frames Gramsci's sensibility as a kind of "ethnographic Marxism," which takes inspiration from the epistemological concerns formulated by Gramsci and "the profound ethnographic sensibility" of his *Prison Notebooks*. In other words, Crehan sees this Gramscian ethnographic Marxism as a resolve to investigate the narratives others use to make sense of their world and navigate their way through it. A Gramscian approach to ethnography can help researchers "trace out the complicated passage between the material structures that shape the basic social and political landscapes within which people live, and the narratives by which they live" (Crehan 2018: 133). Gramsci's 'ethnographic Marxism' strives to understand subaltern experiences while treating the narratives they tell about their lives "with the utmost seriousness" (Crehan 2018: 133).

Here I use this concept of a Gramscian ethnographic Marxism to think through how we do oral history: how do people narrate their lives in relation to the large sweeps of history, the big transformations of capital? How do they understand their own biographies and choices in these historical conditions? What do these narratives look like when told from the perspective of subaltern communities? Crehan explains that all too often progressive intellectuals "assume they know what subalterns think. If those actually experiencing inequality and oppression see things differently, then they are suffering from "false consciousness" and it is the intellectuals' task to enlighten them. This was never Gramsci's view" (Crehan 2018: 133). Part of the puzzle for Gramscian ethnographers then is to discern "to what extent do subaltern groups have their own, alternative understandings – understandings rooted in subaltern experience that genuinely challenge the prevailing hegemony?" (Crehan 2018: 134-135). For Gramsci, collective subaltern experience is the ultimate source of new, potentially transformative, political narratives (Crehan 2018: 137-138). That is to say, scholars should not attempt to 'save' or 'recover' Romani memory but must try to see how Romani oral histories can reveal new forms of class consciousness, fundamental for emancipation in a broader sense. Ethnographic Marxism is an attempt to consider how oral history embodies hegemonic ideas simultaneously alongside emancipatory epistemologies. In such a way Romani oral history is taken seriously, as Spivak and Gramsci would urge.

I use the ethnographic method to piece together the history of Miskolc from the viewpoint of Romani refugees and through their own telling, contextualizing the experiences they shared with me with a historical analysis of the wider changes taking place in the region during the time period of the emergence of Romani asylum-seeking. In relying on ethnography as the

primary research method I analyze Hungarian illiberalism and rightwing populism not as 'talk and text' but as enacted in the lived experiences and material conditions of individual people. Much of the studies of rightwing populism in Central Europe and beyond have had a methodological focus on the rhetoric, narratives, symbols, and discourse of rightwing political actors, studying illiberalism through discursive analyses or the social media and party platform representations of the Hungarian far-right (Dean & Bice Maiguashca 2020). This chapter relies on ethnography as the primary research method and consequently analyzes rightwing populism as enacted in the lived experiences of citizenship and the material conditions of people. How is the crisis of neoliberalism and the rise of rightwing populism present in the everyday lives and made sense of by individuals, particularly those targeted by its exclusionary politics? In this way, the chapter connects the individual and everyday experiences of Roma who have sought asylum in Canada with the broader historical, political, and economic shifts taking place in the city.

A Romani people's history of Miskolc

Miskolc is the fourth largest city in Hungary, located in its northeast region and the administrative centre of the Borsod-Abaúj Zemplén County. During the communist era, Miskolc grew to become a highly industrialized city and served as the center of steel production in socialist Hungary (Szakolcai 2016). Today Miskolc is now characterized by a high unemployment rate and household poverty, in particular among the local Roma population, who live primarily in thirteen demographically concentrated areas on the outskirts of Miskolc (ODIHR 2016). Since 2010, Miskolc's City Council has been governed by Fidesz, the conservative political party also governing the country nationally for the same time period. It is estimated that approximately 25,000 Roma live in the city (ODIHR 2016), out of a total population of 205,626 (Kristof 2018) making the city and the county the most densely populated by Roma in the country.

Already from the turn of the 20th Century, Miskolc had become the center of one of the fastest developing heavy industrial regions of historical Hungary. Following the Treaty of Trianon, which reduced the territory of Hungary, Miskolc became the leading city of northeast Hungary in terms of industry, commerce, and culture (Kristof 2018). 'Greater Miskolc' was established following World War II when nearby settlements were attached to

its area, thus making Miskolc the second largest city in Hungary. During much of these decades, Roma lived in the area and worked as blacksmiths, musicians, and cattle-keepers; according to Lengyel's work, Romani residents paid taxes, served in the army, spoke Hungarian, and did not live separately from non-Romani Hungarians (Lengyel 2009).

During the communist era, Miskolc grew to become a highly industrialized city and served as the center of steel production in socialist Hungary (Kristof 2018, Szakolczai 2006). Soon after the communist transition, industrialization became the most important goal of economic policy in Hungary, and "significant investments were directed toward large cities and industrializing regions" (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 73). The Borsodi Basin was designated as one of the new industrial centers of Hungary (Pal 2017). The socialist push for industrialization created particularly favourable circumstances for the development of the northeast Hungarian city, since Miskolc had long been an important industrial centre in the region. Heavy industrial investments continued throughout the 1950s and Miskolc emerged as a fortress of both old coal and new natural gas and oil-based production centers, second only to Budapest (Pal 2017). As a result, during the socialist era the development of Miskolc was prioritized, and the city received distinguished political and cultural status attention in Hungary.

Meanwhile the city experienced significant population growth, as more than 30,000 workers and former peasants migrated to Miskolc in the 1950s (Lengyel 2009). The main industries were in engineering and iron and steel. Its factories were regarded with a traditionally high reputation: the ironworks - at Diósgyőr, by then incorporated into the Miskolc area - and the Lenin Metal Works (Szakolczai 2006: 1316). Huge housing estates were built throughout the 1950s to the 1980s around the historic city centre. The 1970s in particular saw an increase in the number of Romani residents living in Miskolc, as emigration from the surrounding villages continued (Lengyel 2009).

Michael Burawoy, an American political sociologist who conducted a year's worth of ethnographic work in Miskolc's Lenin Steel Works factory in the 1980s, paints a vivid urban picture of Miskolc's city life under industrializing socialism:

> When I went north to my various workplaces I often passed through Miskolc - the capital of Hungary's industrial heartland. It is strung along the bottom of a valley at one

> end of which are the great Lenin Steel Works (LKM) and its sister factory, the Diósgyör Machine Works. From the hills I had seen the steelworks sprawling over its vast area with its complex of railroad tracks, the familiar tangle of defunct chimneys that had been its Siemens-Martin furnaces, the covered buildings that were its rolling mills, its blast furnaces, and its glowing dump of molten slag. I often wondered what it must be like to work down there in the heart of socialist industry. What had happened to those steelworkers - once glamorized as the proletarian heroes of socialism? (Burawoy and Lukács 1992: 10-11)

The city life of Miskolc was thus shaped by its role as the industrial center of the socialist nation, as the modernization logic of so-called 'industrializing principles' came into play in city-planning. The first encompassing plan was prepared in 1950, calling for the development of a 'unified socialist city and community network' (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 43). Again Burawoy captures the socialist imagery associated with the city of Miskolc during Hungarian state socialism:

> Certainly I had arrived in a proletarian city. With a quarter of a million inhabitants, Miskolc is Hungary's second biggest town and industrial center. Its pulse is ruled by the factory siren. Chimneys belch smoke and dust into a polluted atmosphere; at the turn of the shifts, buses spread through the city - jam-packed with the silence of the weary; housing projects are cramped and overflowing; bars bulge on payday; and tiny weekend homes, planted next to one another in the surrounding hills , provide an eagerly sought refuge when work, weather, and family permit. The city's character is engraved in the rhythm of its time and its distribution in space. Although quite a distance from the center and not easily visible from the main street running from one end of town to the other, the Lenin Steel Works and the Diósgyör Machine Factory are the directing forces of city life (Burawoy and Lukács 1992: 120).

By the 1980s, many Hungarian Roma held low-level jobs in the industrial factories around Miskolc, and in particular, the Lenin Steel Works, the oldest of three integrated steel mills in Hungary which all together employed approximately 50,000 of the city's population. According to Levine-Rasky, "the 1960s saw widespread recruitment of Roma primarily into mining, heavy industry, and agriculture, performing the most demanding, dangerous and lowest paid jobs" (Levine-Rasky 2016: 80-81). As a result, many Roma migrated to industrial

zones to work; during industrialization Roma across Hungary were put into positions in factories and workers' hostels (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 40). By the early 1970s, 90 percent of Romani men and 40 percent of Romani women were fully employed (Levine-Rasky 2016: 81)

According to Lengyel, throughout the socialist era, Romani people who came to Miskolc searching for work found themselves shuffled for decades between Romani settlements, desegregation strategies, and rundown factory slums that eventually deteriorated into segregated Romani settlements once again (Lengyel 2009). The research of Hungarian geographers documents how the emergence of ghetto districts within Miskolc was intensified by suburban migratory trends, with one of the results being that "a contiguous eastern slum region emerged within the Miskolc agglomeration characterized by the marked presence of ethnic minorities" (Kristof 2018). Additional accounts assert that as many as 30,000 Roma continued to live in segregated settlements during Hungarian state socialism (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 71-73), despite government attempts at dismantling and eradicating what it considered to be "gypsy slums." One such neighbourhood became known as the Numbered Streets: 'low-comfort'[14] homes built beside the Lenin Steel Works. These shabby homes became occupied by Romani families who worked in the nearby factories, and as increasing Roma were displaced from other demolished areas, the Numbered Streets became a prominent, increasingly segregated, area for Miskolc's Roma.

Some of the Romani people I met during my fieldwork worked in the factory complex near the Numbered Streets. One woman I met during my fieldwork in the Numbered Streets told me she was born in the neighbourhood in the 1950s. An elderly yet spirited woman, she described to me that her father worked at the Lenin Steel Works; in fact, most of her relatives worked at either the canon factory, the steel mill, or the wire rope plant in Miskolc. She reminisced how "every morning that big gate would open and everybody was happy to go to work, with pleasure." Another man I spoke with, one of the activists who worked at the Romani self-government in Miskolc, also used to work at the Lenin Steel Works in the 1980s, when he was in his 20s. I asked him what it was like, and he said:

[14] The descriptor 'low-comfort' is used in Hungarian to describe homes lacking some amenities such as running water and full electricity.

> I used to work there in the 1980s, I would go there to work everyday with thousands of others; it was like going to work every morning to a small town, it was that big and that many workers. The gates would open in the morning and it was like entering a new city, busy and full of life.

This 'big gate' opening in the morning was described to me on more than one occasion in discussions with Roma about the socialist factories.

While my Romani interlocutors seemed to enjoy sharing with me their memories of factory work under Hungarian socialism, the depiction of Roma life under state socialism in historical accounts tell primarily a story of forced assimilation and state surveillance. According to Majtényi and Majtényi, state socialism in Hungary regarded Roma as a social problem and "envisioned putting Gypsies to work and integrated them into heavy industry" as the only way to assimilate them into Hungary society (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 33). As a result, "according to the propaganda of the time, 'assimilation' of the Gypsies would be solved through providing them with work in 'socialist' large-scale industry" (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 66). Party leaders viewed the Romani population as "a backup labor force for extensive industrialization and rapidly developing heavy industry" (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 38). The regime's notion of assimilation, according to Stewart, could be characterized as a "simple equation" for "the model of assimilation pursued by the Hungarian socialist state: (Gypsy) + (Socialist wage- labor) + (Housing) = (Hungarian worker) + (Gypsy folklore)" (Stewart 1994).

Moreover, what Hungarian historical accounts argue is that while forced industrialization may have transformed the traditional lifestyle of Romani communities, "it did little to change their situation within society. 'Socialist' industry generally viewed them as unskilled labor, and as such most Gypsies filled the lowest positions in nationalized industries" (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 43). State socialism was further characterized by surveillance and police brutality towards Romani communities, in which "the declared goal in such instances was to force them into salaried work" (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 46). Police harassment, intimidation, and violence against Romani communities under communism is documented throughout historical accounts (Levine-Rasky 2016: 81). Additional historical accounts document forced bathing and disinfection of rural Romani settlements by state officials (Bernáth 2002, Mohácsi 2017), in which health officials would visit and examine Romani

settlements every two weeks to enforce group sanitation with harsh chemicals. Barany, for example characterizes this period as follows:

> The means to realize Romani assimilation were often carelessly chosen and insensitively implemented, and at times resulted in increased exclusion of the Roma. For the communist states the Romani minorities represented a nuisance that impeded their construction of a new society (Barany 1994: 326).

While the dominant historical depiction of Roma during Hungarian state socialism focuses on forced assimilation and state surveillance, the Roma from Miskolc I spoke with articulated a different historical narrative. In my conversations with them, Roma who had lived in Miskolc predominantly expressed nostalgia for the socialist era, and this was the case regardless of a person's age: some of these Roma were born and lived throughout the socialist era, but many more of them were only children when socialism ended, if they were born at all during this time. Nevertheless, some form of memory transmission and oral narratives around state socialism was in currency among virtually all Roma I met from Miskolc: as urban Roma, living in neighbourhoods near former factories and whose family members and relatives had been factory workers, proletarianization was remembered as a genuine and meaningful process, in which Romungro Roma were part of a socialist working class. While Romani persecution under communism should not be discounted and understated, it is necessary to capture how Roma remember it differently, especially as they form historical narratives while presently situated within the massive social downgrading of neoliberal postsocialism.

For example, the most significant historical break noted by many of my research informants regarding the city of Miskolc was the end of communism and Hungary's transformation to a market economy. The regime change, the times before it as well as the times since, was referenced frequently in casual conversation when discussing the predicament of Roma in northeast Hungary. For my research informants, much of the contemporary relations between Roma and non-Roma in the city can be traced back to this pivotal historical junction. Most of them spoke positively about the way in which Romani people in Miskolc lived under communism, expressing positive associations and fondness about the Romani experience in socialist Miskolc. As one of my interlocutors, a former factory worker who now works as a Romani activist, noted,

> Under communism, Roma and non-Roma Hungarians were equal: we worked together, we drank beer together, we lived in the same neighbourhoods. We didn't have classes then, economically or ethnically. It was good; it really was like this.

These comments from my interlocutors contrast the general depiction given in Hungarian historical analyses, which emphasize that Roma were not entirely brought into the proletarian brotherhood of workers. As Burawoy's ethnographic work documents:

> [I am told] there are those who 'deserve' to be poor. These are the half million Gypsies who, I am forever being told, despite government assistance continue to malinger and steal, live in a cesspool of poverty because they know no better and thereby heap disrepute onto a nation of honest, decent, and hardworking people (Burawoy and Lukács 1992: 128).

Majtényi and Majtényi (2016) too insist that even those Roma who did engage in paid work and were part of workforces with other Hungarians face discrimination. They provide a documented example of Romani nail smithers who lodged a formal complaint in 1959, attesting that the Romani "workers of the collective behaved according to the 'rules of socialist existence' but they were beaten by police in the pub" (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 51). The stereotypes of Roma as "work-avoiders" and "responsibility-evading" circulated widely during Hungarian socialism (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 45-46, 68), such that even Roma who were 'productive members of society' were often discriminated against: "typically, lacking social acknowledgment in contemporary Hungary, those Roma who have been successful in the labor world are challenged when trying to assimilate" (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 11). Contemporary accounts describe similar dynamics, such as Feischmidt's (2012) study of of micro-villages in southwestern Hungary that concludes how economic success of Roma does not guarantee social acknowledgment.

The explanation for these diverging narratives and Romani socialist nostalgia lays in the postsocialist realities Roma have experienced after the regime change in the 1990s. As discussed in the previous chapter, the changes wrought by the rapid introduction of neoliberalism into Hungary had a dramatic negative impact on Romani communities, hence making 'the past more radiant everyday,' to paraphrase Burawoy. It was common for the 'regime change' to be referenced in discussions of the contemporary plight of Romani people

in Miskolc today. When I would ask, 'Why do so many Roma from Miskolc go to Canada?' the conversation usually started with the role of Roma in the city during the communist time. For example, during a memorial service to commemorate a series of murders that were executed by a group of neo-nazis towards Romani communities in 2008 and 2009, one Romani woman stated:

> Things have changed in the last 20 years. Things were different under communism. Before the regime change, it was better for Roma, and now we see this racism that leads to these murders. There has been a big change in Miskolc since the regime change: the racism is now out in the open and not under the rug anymore. The rise of Jobbik [Hungarian far-right political party] makes it ok.

The postsocialist promises of freedom and prosperity have yet to transpire for Miskolc's Roma: as another Romani activist explained to me,

> Everyone believed it would get better after communism. But for us Roma, it got worse. Under Kádár there were factories and a big working class; there was no 'gypsy' class, and no anti-gypsyism the way it is now. All the gypsies worked in the factories; everybody worked. Understand? Together. But now we cannot find employment and we are blamed for all of society's problems.

Taking seriously the narratives Roma tell themselves about their lives and the history of Miskolc thus means understanding what happened to Romani communities following the regime change. As discussed previously in Chapter 2, the postsocialist transformation in the 1990s dramatically restructured the Hungarian economy and society. As large nationalized industry collapsed, deindustrialization provoked high unemployment and economic recession. The economic transition both in East-Central Europe generally and within Hungary specifically had a profound impact on all sectors of the nation's economy, especially the large urban sites of production, such as Miskolc.

Such findings have significant implications for a city such as Miskolc and how Roma understand their lives within its history. Miskolc has been particularly hit by the de-industrialization of the postcommunist era. The economic recession after the end of the communist era hit the industrial cities of northeast Hungary the hardest, as discussed in the

previous chapter (Bartha and Tóth 2021: 1728, see also Szombati 2018, Scheiring 2020b). Throughout the city, "factories collapsed like dominoes in the early 1990s" (Thorpe 2012), the unemployment rate rose until it became the highest in the country, and the population of Miskolc dramatically decreased (Thorpe 2012). Kristof, whose research analyzes the growth and decline of suburban settlements in the Miskolc agglomeration, estimates that following postsocialist restructuring in the region, the population of Miskolc declined by more than 50,000 people (Kristof 2018). The economic situation of the city went through a major overhaul, and smaller enterprises appeared in place of the large state-owned companies, with many of the industrial factories downsizing and eventually closing. The evidence of this massive economic change is visible in present-day Miskolc, with the city's perimeters framed by enormous now-empty and idle factories, forming a central node in what is now known as Hungary's "rustbelt" (Scheiring 2020b).

Miskolc thus underwent a massive political shift at the same time as neoliberal restructuring. From the grievances of these dispossessed workers arose an increasingly anti-liberal politics, rooted in ethnicized populism (Szombati 2018, Kalb and Halmai 2011) as workers became susceptible to neo-nationalist populism. Such political economy accounts of postsocialism explain why and how Miskolc became a centre for rightwing populism in Hungary. Important are the ways in which the rise of rightwing populism impacted local Romani communities: the ensuing solidification of social ghettoes under neoliberal restructuring set the ethnically Hungarian population against the Roma poor, who, after being the first to be laid off, were then stigmatised as 'lazy' and 'welfare-dependent' (Szombati 2018, Bartha and Tóth 2021).

Since 2010, Miskolc's City Council has been governed by Fidesz, the conservative political party also governing the country nationally during this same time period. Almost as popular in Miskolc is the far-right party, Jobbik, who has lost by only a small margin in local elections. These local rightwing politicians have used anti-Gypsyist rhetoric to gain popularity (Szombati 2018). For example, at a large and well-known demonstration Jobbik organized against 'Gypsy crime' in the centre of Miskolc in 2013, Peter Jakab, a Jobbik politician and one of the event's main organizers, asserted, "We have had enough. For 22 years, Miskolc has become a symbol, a centre of squalor, of crime, of the lack of public order" (Thorpe 2012). These coded messages framed Romani communities as the scapegoat to be blamed for Miskolc's postsocialist decline.

Analyzing the historical transformation of Miskolc hence demonstrates why postsocialism, not state socialism, was conceptualized as the starting point of contemporary Romani marginalization by my research informants in their historical narratives. One of my informants, the former factory worker turned Romani activist, expressed how these changes had impacted him when I asked him if I would be able to go inside any of the empty factories that are scattered around today's Miskolc:

> Well I would take you to see the factory myself, but I think it would be sad and strange for me to see it now, empty and not bustling with workers. I think it would just be heart-wrenching actually, for me to revisit it. After the regime changed, the factories closed; there is nothing there now. And look at us now…

Hence, Roma living in Miskolc endured not only the dramatic effects wrought by deindustrialization and unemployment but also the lived realities of heightened racism and populist politics. In the first few years following the regime change, 40 percent of Roma workers lost their full-time jobs and were excluded from the labor market. In 1993, unemployment in their circle was three and a half times more than white Hungarians (Majtényi and Majtényi 2016: 162). As Cahn wrote in 2001,

> unemployment among Roma runs at 70-100 percent in some parts of the country - notably the northeast. Layoffs, due to restructuring of the Hungarian economy from heavy industry and policies of full employment, began in the mid-1980s and were very disproportionately Romani. Today, towns such as Miskolc, Ozd and Salgotarjan, in Hungary's northern industrial belt, have large populations of Roma, many of whom have not had a job in over a decade (Cahn 2001).

Roma living in postsocialist Miskolc became unemployed and reliant on casual work, the black market economy, metal collecting, and a generally precarious lifestyle (Lengyel 2009). Romani communities in Miskolc today face widespread segregation in the labor market, education and housing.

Romani oral histories about the deterioration of their communities alongside postsocialism are supported by historical documents from this time, with reports from this time describing a rapid increase in school and residential segregation (ERRC 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004).

Research and press releases from the European Roma Rights Centre in the late 1990s and early 2000s describe a rapid and dramatic trend towards ghettoization emerging throughout postsocialist northeast Hungary; they describe the development of Romani segregation and forced evictions starting in the 1990s. The reports further document increased hospital segregations and medical mistreatment arising in the early 2000s. In particular, in the early 2000s, the ERRC conducted research in an attempt to document the extent of spatial segregation of Roma in Hungary and to determine whether or not forced evictions disproportionately affect Roma (ERRC 2002, 2004). Their research shows that most segregated Roma neighbourhoods came into existence in the early 1990s as part of large-scale evictions that relocated Roma from city centres and restructured deindustrialized urban spaces by excluding Romani neighbourhoods. Such accounts corroborate the narratives used by the Roma I met in Miskolc in their oral histories.

It is thus important to counter historical narratives that purport ghettoization and anti-Romani discrimination to be ahistorical phenomena, or simply characteristics of state socialism. As Olah argues, within Hungarian media there is a dominant ahistorical depiction of Roma as a homogenous group of people who have always lived at the margins of society, in "ghettos", waiting for state interventions to change their situation for the better (Olah 2015). The Romani people that I spoke with thus see a connection between the transformation of Hungary to a market economy in the 1990s, the rise of far-right politics and racism, and the worsening of the situation of Roma in Miskolc. While Romani experience in Miskolc under communism was not unproblematic, it is clear that their position worsened dramatically with the regime change, as evidenced by the massive socio-economic upheaval experienced in Hungary in the 1990s.

The repeated reference by my research informants to the situation of Roma in Miskolc before and after socialism is significant for the contextualization of Romani asylum-seeking to Canada. The people that I spoke with drew links between the massive changes that took place in the immediate aftermath of postcommunist transformation and the movement of Roma to Canada that takes place today. Throughout casual conversation, a historicization of Roma going to Canada was made through referencing socialism and postsocialism. As one informant, a Romani sociologist assisting the Romani organization, remarked while discussing the regime change, "And you know, the people who go to Canada? They lived well under socialism. It was a complete turn-around in their living situation afterwards."

Another informant, a woman who had been to Canada and was deported after one year of living in Toronto, explained it to me in this way:

> A lot of families go to Canada nowadays because things changed after communism. Today Roma in Miskolc are unemployed, poor, and becoming homeless. This is why the gypsies go to Canada; today the Miskolc city government does not care about them.

Another of my interlocutors described the movement of Roma to Canada in terms of how life in Canada for Romani asylum-seekers resembles the circumstances Roma enjoyed in Miskolc during socialism. A woman who had filed for refugee status in Toronto, remained in Canada for three years while her claim was processed and then returned to Miskolc only months before I met her in 2016, she explained her experience in Toronto like this to me:

> When people go to Canada and live there for a bit, it reminds them of the time before the regime change, the times of socialism. You know, do you understand? It reminds them of what it was like to live back then, having a job and a house and some security, not feeling like a 'gypsy,' without the everyday racism we feel now.

This woman, a mother of four children, was in her late-30's, scarcely older than me and only a child during the years of state socialism. Yet her comments suggest that the reconfiguration of Romani experience in Miskolc following the transformation of Hungary from a state socialist society to a free-market economy plays an integral role in the ways in which Romani people contextualize their position today in Hungarian society. One teenager I mentored through a local high school in Toronto once joked to me,

> So you know Kádár? We Roma say he is our godfather and that we only lived well when he was alive. A lot of Romani people baptize their babies in Kádár's name, and we would say that if they wrote to him about the baptism, he would send the child money. Officially nobody ever got money, but we would joke that Roma would write letters to him to let him know whenever he had another godchild.

In order to begin to make sense of why Roma have gone to Canada, the dynamics of postsocialist realities for Romani people and the uses of socialist nostalgia and memory

transmission in making sense of contemporary circumstances is therefore a useful starting point. These remarks from my interlocutors suggest that in going to Canada, Roma are seeking something from a lost socialist future, or at the very least recovering the societal belonging they narrate today as once having during the socialist era.

In taking seriously the narratives Roma tell to make sense of their own experiences and history, we thus uncover a nostalgia for socialism, rooted in enduring the horrors of postsocialism. It is thus analytically important to contrast Romani nostalgia for socialism with studies on Hungarian worker nostalgia for state socialism. Bartha's work is instructive here. Her interviews with Hungarian workers in the car industry found that, while the workers interviewed in earlier research were openly nostalgic about the socialist welfare state (Bartha 2011, 237–60), by 2018–2020 interviewees either expressed a complete lack of interest in this distant past or asserted mainly negative associations with the 'communist dictatorship' (Bartha and Tóth 2021). Bartha and Tóth argue that this finding can be attributed to the strongly anti-communist climate of recent decades, the absence of an alternative public sphere in which leftist voices might make themselves heard, and the ways in which the former system is routinely dismissed as 'criminal' (Bartha and Tóth 2021).

A particularly relevant aspect of their research is that they found a marked rise in "ethnicized politics" by workers in the Hungarian car industry in their narratives about postsocialism. Bartha's previous research found that "ethnicised arguments" were rarely voiced by interview partners, but that this had change in recent interviews with workers:

> While ethnicised arguments were still seen as taboo in the previous research (Bartha 2011a), in our new interview project the issue of the 'otherness' of Roma people and Roma culture frequently came up in the group discussions and at the trade union meetings that we attended. Workers went out of their way to stress their belonging to the privileged in-group by distinguishing themselves from the cultural 'others' (Bartha and Tóth 2021: 1742)

Scheiring's interviews with former workers living in Hungarian deindustrialized cities found that "the market transition was a negative experience for the majority of interviewees… Even those who did not lose their jobs talked about a decline in their living standard" (Scheiring 2020b: 1166). One informant is quoted,

> Before the regime change, life was better (laughs). You knew you had a safe job, secure income, a way to make a living. You knew you could go on holidays. You were not stressed. You had no debt. Do you understand? You lived normally (Scheiring 2020b: 1166).

These were the sentiments routinely expressed by the Roma I spoke with in Miskolc, yet, importantly, their perception of life being better was tied not just to economic security but also feeling safe from ethnic violence and societal segregation. As such, life in Miskolc prior to the postsocialist transformation represents a time before Roma experienced a double-dispossession, becoming locked out of both labour markets and Hungarian national belonging.

The postsocialist societal transformations help to explain both why it is common amongst my research informants to look back on socialism positively as well as how they frame the history of Miskolc as a rupture between socialism and postsocialism. While some realities of socialist practice were rooted in anti-gypsy assimilation and policing, the realities of postsocialism are seen as a much worse fate. For Roma in Miskolc, taking seriously their own narratives means acknowledging their own working-class realities and how deindustrialization and the subsequent rise of nationalist racism have been a painful dislocation of their lives. These historical narratives point to the ways in which Romani nostalgia for socialism and Romani asylum-seeking are linked: the journey to Canada as a journey in search of the material security and safety they remember from Miskolc's socialist past.

Asylum-seeking and struggles around social reproduction

A people's history of Miskolc told from the perspective of Romani residents captures the major rupture that the city experienced in the 1990s with the postsocialist transformations, revealing the ways in which Roma experienced a massive social downgrading and ruptures in work and community. For Roma in Miskolc, postsocialism translated into emerging tensions within the sphere of social reproduction. As postsocialist transformations have given way to both economic insecurity as well as rightwing populism, Romani communities in Miskolc

have come face-to-face with challenges centered on housing, poverty, unemployment, healthcare, and education. In tracing the postsocialist history of the city, it becomes clear that the geography and social demographics of the city of Miskolc has become shaped around these struggles of social reproduction, and Romani asylum-seeking has emerged as the end result. Social reproduction is the key for understanding how a people's history of the city comes together in present-day struggles.

In this section I look specifically at my fieldwork in two segregated neighbourhoods in Miskolc, "the Numbered Streets" (*A számozott utcák*) and Lyukóvölgy. Here I share peoples' narratives around evictions and homelessness in Miskolc and how they connect these struggles to the history of the city and their decision-making process to seek asylum in Canada. In seeking to historicize and explain Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, it is necessary to understand what everyday life is like for Romani residents in Miskolc. During my time speaking to Roma who had sought asylum in Canada, it became clear to me that struggles around social reproduction, such as workplace exclusion, medical discrimination, surveillance related to accessing social services, and, in particular, housing were characteristic of their lives in Miskolc. These struggles were built into the urban infrastructure of the city of Miskolc and shaped Romani asylum-seekers' motivations for leaving it for Canada.

Throughout my fieldwork, speaking to Romani families and activists, I was given countless examples of the everyday racism Roma experience in Miskolc while trying to access the basic services needed for social reproduction, such as healthcare, education, public transportation, and acquiring groceries. People often referred to experiences of racism while walking in the city, taking the city tram, going into shops, or trying to be served in a restaurant or cafe. As an ethnographer, an outsider new to the city, I myself noticed quite quickly the way in which the city seemed structured around this discrimination: the Romani neighbourhoods I visited were on the outskirts of the city, the trams I needed to take to get to them were crawling with ticket controllers who targeted Romani passengers, and the city centre had a much more perceptible police presence than Budapest or the other Hungarian towns I had lived in. Romani residents in Miskolc are made to feel like outsiders in their own city, which is reinforced by the public discourse of Hungarian politicians, such as the Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orbán's remarks about Roma living in Miskolc during the 2018 election campaign trail: "There was a time when people from outside migrated en masse

into this city. And you remember what happened. The people of Miskolc experienced what happened then" (Orbán as quoted in Rorke 2019b). Roma in Miskolc are well-familiar with this sort of racist dog-whistling from politicians implying that Roma are outsiders to the city, the same as foreign migrants who had settled in Miskolc, to the detriment of local residents.

My informants tell me that "there is apartheid in Hungary." I am repeatedly told that "they want to make Miskolc a Gypsy-free zone." The activists with the Romani self-government tell me that for at least the past ten years, the municipal authorities of Miskolc have been pursuing a policy of excluding and stigmatizing the Romani population. They give examples of public statements from the police chief on the existence of 'gypsy crime' (ERRC 2014a, ERRC 2014b) and from the mayor who spoke of his wish to clear the city from 'anti-social' Roma (ODIHR 2016). "Racism lives like this everyday in Miskolc," explain the activists.

Today many Roma feel barred from employment opportunities in Miskolc. I was frequently told by my research informants that it is impossible to get hired in the city if you are visibly Roma. One elderly lady told me that all five of her siblings had moved to Canada except for one, who had fair skin and didn't look like a Roma: "she could get work as a hairdresser in Miskolc." The only option for many Roma to survive, then, is public works, which does not provide a sufficient amount of funds to live off of and so poverty and the threat of homelessness are widespread.

One afternoon at the Roma self-government office, I spoke at length with Gyula, an elderly and impassioned man who works in the office. He explained to me that Romani families in Miskolc were constantly being intimidated by local authorities, and it's not just the police. He explained that one major activity bothering Romani communities in Miskolc is the constant check-ups by state services, who do home inspections, looking in fridges and checking the sanitary conditions of the yards. The inspections create a culture of fear and intimidation, with a constant looming threat that Romani children will be taken away and put into protective custody by children services. Sometimes a family may face such an inspection three times in a single month. Reports from the European Roma Rights Centre describe as many as 45 inspections within ten months, in which "the Romani tenants felt humiliated, particularly as no such measures were taken in any other areas of the city" (ERRC 2014b). These inspections are described by a report from the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR):

> These joint official control activities were conducted by the groups of 10–15 officials, primarily the Miskolc Local Government Law Enforcement Section, accompanied by the representatives of other institutions, including social services and public utility providers. Reportedly, in the course of the control activities, the groups would inspect entire apartments and in some cases issue fines, in a manner described as "harassing and fear inducing" by the Commissioner for Human Rights (ODIHR 2016).

For Gyula, this is part of "growing Nazi ideology" that has seeped into everyday city life in Miskolc, not just for Roma but for all poor people in the city. Like the others I've spoken with, he locates the history of this treatment in the post-socialist realities of Miskolc:

> There was hope things would get better post-1989 but they just got worse and worse. Before then, all the Roma worked in the factories: Roma and non-Roma worked together and no one asked about your ethnicity. It really was so. Nowadays, it doesn't matter if you try to act normal, they still hate you.

When I asked the Roma self-government activists about this occurrence, a Romani sociologist-turned-activist explained to me that he believes there was an individualization of the problem and that "this is what the city wants." For him this was an issue of democracy:

> The lowest level of society has no democracy. Maybe there is democracy for some Hungarians, but there is no democracy for the lowest level. The poorest people on the lowest level have to figure things out for themselves, they have to solve everything themselves, and they cannot rely on public services. So it's not a democracy, it's a dictatorship. There is so much poverty and struggle at the lowest level of Hungarian society.

Romani families from Miskolc suffer from a number of chronic illnesses, including depression and anxiety, high blood pressure, lung issues, heart problems, strokes, and diabetes. The chronic and systemic medical discrimination faced by Roma in Miskolc became especially clear to me after I met with a doctor in Toronto who treated several Romani refugee claimants during the years 2015-2018. The family physician explained to me in casual conversation that what struck him most about the Roma who were arriving from

Hungary was the "huge number of untreated chronic conditions" he observed. He explained, by way of example, that his medical team routinely found a high number of ear-related and auditory health problems in adult Hungarian Roma. As he continued to encounter several patients requiring hearing aids and treatment, he realized, somewhat astonished, that the trend likely was the outcome of his patients not being treated for simple ear infections when they were children.

A magazine story about Roma living in west Toronto describes a similar finding amongst Canadian physicians treating Hungarian Romani asylum-seekers:

> a staff physician at Health Access Thorncliffe Park noticed that Roma patients often came in complaining of pain and physical ailments that, over time, were revealed to have their root in trauma or mental illness. 'Post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and depression seem quite dominant' (Hune-Brown 2018).

In the article, the Canadian doctors working with Hungarian Romani refugees explained that when it came to factors impacting the social determinants of health, "Roma seemed to tick all the boxes" (Hune-Brown 2018). One doctor is further quoted as saying, "When I speak to our [Romani] clients, it's mind boggling how many of those system challenges come together in one family" (Hune-Brown 2018).

Alongside discrimination related to employment, health services, and state authorities, housing is a major nexus around which many of the other issues meet and are often exacerbated. Homelessness is a major risk and a theme frequently discussed amongst Romani activists, families, and individuals considering moving to Canada. The lack of a permanent address bars them from obtaining an address card, which in Hungary is required for accessing healthcare, education, and other public services. If a family does not have an official address card, they are not eligible for state benefits such as health insurance, social assistance, and access to medical attention. In Hungary, it is required to have a registered address (issued in the form of a residence card) in order to receive medical care. Yet, constant displacement – from evictions and housing demolitions in Miskolc to deportations from Canada - are a major characteristic of Roma living in Miskolc. Two neighbourhoods stand out in this regard and are discussed in further detail below.

The Numbered Streets

The 'Numbered Streets' is a predominantly Romani neighbourhood on the outskirts of Miskolc, about a 20-minute tram ride west from the city centre; most of its dwellers live in social housings provided by the Local Government. The history of the neighbourhood stretches back to the early Twentieth Century: one historical analysis states that the neighbourhood was founded in 1909, when the increasing number of workers in the heavy industry made it necessary to provide them with housing (Pál 2017). The Numbered Streets is part of the Diósgyőr-Vasgyár area of the town whose importance in the history of post-industrial Miskolc is unquestionable. In the second half of the last century, it became known as home to hundreds of families working in the heavy industry the town was once famous for. In the state socialist era many families saw their prospective future in the town and decided to move to one of the workers' colonies from the surrounding towns and villages. Today the Numbered Streets is one of the most segregated areas in Miskolc, according to the Roma Civil Rights Movement.

The Numbered Streets neighbourhood became well-known across Hungary in May of 2014, after the city council of Miskolc adopted an amendment to its social housing by-laws that targeted Roma living in its social housing, "adding a new, worrying chapter to this city government's history of excluding Roma" (ERRC 2014b). Approximately a year and a half after the mayor's incendiary comments about not allowing Romani refugees back into the city from Canada, Miskolc Mayor Ákos Kriza came up with a plan "for the liquidation of ghettos and slums" in the city. The amended decree allowed the city to terminate social housing contracts, permitting authorities to instigate evictions and demolitions in the so-called 'ghettos' and 'slums' of Miskolc, with one of the main targets being the Numbered Streets neighbourhood. Following its decision, the city unilaterally canceled rent contracts for those living in social council housing. The council estates that were ordered to be demolished are mostly to be found in the Numbered Streets district. As most of the people living in the Numbered Streets were not owner-occupiers, but renters of the houses, they had a very limited space for negotiation. Since the spring of 2014, the Municipal Council of Miskolc has issued eviction orders to numerous Roma families living in social housing in the Numbered Streets neighbourhood in the city (Bangau 2014). About half of the population had left by the spring of 2015.

The amended decree of the Local Government of Miskolc had been communicated as a part of the "slum-eradication program" of the Local Government. The language used by the Hungarian Embassy in Ottawa, for example, in communication with the Canadian government, describes the amended city decree as "eliminating outdated segregated areas," updating city by-laws that had been "in force since 2006" so as to make them "more effective and enabling the municipality to reach its development goals" (IRB 2017). The Hungarian Embassy explained that "The Municipal Assembly of the City with County Rights of Miskolc, with due consideration to public health, public schooling and public safety concerns, decided that the segregated numbered streets area should be eliminated" (IRB 2017).

The amended by-law did offer a form of monetary compensation for those evicted in the sum of approximately $6,500-9,000 CAD. However, a stipulation attached to receiving the compensation stated that compensation was only available if the person buys a property strictly outside the territory of Miskolc. The Hungarian Embassy of Ottawa justified such a measure to Immigration Canada by arguing that

> the municipal council, considering that properties with an adequate level of comfort are unavailable at this price within the city boundaries, and the development of new slums in other parts of the city must be avoided, introduced a new rule. This foresaw that the compensation for leaving a low-comfort level municipal property was only available if the tenant purchased a property outside of the city's boundaries (IRB 2017).

Although the slum eradication program of the Local Government was officially presented as a desegregation measure, this measure was in many ways connected to the Local Government's development plans on the local football stadium nearby the Numbered Streets. The area is next to the Diósgyőr soccer stadium, which the government planned to renovate for $25 million CAD (Albert 2015). These plans required the Numbered Streets area to be converted into a parking lot for the stadium (Prokai 2015, Bardi 2015).

In early August of 2014, the Romani self-government in Miskolc launched a series of protests against the evictions taking place in the Numbered Streets, which became known as the 'tent protests.' The activists set up a four-day demonstration in the city's main square near the main building of the city's local government; they then organized a ten-day protest in the

neighbourhood of the Numbered Streets itself. The windows and walls of the houses of the neighbourhood were plastered with messages and demands from the residents, describing how they faced the real risk of becoming homeless if their neighbourhood was demolished. Many residents described their family histories and spoke about their experiences as being part of Miskolc (Olah 2015).

The city's decision to demolish the Numbered Streets received negative media attention, including a spotlight on an elderly woman made homeless and a family who was at risk of losing their children. Following the passing of the decree, the European Roma Rights Centre condemned the actions of Miskolc's local government. In a press release from the time period, the ERRC characterized the city's actions as "an egregious example of systemic discrimination and racism in an EU member state" (ERRC 2014b); the ERRC called the decree "a recent local government decree designed to expel Roma from Miskolc" (ERRC 2014b). They stressed "the unlawfulness of the action," arguing that the local decree was in breach of EU law. They further emphasized that "people living in these neighbourhoods will not only be forced out of the city, but will be at risk of becoming homeless" (ERRC 2014b).

The decision further garnered censure from the upper levels of Hungarian law. In May 2015, the Supreme Court of Hungary (the Curia/Kúria) struck down the provisions of the bylaws that made the compensation subject to buying a property outside city boundaries. The Curia determined that such provisions were illegal and went against the requirement of equal treatment. In July 2015, the Equal Treatment Authority, following an investigation, imposed a fine on the Miskolc city self-government, amounting to approximately $2,287 CAD for discrimination against the residents of the Numbered Streets as a result of the decree.

Despite these rulings, the Pandora's Box had been opened; by 2016 more than half of the families had left. When I visited the neighbourhood throughout the year of 2016 many of the houses stood empty or were demolished. Unphased by the court rulings Miskolc Mayor Kriza remained "defiant" and declared that the Municipality was "determined to continue with its plans to 'eliminate slums on the city's outskirts'" (Rorke and Szendrey 2016). Moreover, as increased public attention was garnered for the neighbourhood throughout 2014, a rightwing backlash was unleashed. At the end of December 2014, a march of rightwing football 'hooligans' took over the Numbered Streets, in part due to the close proximity of the football stadium. Rightwing demonstrators, all dressed in black, marched through the neighbourhood,

threatening Romani residents and using racist slogans and chants. More than one Romani asylum-seeker living in Toronto would later recount to me this experience as a key motivator for leaving for Canada.

The Romani activists at the self-government explained to me that the evictions in the Numbered Streets began in the August following the passing of the amended decree. In 2014 they began to demolish houses, even the ones that were still in good condition. They demolished the houses without giving new housing, and many people became homeless. Often I met Roma who told me they became homeless after being forced out of the neighbourhood. The evictions continued for the years to come, and the people who chose to stay there lived with "a constant threat of eviction" I was told by the Roma activists. Houses that have already been evicted and demolished remain in ruins and partially standing, but uninhabitable, often right next to houses that are still occupied with families. To make matters worse, in the last few years the number of social housing spots in Miskolc has decreased by one fifth, which means that those facing evictions have only limited opportunities to become tenants again in other parts of the city (Olah 2015, Novak 2015).

One woman I met during my fieldwork, Viki, had me over to her house in late 2016, which was tidy, beautifully-decorated, and very obviously the cherished home to a family. She sat me down in her kitchen one evening, where we smoked several cigarettes and she explained to me what it is like living in the Numbered Streets as the homes around her were being destroyed and families forced out. "Everything is so temporary; there is no sense of security. All of this displacement is going on just in this city alone, never mind going to and from Canada." I asked her what happens during evictions, and she explained:

> When an eviction takes place, the police come, the social services come, the child protective services come. They cut off the electricity and the lights. They take your children away if you don't have a place to go. I've watched them take children away.

She went on: representatives of the Miskolc city authorities issue eviction notices, giving people only a few days' notice. If the family has not already secured another permanent place to live, children services removes any children from their custody and places them into a group home run by the state. During the eviction, the city authorities pull everything down: demolishing the house, the outdoor courtyards, and the fences. "They pull out the fruit trees

that our own families have planted over the years - fruit trees with plums, sour cherries, pears, and the flower gardens and grapevines, too." Evictions are extremely distressing, she concluded.

Viki's whole family lived in the Numbered Streets in houses nearby to her own. During one of my visits with Viki I met her mother, an elderly woman with burns on her body from being a victim of a house fire in the Numbered Streets. Viki's mother explained to me that she was evicted while she was in the hospital recovering from the house fire. Her and her husband lived and worked for 20 years in the neighbourhood. The house fire took place in February 2015, and in April 2015 while she was still in the hospital, the city issued her eviction notice. "The state evicts you and then takes the cost of the eviction from your retirement," she said. She shared:

> It is so hard to walk around the neighbourhood and see all the empty houses of people who have been evicted. Evictions break up families and people become alone. It feels like nobody is willing to help this community. There is only racism to be seen. Why are they evicting people? It can only be because of racism. Am I not Hungarian? They do not even call us Hungarian, just Roma.

Viki's mom concluded her life story to me by asserting that it was necessary for Roma to go to Canada as refugees because they are afraid. Indeed, two years later, when I had moved to Toronto to do more fieldwork, I ran into Viki's mom walking down the street in the west end of Toronto. "You made it to Canada!" I exclaimed, and we embraced. We met a couple times for coffee in the nearby CoffeeTime cafe in Parkdale, but eventually we fell out of touch. A year later, I observed a live video on social media showing that Viki's mom had returned to Miskolc and was welcomed by a heartfelt return party with the whole family.

The story of Viki's family is one among many more. One man I met explains to me that he lived in his home in the Numbered Streets for 30 years. In the spring of 2015 he was issued an eviction notice. Another family tells me they lived in their home, right next to the football stadium, for 17 years. They had put a lot of work into their house, despite it being a social-housing contract. They installed their own gas and electricity and constructed add-ons to make the house bigger.

Where do Roma go after they are forced out of the Numbered Streets? When I asked Gábor Varadi, the President of the Roma self-government, what happens to people after they leave the Numbered Streets, he explained that "some of them are in other parts of the city, we don't know, and others went to Canada. So there is a new wave of immigration towards Canada." He explains that when the first wave of 30 or so families were evicted shortly after the decree was passed, the majority of them was not able to find a new permanent residence in the city of Miskolc, and so "most of them went to Canada." Those who were not able to rally the necessary resources for travel to Canada "are left in Miskolc wandering from slum to slum in the city."

Similar accounts are described in Hungarian newspapers from this time, connecting the evictions with Romani asylum-seeking: "most of those tenants were Romani and many began to emigrate to Canada *en masse* this past May as a result of the evictions" (Albert 2015) writes one Hungarian journalist; another states, "some did not even wait for the eviction order before leaving the country. Most headed to Canada" (Prokai 2015). Another describes the convergence of Canadian embassy staff on Miskolc following the threat of a Romani exodus instigated by the new decree about the Numbered Streets:

> Canadians take that notice so seriously that employees of their Budapest Embassy already appeared in Miskolc to enquire about the situation… Now a new wave can be expected. This is why representatives of Canada's immigration authority visited Miskolc two weeks ago. The Canadians were curious about whether there is an ongoing organized asylum-tourism from Miskolc to Toronto, while mapping the overall situation of Roma in the city as well (Bardi 2015).

Before Roma go to Canada, they often drop in at the Roma self-government office, seeking advice and support about their trip. During my weeks in the office in 2016, such visitors were a frequent daily occurrence. While on the walls of the office hang the protest banner proclaiming 'We are staying in Miskolc,' Varadi told me that the self-government neither encourages nor dissuades people from going to Canada: "it's a personal choice," he stated. He explained the stance of the self-government as such:

> The Roma self-government will neither prevent nor assist anybody in leaving the country, as this should be a personal decision. But the number of those leaving and

> planning to leave Miskolc for Canada is very significant - dozens, maybe more, families.

Perhaps as a joke, during my time at the Roma self-government office, I was often told, that if they were to offer free flights to Canada, not a single Roma would stay in any part of Miskolc, let alone in the Numbered Streets.

Lyukóvölgy

As evictions and demolitions led to the displacement of dozens of families from the Numbered Streets, those families who were unable to go to Canada directly following their eviction often ended up in a settlement called Lyukóvölgy. As one research study from 2015 notes: "those who cannot seek refuge in Canada for some reason are mostly relying on relatives, but there are also families whose only option is to purchase or to rent a house in Lyukóbánya, which is the biggest slum in Hungary" (Olah 2015: 42). When I first asked the activists at the Romani self-government about Lyukó, the neighbourhood I kept hearing about, they told me that it was not an "easy neighbourhood" and that I shouldn't go by myself to see it. One of the activists, Peti, then volunteered to take me and my colleague to the neighbourhood to give us a tour of the area, as he often frequented the neighbourhood for community organizing and to touch base with the residents. He warned us that Lyukó was a *nyomortelep*, which after piecing together the translated words of 'squalor' and 'settlement' I understood to mean 'slum.' "It's like the Numbered Streets, but much worse," he cautioned us.

While in the office, the Romani activists started to tell us more about this neighbourhood, Lyukó: It was originally built to be a place for "weekend homes" for families in Miskolc to "get away" from the city during socialist times. Most of the houses were built like cabins or cottages. The homes were built near a mine, but the mine closed in the early 2000s. An ERRC report about the neighbourhood describes the history:

> Now that jobs and miners have vanished, this hole in the valley is no rural idyll but home to many poor people, including many who were forced out of the Numbered Streets neighbourhood to make way for the gleaming Diósgyőr football stadium (Rorke 2019b)

According to Lengyel, Lyukó from the early 2000s became "another stop in the round dance between apartments and slum neighbourhoods" for Miskolc's poor people, particularly its Romani residents. Though there is little precise information about the settlement, Lengyel documents how families began to move to the area out of necessity as early as the 1990s, following evictions, demolitions, or personal debt. "The city does not know what to do with Lyukó and the thousands of people who live there" (Lengyel 2009): Miskolc authorities made attempts at criminalizing the people who lived there, pushing them out, and ethnicizing it as a Romani slum, and "avoiding reality for decades" (Lengyel 2009).

Very early one morning on a crisp autumn day in October 2016, Peti, a colleague, and I met at the main bus station in the west of Miskolc to take the bus to Lyukó together; after about 30 minutes on the bus, we got off on a road that felt like it was in the middle of nowhere, on the outskirts of the city in the countryside. We walked down a small dirt road until several hundred dilapidated cottages began to be seen from between the foliage and bushes. We spent about one hour walking through the area. As our tour guide, Peti described the neighbourhood to us: there is no proper sanitation or regular trash pick-up; there are no street names in the neighborhood, but instead lot numbers are assigned to each home. Many families live in overcrowded conditions in the run-down houses. The homes have no electricity or heating either, so Peti explained to us that families have to find creative ways to stay warm in the winter. Some heat their homes by collecting branches and burning them, for which the local police fine them. There is no grocery store in the neighborhood. There is a doctor's office that operates out of a container building once a week. However, ambulances will not enter the neighbourhood and the sick must be brought out to the nearest bus stop in order to receive care. Children must commute to school by public transportation, as there are no school busses for the settlements.

Periodically on our walk through Lyukó we encountered a water-pump, and each time Peti pointed them out to us: a total of four water-pumps connected to underground wells. He explained that the homes have no running water, and so the four wells that are scattered around the settlement have to service all 5000 residents, who lug buckets of water to their homes. Some families travel 400 meters or more to reach the wells. The lack of access to clean water in Lyukó is an issue discussed by European Romani rights advocates, who argue that the residents are "systematically denied access to clean water" by the city of Miskolc,

and denounce how “residents have to trudge a distance through mud in all seasons to carry water from a public tap” (Rorke 2019b).

Some of the houses were empty or abandoned, and as we approached them, Peti would point them out, gesture at them, and say, “Oh yes, that family went to Canada” or “Oh look! This house is recently vacated - another family has gone to Canada.” One family I met later on in Toronto told me that they had had a house in Lyukó; once they got over the initial shock that the Canadian sitting in front of them had visited their old slum neighbourhood, they explained to me that they had sold their house in Lyukó, together with all their furniture, to collect the cash they needed to book their flights to Canada. When they collected around $5000 CAD they decided to go to Canada. Newspaper articles from this time capture this movement as a general feeling of the time: “More and more Roma forced to move out of Miskolc are choosing Canada” writes one Hungarian journalist for a weekly print newspaper (HVG), “over the desolate shantytown of Lyukóvölgy” (Bardi 2015).

Yet some families face an inverse fate: upon being deported from Canada, their last resort is to take up residence in one of Lyukó’s worn-down homes. These were the kinds of sentiments expressed to me in conversation with Roma living in Toronto, under threat of being deported: “we are terrified at the prospect of being sent back to Miskolc from Canada: we would have no livelihood, no home, we would arrive to a complete misery only to be homeless and live under the sky.” Many families who found their way to Toronto believed that being sent back to Miskolc was the worse fate they could face: “Where will we go from here? I tell you where, to the street.” They believed that what waited for them in Miskolc was moving to Lyukó or facing homelessness. The Roma I spoke with who had been sent back to Miskolc describe such situations: facing added hostility from state institutions, neighbours and police for having gone to Canada, their children bullied in school and called ‘Canadians’ in a derogatory manner.

One family I met returned from Canada in the spring of 2015 to find their old house in the Numbered Streets demolished. Vivi moved to Lyukó with her husband and two children. The impact of the poor condition of the infrastructure in the neighbourhood on her children was a constant worry for the mother. She feared for the safety of her children, as one daughter faced sexual harassment often when commuting on the bus to the city from the settlement. While living there, someone stole the door off the outdoor washroom that they used near their home.

Eventually Vivi's family found a way to move out to a new home in a different neighbourhood, but the lack of stability made their access to social services and public health near impossible. She explained to me that her husband went to the Netherlands when they returned from Canada to try migrant work in a meat factory. It mentally exhausted him because he received so much abuse as a Roma: he was the only Roma on the working team, and he was abused all the time, she said, due to European hatred of Romani people. He lasted for two months and then came back to Miskolc. Shortly after returning, he had a stroke, which Vivi attributes to the constant stress of constantly being dislocated. After years of living in housing insecurity, the family moved to Budapest where they received public works jobs. The last time I saw them, in the summer of 2019, they were working as cleaners in one of Budapest's main train stations, still devising plans to return to Canada one day.

Conclusion:
Miskolc in Canada, Canada in Miskolc

In December 2016, I visited Miskolc while the Romani activists with the self-government were organizing a Christmas drive and other charity events for the holiday season. One day during my visit the activists hosted an all-day public soup kitchen at Újgyőri főtér, a major public square on the outskirts of the city near the Romani neighbourhoods. I joined the Romani women who were cooking: cutting onion after onion, buttering bread slices, and stirring the large pots of steaming hot stew. While busying myself with cooking duties, I could hear people around me – perhaps inspired by my presence – speaking casually about 'the time I was in Canada' and what happened 'when I came back from Canada.' One child came up to me and announced, "I was born in Canada!" and listed off a string of English words they knew, including 'Bloor Street,' the major road that cuts across the city of Toronto.

During these moments observing life for Roma in Miskolc and their references to Canada, it occurred to me how much the Canadian asylum-seeking journey has impacted the local communities in Miskolc who continue to face discrimination from local officials. Romani activists frame the contemporary history of Miskolc as an ongoing attempt by the city authorities to push Roma out: from one neighbourhood to another, from Hungary to Canada, in a seemingly never-ending cycle of displacements, dislocations, and disruptions. Their sign

asserting, ‘We are staying in Miskolc,’ becomes a defiant gesture when placed within this history.

This chapter has given an overview of the history of the city of Miskolc by way of historicizing the movement of Hungarian Roma to Canada. In telling a history of Miskolc through ethnographic work with Romani refugees, this research project foregrounds the voices of local Roma and how they understand the historical developments that have taken place in Hungary in recent decades. Their social history shows how the phenomenon of Romani asylum-seeking to Canada was born out of everyday struggles over social reproduction rooted in wide-scale economic transformations, which manifested in urban and localized ways in Miskolc through issues of segregation, homelessness, evictions, and welfare. One evidence of the severity of postsocialist transformation on Romani communities and its weight in propelling Roma to Canada is found in the nostalgia Roma express for the socialist era and the ways in which they link their socialist experiences with their Canadian asylum dreams.

While doing fieldwork in Toronto I encountered a police officer of Hungarian origins who had been living in Canada for several years working in law enforcement and recently relocated to the Parkdale neighbourhood where many Roma from Miskolc had settled following their emigration from Hungary. Gábor’s ability to speak Hungarian had become suddenly very useful for law enforcement in this west end neighbourhood of Toronto. Though he originally grew up in a small town in the western part of Hungary, he shared with me that he went out of his way to visit the city of Miskolc the last time he returned to Hungary for a family visit: he had never been there while living in Hungary or taken any interest in the city, but now that he works in Canada with so many of Miskolc’s former Romani residents - he believes that “ninety-five percent of Romani refugees in Toronto come from Miskolc” - he felt compelled to tour the city.

Gábor’s experience is just one of many alluding to the newly crystallizing entanglements and interactions between the history of Miskolc and the dynamics of present-day Toronto. One important point for migration scholars is that Canadian authorities now pay attention to the processes of segregation, eviction, and unemployment plaguing Miskolc’s Romani communities: the decision-makers within the Immigration and Refugee Board, the body that decides on refugee claims, have made multiple requests for information and research reports

on country conditions such as the one quoted at the beginning of this chapter. While reports on Hungary's treatment of Roma are referenced and read by immigration judges and used as evidence for refugee lawyers, more systematic research is required to see the extent to which local government policies in Hungary are having an impact on the outcomes of Romani asylum-seekers' claims.

Chapter 4
Social Reproduction, Rightwing Populism, and Capitalist Crisis: Surplus populations as agents of history

Introduction

Thus far throughout this dissertation I have emphasized that to make sense of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, it is necessary to pay attention to the longstanding dynamics of political economy in the region: global relations of capital and labour, on the one hand, but also dynamics of social reproduction and the racialization of exclusion on the other. As shown in Chapter 2, Romani asylum-seeking to Canada is intimately connected to Hungary's crisis of social reproduction wrought by neoliberal economic transformation in the region, which inflamed rightwing populist movements animated by anti-Gypsyist racist politics. Likewise, Chapter 3 used ethnographic data to capture how these economic transformations have played out in the urban dynamics of postsocialist economic transformation in the city of Miskolc, where Romani residents face daily struggles around sites of social reproduction, such as housing and healthcare. Understanding the constellation of social reproduction, capitalist crisis, and rightwing populism enables a view of Hungarian Roma as a racialized 'surplus population:' excluded from both Hungarian labour markets and the Hungarian nation's cultural register.

Adequately understanding Hungarian illiberalism and the marginalization of Romani people in the country requires a proper theory on the relationship between rightwing populism, financialized capitalism, and how labour is valued. In this chapter I thus turn to the pressing task of a deeper and broader theoretical engagement analyzing the constellation of forces between rightwing populism, social reproduction, and capitalist crisis. Such an engagement is made through anchoring at the heart of the analysis the experiences of 'surplus populations:' those rendered outside the wage economy as well as society more broadly. To analyze their creation and dispossession, as well as their social reproduction and agency, I bring the frameworks of Karl Polányi and Karl Marx - the 'Two Karls' as framed by Fraser (2018b) -

into conversation with feminist theories on care and social reproduction. I explore how the rise of illiberalism and rightwing populism requires making sense of historical changes to social reproduction wrought by contemporary financialized capitalism and, importantly, how these changes in social reproduction relate to surplus populations and dynamics of racialization, nationalism, and far-right politics. Recognizing the dynamics of social reproduction and the role of surplus populations within capital accumulation means reassessing how value is generated under contemporary capitalism and understood by Marxist thought. Following surplus populations in the search for understanding social reproduction under contemporary conditions requires "a dislodging of unpaid housework from the centre" of social reproduction theory (Ferguson 2020: 6), insisting instead on a comprehensive reevaluation of whose labour is categorized as productive, valuable, and visible.

The aims of the chapter are twofold. Firstly, I consider the prevailing argument that contemporary rightwing populist movements can be understood as Polányian counter-movements seeking 'social protection' against 'marketizing forces.' In doing so, I bring into dialogue social reproduction theory with anthropological analyses of rightwing populism, asking: to what extent is the crisis of neoliberal hegemony and the rise of rightwing populism intertwined with the crisis of care wrought by financialized capitalism? Secondly, the chapter considers the ways in which social reproductive crises are related to surplus populations: what is the function of surplus populations in bolstering capitalist hegemony and facilitating rightwing populism, and, importantly, what is the agency exercised by surplus populations themselves faced by these crises? The chapter hence concludes with a consideration of the ways in which struggles around social reproduction can be revolutionary forms of class struggle for those expelled from waged labour.

Polányi, rightwing populism, and social reproduction

As rightwing populist social movements have taken root across the world, Karl Polányi (2001) has become a key reference in scholarly efforts to make sense of the tensions inherent between 'markets' and 'societies' (see, for example, Aulenbacher et al 2019, Atzmuller and Decieux 2020, Lim 2021, Kirby 2021, Milner 2019). Working with his concept of the 'double-movement,' Polányian analyses argue that as neoliberal economic policies have

subjected increasing aspects of human life, social bonds, and communities to marketization, populist movements have emerged organizing against 'marketization' in attempt for 'social protection.' This use of Polányian thought to explain the backlash against liberal democracy argues that populist political projects represent a mass defection from the neoliberal status quo, offering a critique of neoliberalism - or at least an outlet for its discontents.

With this historical context in mind, scholars of East-Central Europe increasingly turn to Polányi to explain the contemporary rise of rightwing populism in the region (see, for example, Hann 2019, Kalb 2020, Scheiring 2021, Szombati 2018, Scheiring and Szombati 2020, Bartha and Tóth 2021), not least due to Polányi's own Central European roots. For example, Szombati's work tracing the rise of rightwing populism in Hungary uses "a reworked Polányian approach" to analyze "the emergence of a racist countermovement in Hungary" (Szombati 2018: 3-4). Along with his colleague Scheiring, he argues that in Hungary, "neoliberal disembedding kicked off a classic Polányian countermovement" (Scheiring and Szombati 2020: 11). Scheiring's own studies of Hungary "conceptualise Hungary's neo-nationalist turn as a Polányian countermovement against commodification, globalisation and deindustrialisation" (Scheiring 2020b: 1159). Likewise, in his comparative analysis of Poland and Hungary, Kalb argues that the rightwing populism in these countries should be understood primarily as "the result of successful Polányian 'counter-movements' against the 'disembedding of local economies,' which were propelled forward by the [integration] of post-socialist economies into financialized Western capitalism" (Kalb 2020: 135). He emphasizes that rightwing populism emerges from "spaces of economic collapse and attrition" (Kalb 2018: 313). This neo-Polányian consensus on Hungary's turn to the right hence argues overall that rightwing populist movements grew in "economically deprived communities where Roma and non-Roma were competing over increasingly scarce public goods and services" (Scheiring and Szombati 2020: 726).

Literature on gender and populism point to the multiplicities of ideologies and intents that congeal within rightwing populist politics, suggesting that the juxtaposition of 'marketization' and 'social protection' as an explanation for rightwing populism requires further elaboration (Corredor 2019, Grzebalska and Pető 2018, Korolczuk and Graff 2018, Kovats 2018, Graff and Korolczuk 2021). For example, Grzebalska and Pető argue "that the 21st century Central European illiberal transformation is a process deeply reliant on gender politics, and that a feminist analysis is central to understanding the current regime changes"

(Grzebalska and Pető 2018: 1). Likewise, Korolczuk and Graff claim "that the opposition to gender is key for the ideological coherence of the present illiberal turn and that antigenderism has become a new language of resistance to neoliberalism" (Korolczuk and Graff 2018: 800).

Hence, beyond seeing rightwing populism as a countermovement against commodification, questions remain about the nuances of rightwing populism: namely, regarding the social hierarchies around race, gender, and sexuality that become enshrined within rightwing populist politics. Why is the backlash against neoliberalism, globalization, and deindustrialization so heavily reliant on negative tropes about migration, LGBT movements, feminist politics, and racialized minorities? How do these social hierarchies interact with and reinforce the class grievances of 'disembedded' communities ravaged by neoliberalism? Particularly for this research project, how are racist and ultranationalist ideas about Roma animated by rightwing populism, and how do Romani people experience and exercise agency within the context of the circulation of these politics while also themselves being ravaged by the economic disembedding of neoliberalism?

Furthermore, the use of Polányi to explain the relationship between the rise of contemporary rightwing populism and the neoliberal crisis of social reproduction raises questions about his idea of 'social protection': how is a Polányian concept of 'social protection' related to social reproduction, and how can thinking through both help us to move closer to a comprehensive critique of contemporary capitalist crisis and the rise of rightwing populism? Importantly, who is included and excluded in the movement towards 'social protection'? While Polányi doesn't refer specifically to social reproduction, his framework of the 'double-movement' resonates with work of Marxist-feminists analyzing dynamics of social reproduction under conditions of contemporary financialized capitalism. As discussed in Chapter 1, social reproduction theory expands on a Marxist labour theory of value to highlight the socially necessary work for providing the means for maintaining and reproducing the population (Bhattacharya 2017a). In looking behind the scenes of production and waged work to reveal the unwaged work that sustains capitalist social relations, social reproduction theory emphasizes that the social relations outside of wage labor are not accidental to it but take specific historical form in response to it (Ferguson 2020, Federici 2021, Folbre 2021). Moreover, the struggle by workers to satisfy their own needs is also an inherent and integral part of the system; hence, "reproduction, in short, is therefore a site of class conflict" (Bhattacharya 2017b).

Importantly, like Polányi, social reproduction theory emphasizes the destructive effects of financialized capitalism on the social fabric of communities, drawing attention to the 'crisis of care' endemic to neoliberalism, as increasing people are pushed out of waged labour into precarious and unwaged work and public institutions of social welfare are clawed back due to austerity (see, for example, Dowling 2021, Fraser 2017, Bhattacharya 2017a,). These analyses emphasize the ways in which financialized capitalism's drive for accumulating wealth is disrupting the very bonds that sustain human life, "like a tiger that eats its own tail" (Fraser 2019: 48). For Fraser, capitalism harbours a fundamental crisis of social reproduction within it due to the contradictions between capital and care: from this perspective, the crisis of social reproduction is "non-accidental" to capitalism (Fraser 2013b). As she explains, "what some call 'the crisis of care' is best interpreted as a more or less acute expression of the social-reproductive contradictions of financialized capitalism" (Fraser 2017: 22). For Fraser, this crisis of social reproduction under financialized capitalism can be captured in Polányian terms: financialized capitalism whittles away at society's protection of people, in the form of welfare and employment with benefits, instead exposing them to the brute realities of the market.

Fraser's analysis of Polányi's 'double-movement' concept is especially instructive for both tasks of understanding social hierarchies within contemporary Polányian counter-movements as well as recentering social reproduction in analyzing rightwing counter-movements (Fraser 2014b, 2020, 2013). Fraser points out the ambivalent nature of Polányi's 'social protection,' explaining how struggles to protect 'society' from 'the market' are often aimed at entrenching existing societal traditions rooted in hierarchies and exclusions. The example she draws from is the historical role of women in unwaged domestic labour and how marketization has had emancipatory effects for women engaged in unpaid housework and confined to the private sphere. As Dowling notes, "the political struggle was for the liberation of women from isolation in the home and from economic dependency on a husband as the 'breadwinner' and head of the household" (Dowling 2021: 71). In this context, resisting markets through calls for 'social protection' can translate into maintaining a patriarchal division of labour: as Fraser explains, "what would be protected was less 'society' as such than arrangements premised on gender hierarchy" (Fraser 2014b: 550).

While Polányi viewed social protection as unambiguously positive, Fraser's analysis of the double-movement underscores the vague and potentially reactionary character of 'social protection' given the uneven and heterogeneous nature of human societies. Today, for example, national movements for social protection increasingly exist "mainly in counter-historical retrograde forms" like rightwing populist European parties indulging anti-migrant welfare chauvinism (Fraser 2013b: 127). As such, Polányi's double-movement makes invisible the forms of domination and power hierarchies that exist within 'society' and 'social protection' (Fraser 2013a). To avoid "romanticizing 'society,'" (Fraser 2013a: 312), Fraser proposes that instead of a double movement we should think of a 'triple movement:' between marketization, social protection, and *emancipation* - the missing third political project that crosscuts and mediates the central conflict between 'marketization' and 'protection' (Fraser 2013a: 312). Analyses taking up a Polányian framework must consider the ways in which movements for either marketization or protection may perpetuate or sacrifice the 'emancipation' of certain groups. Using the example of feminist movements again, she explains:

> Caught in a double bind, many feminists found scant comfort on either side of Polányi's double movement, neither on the side of social protection, with its attachment to male domination, nor on the side of marketization, with its disregard for social reproduction. Able to neither reject nor embrace the liberal order, they needed a third alternative, which they called emancipation. To the extent that feminists could credibly embody that term, they effectively exploded the dualistic Polányian figure and replaced it with what we might call a triple movement (Fraser 2017: 29).

This third project of 'emancipation' thus captures the idea that 'marketization' is not always negative, and that 'social protection' is not always positive: some forms of marketization can disintegrate oppressive dynamics, whereas some forms of social protection can entrench domination. Likewise, the "ambivalence of emancipation" points to the ways in which some emancipatory movements, such as feminism, have aligned with marketization and aided the ushering in of neoliberalism: as Fraser's now formative critique of second-wave feminism states, in empowering housewives to enter the workforce, feminism "serves today to intensify capitalism's valorization of waged labour" (Fraser 2013a: 299). As she states, "disturbing as it may sound, I am suggesting that second-wave feminism has unwittingly provided a key

ingredient of the new spirit of neoliberalism" (Fraser 2013a: 299) by emphasizing individual freedom without a critique of capitalism.

The 'triple movement' is a crucial framework for understanding rightwing populism through the insights of both Polányi and Marxist-feminist theories, providing an explanation for understanding how rightwing populist movements can be animated by simultaneously a rejection of neoliberal hegemony as well as racist anti-migrant politics. In such a context, 'society' and 'social protection' take on reactionary meaning: social reproductive tensions and calls for 'social protection' dovetail with a reactionary anti-liberalism, relying on the exclusion of some people in the evocation of 'society.' For Fraser, putting Polányi in conversation with Marx, as well as feminist and critical race theories, enables a comprehensive framework for understanding capitalism as 'an institutionalized social order' that is fundamentally a crisis-prone system (Fraser 2014b).

Fraser's framework of the 'triple-movement' is readily applicable to understanding Romani marginalization in a place like Hungary and particularly useful for augmenting the Polányian interpretation in circulation through paying attention to the dynamics of emancipation and oppression at play in the struggles over the disembedding of markets from society. The rise of illiberalism in Hungary can be understood as partly rooted in a movement against 'marketization' as caused by postsocialist EU-driven neoliberalism, striving for 'social protection' while sacrificing the 'emancipation' of Hungarians who do not fit within the confines of the nationalist definitions. Rightwing discourse emerged explaining the postsocialist deterioration of living standards for Hungarians as a result of 'gypsy criminality' and liberal 'special treatment' towards minorities - not the effect of integration into the channels of global capital accumulation. Rightwing populism in Hungary hence arose as a movement for 'social protection' in response to neoliberalization, providing a nominal critique of neoliberal exposure, yet with its social protection rooted in exclusionary and neo-nationalist terms leading to ethnic violence and neo-Nazi paramilitary movements - forgoing the 'emancipation' of those excluded from its welfare chauvinism.

Questions remain, however, about these parts of society whose emancipation is abandoned in triple-movements. What function do these racist rightwing politics targeting marginalized components of society play in capital accumulation? What is the role of such 'surplus populations' in the social relations of social reproduction and the dynamics of the triple-

movement? What does the crisis of social reproduction and the consequent rise of rightwing populism look like for a group that experiences the crisis of capitalism and then becomes the target, not perpetrator, of the political crisis embodied by rightwing populism?

Social reproduction and surplus populations

Here I propose that a prospective avenue for advancing an analysis of Polányian counter-movements and the relationship between social reproduction and rightwing populism is to orient the discussion around 'surplus populations.' The question of surplus populations is a relevant topic for theories on social reproduction, but it remains largely unexplored within the literature on social reproduction. Rather, much of social reproduction theory remains focused on the role of unwaged work in supporting waged work or the reproduction of labour power in the service of capital, following the gender dynamics of households. As Bhattacharya writes, the aim of social reproduction theory is to elucidate upon how "the relationship between wage labor and capital is sustained in all sorts of unwaged ways and in all kinds of social spaces - not just at work" (Bhattacharya 2017b: 92). Thus while social reproduction theory tends to ask "who produces the worker?" (Bhattacharya 2017a: 1) and "what kinds of processes enable the worker to arrive at the doors of her place of work every day so that she can produce the wealth of society?" (Bhattacharya 2017a: 1), it remains necessary to ask further: how do those relegated outside of wage-labour reproduce? What role, if any, does their existence and social reproduction play in capital accumulation? And, importantly, what agency and survival strategies do they employ in their continued existence outside waged work? Understanding capitalism as a 'totality' and expanding our definitions of work beyond the world of wage labour requires understanding the importance of 'non-workers' and their social reproduction in the processes of capital accumulation.

In *Capital, Volume I*, Marx outlines his framework for understanding what he terms as a relative surplus population, "i.e., surplus with regard to the average needs of the self-expansion of capital" (Marx 1867). He applied the term to the segment of the working class to which "every labourer belongs… during the time when he is only partially employed or wholly unemployed" (Marx 1867) and uses it interchangeably with the terms 'reserve army of labour' and the 'industrial labour reserve.' Marx ties the existence of a surplus population to the capitalist mode of production: he argues that the surplus population is a unique feature

of capitalism, as structural unemployment did not exist in societies prior to the emergence of the capitalist mode of production. As Marx explains,

> Capitalist accumulation… constantly produces, and produces in the direct ratio of its own energy and extent, a relatively redundant population of workers, i.e., a population of greater extent than suffices for the average needs of the valorisation of capital, and therefore a surplus-population... It is the absolute interest of every capitalist to press a given quantity of labour out of a smaller, rather than a greater number of labourers (Marx 1867).

Surplus populations are, in other words, an inevitable by-product of the capitalist mode of production. At the same time, Marx emphasizes this as a dialectical relationship: the surplus population is both an inevitable product as well as a necessary condition of existence of the capitalist mode of production: "the whole form of the movement of modern industry depends, therefore, upon the constant transformation of a part of the labouring population into unemployed or half-employed hands" (Marx 1867). For Marx, the creation of surplus populations is "the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation" (Marx 1867).

Importantly, for the task of understanding the social hierarchies of labour valorization, the existence of a surplus population further aids capital accumulation by creating fragmentation between those 'productive workers' in the army of labour and those 'unproductive' people relegated to the reserve labour army. One of the crucial functions of a surplus group of labourers is in the creation of competition between those who are employed, those who are not, and those who are at the risk of becoming unemployed. As Marx explained, the surplus population, though not 'useful' in terms of 'productive' labour, plays an integral role in shaping working class compliance under capitalism by pitting workers against each other due to the nature of capitalist accumulation:

> The overwork of the employed part of the working class swells the ranks of the reserve, whilst conversely the greater pressure that the latter by its competition exerts on the former, forces these to submit to overwork and to subjugation under the dictates of capital. The condemnation of one part of the working class to enforced idleness by the overwork of the other part, and the converse, becomes a means of enriching the individual capitalists (Marx 1867).

In turn such exploitation is glorified within the ideological tendencies of society, with the 'sacrifice' deemed necessary by defenders of the capitalist system. The glorification of this misery shows us that the capitalist production of value is not just a 'scientific' phenomenon but an ideological one as well.

Due to the changing and new forms of work under neoliberal capitalism, anthropologists of labour and political economy have taken a renewed interest in "the lives of people outside wage-labour" or those rendered "useless" and "redundant" under emerging conditions of contemporary capitalism (Smith 2022). However, as Smith points out: "in the majority of its uses 'surplus population' (and similar terms like 'wasted lives' and so on) is not a problem produced by capitalism but to the contrary describes people who do not have enough of it" (Smith 2022). Smith's remarks allude to recent debates within anthropological political economy on surplus populations and the role of capital accumulation and the state in their struggles (Li 2009, Smith 2011, Susser 2011, Lem 2012, Kasmir and Carbonella 2015, Kaminer 2022, Smith 2022). Under contemporary conditions of financialized capitalism it has become ncreasingly important to understand "how certain populations are surplus in the sense that they are unable to meet either capital's requirements or those of the socially constituted necessities of population" (Smith 2022). As Mike Davis explains,

> This outcast proletariat - perhaps 1.5 billion today, 2.5 billion by 2030 - is the fastest growing and most novel social class on the planet… this is a mass of humanity structurally and biologically redundant to global accumulation and the corporate matrix (Davis 2004: 11. See also Davis 2006).

Marxian anthropologists have been at the forefronts of documenting and understanding the processes by which increasing workers under global capitalism are pushed out of productive labour, becoming "little more than the human-as-waste, excreted from the capitalist system" (Yates 2011: 1680). As the capitalist mode of production spreads to the far reaches of the globe, bringing with it intensified levels of neoliberalization, dispossession, and precarity, anthropologists note that the creation of surplus populations is a common feature of financialized capitalism, through processes such as accumulation by dispossession in resource-rich areas in the Global South (Li 2009, Smith 2011) and the deindustrialization of

the Global North as industries move to cheaper labour markets à la Harvey's "spatial fix" (Kasmir and Carbonella 2018, Susser 2011).

Recent anthropological studies of surplus populations examine the processes of dispossession by which people are made surplus under contemporary forms of capital accumulation (Li 2009); they document the austerity-fueled cutbacks against social policies that once protected people not engaged in productive labour (Kasmir and Carbonella 2015); and they debate who should be considered 'absolutely' surplus and who have the fortune of being a 'relative' surplus labour reserve (Smith 2011), deliberating on whether or not surplus populations may be useful for capitalism "as consumers, as soldiers and guards, or indeed as a 'reserve army' of strikebreaking laborers" (Kaminer 2022). One important question is whose labour is allowed to be valorized and whose labour is cheapened: who is made surplus due to social relations that prevent them valorizing their body power because of where they are located in the hierarchies of social formations intersecting with race, gender, and global systems of imperialism (Rajaram 2018).

There is a pressing need then to understand the role of surplus populations in capitalist crisis, social reproduction dynamics, and the rise of rightwing populism. Framing capitalism as a 'social totality' (Bhattacharya 2017b) or an 'institutionalized social order' (Fraser 2014a), permeating social relations beyond the factory floor, means reevaluating more than just the dynamics of households and gendered labour. If we follow Ferguson's call to reassess Marxist-feminist analyses of social reproduction by "dislodging the housewife from the center of the analysis" (Ferguson 2020: 6), then it follows that the question of those left out of waged labour is a pressing one for social reproduction theory. Instead of focusing narrowly on the family, unpaid housewives, and 'the patriarchy of the wage' (Federici 2021), paying attention to surplus populations means applying social reproduction theory more broadly to "the interaction between paid and unpaid labour, positioning these as different-but-equally-essential parts of the same overall (capitalist) system" (Ferguson 2020: 3).

Bringing surplus populations explicitly into questions about social reproduction can open new avenues for understanding how "markets depend for their very existence on non-marketized social relations, which supply their background conditions of possibility" (Fraser 2014a: 59-60) and the ways in which capitalism "is free riding on the life-world" (Fraser 2016: 101). In other words, "to speak of a crisis of care" means also asking "who is cared for

and who is not?" (Dowling 2021: 22). Such a line of question entails further asking how and why some labour is devalued and examining "the labor hierarchies capitalism has built in the course of its history" (Federici 2021: 3). As Federici describes in her own recounting of expanding her personal approach to social reproduction, studies of social reproduction today necessitate acknowledging how parts of the world provide the conditions for the functioning of capitalist production through resources and unpaid labour (Federici 2020). This broadening of social reproduction theory means understanding how the contours of race, as well as gender, structure waged and unwaged work, calling attention to what Roediger calls "the wages of whiteness:" the ways in which racialization plays out in the valorization of labour (Roediger 2022). Thus, orienting social reproduction theory around the experiences of surplus populations demands nothing short than what Ferguson calls "the radical reorganization and reimagining of the whole world of work" (Ferguson 2020: 3).

Surplus populations and rightwing populism

One way that a consideration of surplus populations can enrich social reproduction theory is to consider the creation of surplus populations in broader terms regarding the generation of value and the processes of valuation and devaluation within capitalist accumulation. Here I draw from Rajaram's recent work (Rajaram 2018, 2015), which builds upon Marx's labour theory of value to apply the concept of "surplus populations" to the case of refugees and migrants. Rajaram emphasizes that what is being produced through labour power is not solely material wealth but also a cultural register that mediates the social relations and value production of capitalist societies. A labour theory of value is, then, an account of capitalism as a cultural ideology, producing patterns of valuation that privilege certain ways of being while demeaning or restricting others.

As such, capitalist value systems create value hierarchies of work, which are informed by racialized ideologies that lead to differential modes of inclusion and exclusion, for citizens, migrants, and refugees. Consequently, surplus populations should not be understood as completely excluded and unproductive but rather recognized as the ones who "work the dark underbelly of capitalism, its backstage operations where cheap and irregular labour is used in the search for hyperprofit" (Rajaram 2018: 2). In recognizing 'refugees as a surplus population" (Rajaram 2018), pertinent questions arise about who is more likely to be

devalued as unproductive, what forms of labour become valorized, and what processes of exclusion and devaluation are created and maintained over time (Rajaram 2018: 7). Therefore, "the question of who constitutes the surplus population points to the modes of valorisation of capitalism which arise not simply as an economic system but a cultural register" (Rajaram 2018: 9).

Importantly, this line of thinking raises the important concern of what is the function of surplus populations in the proliferation of rightwing populism and its connection to the functioning of capitalism and relations of social reproduction. Marxist political theorists have pointed out the generally antithetical relationship between capitalism and democracy (Wood 1995, Streeck 2011, Fraser 2022). For Fraser, the tendencies of a social order predicated on capitalist drives means that political crisis is inevitable: "not just neoliberalism, but capitalism, is prone to political crisis and inimical to democracy" (Fraser 2022). Fraser's analysis of capitalist crisis argues that what lays behind the rise of rightwing populist and authoritarian politics is consequently the contradictions inherent to capitalism, but not just its *economic* contradictions: it is important to see how capitalism destabilizes the *political* conditions, such as democracy, and the *social* conditions, such as social reproduction, on which it itself rests.

One way that capitalism's crisis may be resolved is by foregoing democracy, or what Streeck has termed "the right overthrowing democracy in order to save capitalism" (Streeck 2011). Polányi's insights are instructive once again. For Polányi (2001: 247), fascism represents precisely a movement that aims at rescuing capitalism through the destruction of democracy; through an attack on democratic institutions, "the economic system which was in peril of disruption would thus be revitalized, while the people themselves were subjected to a re-education designed to denaturalize the individual" (Polányi 2001: 245). The question that remains is the instrumentalization of surplus populations within these crises to keep capitalism from collapsing.

Contemporary racist movements that have emerged as a response to the crisis of social reproduction under financialized capitalism play a fundamental role in the relations of contemporary capital accumulation; as Rajaram points out, "racial ideology provides an opportunity for capital accumulation" (Rajaram 2018: 8). In his work on racism, capitalism,

and the rise of authoritarian populism (Hall 1979, 1980, 1985, 1988), Hall stresses the need to locate racism within its particular function in specific historical conditions:

> The question is not whether men [sic] in general make perceptual distinctions between groups with different racial or ethnic characteristics, but rather, what are the specific conditions which make this form of distinction socially pertinent, historically active. What gives this abstract human potentiality its effectivity, as a concrete material force?... Appeals to 'human nature' are not explanations, they are an alibi. One must start, then, from the concrete historical 'work' which racism accomplishes under specific historical conditions (Hall 1980: 338).

For students of contemporary rightwing populism, the issue then is about "why racism has been specifically overdetermined by and articulated with certain capitalisms at different stages of their development" (Hall 1980: 338-339). In other words, the question is: what work is racist rightwing populism doing for contemporary capitalism? Drawing from Gramsci, Hall emphasizes the importance of understanding racism as a set of practices operating to secure the hegemony of the dominant group over subordinate groups, in such a way as to foster social relations that are "favourable to the long-term development of the economic productive base" (Hall 1980: 338). Angela Davis' work on the intersections of race and gender in capitalist social relations is instructive here as well, showing the ways in which sexism and racism form a complex unity in securing hegemonic consent for capitalism (Davis 1981).

Such an analysis helps us to understand how racism, declining social reproduction conditions and rightwing populism combine in neoliberal austerity. Rightwing populist racism operates as a reactionary force to obscure the crisis of social reproduction connected to the declining living conditions and precarious work of neoliberalism. As Hall suggests, "The 'swing to the Right' is not a reflection of the crisis: it is itself a response to the crisis" (Hall 1979: 15). To frame it in terms of Fraser's 'triple movement,' these rightwing populist forces have emerged in reaction to neoliberalism as a social struggle of 'social protection' against 'marketization' but also against 'emancipation.' Building from Marx's emphasis that the presence of a surplus population creates inevitable discord amongst workers due to the laws of capital accumulation, it becomes possible to analyze how these antagonisms between workers become etched through racialized ideas about society and national belonging, operating to obscure the responsibility of capitalist social relations for workers' suffering. In the words of

Bhattacharya, "the social relations outside of wage labour are not accidental to it but take specific historical form in response to it" (Bhattacharya 2017b: 87).

Of particular interest here is how the question of societal belonging and citizenship comes into play with the function of surplus populations within capitalist crisis and rightwing populism. Critical scholars of migration bring attention to the ongoing crises in migration and asylum-seeking alongside emerging exclusionary models of citizenship and border regimes, turning to concepts such as "human-waste," "wasted lives," and "disposability" to describe the experiences of those displaced and excluded people who have been pushed out of contemporary definitions of citizenship. Such sentiments are captured incisively by Bauman:

> Refugees are human waste, with no useful function to play in the land of their arrival and temporary stay and no intention or realistic prospect of being assimilated or incorporate into the new social body; from their present place, the dumping site [of the refugee camp], there is no return and no road forward (Bauman 2003: 76)

For Smith, universal citizenship is understood as a Keynesian attempt to secure the masses' consent to capitalism in the wake of surplus population creation (Smith 2011): as people are excluded from the labour economy, they will continue to support the capitalist economic system if they receive the social assistance secured via citizenship rights. As capital accumulation turns to increasingly 'selective' forms of hegemony relying more on coercion than consent, a universal citizenship and its welfare system becomes unnecessary (Smith 2011), leaving increasing numbers excluded both in terms of class and citizenship. As rightwing populist politics converge with neoliberal austerity, this is precisely the outcome observable today.

However, as Susser points out, "the concept of class is not necessarily tied to the concept of 'citizen'" (Susser 2011: 55), and anthropological analyses of surplus populations should not rely on the framework of citizenship rights as the avenue for 'revindicative' politics. In paying attention to citizenship, we risk losing focus on class as the organizing principle that defines peoples' lived experiences. Furthermore, an emphasis on citizenship runs the risk of seeing the state and the arena of politics as the mediator of surplus populations, failing to recognize the fact that it is an economic system based on capital accumulation, not the state, nor governmentality, nor biopolitics, that makes and maintains people as surplus. In other

words, Smith cautions that by focusing on the dynamics of citizenship, we may "let capitalism and capitalists off the hook and attend instead to the state and its experts" (Smith 2011: 14-15). Nevertheless, the role of nationalism, racialization, and national belonging remains a paramount line of inquiry for adequately understanding how rightwing populism and capital accumulation interact. As Bhattacharya argues, Marxist analyses must recognize "'race and citizenship status' as central determinants" of dynamics of social reproduction (Bhattacharya 2017a: 13).

When brought together, what these analyses show is that instead of seeing surplus populations and their social reproduction as outside of capitalism, we have to consider the ways in which surplus populations are situated within larger fields of power that create conditions for accumulation, and how rightwing populist politics are closely tied to capitalist processes. Centering the lived experiences of surplus populations in our analyses of rightwing populism can offer us new insights into the contemporary conditions of capitalism: here I have argued that the perspective of surplus populations shows the ways in which contemporary forms of capital accumulation rely on rightwing populist politics for securing hegemonic consent. Paying attention to surplus populations therefore expands our understanding of work and political crisis, pushing back against a tendency of Marxist analysis to follow too closely surplus-value-producing labour and a tendency of social reproduction theory to follow too closely the gendered dynamics of labour. Such an analysis highlights the instrumentalization of surplus populations in invigorating rightwing populist movements as well as bolstering capital accumulation during a time of capitalist crisis.

Once again the case study of Hungarian Roma usefully demonstrates these theoretical insights: following postsocialist economic restructuring and its connected crisis of social reproduction, Roma in Hungary experienced a "double dispossession" in which they were permanently excluded from both labour markets and the national cultural register, becoming a racialized surplus population. As they became increasingly the target of rightwing populist politics, discourse about Roma was instrumentalized to gain hegemonic consent from the broader Hungarian society for the authoritarian capitalist regime built by the Orbán government under the banner of illiberalism. Roma then became, as discussed in Chapter 2, a supply of cheap labour in the form of workfare schemes implemented by the Hungarian state while also driving down general costs of labour, bolstering the smooth channels of accumulation.

Conclusion:
Surplus populations and social reproduction as class struggle

In this chapter I have proposed a view of capitalist crisis that centers surplus populations in our analyses of social reproduction and rightwing populism. In marrying Marxist-feminist theories on care with Polányi's work on the double-movement, I have thought through how to understand the general crisis of contemporary capitalism, the rise of rightwing populism, and the changing social reproduction conditions of those both excluded from labour markets and targeted by rightwing populism. While Polányian theories provide a useful analysis of the relationship between marketization and society, an analysis of surplus populations grounded in social reproduction theory offers critical insights about the relationship between capitalism and rightwing populism: I have here argued that through its instrumentalization of racialized surplus populations, rightwing populist politics operate to gain hegemonic consent and to weaken labour resistance, fortifying the contemporary conditions of accumulation in a time of capitalist crisis.

Throughout the chapter I have examined how to explain the rightwing nature of movements for 'social protection' reacting against neoliberal capitalism. Here I have put forth an understanding of the crisis of social reproduction and the rise of rightwing populism by thinking through the lens of social reproduction and centering the lived experiences of surplus populations. Taking lessons from Polányi's analysis and giving social reproduction the analytical attention it deserves within Marxist analysis, it becomes possible then to understand that the rise of rightwing populism and authoritarianism today is not a 'failure' of liberal democracy, but rather an acute crisis tied intimately to the social reproduction relations of contemporary capitalism. Reorienting surplus populations in the analysis of rightwing populism enables a political economy perspective that connects the crises at their shared root - capitalism - and can interpret their inter-connections.

That so many are excluded from exploitation "necessitates a rethinking of political strategy, one to which anthropology is particularly suited to contribute" (Kaminer 2022). As Angela Davis argues,

> Today when so many Black, Chicano and Puerto Rican men and women are jobless as a consequence of the internal dynamic of the capitalist system, the role of the unemployed, which includes the lumpenproletariat, in revolutionary struggle must be given serious thought… This recognition should signal the urgent need to organize the unemployed and lumpenproletariat (Davis 2016: 35-36).

Such an analysis requires seeing racialized surplus populations such as Roma and refugees as not outside the channels of revolutionary struggle, instead making visible "the migrant as a revolutionary subject" (Hussan 2021). It is necessary to recognize surplus populations as agents of history, and especially in an era of precarity, agents with power to wage class struggle outside the realm of waged work, in the realm of social reproduction. As Kaminer argues, "even the most outcast of populations have means of putting pressure on capital, and maintenance of global hegemony requires that their demands be dealt with in one way or another" (Kaminer 2022). Smith too suggests that for the "wretched citizens" of surplus populations, "their daily existence is one of resistance" and that they can engage in what he terms "a politics of refusal" (Smith 2022).

What these analyses suggest is that reorienting social reproduction in our analyses of capitalist crisis does not just allow us to see the problem more clearly: such a framework offers opportunities for thinking of agency and strategy in new ways. Bhattacharya's analysis of social reproduction (2017b) stresses that social reproduction is not only the key to developing a sufficiently dynamic understanding of the working class, but also the most promising arena for emancipatory struggles against capitalism. She argues that it is necessary to "go beyond the purely economic struggle for wages… Every social and political movement 'tending' in the direction of gains for the working class… must be considered an aspect of class struggle" (Bhattacharya 2017b: 85-86). In other words, "reproduction, in short, is therefore a site of class conflict" (Bhattacharya 2017b: 79)

Bhattacharya's analysis raises the question, what strategies emerge for combatting both capitalist crisis and the rise of rightwing populism when we reframe class struggle around an understanding of social reproduction that recognizes capitalism as a social totality - as a wider social whole, sustained and co-produced by human labor in contradictory yet constitutive ways? Thinking about 'social reproduction as class struggle' moves beyond the trappings of both a Polányian double-movement framework that simplifies social protection

as well as a Marxist framework that tends towards class reductionism and economism. As she states, an expanded theory of social reproduction emphasizes "the need to confront capital in its totality" (Bhattachrya 2017b: 85).

Bhattacharya's work helps to reframe the response to rightwing populism and capitalism, highlighting "the strategic implications of social reproduction theory" in not just "our actual battles against capital" but also our 'actual battles' against rightwing populism as a way of "confronting capital beyond the factory floor" (Bhattacharya 2017b: 91). As Fraser emphasizes, the strategic need remains to connect how the various contemporary crises facing the world today - political, economic, environmental, social - can be traced back to a singular source: capitalism (Fraser 2022). Expanding and re-centering "class struggle" - instead of concepts like "intersectionality" - within the diverse social movements responding to the multifaceted crises of contemporary conditions enable us to keep at our attention the singular source from which emanates the various crises of this current historical moment: capitalism, understood as a wider social order, pointing to "the filaments of class solidarity that must be forged, sometimes within and sometimes without the workplace" (Bhattacharya 2017b: 87-88). The issue then becomes one of how struggles against rightwing populism can become tethered around class struggle through centering social reproduction, and how people pushed out of waged labour can become recognized as empowered agents of history in these movements, finding linked solidarities in their respective grievances emanating from a world structured by capital accumulation. Recentering social reproduction and the question of surplus populations in a Polányian analysis of capitalist crisis opens up opportunities for a broadened working-class affront to the authoritarian tendencies of capitalism.

If the task is to capture emergent political possibilities that can orient our movements towards hope, leftists can benefit from rethinking social reproduction and surplus populations in their analyses. This realization pushes back against terminology that renders surplus populations, Roma, and refugees as merely "wasted lives" and "abandoned" and looks to how the "refuse of capitalism" actively engage in attempts to form lives that are not centered on the wage relationship, instead finding ways to survive and resist on the margins of capitalism and beyond. The following section of my dissertation engages with these themes more directly in relation to my fieldwork with Roma and their work and survival strategies in Canada. In the following chapters, I will build on the theoretical argument advanced here to show how

Romani asylum-seeking has emerged as a social reproduction strategy as Roma respond to the exigencies of rightwing populism and authoritarian capitalism.

Chapter 5
From Hungarian Illiberalism to Canadian Neoliberalism: Romani experiences with the Canadian asylum regime

Introduction

What happens to Hungarian Roma after they arrive in Canada? The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the experiences of Hungarian Roma navigating the refugee processing system in Canada: the legal processes involved, the border mechanisms encountered, the abuses of power as well as the networks of solidarity and support. In tracing these experiences, the chapter is an invitation to think through how struggles around refugee status and immigration relate to histories of social reproduction and labour, and how the processes of accumulation and the resultant marginalization of racialized labour I have examined thus far in postsocialist Hungary form part of a global system, one in which Canada too is implicated. While I develop the analysis of work and social reproduction within relations of asylum-seeking more explicitly and theoretically in the following chapter of this dissertation, Chapter 6, here I focus specifically on the details and dynamics of Romani asylum-seeking in Canada.

The chapter draws from my time conducting ethnographic fieldwork at the Toronto Roma Community Centre (RCC) between January 2017 and February 2020. During my time at the RCC, I encountered Romani families, Hungarian-speaking social workers, Canadian teachers, and advocates for Roma and refugees living in Toronto. I combine the information I gained from my participant observation and semi-structured interviews at the RCC with an analysis of government legislation, legal proceedings, immigration statistics, and newspaper articles spanning between 1996 and 2021. As a whole, the chapter is a detailed documentation of the recent history of Hungarian Roma maneuvering through the various institutions that comprise what I term here the Canadian asylum regime, including border services, law offices, community organizations, neighbourhood police, and school boards and teachers. Importantly, in documenting Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking through their everyday experiences with these institutions, it becomes evident that the Canadian asylum regime has not been left untouched by the historical transformations discussed in previous chapters:

hence, here I underscore the global processes of racialized capitalism, social reproduction struggles, and rightwing populist politics, locating these processes in Canadian histories.

The chapter thus provides a crucial part of the story about Romani marginalization and social reproduction that resists orientalizing Central and Eastern Europe as a region of countries facing 'democratic backsliding' connected to their communist legacies. Instead, this analysis of the Canadian asylum regime shows how global dimensions of political economy and capital shape migration and asylum trends; namely, following Roma as they navigate the Canadian asylum regime reveals how the Canadian refugee processing system has crystallized around political and economic developments nationally as well as globally, such as financialized capitalism, a crisis of care, and racially-motivated populism. The chapter details how these changes have come to bear on the lives of Romani refugees and the local efforts on the ground by their families and their advocates to help Romani refugees live dignified lives in Canada. A crucial part of this analysis is thus tracing the lines between the coalitions, activists, and local groups who have gathered around Roma to support them in Toronto and to organize against dehumanizing immigration policies. The chapter emphasizes the individual actions of people maneuvering large-scale global and historical processes and the networks of mutual aid and social reproduction that have filled in to assist Roma in the face of the neoliberal border politics of the Canadian asylum regime.

The Toronto Roma Community Centre

In October 2017, I attended for the first time an Annual General Meeting of the Toronto Roma Community Centre (RCC). Crowded into a boardroom inside of the immigrant assistance organization Culture Link were about fifty people, a large pot of Hungarian chicken paprikash, and a party-sized sheet cake decorated in red, blue, and green icing. As an aspect of my fieldwork, I was assisting the RCC Board of Directors in the role of secretary and was consequently taking the meeting minutes: as people went around the room and introduced themselves, I noted the attendance from the RCC Roma membership: fourteen Ukrainians, seven Hungarians, five Czechs or Slovaks, three Bulgarians, two English travellers and a half dozen or so Canadians of Roma background. Also in attendance was a handful of local refugee advocates from similar community groups, as well as the

neighbourhood's local elected representative for the provincial parliament, who expressed her support for the Romani diaspora in Toronto.

During these introductions, a man stood up and introduced himself as one of the founders of the RCC, narrating how he and a group of Romani-Canadians and allies established the organization almost twenty years ago. At the time, in 1998, a group of white supremacist neo-Nazis were marching in downtown Toronto and took as target some recently-arrived Czech Romani asylum-seekers. The man lamented that he had heard on the CBC just that week that far-right militants had once again started up rallies at Toronto City Hall[15], making the work of the RCC as relevant as ever.

Once the tedious and official business adjourned, plates of cabbage rolls, *lecsó*, and paprikash were passed out; children ran around playing with each other and dancing while Ronald Lee, one of Canada's preeminent Romani scholars and activists as well as one of the RCC's co-founders, played a Russian folk tune on the piano. I found myself cutting cake slices and caught in conversation with Zoli *bácsi*, an elderly Hungarian Romani man who wanted to share with me his thoughts on the comparative nuances of rightwing populism between Hungary and Canada.

The community conglomerated around the RCC meets about four times a year for community events such as its AGM. Originally founded as the Roma Community and Advocacy Centre of Toronto (RCAC), and initially motivated by racist attacks on recently arrived postsocialist Romani refugees, today the RCC is a modest volunteer-run organization with a range of operations: helping Roma with settlement in Canada; assisting with translation or support for social services; providing workshops and public education; and organizing advocacy efforts and political campaigns advancing Romani rights.[16]

[15] Throughout 2017, a small number of far-right – usually referred to as 'alt-right' in North America – activists began organizing monthly protests at Toronto City Hall, amounting to about two dozen protestors demonstrating against the Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, and the government's perceived 'liberal' policies towards immigrants, people on social assistance, and LGBT politics. As an aspect of my doctoral fieldwork, I attended the leftist counter-protests of these events but did not see any messaging specific to Roma being shared by alt-right protestors. Later these alt-right protestors in Canada would gain strength and numbers from the COVID-19 global pandemic, protesting vaccinations and public masking, which eventually escalated into a 'Freedom Convoy' protest outside of the Canadian Parliament building in Ottawa in January 2022. See UTA 2022.

[16] For a thorough overview of the RCC history and activities see: Levine-Rasky 2016: 164-171.

Since 2014, the RCC has been led by Micheal[17] Butch, a fourth-generation Canadian Romani man whose paternal great-grandparents emigrated from Russia at the turn of the Twentieth Century. Micheal's family retains many of the customs traditional to Romani communities: they speak the Romani language with each other; Micheal works as a musician; and many of the women in his family, including his daughter, work as fortune-tellers. Today Micheal is frontman for the Gypsy Rebels, a rock and blues band that plays a mix of traditional Romani music and contemporary cover songs in bars throughout Toronto. Micheal is a community leader of the Toronto Kalderash Romani community and acts as a judge in the Canadian Romani court system, the *kris*, a traditional court system used in Romani communities for conflict-issue resolution amongst community members.

Micheal and I grew to know each other very well over the course of my fieldwork. Outside of our office hours together at the RCC, I joined him for dinners at local restaurants, where the owners tended to know Micheal well and treat him like an old friend; I attended the concerts of his band in Kensington Market or Parkdale; and I spent a fair part of my fieldwork in the passenger seat of his car, chatting about all kinds of topics while driving around Toronto to run errands for the RCC. While Micheal's formal education came to an end before he was able to graduate from high school, he enjoyed discussing political topics and debating current affairs. When speaking about my research or the RCC's activism, he would often tell me that the word 'gypsy' is not a bad word: "It's the words that come before and after it that matter." During my fieldwork I was regularly treated to Micheal's characteristic good sense of humour: one time he called me and 'psychically' guessed, correctly, that I was at the grocery store. It was evident to me from the onset that Micheal wielded his charismatic kindness and expansive networks around Toronto to mobilize support and services for the Roma community. For each event we held, Micheal managed to get food donated by local restaurants, well-known musicians to play free concerts, local politicians to show up and give speeches, and Roma from across all nationalities to attend.

For the most part, my fieldwork with Micheal and the RCC took shape around the office of the RCC located at Culture Link, where once or twice a week I assumed the voluntary role of secretary and administrative assistant. Micheal would treat me to a turkey sandwich and

[17] Micheal's first name is spelt in an unconventional way that may appear as a spelling mistake. He told me that his parents made a mistake on his birth certificate, but this may have been a joke.

coffee for lunch, and, if it wasn't busy, we would chat about his family history, Roma in Canada, and the situation in Hungary. Since Micheal's skills with computers are limited, I was in charge of typing up any necessary documents and navigating the internet. I assisted Micheal with RCC advocacy work, writing letters he would dictate to me from the top of his head in support of Romani refugee claimants struggling with their claims or local Roma families encountering problems with social services or the school board. Romani parents would call or stop by to ask Micheal for help finding their teenage son a summer job or to come translate for them at a meeting with their lawyers, doctors, or teachers. A few months into my time at the RCC, at Micheal's urging, I began to teach English classes to Hungarian Roma.

Romani refugee claimants visited the RCC from various Central European countries; during my years helping out every Monday and Friday afternoons, I met countless Slovaks, Czechs, Hungarians, Bulgarians, and Romanians. As the civil war in Ukraine continued throughout the mid-2010s, we began to receive frequent visits from Ukrainian Roma arriving in Canada filing for refugee protection. As Levine-Rasky documents in her detailed history of Roma in Canada:

> Among Toronto Roma communities, one observes an impressive plurality of identities. Diversity exists not only in such categories as country of origin and religion, but also in identification with Romanipe, and familiarity with traditional occupations and work strategies (Levine-Rasky 2016: 76).

A typical day at the RCC office often entailed meeting with Romani families, who would drop by with requests for help for any number of issues affecting their new lives in Toronto, from filling out their asylum applications to trying to secure an apartment to rent in Toronto. One document we regularly produced for asylum-seeking families was a "Roma Ethnicity" certificate, which families would include in their refugee claims. Because Roma apply for asylum protection in Canada based on persecution related to their race and ethnicity, the practice of issuing certificates attesting to Romani ethnicity has become common in Romani organizations, both in Canada and in Hungary. For these certificates, Micheal would interview families to determine if they had a Romani background. Based on the information he derived from these conversations, I would type up a document, print it, and have Micheal sign it.

It was common for me to interact with Hungarian Roma as they were navigating either applying for asylum, appealing a rejected asylum claim, waiting on their 'legacy' claim (discussed below), or looking to stay in Canada based on humanitarian and compassionate grounds. For example, an excerpt from my fieldnotes reads:

> Friday, January 10, 2020: Today I got to practice my Hungarian a lot at the Roma Centre. We had several appointments for "Roma Ethnicity" certificates and all but one were for Hungarian families. One was a man who had come to Canada recently to join his partner and her parents; all Roma from Miskolc. Another was a woman about my age, who dropped in with her partner and her mother, plus several children. They are just filing for asylum now, also from Miskolc. Later in the afternoon, another Hungarian couple came in for assistance with their permanent residency application. They were Beás Roma from central Hungary, from a village close to Székesfehérvár. They'd been in Canada for years.

Roma from Hungary stand out somewhat in the community formed around the RCC, as most of them are Romungro: Roma who were proletarianized during Hungarian socialism and speak little Romani and practice few of the customs and traditions that Romani communities from other European countries tend to retain.[18] As my time at the RCC progressed, I began to discern these differences and the dynamics they entailed. Hence over the course of my time at the RCC, the ebbs and flows of Romani asylum-seeking and settlement in Canada were slowly revealed to me, involving many groups of Roma from different original countries and migration periods. These waves are unpacked and discussed below.

Roma in Canada: A brief history

In the 2016 Canadian Census (Statistics Canada 2016), 4,630 respondents identified as "Roma (Gypsy)" and 348,085 respondents identified as Hungarian.[19] However, census data is

[18] Hungarian Romani identity related to being Romungro and how this impacts their life, work, and relations in Canada is unpacked in the following chapter where I discuss questions of labour and social reproduction amongst Romani refugees in Toronto.

[19] The Canadian census takes place every five years. At the time of writing, the 2021 census data on Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity had yet to be released. Interestingly there was a slight drop in the number of Roma who identified as such in 2016 compared to the 2011 survey, and a significant increase in who

notorious for undercounting Romani populations for a number of methodological limitations discussed elsewhere (Ladányi and Szelényi 2006, Levine-Rasky 2016, Beaudoin et al 2015). Romani scholar and leading historian on Canadian Romani history Ron Lee argues that the population of Roma in Canada is close to 80,000 (Lee 2006). Moreover, Lee argues that for Roma who arrived throughout the first half of the Twentieth Century:

> Since these transplanted immigrant groups never experienced the Holocaust nor the Communist assimilation programs of central-eastern Europe, they have in many ways preserved a more traditional, ancestral culture (Lee, unpublished manuscript).[20]

It is difficult to overstate the influence of Ron Lee on the Canadian Romani Community, its intellectual history and the networks of activism born out of decades of struggle. The author of several articles about Romani history and language in Canada (Lee 1997, 2000, 2006, 2009, 2013, unpublished manuscript), a Romani musician, and a longstanding advocate for Romani rights in Canada, Lee has traced the communities of Roma in Canada for decades and has been a central figure within the community organizing of the RCC. As a co-founder of the RCC, Ron sat on its Board of Directors until his death in early 2020. I met him often at RCC events, dinners, concerts, and meetings.

In the summer of 2018, I visited Ron in his modest home in Hamilton, a working-class 'steel-town' one hour's drive west of Toronto, to conduct a lengthy interview away from the chaotic bustling environment of the RCC. Ron was eager to meet and discuss with me the history of Romani refugees in Canada. During our interview Ron explained to me his life history and the dynamics surrounding Romani communities in Canada and Romani asylum-seeking. Born in Montreal in 1934, Ron was the child of Welsh travelers who had emigrated from Britain. Throughout the sixties Ron was a folk singer in Montreal, rubbing shoulders with Leonard Cohen and playing both traditional Romani music and folk music for smoky bars across Canada. Ron became active with the global Romani civil rights movement in the 1970s, traveling to the UK and elsewhere in Europe, though he eventually grew disillusioned

identified as Hungarian: in the 2011 Canadian National Household Survey, 5,255 respondents identified as Romani and 317,000 respondents identified as Hungarian.

[20] During my fieldwork at the RCC, Ronald Lee shared with me an unpublished manuscript that he had written on the history of Roma in Canada and gave me permission to use it in my doctoral work; he passed away in early 2020 before the book was published, though his estate has been authorized with publishing it on his behalf posthumously, and it is expected to be published in the coming year. I have taken some quotes and information from this manuscript and have referenced it accordingly.

with these efforts[21]: when we spoke, with a wink he asserted: "Frantz Fanon should be required reading for all Roma." Ron earned a living as a journalist and trained as a paralegal to help Romani refugees when they began to arrive in the 1990s. He taught a university course on Romani Studies at the University of Toronto for five years, wrote a textbook for learning the Romani language that is now widely used, and was given an honorary doctorate from Queen's University. He was a quintessential organic intellectual in Gramscian terms.

Lee's history of Roma in Canada shows that Roma began to arrive as early as the turn of the 19th Century (Lee, unpublished manuscript; see also Hancock 1987, Levine-Rasky 2016). His research into the Canadian archives has shown that from the onset, Roma arriving in Canada did not receive a warm welcome: in the 1880s, the Canadian state wanted "lumberjacks and farmers, hard-working Europeans who would 'settle' the Canadian prairies" (Lee, unpublished manuscript). Yet when groups of European Roma began to arrive, the Canadian Ministry of Agriculture asserted that "gypsies should not become Canadians because they would not become 'productive citizens'" (Lee, unpublished manuscript). For Lee, this kind of story captures the Canadian state's approach to its relationship with Romani migrants. In conversation with him he told me, "This philosophy still exists in Canada today. This way of thinking extends all the way to the present and the rise of neo-Nazism in Canada today." Because of this discrimination, Roma in Canada have developed a strategy of strategic invisibility: "We just disappear in Canadian society - it's so multicultural. So when you're with *gadjes*, you pretend to be *gadje*. When you're with Rom, you're Rom."

I asked Ron about Roma from Hungary and how they relate in Canada, and he recalled to me that he had once had a big argument with the Hungarian Embassy when he was Executive Director of the RCC:

> One time I was at the Hungarian Embassy in Canada. They had a pamphlet called 'A Study of the Gypsies in Hungary,' which I thought was funny because Gypsies have been in Hungary much longer than Canadians have been in Canada, but could you imagine a similar pamphlet about Canadians in a Canadian Embassy? Roma have been

[21] As Acton describes in his obituary to Lee, written for *Travellers Times*, "Disillusioned with both the Gypsy Council and the Gypsy Lore Society, he decided to return to Canada in 1970… The bulk of the 1980s were a period of disillusion with the perennial failure of Romani politics, and of too much reliance on alcohol to dull the pain" (Acton 2020).

> living in Hungary since the Middle Ages! It is clear that the civil servants of the Hungarian state do not view Roma as Hungarian citizens.

Ron also believed it was important to be mindful of hierarchies and exclusions within Romani communities. He emphasized the need for women's empowerment and the freedom for gender expression in Romani communities.[22] When it came to questions about Hungary, he was often quick to point out class issues about the Roma coming to Canada; as he joked during our interview:

> Keep in mind that educated Roma getting money from George Soros don't represent all of us. Most Roma are so poor they cannot afford the bus fare to the airport, never mind the trip all the way to Canada.

These kinds of remarks indicated to me that there were tensions and nuances within the category of 'Roma' as an identity, which are often glossed over by non-Roma.

In tracing the history of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, Ron explained that some Hungarian Roma arrived in Canada following the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. At this time Canada was not a signatory to the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention and had no official refugee processing system in place.[23] Nevertheless, in less than a year following the uprising, Canadian immigration officials brought in over 37,000 Hungarian refugees, who were quickly resettled across Canada. Canada's response to these fleeing Hungarians influenced the Canadian refugee system for years to come; however, little is known about the Hungarian Roma who may have come during this time, as the ethnicity of Hungarian refugees was not - and is still not - registered officially with the Canadian state.

One elderly Romani man who is a board member of the RCC came to Toronto as a refugee during this time period. Zoli *bácsi* has been in Canada for 61 years and is one of the early members of the RCC; he speaks Hungarian, Romanes, English, Russian, and French, often

[22] During his funeral service in early 2020, which I attended in person, several Romani women stood up and spoke about Ron's commitment to supporting Romani women's activism and intellectual work.

[23] In 1969 Canada signed the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol that defined 'refugee' as anyone outside the country of nationality who was unable or unwilling to return to that country due to a 'well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.'

switching between the languages rapidly depending on who is in the conversation. I met Zoli frequently during my fieldwork and interviewed him about his experiences: he was born in Budapest in 1936; along with his brother, he fled to the Slovakian countryside to hide and escape the Romani genocide during World War II. After the war he returned to Budapest and attended trade school. Zoli was 20 years old and working as an electrician when the 1956 Revolution broke out. When I asked him what happened to him during this time, Zoli simply told me, "We had no choice but to leave." That December he snuck to Austria and made it eventually onto Canada.

Zoli described the Toronto of the 1950s and 1960s as anti-Hungarian: it was during the Cold War, and Canadians were suspicious of East Europeans. The discrimination against Roma and Hungarians were alike in Canada during this time. Hungarians were seen as 'fascists' or 'communists,' and according to Zoli, "you can't be a communist in Canada" When I enquired about anti-Gypsyism during the same historical period in Hungary, Zoli responded simply: under the communist law it was illegal to insult Roma. Zoli believes that since the 1990s some people have brought the anti-Gypsyism of Europe with them to Canada.

Throughout the 70s and 80s, and along with Ron Lee, Zoli helped the modest numbers of Roma who escaped state socialism to settle in Montreal and Toronto, forming a kind of network of support and aid for Romani refugees: he would go to hearings and tribunals to interpret for Romani refugee families, and he would escort them to their doctor's offices and social services appointments. He would help Hungarian Roma in Canada, who, having lived under state socialism, he believed had lost some of their Romani traditions. He would tell them, "Your citizenship is Hungarian, but your origins are Roma" - something he repeated quite often at the RCC. Throughout the 2000s, Zoli assisted refugee lawyers with working with Romani families. His impression from this work was that "the fate of Romani refugees is totally random here in Canada: it doesn't matter what your story is. It just depends on lawyers, the judges, the laws at the time, and how lucky you are."

After 1956, the number of Hungarian Roma coming to Canada dwindled, though a small trickle of East Europeans leaving communist countries gradually built up the numbers of Canadian Roma communities. By the 1990s, a sizable diaspora of Roma had formed in cities like Toronto and Montreal, from Russia, Yugoslavia, Hungary and elsewhere (Levine-Rasky 2019). As Levine-Rasky in her extensive research on Roma in Canada explains:

> A viable Canadian-Romani community existed, composed of Roma from many groups, who had been arriving in Canada for almost a century and who had integrated peacefully into the Canadian multicultural mosaic while retaining their Romani culture and identity and in many cases, their Romani dialects, most of whom had adapted to Canadian society and were small businessmen, automobile dealers, entertainers, middle-men dealing in surplus and other non-criminal activities (Levine Rasky 2016: 38).

As the end of communism approached, the history of Roma arriving in Canada would enter a new phase, shaped by the postsocialist marginalization experienced by Roma in Central and Eastern Europe and the Canadian state response to their inflow.

The three waves of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada

As overviewed in Chapter 1, more than 25,000 Hungarian Roma have filed for refugee protection in Canada since the mid-1990s. There have been two short periods in the past three decades in which Romani claims peaked: in 1998-2002 and again in 2009-2012. At the end of 2012 a new system of refugee processing was introduced. From 2013 onwards, numbers for 'New System Claims' have dropped but a persistent stream continues with 3,888 claims made between 2013 and 2021. For the sake of my analysis, I have thus categorized Romani asylum-seeking to Canada into three periods: these three waves are broken down in Table 1. In the past two decades, Hungary has ranked as the number one source country for asylum-seekers in Canada, of all countries globally, for four separate years: in 2001 and for the three consecutive years between 2010 and 2012.

Table 1: Total Hungarian Refugee Claims filed in Canada, Three Waves

First Wave	
Year	Claims Referred
1996	64
1997	294
1998	977
1999	1581
2000	1936
2001	3895
2002	1180
2003	132
2004	162
2005	58
2006	48
2007	24
TOTAL:	**10,351**

Second Wave	
Year	Claims Referred
2008	288
2009	2440
2010	2300
2011	4423
2012	1882
TOTAL:	**11,333**

Third Wave	
Year	Claims Referred
2013	198
2014	389
2015	925
2016	957
2017	557
2018	462
2019	217
2020	118
2021	94
TOTAL:	**3,888**

Total claims 1996-2021: 25,572

Data compiled from:

UNHCR (2022). Refugee Data Finder. Accessed online: https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/

Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) of Canada (2022b): Refugee claims statistics. Accessed online: https://irb.gc.ca/en/statistics/protection/pages/index.aspx

Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) of Canada (1998-2015). 'Country reports: October to December and year to date.'

Many Romani asylum-seekers have settled in west Toronto in the Parkdale neighbourhood, where today there are numerous services assisting Hungarian-speaking refugee claimants, including a health centre specializing in immigrant care; a free legal clinic that assists with asylum claims; the Parkdale Cultural Associations, out of which some of the Hungarian-speaking resettlement workers operate; the Parkdale primary school; and a high school, Parkdale Collegiate Institute. There is a large apartment building called West Lodge Towers, where many Roma live alongside fellow migrants and low-income families. A sprawling complex of social service providers has built up in Parkdale in response to the inflow of Hungarian Romani asylum-seekers, and, as a result, untold Hungarian-speaking Canadians have been recruited to the west Toronto neighbourhood.

Almost every week during my fieldwork, particularly in Parkdale, I would meet community workers originally from Hungary: the retired Hungarian teacher who came to Canada in 1991 and now works as a casual staffer for the Toronto District School Board as a 'Hungarian assistant' in the Parkdale schools; the former social worker who worked for the Children's Protective Services in Miskolc and now helps Roma applying for social assistance; the social worker who came to Canada in the mid-2000s for her son's hockey career and today helps Romani families experiencing domestic abuse. Often I wondered about the dynamics of Hungarian-Canadians assisting Romani refugees and the levels of mutual respect and trust. It was not uncommon to hear workers express vaguely racist sentiments about Roma or to draw on stereotypes to explain situations or behaviour. As a white Canadian researcher, I was often privy to commentary from Hungarian workers who felt comfortable expressing discriminatory ideas about Roma in front of me, and these moments presented an opportunity to reflect on my own behaviour.

When I asked Romani families about the Hungarian helpers in Toronto, they would tell me that they were annoyed by the patronizing tones while also appreciating being understood speaking their own language and being assisted by people who recognized the Hungarian context. Most Hungarians in Canada were critical of the current Hungarian government and acknowledged the sizeable discrimination Roma experience in Hungary. Additionally, many of the Romani women I spoke with seemed to identify more with these Hungarian helpers than with Canadians or Roma in Canada from other countries, with whom they also had strained relations at times. It thus appeared to be an ambivalent relationship, shaped by social tensions and ironic historical twists. I was also acutely aware in these conversations that I

myself, as a Canadian researcher and anthropologist who had lived in Hungary, existed somewhere amidst these relational ambiguities as well. I recognized that in these conversations my informants may not have felt comfortable expressing to me any criticism about people helping them in Canada.

One notable example from my fieldwork in Parkdale was a police officer who had been relocated about ten years ago from a precinct elsewhere in the city to the Parkdale neighbourhood police station because of his Hungarian language skills. Originally from Keszthely, a small Hungarian town on the western shores of Lake Balaton, the neighbourhood officer had moved to Canada fourteen years ago: today he says that "not a single day goes by" in which he doesn't speak Hungarian on the job, and many of the Romani families I met with were on a first-name basis with him. He believes that "95 percent of the Roma here in Parkdale come from Miskolc," and as a result he even visited Miskolc the last time he went back to Hungary, even though he had never been there before or had any interest in the city prior to meeting all these Romani refugees in Parkdale.

Romani teenagers told me that the police officer drops into the high school occasionally to play soccer with them during their open class period. I was surprised to hear them speak of him with respect and a hint of adoration, as opposed to youthful rebellious sentiments or the justifiably tense relations between racialized communities and the police force. The police officer explained that he is called almost daily to assist with neighbourhood conflicts involving Romani families, most of whom do not speak English enough to communicate with the authorities. A lot of the time, these families require help outside of what the police force can offer, so he ends up referring them to Hungarian-speaking social workers located in Parkdale. It seemed clear that he had a good and active working relationship with the several other Hungarian-speaking settlement workers, teachers, and social workers who operate in Parkdale.

The police officer shared that he was very committed to being a role model for the Romani youth: "They are a very vulnerable group who are easily lost if someone does not reach out to them." He sees himself as a migrant success story that Roma can work towards achieving. This liberal attitude seemed naive to the challenging structural barriers Romani families face in becoming settled into Canadian society the way police officer did, not to mention the various scales of racism and poverty that Roma had to struggle against and maneuver

through, from the legal sector and government policy to media representations and social services.

Importantly, the role that police play in surveillancing racialized communities in Toronto is glossed over in this kind of narrative. As a recent editorial in a leftist Toronto-based journal described,

> In response to the critique of police violence, police organizations have created programs to "bridge" with communities. They integrate themselves into grade schools or promote "neighbourhood" programs where "kind police officers" walk around, playing basketball with the youth. This is all, however, transparently to reform their image in order to justify higher budget lines. Meanwhile, grassroots campaigns like Education Not Incarceration in Toronto have worked tirelessly to get cops out of the Toronto school board and won. Much of this work involved dispelling police propaganda about the supposed "success" of the program by recentring the experiences of racialized students (UTA 2022).

These kind of tensions - between liberal sentiments about refugees in Canada, the neoliberal realities, and the lived experiences of refugee claimants, are unpacked in the following sections.

The first wave: The "Refugees from Democracy"

Following the end of state socialism in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s, a wave of Romani asylum-seekers from across the former Eastern Bloc began to arrive in Canada, and, by the new millennium, they amounted to over 10,000 asylum-seekers (Levine-Rasky et al 2013). Ron Lee would, tongue-in-cheek, call this first wave of Romani asylum-seeking the 'refugees from democracy.' As he explained to me:

> Under communism anyone coming from a communist country automatically received refugee status in Canada, but it was trickier now because everyone was asking, why are these gypsies asking for protection from their new-found democracies? Canada just

> didn't know what to make of these Roma fleeing the racism set free by the fall of communism.

The first wave kicked off in genuine in 1997 when in a single year 2,000 Czech Roma arrived in Canada seeking refugee status (Levine-Rasky et al 2013: 85). Canada began receiving refugee applicants from Hungary as early as 1994, when it dropped its visa requirements for Hungary, and significant numbers of claims were filed between the period of 1998 and 2001. For a breakdown of numbers, see Table 1. From 1996 until 2001, approximately 9,500 Roma from Hungary applied for refugee status in Canada, representing about 6 percent of the total number of refugee claims made in Canada during this period (Beaudoin et al 2015).

In trying to explain how this wave of Romani asylum-seeking was mobilized in the first place, Lee argued that media representations and word of mouth led to a snowball effect. During this first wave of postsocialist Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, there was "widespread coverage in Hungarian media about Czech Roma receiving refugee status in Canada" (Lee, unpublished manuscript). As a result

> wild, exaggerated rumours and pure mythology circulated about the Roma in Hungary about the mainly mythical benefits they might expect once they arrived in Canada… these totally unfounded rumours, plus the widespread persecution and systemic discrimination in Hungary convinced many Hungarian Roma that they could better their lives and those of their children by seeking Convention-refugee status in Canada (Lee, unpublished manuscript).

Already at this time, according to Lee, racist representations in the media were capitalizing on stereotypes about 'gypsy invasions': he explained to me in conversation that there was a lot of "Roma bashing in the Canadian media" as more Roma refugees were arriving throughout this first wave.[24] This anti-Roma racism was compounded when neo-Nazis began organizing in Toronto in the mid-1990s. In 1998, Ron co-founded the Roma Centre to help the Czech and Hungarian Roma respond to this local wave of Canadian racism.

[24] Beaudoin provides a detailed analysis of representations of Roma in Canadian media that corroborate Lee's claims about 'Roma bashing': see Beaudoin 2014.

One of the people who helped Ron with the Roma 'fleeing democracy' was Paul St Claire, a paralegal who continues today to work assisting Czech and Slovak Roma coming to Canada, with an office inside of Culture Link. I met Paul frequently during my fieldwork and interviewed him to gain insight from someone who had borne witness to the past three decades of Romani asylum-seeking. Originally from the former Czechoslovakia, Paul explained to me that he was visiting Canada in 1968, as a student, when he saw on the news that Soviet tanks had invaded Czechoslovakia to crush the Prague Spring; he decided then to make Canada his home.

Decades later, Paul shared, Czech Roma arrived in Toronto in a huge wave. The year was 1998, and Paul became involved when his mother heard on the radio that there was a large group of Czech Roma who had just arrived in Canada, who were living in a refugee shelter and needed help with translation. Paul went down to the shelter to assist with communication; the Romani families warmed up to him when he was able to help them improve their situation by suggesting to the shelter that they allow the Romani women to do the cooking. Paul began working with Ron and other Romani activists to assist these newcomer Roma and took on the role of Executive Director of the RCC for its first ten years. Starting off as a translator, he eventually became a paralegal doing legal work for Roma. Paul told me that when Roma in the late 1990s first started coming to Canada, the East European diaspora in Toronto - Czechs, Hungarians, Slovaks - initially distanced themselves from the Roma. They would say things like, "these Roma are not the kind of immigrants Canada should take." Moreover, there was some conflict between Czech and Hungarian Roma, who spoke different languages and had different connections to Romani identity and traditions.

The Hungarian Roma who came during the beginning of this wave faced, at first, largely positive outcomes initially. As Tóth notes, "a significant number of claimants [in the beginning of this period were able to] convince the IRB that they are victims of persecution and that the state does nothing to address it" (Tóth 2010: 9). The IRB was quoted in the Canadian press at this time as saying: "The chronic discrimination in housing, employment and education that the Roma faced in the two countries [Hungary and the Czech Republic] is tantamount to persecution so severe that they qualify under the United Nations definition as refugees" (Sarick 1998, as quoted in Levine-Rasky 2016).

However, outcomes for Hungarian refugee claims changed in 1999, when the IRB conducted a 'lead case' in anticipation of increased numbers of Hungarian Romani refugee claims (Levine-Rasky 2016: 110; see also Beaudoin et al 2015, Tóth 2010, Levine-Rasky et al 2013). Lead cases are used as "a tool for enhancing consistency in refugee determinations by providing non-binding guidance in cases involving similar facts" (Beaudoin et al 2015). However, Tóth argues that Canada at this time wanted to change its approach to refugee claims from Hungary due to impending trade negotiations and its support for EU membership for Hungary:

> With more than $1 billion in trade between the countries since 1998, and Canada's support for EU membership for Hungary, accepting thousands of Roma refugees from Hungary would have strained relations between the two countries (Tóth 2010: 9).

The IRB thus invited a panel of 'Hungarian experts on Roma'[25] to testify as to the country conditions in Hungary; these eyewitnesses asserted that there were laws in place to assist and protect Roma (Lee, forthcoming). The lead case thus decided that Hungarian Roma did not face persecution and instead enjoyed state protection in Hungary.[26] After the lead case, both recognition rates and claims plummeted. Tóth states that: "The IRB accepted 71 percent of Hungarian Roma refugee cases in late 1998, but early the following year only 9 percent were admitted" (Tóth 2010: 9). Visa restrictions were then introduced for Hungarian citizens in December 2001: consequently, while 2,000 claims were made per year between 1998 and 2002, only 424 claims were made from 2003 until 2007, as shown in Table 1. Nevertheless, advocates for Roma point out that during this first wave, over 1000 Hungarians were granted refugee protection in Canada (Levine-Rasky et al 2013).

The second wave: Canada's racialized panic

[25] According to Ron Lee, these Hungarian experts were Jeno Kaltenbach, Parliamentary Commissioner (Ombudsman) for National and Ethnic Minority Rights in Hungary; Lipot Holtzl, Deputy Secretary of State at the Hungarian Ministry of Justice; Florian Farkas, President of the National Gypsy Minority Self Government; and Andras Biro, journalist and then Chair of the Board of the European Roma Rights Center (ERRC). (Lee, unpublished manuscript).

[26] The outcome of the lead case was eventually overturned by the Federal Court of Appeal in 2006 due to a reasonable apprehension of bias. The FCA found it reasonable to believe that, through the lead case, the IRB was attempting to manufacture a negative precedent that would reduce recognition rates and discourage Hungarian Romani refugee claimants from coming to Canada (Beaudoin et al 2015: 13).

In 2008, Canada eliminated its visa requirement for Hungarian citizens once again in response to further international trade pressure amidst Hungary's accession to the European Union (Sliva 2007). In the four years to follow, over 11,000 Hungarians - approximately eight percent of the total number of refugee claims made in Canada during this period - came to Canada and filed for asylum, as detailed in Table 1. Between the years 2010 and 2012, Hungary was the leading source country for asylum-seekers in Canada; it peaked in 2011 when 4,423 claims were filed, which was 17.7 percent of all refugee claims made in Canada that year.

During this time period, the neighbourhood of Parkdale was dramatically transformed. A pastor originally from Transylvania who now heads a Hungarian Church in the suburbs of Toronto recounted this time period to me once in casual conversation:

> When a huge amount of Roma - and when I say huge, I mean 10,000 people! - started to suddenly arrive in Toronto from Hungary, our church group stepped up to provide assistance. It really felt like a crisis period because Canadian refugee services were completely overwhelmed and caught unguard by the large number of Romani refugees. So during this crisis point we went down to Parkdale and started to organize assistance: we set up at one of the schools in Parkdale and gave translation support, English lessons, serving food, and getting people enrolled in social services. Thinking back now, most of the Roma claims were rejected, and a lot of the people I met during this time were deported.

The priest's narrative captures the magnitude and swiftness of this second wave: when thousands arrived in a matter of years and were subsequently deported and sent back within a similar rapid time.

Specifically, 11,333 Hungarian refugee claims were filed between 2008 and 2012: approximately 7,669 of these claims were processed in those years, with an overall success rate of 8.5 percent, a negative rate of 38.8 percent, and, most striking, a 52.5 percent rate of abandonment or withdrawal. These numbers differ drastically for the outcomes of average refugee claims filed during this time: the average claim had a 38.5 percent acceptance rate and only an 18.3 percent abandonment and withdrawal rate. How can one make sense of

these statistics? Why was the abandonment rate so high for Romani refugee claimants and the success rate so low? These dynamics are analyzed below.

A number of events led to this wave becoming a subject of much scholarly attention, including controversial reforms to Canadian immigration policy, sensational media coverage, and negligent legal representation (see Beaudoin et al 2015, Beaudoin 2014, Levine-Rasky et al 2013, Levine-Rasky 2016, Diop 2014, Swerdlyk 2013, Tóth 2013, Dip 2014, Durst 2013, Vidra 2013, Mohácsi 2017). Of particular note, a detailed legal studies report entitled "No Refuge: Hungarian Romani Refugee Claimants in Canada," published in 2015, found that Hungarian Romani asylum-seekers in Canada were discriminated against at several points throughout the refugee application process (Beaudoin et al 2015). The authors examined the 11,000 Hungarian refugee claims of this wave and found that claimants regularly encountered unfair treatment at the hands of Canadian lawyers, politicians and government officials (Beaudoin et al 2015). Romani refugee claimants faced institutional bias, linked to negative media portrayals of Romani refugees, and they experienced negligent quality of counsel (Beaudoin et al 2015: 45-50) at the hands of lawyers guilty of professional misconduct. While the violence of Hungarian far-right vigilantes is not the same as the Canadian refugee processing system, what their research shows is the continuities in marginalization and institutional discrimination experienced by Roma between Hungary and Canada.

Governed by the Conservative Party during these years, the Canadian state's response to this second wave can "be best described as a racialized panic" (Beaudoin et al 2015: 14). Government officials stated publicly on numerous accounts that Hungarian Romani refugee claimants were 'bogus refugees' and 'fraudsters' who came to Canada to abuse welfare and to engage in criminal activities (Government of Canada 2012a, Boesveld 2012). During this second wave, Immigration Minister Jason Kenney stated repeatedly to the press that Roma from Hungary travel to Canada to exploit social programs, commit petty crimes, and "take advantage of our generosity" (Westhead 2012, Baluja 2012, Cheadle 2012). Kenney argued that the "bogus claims" of Hungarian Roma were a result of Canada's extensive social services: "It's naive to say we haven't created a pull factor by having all these benefits" (Westhead 2012). The main message circulated by the government of Canada during this time centered on Hungary's status as a European country: "We're spending far too much time and taxpayers' money on bogus claims, and on generous tax-funded health and social benefits

for claimants from liberal democracies" (Government of Canada 2012a). As Kenney repeatedly told the Canadian press:

> The rise in refugee claims from safe democratic countries is well-documented. It is a cause for growing concern. For example, Canada receives more asylum claims from the democratic European Union than from Africa or Asia. In fact, 23 per cent of the refugee claims made in Canada last year were made by EU nationals, who come from countries with strong human and democratic rights…. Consider the cost to taxpayers. Virtually all EU claims in the past couple of years have been rejected, abandoned or withdrawn (Kenney, as quoted in Government of Canada 2012b).

Furthermore, in October of 2012, national media leaked an intelligence report authored by the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) detailing the Canadian government's concern over rising numbers of Hungarian refugee claimants in the country (CBSA 2012). Commissioned in response to "the large influx of Hungarian claimants," the stated purpose of the CBSA report was "to confirm or negate" the assumption that "many of these individuals are taking advantage of Canada's refugee processing system, social assistance, and other benefits" (CBSA 2012: 15). Inferring from data provided by police departments, financial institutions, and the Ontario Ministry of Social Services, the report suggested that high levels of criminal activity and welfare fraud existed among Romani refugee claimants.[27] The report was a demonstration of what Carver terms as the Harper government's "discourse of distrust" with respect to refugee claimants, repeatedly identifying them as persons trying to fool or take advantage of Canada's immigration and social welfare schemes: perpetuating "a public discourse casting migrants as untrustworthy, costly, and associated with criminal activity" (Carver 2016: 230).

The ongoing and frequent framings by the Canadian state of Roma as 'bogus refugees' was further exacerbated by media coverage perpetuating stereotypes about 'gypsies.' Particularly stupefying, in September 2012, conservative television personality Ezra Levant broadcast a television segment in which he engaged in an elaborate rant about Hungarian Roma for a national audience:

[27] For a detailed analysis of this CBSA report through a critical race theory lens, see Swerdlyk 2013.

> I told you about the wave of fraudulent refugee claims made by Gypsies trying to lie their way into Canada… I mean, they're coming from Hungary, for crying out loud, a rich, generous, liberal democracy. No one's a refugee from Hungary…But these are Gypsies, a culture synonymous with swindlers. The phrase "Gypsy" and "cheater" have been so interchangeable historically that the word has entered the English language as a verb -- he "gypped" me… Well, the Gypsies have gypped us. Too many have come here as false refugees. And they come here to gyp us again, to rob us blind as they have done in Europe for centuries… Now because of our broken refugee system, they're here in Canada by the thousands (Levant 2012).

Romani activists based out of the RCC organized against Levant's comments, filing a complaint against hate speech to the Canadian Broadcast Authorities. As Gina Csanyi-Robah, Executive Director of the RCC at the time stated, "When people legitimately need help in Canada, they are being doubly victimized… It's the same rhetoric, the same discourse, that's happening in these European societies, and we're allowing it to come here" (Csanyi-Robah, as quoted in Levine-Rasky 2016: 168-170). The efforts of the Romani activists bore fruit, when the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council condemned Levant's segment for breaching a large number of broadcasting standards, including norms against "abusive or unduly discriminatory material or comment which is based on matters of race, national or ethnic origin" (Levine-Rasky 2016: 168-170).

Nevertheless, these racializing discourses indulging Romani stereotypes were put in service of advocating for the downsizing of Canadian social assistance as well as reforming immigration policy. The CBSA report, for example, put forth a series of policy recommendations, including reducing the timeframe for refugee claimant hearings, implementing an expedited claims process for claimants from countries within the European Union, and, in the long-term, eliminating social services that attract refugees to Canada (CBSA 2012: 8). The Harper government sought to quell this second wave of Hungarian asylum-seeking, yet reimposing a travel visa, as was done in 2000, was regarded as "antagonistic to trade relations" (Levine-Rasky 2016: 134). As Levine-Rasky explains, "another visa restriction for Hungarian nationals was ruled out as incompatible with trade relations" (Levine-Rasky 2016: 135). During this period Canada was negotiating the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement with the European Union, which is

Canada's second largest trade and investment partner (Levine-Rasky 2016: 135). Hungary at the time was in the top ten of recipients of foreign investment worldwide, receiving $13.7 billion CAD in 2012 from Canada.

The possibility of imposing a travel visa to regulate Hungarian travel was thus seen as "an irritant" in negotiating CETA that would "generate friction" in these budding trade relations. Levine-Rasky analyzes this relationship between trade and refugee policy:

> How does international trade affect national refugee policy? In a nutshell, the value of trade and the desire to nurture political relations conducive to sustaining the globalization of trade works as an incentive for overlooking a trading partner's violation of human rights. To facilitate free trade and diplomatic relations, social conditions for national minorities are frequently denied or dismissed as a domestic concern. As a result, the persecution of minorities is expunged from the political dialogue (Levine Rasky 2016: 133)

Since a visa restriction for Hungarians was viewed as incompatible with international trade relations, the Harper government chose instead to substantially revise the Canadian refugee protection system.

On December 15, 2012, the Canadian refugee determination system underwent numerous changes, enshrined in reforms to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, with amendments entitled the "Balanced Refugee Reform Act" and the "Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act" (Government of Canada 2012a, Carver 2016: 209). Proponents argued that these revisions were needed to crack down on alleged abuse of the existing refugee determination system by 'bogus' refugee claimants. Hungarian refugee claimants - most of whom were Roma - were held out to be an example of this alleged abuse.

These reforms sped up the process and limited the rights for some refugee claimants: the Harper government's new refugee system introduced a list of 'safe countries,' what it termed a "Designated Country of Origin" (DCO) list. The DCO list created different classes of refugee claimants, which was premised on the belief that refugee claimants who come from "countries that do not normally produce refugees" that have "robust human rights records" and "strong democratic, judicial and accountability systems" were unlikely to require

protection (Government of Canada 2012a). The Government of Canada put 42 countries[28] on the list, including most of Roma refugee-producing Central Europe. For claimants from a DCO country, refugee claim processing was reduced to thirty to forty-five days and claimants were barred from appealing the outcome: "presuming the likelihood of failure, those [on the DCO list] are moved through the system quickly, allocated fewer resources, and ensured insufficient time for processing relative those in the non-DCO group" (Levine-Rasky 2016: 126-127).

DCO nationals were further denied access to publicly-funded health care and faced restrictions on legal aid. Policy concerns about claimants' taking advantage of Canada's purportedly generous health and social benefits schemes led the Harper government to rewrite the Interim Federal Health Plan program, which had been in place since the 1950s. The changes limited access to public health care benefits of DCO claimants and failed refugee claimants, in most instances leaving them with access to emergency health services only (Carver 2016: 218).

Moreover, between 2012 and 2014, the Canadian Border Services Agency ran the 'Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration' (AVRR) program, through which the Government of Canada paid more than 3,600 people to abandon their refugee claims and 'voluntarily' leave Canada, according to a report by the CBSA (CBSA 2014). The AVRR program aimed to reduce the costs of deporting failed claimants and reduce the rate of appeals by offering claimants money if they returned by their own choosing: under the AVRR program, refugee claimants who agreed to abandon their claims were given airfare home and "in-kind reintegration assistance" of approximately $2,000 CAD. The CBSA report shows that Hungarian nationals made up almost half - 48.0 percent - of all AVRR program removals with 1,510 Hungarians sent back to Hungary. As one newspaper headline reported, "Canada pays thousands of Roma to abandon refugee appeals" (Cain 2014). The CBSA report states, "Pilot program participants have been returned to 94 countries with about half (48.0%) of them going to Hungary" (CBSA 2014). The program ended in 2015: during its three years in existence, the Canadian state spent a total of $7.5 million paying would-be refugees to leave (Levitz 2015, Ryan 2015).

[28] DCO countries were determined solely at the discretion of the individual occupying th role of Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

Consequently, with these combined changes to government policy and discourse, by 2012, Hungary had suddenly become the top country for deportations from Canada: in that year, 2,586 Hungarian refugee claimants were deported (Cain 2014). In cases where claims made it to a refugee hearing and were rejected, the main reason cited for denying refugee status was the 'availability of state protection:' that Hungarian Roma receive adequate protection from the Hungarian government against ethnic and racial persecution (Beaudoin et al 2015). The sweeping deportations of Hungarian Roma had a dramatic impact on the Parkdale neighbourhood: as one newspaper describes the time, "an elementary school in downtown Toronto was almost emptied as a result" of Roma being sent back to Europe (Brown 2013). It describes the sudden departure of Roma living in Parkdale and disappearing by the hundreds in a matter of weeks: "Who knew this wave of Roma students would reverse just four years later, emptying classrooms, laying off teachers and leaving a community heartsick at the loss?" (Brown 2013).

An acquaintance of mine from Toronto was a teacher in Parkdale during this time. He told me that he remembers "when things got really bad" and Border agents were showing up at the school to take Roma kids away from the school grounds and off to be deported. The high school in Parkdale had to lay off about a dozen teachers in 2012 because of the drop in Romani students. The acquaintance described to me the legacy of this wave on the relationship between border services and Parkdale schools: he recalled a permission slip he recently handed out in his class for a field trip he was organizing for the students; a standard consent form meant for parents or guardians, he took a closer glance at the fine print and noticed that the school board had included small print stating that signing the form meant giving permission for the information within it to be shared with Immigration Canada. He also found it odd that the permission slip asked for the student's refugee status. We joked in a half-serious way that most teenagers don't even know their own status, instead often teasing each other with sayings like 'You refugee, I'll send you back to Hungary!'

Ultimately, the Harper government was satisfied with their changes and the effective removal program. In 2014 it boasted publicly:

> Under the new rules, annual asylum claims from Hungary - an E.U. country and the top source country for asylum claims in Canada over the past three years with already high

> withdrawal and abandonment rates - have declined by an overwhelming 97 percent (Government of Canada 2014).

What is clear is that the cumulative effect of negative media portrayals, the state-led removal program, and the legal changes to immigration policy was undeniable: Hungarian claims dropped from an average of over 2,000 per year between 2008 and 2012 to under 200 in 2013.

A particularly peculiar aspect of Hungarian claims during this wave is that a very large proportion - 52.5 percent - of the 7,669 Hungarian refugee claims finalized between 2008 and 2012 were withdrawn or abandoned (Beaudoin et al 2015). Many theories circulated about the reason why Roma were abandoning or withdrawing their claims: the Canadian state used the high numbers as evidence that Roma were not in genuine need for refugee protection, mentioning it often in the press when speaking of 'bogus refugees' coming to Canada to 'scam welfare' (Government of Canada 2012b, Boesveld 2012, Diop 2014) During an interview I conducted with an otherwise sympathetic social worker, it was chalked up to 'Romani culture': according to this perspective, "I guess it is part of Roma tradition, because of the nomadic background, to travel back and forth, until you find a place that gives you an advantage." The social worker had been working with Romani asylum-seekers for more than 20 years and had participated in advocacy efforts to give Roma adequate social support, housing, and state welfare services.

Beaudoin et al's research investigated the issue of abandoned claims by conducting interviews with advocates assisting Roma at this time and found a plausible reason:

> The most frequent explanation our interviewees offered was that, confronted with very low success rates for Hungarian refugee claimants reported in the media, many lost hope that their claims would be successful and decided that it was not worth waiting for the refugee-determination process to run its course (Beaudoin et al 2015: 54)

Moreover, in the years since Beaudoin et al's report was published, it has become clear the extent of the AVRR with the publication of the CBSA report documenting the over 1,500 Hungarian claimants paid to 'voluntarily' abandon their claims. It is also only in recent years the scale to which Romani refugee claimants experienced gross negligence at the hands of

their refugee lawyers, which is discussed in the next section of this chapter. Based on Beaudoin et al's research as well as my discussions with Roma during my fieldwork, it is clear that claims were abandoned or withdrawn primarily because of the institutional discrimination Roma experience while maneuvering the Canadian refugee processing system at several different points in the process.

"Lawyer Disbarred in Roma Rip-off"

One crucial aspect of this time period requires a detailed and careful examination: Toronto-based advocates for refugees and Roma during this time period began to suspect that Hungarian Roma were not receiving the legal representation they deserved. Stories were surfacing in Ontario about lawyers failing to show up for refugee hearings, to file supporting evidence properly, and to even meet at all with their clients. In the years following advocacy efforts to investigate the issue of negligent legal representation, it became clear that at least three lawyers during this time period committed professional misconduct in their handling of Hungarian refugee claims: Viktor Hohots, Erzsebet Jaszi and Joseph Farkas.[29]

Hohots, Jaszi, and Farkas together represented 29.5 percent of all Hungarian refugee claims finalized between 2008 and 2012: the lawyers took on a total of 985 family claims, representing approximately 2,200 asylum-seekers (the principal applicants along with their dependents). As separate cases were brought against each of these lawyers at the Law Society of Upper Canada and their disciplinary hearings held by the Law Society Tribunal throughout 2015 and 2016, details emerged about their malpractice: the lawyers handled hundreds of claims from Roma families, collecting hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal aid fees paid by public money, and then failed to represent their clients, the vast majority of whom were deported back to Hungary (CRA 2020, Brosnahan 2015, Keung 2016a, 2017a, 2017b, 2020).

In May 2015, Viktor Hohots, a Toronto-based refugee lawyer, was found guilty of professional misconduct by the Law Society of Upper Canada (Law Society of Upper Canada v. Hohots 2015). Hohots handled 504 Hungarian refugee claims (approximately 1,160 people) between 2008 and 2012, the highest volume of Hungarian claims handled by any

[29] It is worth pointing out that at least two of these lawyers have Hungarian names (Farkas and Jaszi) suggesting that they were Canadians of Hungarian ethnic origins.

single lawyer during this period. The overall success rate for these cases was 1.2 percent, well below the average[30]; and 80 percent of the cases were abandoned or withdrawn[31] (Beaudoin et al 2015: 48). At his disciplinary hearing by the Law Society Tribunal, it was shown that Hohots had delegated the work of his claims to unqualified non-lawyer staff who he then failed to effectively supervise; he failed to prepare the necessary documents and forms for his clients; and he failed to prepare his clients for their refugee hearing, in some cases not meeting with them at all. According to the tribunal proceedings, Hohots engaged in professional misconduct for "failing to submit documentation to the Immigration and Refugee Board that was material to [clients'] refugee claim and was in the Lawyer's possession" (Law Society of Upper Canada v. Hohots 2015). Hohots was fined $15,000 and received a five-month suspension by the Law Society; he was further barred from handling refugee claims for two years and was ordered to participate in a review of his practice.

Six months later, Erzsebet Jaszi, a lawyer based just outside Toronto in the nearby city of Mississauga, was "found to have engaged in professional misconduct" for similar - in fact what was ruled as worse – behaviour (Law Society of Upper Canada v. Jaszi 2015). Jaszi handled 95 claims representing approximately 219 Romani people: her claims had an overall success rate of 1.1 percent - the lowest on record - with an abandoned and withdrawn rate of 84.2 percent (Beaudoin et al 2015: 48). According to her disciplinary hearing records, Jaszi's professional misconduct was related to her "failing to serve her clients" (Law Society of Upper Canada v. Jaszi 2015), which included failing to adequately prepare clients' forms, filing forms after their deadlines, having her clients sign blank forms, preparing forms without ever meeting or speaking with clients, failing to attend scheduled hearings, failing to translate documents, and failing to communicate with clients. Jaszi was also found negligent for "knowingly overbilling Legal Aid Ontario for services not provided" and ultimately "failing to maintain the integrity of the profession" (Law Society of Upper Canada v. Jaszi 2015). She was thus disbarred by the Law Society in December 2015. "Ms Jaszi could not be trusted at all," the Law Society tribunal stated in its decision to disbar her (Law Society of Upper Canada v. Jaszi 2015). Her license revoked, Jaszi was further ordered to pay $50,000 in fines and to reimburse Legal Aid Ontario. The news headlines about the offense summed it up: "Lawyer disbarred for Roma ripoff" (Gallant 2015).

[30] Other lawyers handling Roma cases during this time period had average acceptance rates of around 10 per cent, with some as high as 30 per cent.

[31] This is compared to an average of 52.5 percent.

The following year, in September 2016, a third lawyer Joseph Farkas was found to have "committed professional misconduct" by the Law Society Tribunal by "failing to serve multiple clients with respect to their refugee claims" (Law Society of Upper Canada v. Farkas 2016). Farkas was the second highest-volume lawyer working with Hungarian claims during this period, taking on 289 claims representing about 665 people. While Farkas fared slightly better than Jaszi and Hohots regarding the outcomes of claims - which had an abandoned and withdrawn rate of 57.8 percent (Beaudoin et al 2015: 48) and an overall success rate of 6.7 percent - Farkas was found to have used "unqualified non-lawyer staff" to prepare his clients' asylum claims; the claims were filled with both factual and grammatical errors. During his disciplinary hearing, testimonies shared that Farkas had asylum documentation prepared by his Hungarian interpreters, that clients were asked to sign blank pages, and that some clients never met with Farkas at all. Farkas was suspended for six months by the Law Society of Upper Canada, placed under supervision for any future refugee claims for at least one year and ordered to pay $200,000.

All three lawyers were eventually disciplined in large part due to the collective organizers of advocates for Roma and refugees in Toronto. Community activists connected to Romani groups and refugee rights groups managed to have the three lawyers subjected to disciplinary hearings after organizing with Romani claimants who had been represented by them, a difficult task considering most claimants were already deported as a direct result of the poor service received by their lawyers. Ten former clients of Farkas filed formal complaints with the Law Society of Upper Canada; ten or more former clients of Jaszi filed complaints against her; nineteen clients are referenced in Hohots' Law Society tribunal hearing. Complaints about Hohots by Roma refugee claimants were first filed with the Law Society in 2011. Activists involved with the RCC organized protests and vigils for deported families in front of the Toronto City Hall and worked closely with Canadian journalists to document the legal abuse. Hence it is important to note that the recourse eventually handed out to the negligent lawyers is a result of their collective and unrelenting activism (Levine-Rasky 2016, CRA 2020, Keung 2017a, Keung 2017b).

During my fieldwork, I met several Roma who had been represented by Hohots, Farkas, or Jaszi. I encountered most of them in Hungary, as most claimants of these lawyers were deported from Canada after receiving negligent legal representation. These families described

multiple instances of negligence and professional misconduct on behalf of the refugee lawyers that Romani families used for filing their refugee claims in Ontario. By far the greatest consequence of the legal negligence is that these families are no longer able to apply for refugee protection in Canada, as Canadian law does not allow refugee claims from anyone with a previously filed claim. My research informants described several negative consequences of receiving negligent legal representation as refugee claimants in Ontario. The vast majority had their refugee claims rejected, were deported back to Hungary, and are now no longer able to seek asylum in Canada, though are desperate to return. Romani families were returned to a hostile environment in Hungary, where they now face ethnic persecution, child endangerment, and racially-motivated poverty and homelessness. Most if not all of these failed claimants are living in insecure and risky conditions, confronted with issues ranging from poverty and homelessness to imminent threats from local far-right groups and individuals.[32]

A sentiment I routinely heard was that families who returned to Hungary faced worse circumstances than before they left: they had no homes or furniture to return to; they faced unreasonable obstacles trying to process the paperwork that would re-enter them into the social security and health system; they were threatened to have their children taken away and institutionalized; their children were bullied in schools, told to 'go back to Canada' and called 'dirty Canadians.' One particularly cruel treatment I heard about often was that schools would send the children who had been in Canada back to the level of education they were in when they left in Hungary; for example, a boy who was in Grade 8 in Toronto would have to go back to Grade 4 when he returned to Hungary. School authorities rationalized this as a technical necessity related to not being able to recognize and convert curriculum taught in the Canadian education system.

Advocates for refugee rights and Romani activists formed a coalition with progressive lawyers in efforts to seek redress for Roma refugees (CRA 2020, Keung 2017a, Keung 2017b). As one newspaper article describes, "refugee advocates are trying to reopen the cases of hundreds of Roma families who were denied refugee status in Canada after being bilked by their lawyers" (Keung 2017a). While any attempts at providing Roma who had had legal representation from Hohots, Farkas, or Jaszi ultimately failed, this coalition seeking redress

[32] For this reason I have intentionally left some of the details of the family stories vague.

for Romani refugees did manage to coordinate a class action lawsuit on behalf of Romani claimants: the law firm of Flaherty McCarthy in Toronto consolidated the class actions of the three lawyers and won a $341,000 CAD settlement. Roma who had had one of the three lawyers – about 900 eligible claimants in the class action - were eligible to receive compensation of approximately $5,000 per claimant (Keung 2020). This compensation was the result of the unrelenting collective organizing of advocates on behalf of the Romani refugee claimants. The Canadian Romani Alliance issued a statement about the class action:

> Due to professional misconduct by their respective lawyers, these refugee claimants were robbed of a fair opportunity to seek safety in Canada. Many were left feeling that due to their Roma ethnicity, they were disregarded and disrespected by their Canadian-Hungarian lawyers -- the same disregard and discrimination as they routinely faced in Hungary (CRA 2020).

Unfortunately, the class action, while providing monetary compensation, does not allow Roma to re-open their refugee cases or apply for refugee status in Canada a second time.

One high-profile case of a family represented by a negligent lawyer captured national headlines in the years following the rejection of their refugee claim: "The Family That Won't Leave" (Hune-Brown 2014), the Pusuma family fled Hungary in 2009 after their work as human rights activists[33] in Hungary led to harassment, death threats, and a violent attack by the Hungarian Guard that left them physically injured. Jozsef Pusuma, Timea Daróczi, and their daughter Viktoria (Lulu) were represented by Viktor Hohots, who failed to show up for their hearing or file their paperwork. When the family's asylum claim was rejected in 2010 due to Hohots' negligent legal representation, the Pusumas sought sanctuary inside the Windermere United Church, where they ended up living for more than three years. Lulu, their daughter, was four years old when they first started living in the church basement in the west end of Toronto just north of Parkdale.[34] After exhausting all legal avenues to appeal their decision and considering the quality of life for their daughter, who by the end of their

[33] The father worked for Viktoria Mohácsi, a member of parliament who also sought refugee protection in Canada in this time period.

[34] The Ontario Justice Education Network (OJEN) has a teaching resource worksheet about the Pusuma family called "Sanctuary and the 'Free Lulu' Campaign" (OJEN 2014). Geared towards high school students, the listed learning objectives include "to introduce students to important elements of Canadian refugee law" and "to raise student awareness of a grassroots campaign in support of a family of Roma refugee claimants in Toronto"

sanctuary had lived as much of her life inside the Church basement as outside of it, the family left the church and was eventually deported back to Hungary in December 2014, five months before Hohots was found guilty of professional misconduct. Their new lawyer, Andrew Brouwer, told the press: “This family has already suffered such injustice, first in Hungary at the hands of the right-wing extremists, and then in Canada at the hands of their previous lawyer and Canadian government officials” (Keung 2015).

Eventually the Pusuma family’s story resolved with a rare happy ending: In May 2015, a judge ordered a review of the family's case, and in February 2016, the new federal immigration minister granted them special permission to return to Canada (Brosnahan 2015, OJEN 2014). Appointed by the newly-elected Trudeau government, Immigration and Refugee Minister John McCallum intervened in the Pusumas' case, granting them ministerial approval for their return and clearing the way for them to receive full permanent residency status (Brosnahan 2016). While this happy ending for the Pusuma family may appear as an unlikely *deux ex machina*, the reality is that collective grassroots organizing is the very likely reason for their return to Canada: from what I gathered from conversations in the community, the Pusuma case received this special treatment due to the relentless campaigning of the parishioners of the Windemere United Church, who wrote letters to government officials and led media campaigns in effort to get redress for the family. The parishioners had been taking care of the family for the three years they lived inside the church, buying their groceries and taking care of Lulu.

The Pusuma family returned to Toronto in June 2016, and throughout my fieldwork period I saw the Pusumas in Parkdale, buying groceries at the local shop and attending concerts and events by the RCC. Did the Pusuma’s resolution signal a new era for Romani refugees, with the election of Justin Trudeau? As discussed below, some positive change has occurred since the Harper era; however, most Romani families subjected to the Harper era and negligent legal representation have received no redress; and any positive changes should be attributed to the hard work and advocacy efforts of community organizers rather than the benevolence of the Trudeau Liberal government.

The third wave: Romani asylum-seeking from 2013 to the present

After the Harper Government's reforms to the refugee system were implemented, figures indicate that asylum-seeking to Canada from Hungary slowed dramatically, plummeting from 1,882 claims in 2012 to a mere 198 in 2013. However, a close look at the data of these 'New System' Claims, as seen in Table 2, indicates a persistent albeit modest stream of Hungarian refugee claims from 2013 up to the present day. Importantly, the success rate for these claims has been much higher than in previous waves, demonstrating that claimants have still managed to make a strong case that they are persecuted in what is now designated a 'safe country:' Table 2 provides a breakdown of success rates over these years. Importantly, the federal elections in Canada in October 2015 led to a change in government, when the Liberal Party of Canada led by Justin Trudeau swept to power on a pro-refugee platform and eventually modified or annulled the previous government's reforms to the Canadian refugee system. These dynamics are discussed and unpacked below.

The Liberal Party led by Justin Trudeau defeated Harper's Conservatives and won the federal elections in Canada in October 2015, amidst the 2015 Syrian refugee crisis. During the election campaign, Trudeau pledged that if elected the Liberals would accept 25,000 refugees from Syria and Iraq by the end of the year.[35] This refugee policy promise was viewed as central to the Liberal electoral victory in 2015 and has been widely judged a success (Gilmour 2018, Cros 2018). In its first month in power, the Trudeau government rolled back several elements of the Harper immigration agenda. Both the Interim Federal Health Care cuts and much of the DCO regime had already been declared unconstitutional, cruel, and discriminatory by the Federal Court of Canada.[36] In his Mandate letter to the newly-appointed Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship, the Prime Minister instructed the Minister McCallum to "fully restore the Interim Federal Health Program that provides limited

[35] By March 1, 2016, the Government of Canada had accepted and brought to Canada 25,000 Syrian refugees. See Associated Press 2016. Between 2015 and 2017, Canada accepted and brought to Canada 49,810 Syrian refugees (Cros 2018).

[36] Following the 2012 changes, refugee claimants sued the government about the changes to the interim federal health program, arguing their charter rights were being violated. They won and the court ordered benefits for all to be reinstated.

and temporary health benefits to refugees and refugee claimants" (Prime Minister of Canada: 2015). Additionally in May 2019, Canada finally removed all countries from the DCO list, effectively suspending the DCO policy. During its lifetime, approximately 12 percent of asylum claims were from citizens of designated countries of origin (Government of Canada 2019). The Canadian elections in 2015 thus demonstrated that the "discourse of distrust" towards migrants and refugees that the Harper government perpetuated was one of the contributing factors leading to a change of government. As Carver assesses:

> It might be said that the Conservative Government took a sword to many of the long-established understandings that informed Canada's immigration law. This would permit using the venerable saying that "they who live by the sword die by the sword" - for it appears that the Government's truculence in matters dealing with immigrants and multiculturalism served as one of the bases on which the election of October 2015 turned. And in the first year of the Liberal government of Prime Minister Trudeau, Canada has witnessed, with respect to immigration, one of the most emphatic rejections of a previous government's policy discourse in Canadian history (Carver 2016: 233)

Table 2 provides an overview of the data on New System Claims from Hungarian nationals based on data I collected from the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) website and the UNHCR database (IRB 2022b, UNHCR 2022). Claims that are referred to the Refugee Protection Division (RPD) on or after December 15, 2012, are what the IRB calls "new system claims" (IRB 2022b). These new system claims are processed under the reformed refugee system; while many of the features of this system enshrined by the Harper reforms have been reversed, the new system implemented from 2013 onwards continues to be the overarching system in place.

Table 2: Hungarian Refugee Claims in Canada, 2013-2021: New System Claims

Year	Referred	Finalized	Accepted	Rejected	Abandoned or Withdrawn	Overall Success Rate
2013	212	48	9	21	18	18.8%
2014	506	228	103	66	59	45.2%
2015	985	713	507	118	88	71.1%
2016	953	857	545	215	97	63.6%
2017	527	475	227	122	126	47.8%
2018	482	728	379	132	217	52.1%
2019	302	512	251	105	156	49.0%
2020	138	166	98	N/A	N/A	59.0%
2021	94	269	223	N/A	N/A	82.9%
Total	**4199**	**3998**	**2342**	**779**	**761**	**54.4%**

Reference: Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) of Canada (2022b): Refugee claims statistics. Accessed online: https://irb.gc.ca/en/statistics/protection/pages/index.aspx

Notes: "Referred" are total claims sent to the Refugee Protection Division in the given year. "Finalized" are total claims processed during the given year. "Overall Success Rate" is calculated by dividing the number of accepted claims by the number of all claims finalized in the given year (accepted, rejected, abandoned/withdrawn). Table 2 of New System Claims includes claims that have been returned by either the Federal Court or the Refugee Appeal Division for re-determination, so numbers are slightly larger than figures on Table 1.

Approximately 4,199 claims from Hungarian nationals were referred to the IRB between 2013 and 2021, making up 1.6 percent of total New System Claims.[37] As of 2021, 3,998 of the 4,199 claims referred since 2013 had been finalized, with an average negative rate of 19.5 percent and an average withdrawn or abandoned rate of 19.0 percent. Importantly, during this time period Hungarian refugee claims had an overall success rate of 54.4 percent[38], compared to an average, of claims from all countries, of 60.9 percent. Most recently, in 2021, the success rate for Hungarian refugee claims was 82.9 percent, when 223 of the 269 claims finalized that year were approved.

A few points from this statistical overview are worth emphasizing. These numbers vary significantly from the previous wave, suggesting several implications. Firstly, Hungary's inclusion on the DCO list appears out of place, particularly considering that aside from 2013, the overall success rate of Hungarian New Claims has not dropped below 45 percent, and in some years it has been higher than the overall average refugee claim success rate. In 2015, the success rate for Hungarian New Claims was 71.1 percent; the following year it was 63.6 percent; [39] and most recently it was as high as 82.9 percent. Secondly, the average withdrawn or abandoned rate for Hungarian nationals is much lower than in previous years, when it was on average 52.5 percent between 2008 and 2012. This may be an indication that the fall-out from the 'negligent lawyers' incident is having a positive impact on Romani legal assistance; the end of the Harper era anti-Roma campaigning may also have had a positive impact on Romani morale in seeing through to the end of their claim.

The data shows that numbers peaked in 2015 and 2016 for total Hungarian refugee claims filed, when nearly 1,000 refugee claims were made in each of these years. One explanation

[37] Between 2013 and 2021, a total of 268,025 refugee claims were filed from within Canada. Of these, 211,373 claims were finalized, with 128,664 claims accepted.

[38] The success rate is calculated by dividing the number of accepted claims by the number of all claims finalized (accepted, rejected, abandoned, and withdrawn). The success rate thus differs from an "acceptance rate," which is calculated by dividing the number of accepted claims by the total number of accepted and rejected cases (excluding claims that were abandoned or withdrawn). Due to the high number of Hungarian claims that resulted in abandoned or withdrawn claims, the acceptance rate is invariably higher than the success rate and demonstrates the percentage of cases that were approved after being presented in a refugee hearing and evaluated by a judge.

[39] It is interesting to place this high success rate within the context of the time period and what was happening in Hungary during this time: as discussed in Chapter 3, the city of Miskolc began its eviction campaigns from the Romani neighbourhood of the Numbered Streets in 2014, which resulted in Romani families moving to Canada. Perhaps the fact that Hungarian refugee claimants in the two years following this incident (2015 and 2016) were more likely to receive refugee status by the Canadian refugee processing system suggests that Canadian officials acknowledge the Miskolc evictions as a form of ethnic persecution and grounds for receiving asylum.

for this trend is to consider the local dynamics taking place in Hungary during these years. As discussed in Chapter 2 and 3, in 2015 the local government of Miskolc, the northeast Hungarian city where historically about half of Romani asylum-seekers to Canada originate, began an eviction campaign in the Romani neighbourhood, the Numbered Streets. Several Romani families fled to Canada in the aftermath, as shared to me by numerous research informants. The dynamics of Miskolc were matched nationally in Hungary, as discussed in Chapter 2, as the Hungarian government, led by Viktor Orbán and his Fidesz party, increasingly turned to what Orbán terms 'illiberal' politics or what Hungarian sociologists frame as 'authoritarian capitalism' (Scheiring 2020a).

During this third wave, I encountered through my fieldwork many Roma trying to return to Canada after having a failed or abandoned claim during the second wave. Many rumours circulated about the possibilities of returning to Canada and how regulations worked at the airports, the immigration board, and ports of entry. According to Canadian law, it is not possible to apply for refugee status after having already applied previously, regardless of if the claim was rejected, abandoned, or withdrawn. However, Roma who had previous claims would be able to apply for permanent residency in Canada based on humanitarian and compassionate grounds, discussed below - if they could get their way back into Canada first.

One common occurrence I repeatedly heard about was that Roma trying to travel to Canada between 2015 and 2017 were being denied boarding while still in Europe; Romani families reported this to me several times, showing me live videos from social media where we would try to identify who was denying them their flight.[40] Once while visiting a family in Miskolc, the mother, for example, shared with me that she had just heard yesterday, in October 2016, that four or five families had tried to fly to Canada, but during their layover in Paris, they were denied boarding. No compensation was offered for what they had paid for their flights. Another man I met told me he had tried to go back to Canada in September 2016, but while standing in line to board his plane from Amsterdam to Toronto, while holding his children's hands, an officer approached him and told him he wasn't allowed to board. He said three families were denied boarding during this incident, all Roma.

[40] Research by Ronald Lee indicates that airport racial profiling of potential Romani refugee claimants occurred in the 1990s as well. See Lee, unpublished manuscript.

Advocates in Canada eventually managed to get some press coverage of this trend, but few answers were given to explain what was happening. An editorial in Canada's most widely read newspaper was published with the headline “Canadian flirting with racism in European airports” (Globe and Mail 2015). The CBC also reported that “Hungarian Roma [are] regularly prevented from boarding Canada-bound flights” (Boudjikanian 2015), citing that the Hungarian Roma rights organization, NEKI, had received fifty complaints from Roma who had been racially-profiled and denied board. The press called this behaviour “disturbing” and labeled “ethnic or racial profiling” at the hands of Canadian officials “a horrific thought” (Globe and Mail 2015), but argued that “the federal government’s crackdown on refugee claims may have been justified” (Globe and Mail 2015).

Rumours and gossip also circulated about Roma arriving in Toronto only to be deported without leaving the airport or being sent to detention centers. One man I met in Budapest told me he tried to go to Canada in the summer of 2016 but was detained for three weeks and then sent back to Hungary. He told me that he knew of one Romani man who was in immigration detention near Toronto for six months. I also met in Miskolc two women at the Romani self-government office, whose son was at the time in detention in Canada - he had been in detention for a month. The prospect of mass detention for Romani refugee claimants had been a topic of discussion for the Government of Canada and within Canadian media during this time period (see, for example, Beaudoin et al 2015: 18).

At this time I recall seeing some of my Romani research informants sharing Trudeau’s widely-circulated tweet that promised, “To those fleeing persecution, terror & war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength #WelcomeToCanada” (Trudeau 2017). Seeing this tweet on my social media shared by Roma - regardless of if they had had their asylum claims rejected after being represented by one of the negligent lawyers while living through the Harper government’s anti-Roma mania or if they had spent time in a detention centre before being deported from Trudeau’s Canada - was bittersweet. At the time of Trudeau’s tweet, no recourse or compensation had been made available to Romani claimants.

One last point to consider in analyzing this wave: numbers fell considerably in 2020 and 2021, which is invariably connected to the global COVID-19 pandemic. During different periods of the pandemic, travel restrictions prevented Hungarians from entering Canada for

'non-essential reasons'; moreover, vaccination requirements further put a stop to Hungarian travel, as many Hungarians were inoculated with vaccines not recognized by the Canadian government.[41] Additionally, in April 2020, the Government of Canada introduced an app called ArriveCan with which visitors to Canada provide travel information to the federal government within 72 hours of their arrival. Use of ArriveCan was made mandatory for all travelers to Canada in November 2021. During the pandemic I fielded many social media messages from Roma living in Hungary enquiring about travel restrictions, quarantine, and vaccine requirements for entering Canada.

Legacy Claims

While doing fieldwork in Toronto, I routinely encountered Romani refugee claimants who were still waiting for the decision on their refugee claims even though they had filed their claims several years prior. While a general wait time of one or two years seemed tedious yet standard for immigration decision outcomes, I kept meeting people who had been waiting five, six, seven, and even eight years. For example, one time in October 2017, while hanging around the RCC, I ended up chit-chatting with some Romani teenagers who were lounging in the lobby of Culture Link. I asked them if they knew what their status was in Canada. One teen asserted, 'I am a citizen!' His brother interjected, 'No you are not! You are a refugee.' After a bit of discussion of the finer details, I learnt, incredulously, that they had filed their claim in 2010 and were still waiting to hear back about it. What was going on? How could such egregious wait-times be possible? After enquiring to social workers and refugee resettlement workers, I was told that hundreds of Romani refugee claimants in Toronto were 'legacy claims:' refugee claims that had been filed prior to the Harper government's changes to the Canadian refugee system but still needed to be processed (Keung 2016b).

When the 2012 changes to the Canadian refugee system were implemented, there were 32,339 refugee claims still waiting to be processed that had been filed in the previous system (filed before December 15, 2012). The IRB officially termed these pending cases as "legacy claims." Hungarian refugee claimants made up 3,686 legacy claims (11.4 percent of total claims). Importantly, refugee protection claims filed in the old system were not subject to the

[41] The Hungarian state made widely available the Russian and Chinese vaccines, which were not initially recognized for valid entry into Canada. The pandemic and its implications for Romani asylum-seeking are discussed in further depth in the conclusion of this dissertation.

regulatory time limits for hearings that were implemented under the new system: 'New System' claims from DCO nationals had an expedited processing timeline of 30 to 45 days,[42] whereas there was no deadline for processing 'Old System' claims. Consequently, the IRB gave scheduling priority to claims made in the new system, and, though they were filed first, legacy claims were regularly pushed to the back of the queue, with thousands left to languish in waiting for several years.

Explaining its prioritization of New System Claims in its processing, the IRB website stated, "That is not to say, however, that legacy claims will be lost in this new system. The IRB will continue to hear and decide as many legacy claims as possible using its existing resources" (IRB 2022b). Yet, several thousand claims did indeed become lost in the new system: while 53.5 percent of the total legacy claims were processed in 2013, the first year of the new system, thousands remained for years to come: four years after the implementation of the new system, at the end of 2016, there remained 5,573 legacy cases still pending, 688 of which were Hungarian claims. This backlog of legacy claims became such a grievous issue that in April 2017 the IRB announced the creation of a "Legacy Task Force" to process the remaining legacy claims. Hiring former RPD decision-makers to take on the refugee hearings of solely legacy cases, the taskforce managed to work its way through most of the backlog by the end of 2018, when 585 remained. As of 2021, nine years after the new system was implemented, there were only 37 cases remaining, two of which were from Hungarian nationals.

[42] Hearings on DCO claims should be held within 30-45 days after they are referred to the IRB. The timeframe for other refugee claimants is 60 days. Unlike previous claims, claims referred after December 15, 2012, have to be heard within 60 days. The time limit means these cases take priority.

Table 3: Hungarian Refugee Claims in Canada: Legacy Claims

Year	Pending Legacy Claims	Finalized	Accepted	Rejected	Abandoned or Withdrawn	Overall Success Rate
2013	3686	1943	391	1083	469	20.1%
2014	1743	738	236	264	242	32.0%
2015	1005	244	80	99	63	32.8%
2016	761	73	N/A	N/A	42	N/A
2017	688	208	107	70	27	51.4%
2018	480	430	254	127	47	59.1%
2019	50	48	23	24	1	47.9%
2020	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	**3686**	**3684**	**1091**	**1667**	**891**	**29.6%**

Reference: Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) of Canada (2022b): Refugee claims statistics. Accessed online: https://irb.gc.ca/en/statistics/protection/pages/index.aspx

Notes: "Pending Legacy Claims" refers to the number of claims remaining at the start of the given year. Information is not available for the outcomes of 37 Legacy Claims, the majority of which (31) were processed in 2016 and either accepted or rejected (42 - 57.5% - of claims finalized in this year were abandoned or withdrawn).

Table 3 provides a closer look at the statistics regarding Hungarian legacy claims based on data I collected from the IRB website. Of the total 3,686 legacy cases of Hungarian nationals created by the implementation of the new system, 1,943 claims - or just over half of total claims (52.7 percent) - were finalized within the first year of the new system: 391 (20.1 percent) were accepted, 1,083 (55.7 percent) were rejected, and 469 (24.1 percent) were abandoned or withdrawn. The following year, a further 738 claims were finalized and by the end of 2014, 1,005 legacy claims remained. However, the finalization of legacy claims then slowed between 2015 and 2017: it was only after the implementation of the taskforce that the majority of the remainder were processed.

Overall, the average success rate for Hungarian legacy claims was 29.6 percent; the average rejection rate was 45.2 percent; the average abandonment and withdrawal rate was 24.2 percent. Hungarian legacy claims received slightly lower success than the average legacy claim: 11,318 of the total 32,339 cases of legacy claims were accepted, with an average success rate of 35.0 percent. Of note is that this success rate is lower than the average success rate of new system claims processed during the same years. Additionally, observable in Table 3 is that the overall success rate for Hungarians increased as years passed.

Interestingly the percentage of Hungarian claimants who abandoned or withdrew their legacy claim is about half of the rate of the second wave, the time period when their claims were filed, when 52.5 percent of Hungarian refugee claims finalized between 2008 and 2012 were abandoned or withdrawn. While the average abandoned and withdrawn rate of New Systems Claim is lower at 19.2 percent, the fact that less than a quarter of Legacy Claims were abandoned or withdrawn despite waiting times of up to eight years is significant: considering the long wait-times legacy claimants had to endure, the fact that more than three quarters of claimants stuck it out suggests their genuine need for asylum protection.

At the start of my fieldwork period in Toronto in January 2017, there were still 688 pending Hungarian legacy claims, virtually all of which were processed during my time volunteering at the RCC. Consequently, part of my work at the RCC involved meeting and advocating for Roma waiting and eventually dealing with the outcome of their legacy claims. I remember meeting several people embroiled in legacy cases: one day in summer 2018, a 26-year-old woman from the Csepel neighbourhood in Budapest came into the office; she had been in Canada for six and a half years and her claim had just now been rejected. Another family

came into the office in January 2020: they had been in Canada since 2011 and just had their claim processed now; they were also rejected. This family had three children: an 11-year-old, who was 2 years old when their claim was filed, and a 6-year-old and 5-year-old who were both born in Canada and have Canadian citizenship. The family was now awaiting their deportation back to Hungary. One day in June 2018, a Romani woman from Miskolc dropped by the RCC, tearful and visibly stressed. She and her family had been in Canada since 2011, living in Parkdale for the past seven years. She was accompanied by her 18-year-old daughter, who I spoke with at length while Micheal comforted her mother. The daughter spoke English as though it was her native language. To assist the family, Micheal and I talked to them about other ways they could try to stay in Canada; and we prepared a letter of support that they could use in their next steps.

The main recourse for Romani families in this situation is to apply for an 'H and C:' a process in which someone who is not usually eligible to apply for permanent residency in Canada can do so on 'humanitarian and compassionate grounds.' H and C applications are used in exceptional circumstances and are evaluated based on a set of criteria related to their lives in Canada: how settled the claimant is in Canada, the claimant's family ties in Canada, and the best interests of any children involved (IRB 2022a). Based on these evaluation criteria, a strong case can be argued in favour of the majority of rejected Hungarian legacy claims.

However, the application fees to apply for the H and C are notably prohibitive: to apply for permanent residency in Canada based on humanitarian and compassionate grounds, each spouse in a family must pay a processing fee of $550 CAD as well as a right of permanent residence fee of $500 CAD ($1050 CAD per person); and for each child included on the claim there is an additional $150 CAD fee (IRB 2022c). For a family with two children, the application fees amount to $2400 CAD. Moreover, once the H and C is filed, it takes years for it to process. For the families I knew with H and C applications, the average waiting time was three years. This timeline could mean that for a Hungarian Romani family that was originally a legacy claim, they may be waiting for more than a decade for their status in Canada to be finalized. Presently it is difficult to assess the success rate of the H and C applications of Hungarian Roma; many Roma I knew personally are still waiting on the outcome of their application.

In the fall of 2017, after I had been doing fieldwork at the Roma Community Centre for eight months, I sat down and interviewed Ági, one of the Hungarian-speaking refugee resettlement workers assisting Romani asylum-seekers. I saw Ági often at Culture Link, as her office was next door to the RCC office. Originally from Transylvania and ethnically Hungarian, she had been hired nine months prior to our interview due to her background working as a social worker and her fluency in the Hungarian language. She explained to me that at that time in the city of Toronto there was a group of six settlement workers who were dealing with Hungarian Roma. All Hungarian-speaking and mostly originally from Hungary, their main task was to support Romani refugee claimants in their settlement process: this usually involved a lot of translation assistance, calling the Immigration office, explaining immigration processes, and helping Roma to apply for social assistance. Ági felt strongly that her work was important due to the convoluted nature of Canada's refugee processing system: "The Canadian system is so complicated. It is difficult for newcomers to understand, to get all the papers and to file them properly."

During our interview, Ági explained to me that she was, at the time, working with a lot of the families whose legacy refugee claims were just now being rejected after being here for years, while others were still waiting after more than four years. Her task was to help Roma understand their options and assist them with the H and C application if they wished to pursue one. From a social work perspective, she explained, there are a lot of complications with legacy cases:

> Their lives are just frozen. It's not fair. They are just waiting in this frozen wasteland. It's terrible for my clients. They say, 'I don't know what to buy, like furniture, beds, kitchen equipment,' because they are always ready to pack up and leave, to be deported. It is especially hard for the families with kids. It messes up their schooling, it breaks up their education if they have to go back to Hungary.

As Ronald Lee describes it: "They established a home and made a new life in Canada. Meanwhile, the threat of deportation hung like a sword of Damocles above them until often it fell, and they were then deported" (Lee, unpublished manuscript)

I asked Ági about the Hungarians employed as settlement workers assisting Roma; while Ági herself was a liberal with a new age attitude, who often made condemnatory comments about

the Orbán government, I had heard stories from Romani families that some of the settlement workers had been patronizing or racist in their treatment of Roma. Ági shared that she understood that the relationship between Roma and non-Roma Hungarians was strained. For her it had a lot to do with growing up in Hungary:

> As a Hungarian, I grew up being taught not to like the Roma. My grandma had Roma people coming to help around the house, so we had Roma in our lives who we liked and respected, but we were still taught not to like Roma in general. As a Hungarian who is white, this legacy is given to you, but it doesn't mean these stereotypes are true. Now I help them and support them. It is very obvious that Roma are not treated well in Hungary. I'm glad they can come to Canada and they can get the support. There are lots more [than the ones who come to Canada] who are not treated well. Those who can afford the plane tickets and can prepare financially are the ones who come to Canada; those who don't have the money have to stay in Hungary.

Ági's comments captured many dynamics of the network surrounding the community of Romani refugee claimants in Toronto and Parkdale. Ági was well-meaning and tried her best to assist Romani families, yet occasionally she grew frustrated and resorted to stereotypical explanations for the behaviour of her clients: "They need to make more efforts to learn English," she told me. "But they just don't have the spirit for education in them, it's just not part of the culture." This sentiment was expressed to me a handful of times by Canadian social workers and teachers; for many adult Roma coming to Canada, speaking English was not a priority.

One such example of a Romani asylum-seeker who had yet to learn English after years in Canada was Zsuzsa, a grandmother for a large family living in Parkdale. I grew to know Zsuzsi's family in the fall of 2019; she, her spouse, and her children were all legacy claims. The family lived in Parkdale on a street populated by several Romani families, in a run-down two-story house typical of Toronto rental properties. Over the course of a few months, I met and spoke with Zsuzsi a handful of times. Zsusza's eight-year-old grandson would often buzz around during my visits and occasionally I would chat with her teenage granddaughter who had just started high school in Parkdale. As Zsuzsi didn't speak any English, the grandchildren occasionally assisted with our conversation.

When we met, Zsuzsi had been living in Toronto for eight years, and she had just heard that her asylum claim had finally been rejected. During our conversations she expressed feelings of despair because she was worried that she would be deported back to Hungary. At the same time, she shared with me that she was bitter towards Canada, often speaking negatively about life in Toronto: her landlord was exploitative, their house was falling apart, everything in Toronto was so expensive. She stated that she was tired and unhappy in Canada; she had been living in a form of legal limbo for eight years, with no sense of security or stability, and by this point she felt rootless and unlucky, as if things just weren't working out for her because she was Roma. One day she told me:

> I am just tired. I was already tired when I came here after growing up in Hungary and how Roma are treated there. Now it's hard to explain how it feels to be waiting this long for a decision by Canada. I'm just tired. Tired in my body and soul. My friend Erzsi came a year and a half ago, from Miskolc, and she's already gotten her claim processed and can build her life in Toronto in peace. Meanwhile I am still waiting. How can I explain how it feels? It's awful, really; just awful.

From these conversations it made sense to me that Zsuzsi hadn't learnt English: it was clear to me that when she said she was 'tired' Zsuzsi meant that she was psychologically burnt out, anxious and exhausted from years of navigating a temporary life in Toronto while knowing that she could be deported back to Hungary any day.

As much as she was disappointed by her life in Canada, she emphasized that she didn't want to go back to Miskolc, either. To me her experiences in Canada recalled the old joke of the woman who was asked if she liked the food at a local restaurant: "No! It was terrible! Every mouthful was positively poison — and what small portions they give you of it." Zsuzsi's experiences with the Canadian asylum regime were dehumanizing and frustrating, , yet she was desperate to stay: she felt homesick, but with no home to return to in Hungary. Zsuzsi had five children, and all of them but one[43] had moved to Toronto in 2011 and also filed for asylum. They had all established lives in Toronto, most of them working in construction. Zsuzsi's children all had several children of their own, which gave Zsuzsi multiple

[43] The one who remained in Miskolc was a hairdresser, who "looked Hungarian," so Zsuzsi said she could stay because she didn't experience too much discrimination. This woman is mentioned briefly in Chapter 3.

grandchildren, the majority of whom were born in Canada. Overall Zsuzsi felt like she had been failed by both Hungary and Canada.

Zsuzsi's life thus exemplified for me the unfair conditions Romani asylum-seekers who ended up as legacy claims have had to endure. She was living in an extended state of liminality and uncertainty: a striking example of the lived realities of what critical migration scholars term as the 'stolen time' taken by contemporary border regimes (Khosravi 2018). Zsuzsi's experience living in uncertainty for years demonstrates how "stealing time" from migrants has the consequence of "keeping people in a condition of circulation" (Khosravi 2018: 41). Another particularly stark case is the example of the Pusuma family, which was discussed earlier in this chapter. How was the Pusuma family's time, which involved three years living in a church basement, violently robbed by the Canadian asylum regime? Romani refugee experiences with the Canadian asylum regime point to the temporalities imposed on them of waiting, of being delayed, and of starting over.

Conclusion:
The non-accidental arbitrariness of the Canadian Asylum Regime

On the wall of the Toronto Community Roma Centre (RCC) hangs a large painting taking up most of the wall's area. The painting depicts a panoramic story: beginning in Hungary, a Romani family facing ethnic violence sells their home and belongings and boards a flight to Toronto. In Canada, their asylum claim is rejected, and they are deported back to Hungary on a no-name flight, where they are shown finally sleeping outside, homeless and broke. The first plane is decorated with the logo of Canada's national airline, and the skyline of Toronto dominates the artwork. A group of seven Hungarian Romani women made the mural in the early 2000s while at the RCC.

Mural on the wall of the Toronto Roma Community Centre. I took this photo in September 2019.

Faced with discriminatory treatment by negligent lawyers, racist politicians, stereotyping media, and changing border policies, Hungarian Romani experiences of the Canadian asylum regime suggest an astonishing cumulation of discriminatory practices, from Hungary to Canada. Deemed by media and the Canadian state alike to be the quintessential example of 'bogus refugees' poised for welfare profiteering, the anti-Gypsyism they fled in Europe seems to have followed them to Canada. Such circumstances underscore once more the collusion between the myriad devaluation processes experienced by Roma as a racialized surplus populations: as ex-workers, *de facto* non-citizens, and migrants navigating an increasingly brutal global system structured by the imperatives of capital accumulation.

A sentiment shared by nearly everyone I met involved with the Canadian asylum regime based in Parkdale assisting Roma was realizing how arbitrary the outcomes were for people

navigating the Canadian asylum regime: what the Hungarian Priest, the Canadian teacher, the community social workers, the Parkdale librarians, and the Romani families and activists could all agree on was the total randomness of refugee claim outcomes for Hungarian Roma in Canada. A common theme emerging from my interviews was the sense that it was inconsistent and unpredictable whose refugee claim would be accepted and whose would be rejected. Partly because many Roma who filed for refugee status were subjected to negligent legal representation by their Canadian lawyers, and partly because Romani clients filed under different refugee systems or different political climates formed by changing Canadian governments and Hungarian contexts, Romani refugee claimants with similar experiences could face completely opposite outcomes. I even heard of family members on separate claims but with the same experiences finding that some of them received refugee status while others were rejected and told to await deportation. While some were not even able to board the plane to Canada, racially-profiled at the airport, others were able to re-enter Canada and file a 'H and C' application. This feeling of randomness is reinforced with a quick glance at the overall success rates of Hungarian refugee claims, as broken down in Table 4 and compared to total refugee claims received by Canada, which shows annual average success rates for Hungarian claims ranging anywhere from 1.1 percent (in 2009) to 82.9 percent (in 2021).

A profound lack of faith in the due process of refugee hearings was thus a defining observation from my fieldwork, shared amongst Romani refugee claimants as well as their support workers and advocates. Research informants attested that the success of a refugee claim appeared dependent, in excess, upon having the right connections: a good lawyer, people to advocate for you, a community to support you with a GoFundMe fundraiser should you need to apply for a humanitarian and compassionate claim. As one exasperated Romani mother told me,

> Why don't they just say, 'Canada is closed to Hungarian Roma'? So we don't spend all the money on plane tickets, sell all of our things, get our hopes up, come all the way here, and then just wait and wait and wait for years - only to be deported back to Hungary.

Many Roma expressed this sentiment to me in our conversations about Canadian immigration: they were not upset because they had been rejected or denied, but because they

had been neither accepted nor rejected and were just waiting for an outcome that would feel completely random in the end.

Their feelings are confirmed by research that captured the inconsistent decision-making at the IRB (Beaudoin et al 2015), in which "Roma claimants faced a 'luck of the draw' situation" (Beaudoin et al 2015) because the IRB did not have a consistent response to Romani claimants from Hungary. While persecution against Roma in Hungary and Hungary's turn to authoritarianism and illiberalism has become increasingly difficult to deny, trade relations between Canada, Hungary, and the European Union remain a priority. Hence while the Canadian government tweets pro-refugee statements, its border services orchestrate sweeping deportations. It is the ultimate form of institutional gas-lighting.

What has resulted for thousands of Romani asylum-seekers is years of disruption and uncertainty. Here we can draw from the work of critical scholars of migration to help make sense of the full ramifications of this state of being. Khosravi's (2018) notion of "stolen time" looks at the temporalities of deportation and the ways in which migration controls operate to restructure the time of asylum-seekers, putting them in constant waiting, denial, delay, and withdrawal. One example of Khosravi's "stolen time" is the keeping of migrants in a condition of life circulation: he describes a common experience of deportees being sent "back in time", expressed as being sent "back to square one." Romani refugee experiences with the Canadian asylum regime is a quintessential example of this permanent state of circulation and liminality, the stealing of time a built-in feature of the Canadian asylum regime.

Table 4: Overall Success Rates of Refugee Claims Processed by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

Hungarian claims average	
Year	Percentage
1998	38.6
1999	7.7
2000	21.2
2001	12.1
2002	11.1
2003	8.4
2004	11.0
2005	13.4
2006	53.2
2007	21.4
2008	26.8
2009	1.1
2010	1.9
2011	8.3
2012	10.8
2013	20.5
2014	34.8
2015	61.5
2016	58.7
2017	49.2
2018	54.8
2019	48.9
2020	59.0
2021	82.9

Total claims average	
Year	Percentage
1998	43.9
1999	46.4
2000	48.6
2001	47.1
2002	46.7
2003	41.6
2004	39.6
2005	44.3
2006	46.7
2007	42.6
2008	41.7
2009	41.8
2010	37.9
2011	37.9
2012	35.0
2013	37.9
2014	49.4
2015	58.9
2016	62.3
2017	62.3
2018	54.3
2029	58.7
2020	62.6
2021	63.1

Notes:

"Overall Success Rate" is calculated by dividing the number of accepted claims by the number of all claims finalized in the given year (accepted, rejected, abandoned/withdrawn). As such, the success rate is a conservative number compared to the acceptance rate, which would be a comparison between acceptance and rejection solely.

References:

Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) of Canada (2022b): Refugee claims statistics. Accessed online: https://irb.gc.ca/en/statistics/protection/pages/index.aspx

Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) of Canada (1998-2015). 'Country reports: October to December and year to date.'

A close analysis of Romani experiences in the Canadian asylum regime further points to the necessity to unpack the ways in which Romani refugee experiences contest the dichotomies between 'illiberal Hungary' and 'liberal Canada.' In particular, this chapter has outlined a variety of dehumanizing experiences Romani refugees face while navigating the Canadian refugee processing system in a time not only when neoliberal capitalism appears to reign triumphant, but also when right-wing rhetoric about immigration and neo-nazi movements are increasing within Canadian society. As Beaudoin et al (2015) conclude, "Romani refugee claimants fled persecution in Hungary only to be confronted with similar treatment in Canada" (Beaudoin et al 2015: 3). The violence of illiberalism is matched only by the violence of liberal capitalism.

Mezzadra and Neilson's notion of 'Border as Method' (2013, 2012) is particularly useful here in understanding the implications of the Canadian asylum regime: their work is premised on an acknowledgement of the proliferation of borders today and the deep heterogeneity assumed by these border types. One aspect of the 'Border as Method' is the emphasis on the relevance of borders in the articulation of global processes and the facilitation of global capitalism: as they emphasize, "borders play a key role in producing the times and spaces of capitalism" (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013: ix). A crucial part of 'border as method' is what they term 'the multiplication of labour' which marks the "constant and unpredictable mutations" of legal statuses of workers arising from changing arrangements between capital, borders and political processes. The multiplication of labour is thus a conceptual tool intrinsically tied to making sense of global capitalism from the vantage point of borders, investigating "the composition of living labour in a situation characterized by a high-degree of heterogeneity" (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013: x).

The arbitrariness should thus be unpacked as not simply chaotic or random, but rather a non-accidental feature of the Canadian asylum regime, solidifying power relations that work in the favour of the Canadian state, the Hungarian state, and the friendly relations of a global system built for capital accumulation. In this sense, the arbitrary outcomes for Roma should be understood as enshrined in the racialization of global capital: it is not, for example, unintentional that immigration processing is prolonged; as Mezzadra and Neilson's concept of 'differential inclusion' shows, being in a liminal migration state without status allows for the emergence of precarious informal labour, which is functional in lowering overall labour costs. A contemporary border regime premised on liminality and the threat of deportability

turns migrants into a “disposable commodity” (De Genova 2002) and “creates a flexible and docile labour force” (Khosravi 2018: 39). These power relations in service of profit are a reminder that any discussion of postsocialist illiberalism in relation to Western liberalism much be conceptualized in relation to political economy, historical materialism, and the current political moment defined by the imperatives of global capitalism (Lem and Barber 2010, Barber and Lem 2018), not through Cold War prisms (Gagyi 2016, 2017) that indulge certain orientalisms and racisms about Eastern Europe and communism.

Finally, it is important to stress that Roma are not passive recipients of institutional discrimination and the dynamics of the Canadian asylum regime. From organizing campaigns against negligent legal representation and filing institutional complaints about anti-Romani hate speech in the media to supporting each other through networks of mutual aid and advice, Romani refugees have found their own ways to assert agency and make choices in these situations, and advocates for Roma in Toronto have helped to form coalitions pushing back against the dehumanizing impacts of the Canadian asylum regime. The following chapter will analyze these efforts in closer depth, centered on the struggles – the setbacks and the victories - of social reproduction Roma face in Toronto.

Chapter 6
"Filing for Refugee Status is Women's Work:" Labour and social reproduction amongst Hungarian Roma in Canada

Introduction

Can the act of seeking refugee support be understood as a form of work? During my ethnographic research with Romani families living in Toronto, this question often crossed my mind. Early on and throughout my fieldwork, a discernible trend arose regarding how the families understood and delegated the task of filing their asylum claims and securing social assistance in Canada. I noticed that most of the organizing for making the family's refugee claim - planning the travel, finding a lawyer, collecting the documents, filling out the paperwork, and more - was coordinated by the families' maternal figures. Such was the case in almost all the Romani families I met, and I spent much of my fieldwork speaking with the mothers over the phone about their asylum claims, calling the families' lawyers at the request of the mothers, and visiting government offices with the women to inquire about their social benefits. The Romani women I worked with displayed encyclopedic knowledge of the details of the immigration process, documents, and deadlines; they designed comprehensive household budgets based on the social assistance and state support they would receive.

Eventually I came to ask families about this lead role played by the women in the families, and one mother quipped to me, "Oh yes, filing for refugee status is 'women's work' for Roma families." To her, and to the other women I discussed the topic with later, dealing with the asylum claim and welfare benefits was an obvious extension of the domestic duties, care work, and family obligations of women in the family. Moreover, she likened the process of coordinating the refugee claim to a form of work that the women contribute to the financial budget of the family; securing social support was the part of the family's income that she worked for, that she earned. It was in conversations such as these that I began to understand the history of Romani asylum-seeking as a process that should be analyzed through the lenses of labour history and the broader histories of capitalism, class, and social reproduction.

These conversations raised questions for me about the gendered divisions of labour amongst Romani refugee families, the dimensions of housework and other forms of unpaid labour for refugees, and what social reproduction means for groups of people existing on the periphery of the world of waged work. In particular, the attitude that filing for social support and refugee protection was a type of work recalled to me earlier studies of welfare capitalism in the US detailing the creation of state financial relief, in which unemployed people "came to see direct state payments as a crucial component of total household income" (Mohandesi and Teitelman 2017: 54):

> Many workers not only welcomed direct federal aid, but felt they deserved it… There is a noticeable tendency to regard obtaining relief as another way of earning a living. Some people came to see state payments as a crucial component of total household income (Mohandesi and Teitelman 2017: 54).

It also recalled to me work by feminist theories studying housework and the unpaid labour of women, such as Angela Davis' call to socialize "the countless chores collectively known as 'housework'" (Davis 1981: 222), feminist debates on whether or not "the housewife is actually a secret worker inside the capitalist production process" (Davis 1981: 234), and the demand that housewives should receive a wage (Davis 1981: 232). Federici's lifelong scholarship on "the patriarchy of the wage" (Federici 2021) shows persuasively the ways in which family institutions under capitalism ensure the "wagelessness" of "women's work" (Federici 2021: 14), illuminating the ways in which "the class struggle is not fought only in the factories but also in our bodies" (Federici 2021: 6). When it comes to refugee families, however, the question remains: what is the meaning of 'women's work' and the wagelessness of the household for families surviving off social assistance, existing on the margins of the labour economy, and maneuvering between precarious working conditions and citizenship statuses?

This chapter analyzes the forms of work that have emerged amongst Hungarian Roma seeking asylum in Canada. In examining the life-sustaining economic strategies of Romani families in Toronto, as they navigate the class relations and citizenship regimes of global capitalism, the chapter thinks through, broadly, how refugees as a surplus population engage in forms of valorized and unvalorized labour. The chapter bridges the work of feminist social

reproduction theorists and anthropologists of labour by analyzing the intersections of work, social reproduction, and citizenship. How do Romani refugees, as a mobile surplus population, engage in gendered social reproductive strategies when they are excluded from both wage labour and citizenship regimes? And what role does the exclusion and social reproduction of 'non-workers' like Romani refugees play within circuits of capital and value-making? In exploring these questions, I analyze the connections between new forms of work emerging during financialized capitalism, the gendered relations of social reproduction tied to them, and the politics of citizenship and refugee protection. In doing so, I build on the arguments made earlier in this dissertation, showing how the history of Romani refugees is not only about the unmaking of the working class in Hungary, but, moreover, also the birth of new forms of work and class struggle, tied to the experiences and actions of a racialized surplus population expelled from waged work and national inclusion.

The main argument of this chapter is that Romani asylum-seeking to Canada should be understood as a social reproduction strategy and a form of gendered work that has emerged in the specific historical conditions created by contemporary financialized capitalism and postsocialism. Here I argue that the survival strategies of Romani refugees - who were permanently locked out of the Hungarian labour market in the postsocialist economic transformations of the 1990s, as analyzed in Part 1 - are embedded in gendered divisions of work. For these newly-formed gendered labour dynamics, gaining access to state social support and filing for refugee status in Canada are regarded as an extension of domestic labour, typically done by the maternal figures of the family. Moreover, in historically contextualizing why Roma have become refugees in Canada, I propose here that the life decision to seek asylum should itself be understood as a social reproduction strategy for Roma in reaction to the changing conditions of postsocialist capital accumulation. Ultimately my research stresses the urgency to pay attention to questions of citizenship, race, and migration in our critical analyses of labour, social reproduction, and capitalism.

This chapter draws specifically from my ethnographic fieldwork with Romani families living in Toronto, which began in early 2017 and continued off and on for the following three years, until the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic.[44] During this time I worked closely with six families originally from Hungary, assisting them with their refugee applications and

[44] My fieldwork and methodology is discussed in detail in the dissertation introduction.

navigating their new lives in Canada. The paper first provides an overview of theory on the anthropology of labour and social reproduction. It then puts these insights into conversation with research regarding Romani families, Romani women, and gender dynamics. I then turn to my own fieldwork where I consider the economies of work that have been built by Roma arriving in Canada from Hungary, the gendered division of labour played out in Romani refugee families, and how refugee-seeking has become a primary subsistence strategy for them. In the final section, I consider the theoretical implications of the findings of my fieldwork, troubling the dichotomy of 'the economic migrant' and the 'political refugee,' arguing that strategies around social reproduction can be understood as a form of class struggle.

Theoretical considerations:
Work beyond wages and surplus populations

This chapter bridges and builds upon two bodies of literature: the anthropology of labour and social reproduction theory. Marxist-feminist scholars understand social reproduction as the 'socially necessary work' of providing the means for maintaining and reproducing people (Bhattacharya 2017a, Folbre 2021, Federici 2019, Fraser 2022, Ferguson 2022). As Bhattacharya's work (2017a) shows, social reproduction theory expands on a Marxist labour theory of value to look behind the scenes of production at the unwaged work that sustains capitalist social relations. These analyses of social reproduction emphasize that we should not regard the social sphere of households, care work, and informal labour as separate from the economic sphere of value-producing wage labour; in other words, it is not possible to analyze social reproduction as separate from the accumulation process. Instead we must understand the reproduction of capitalism and the reproduction of people as intrinsically interlinked processes and hence trouble the distinction between work that is recognized as value-producing and work that is not. Feminist scholars emphasize that much of this invisible work in the realm of social reproduction is done by women and that the "women's work" that results from the divisions between waged/valorized work and unwaged/unvalorized work is tied to the advent of the family model tied to private property and capitalism (Folbre 1994, Davis 1981, Federici 1975, Engels 1978). For Davis this means that "women's work" is a "precondition for production" because capitalism presupposes social reproductive work (Davis 1981: 228)

Nancy Fraser's work on capital accumulation and social reproduction is particularly instructive here; tracing the history of social reproduction alongside the social relations inherent to historical regimes of capitalism, Fraser argues that "every form of capitalist society harbors a deep-seated social-reproductive 'crisis tendency' or 'contradiction'" (Fraser 2017: 23). This crisis is inevitable since "capitalism's orientation to unlimited accumulation tends to destabilize the very processes of social reproduction on which it relies" (Fraser 2017: 23). Fraser frames the 'crisis of care' resulting from financialized capitalism as "one aspect of a 'general crisis'" of neoliberalism that involves ecological, political, and financial crises as well as this crisis in social reproduction (Fraser 2016: 99). The tendency of neoliberalism to 'cannibalize' care work, the environmental, and public powers is a non-accidental feature of capitalism as an 'institutionalized social order' (Fraser 2022, Fraser 2014b). This view of 'capitalist crisis' is essential for adequately making sense of Romani asylum-seeking and recognizing their survival strategies as efforts organized around social reproduction that respond to the exigencies of financialized capitalism.

Recent anthropologists of labour, working in the tradition of political economy, too point towards the increased relevance of the question of social reproduction today, as the rise of neoliberal or financialized capitalism across the globe has led to attacks on social welfare, a rise in precarious work, and growing surplus populations, or people excluded from traditional forms of waged labour (Kasmir 2020, Nevelling and Steur 2018, Barber and Lem 2019, Carrier and Kalb 2015, Kasmir and Carbonella 2018, Smith 2011, Li 2009, Lem and Barber 2010). These scholars explore how transformations in global capitalism have led to changes in labour dynamics with increasing precarious work resulting in more and more people engaging in informal labour and unwaged work. For anthropologists of work, new and emerging forms of work under financialization mean that for increasing people worldwide, "terms like 'work' and 'labour' seem too limiting" (Smith 2018).

Such anthropological studies show the ways in which poor people ameliorate their circumstances by sustaining networks of care based upon reciprocity and non-monetary exchanges among kin and across households and how this is a form of social reproduction that sustains people and supplements waged labour. As anthropologists trying to expand the understanding of work, they argue that it is necessary to situate social reproductive practices within the larger fields of power that create and reproduce capitalism. As Kasmir explains,

"Instances of capitalism's outside or non-capitalism are better explained by the power-laden projects of incorporation and exclusion that are fundamental to capitalist accumulation" (Kasmir 2020: 12).

Social reproduction theorists and anthropologists of labour thus both call for an expanded understanding of labour that can account for changing and invisibilized forms of work left outside the conventional form of wage-labour. What is crucial for capturing the myriad forms of work unseen by traditional analyses of labour is to embrace an understanding of capitalism as a whole - shaping all social relations at and beyond the point of production - and to acknowledge that many activities - both within the wage relation and outside of it - combine to form the whole of capitalist social relations and the value that is produced for capital. Social reproduction theorists thus frame capitalism as a 'social totality' (Bhattacharya 2017b) or an 'institutionalized social order' (Fraser 2014); anthropologists of work suggest orienting analyses of class relations around subsistence strategies instead of wages. As Kasmir argues,

> Waged employment is only one possible life condition among many. The imperative to earn a living rather than the wage relation as a singular form is the foundational moment of capitalist class relations. (Kasmir 2020: 8)

Understanding capitalism as an 'institutionalized social order' thus enables a view of surplus populations who are engaged in work and forms of class struggle even if relegated to the margins of society; this framing allows for a challenging of the boundaries between what is considered work, and, moreover, what is considered asylum-seeking, an argument I will develop throughout this chapter. As I argued in Chapter 4, the urgency remains to pay attention to the role of surplus populations within the crisis of social reproduction, the processes of capital accumulation, and the emergence of rightwing populism. Putting the anthropology of work into conversation with social reproduction theory allows for an expanding and broadening of our analyses of unwaged work, bringing into focus the subsistence strategies of those existing on the peripheries of capitalism. In this chapter, the aim is to explore how one such racialized surplus population has developed new forms of work and social-reproductive tendencies in response to the exigences of financialized capitalism.

Furthermore, an expanded understanding of labour attentive to social reproduction and surplus populations has profound implications for how we think about citizenship, migration, race and the nation - and ultimately the politics of refugee protection. In recognizing "refugees as a surplus population" (Rajaram 2018), we can think more thoroughly on how work and social reproduction plays out in relation to citizenship regimes, racialization, and border practices. That is to say: in paying attention to the social reproduction practices of surplus populations, in particular refugees, I want to recenter citizenship access and migration as central determinants of unwaged labour, particularly when we understand how these are conditioned by the changing prerogatives of accumulation. On the one hand, I explore here how social reproduction dynamics may produce the conditions that cause people to seek refugee status; on the other hand, I ask how refugees engage in social reproduction strategies as a form of survival and resistance.

As such this chapter aims to push forward discussions within social reproduction theory and the anthropology of labour by recognizing how the existence and work of surplus populations operates within capitalism's inside, usually at the intersection of structural racism, labour market segmentation, gendered divisions of labour, and state welfare policy. In particular, while working with refugees relegated outside of official labour markets and analyzing their experiences through the framework of social reproduction theory, I have sought to consider how surplus populations who do not engage in conventionally-recognized waged work may still contribute to the overall production of capitalist value. Analyzing the life-sustaining strategies of refugees helps us imagine 'non-workers' such as refugees as agents of history and how through their everyday strategies of social reproduction can be participants in class struggle. The importance of citizenship and migration to our understanding of social reproduction, work, and contemporary capitalism became clear to me through my ethnographic field work with Romani refugees.

Romani families, social reproduction, and women's work

Earlier in my dissertation I analyzed how the crisis of social reproduction wrought by financialized capitalism in postsocialist Hungary produced the conditions for the rise of rightwing populism in Hungary, which made Romani communities the targets of anti-Gypsy violence while they were also being locked out of labour markets, what I term as a process of

'double dispossession' for Roma.[45] In other words, the crisis of social reproduction tied to the introduction of neoliberalism in the region created the historical conditions that compelled thousands of Roma to leave Hungary and seek asylum protection in Canada. One of the major arguments I have traced throughout this dissertation is that while Romani Hungarians' claim to refugee protection is legally premised on their experiences of ethnic persecution living in Hungary, this ethnic persecution cannot be separated from their work and class status following postsocialist economic transformation. In particular, I have located the historical roots of Romani asylum-seeking to Canada in Romani experiences of class dispossession during the postsocialist economic transformation of the 1990s, when Hungary's Roma population experienced a rapid and dramatic increase in unemployment in the early 1990s, which has left the majority of Roma unemployed to this day.

Studying their movement raises questions about how we understand citizenship and the dimensions of refugee protection in relation to the contemporary crises in global capitalism, work, and social reproduction. Placed into historical context, Romani ethnic persecution - and the consequent asylum-seeking - must be recognized as the result of a crisis in social reproduction in Hungary connected to postsocialist neoliberal economic restructuring. The case hence offers us a reminder, as Nancy Fraser's work shows (Fraser 2013a), that Polányian double-movements to protect the social sphere from market forces can be spurred by rightwing forces upholding patriarchal and nationalist dynamics of the "people" and the "family" at the expense of the emancipation of people who do not fit into these nationalist definitions.

In trying to understand the reasons for Roma coming to Canada and the dynamics of family and work amongst Romani refugees in Toronto, I often had discussions with Romani families about their family dynamics and work life, in Hungary as well as Canada. As I explain in Part 1 of the dissertation, struggles around social reproduction in Hungary operate as a major motivating factor for Roma in their push to Canada. It was common for Romani men to describe to me how they were regularly denied work in Hungary, saying it was because people in Hungary do not want to hire Romani people. They would tell me that in Hungary it was a constant struggle to support and provide for their families. Families coming to Canada expressed concerns about their risk of eviction and becoming homeless, their houses being

[45] This analysis is primarily developed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

demolished, their children being segregated in school and taken by Child Protective Services, the family's inability to access proper healthcare. Despite these struggles, Roma eke out a livelihood in Hungary through a combination of public works, informal labour, and social welfare. This work they do, on the outskirts of formal labour channels and markets, is made invisible to the wider Hungarian society through racist discourses of Roma being 'welfare profiteers' and transient nomads (Kóczé 2018, Kóczé 2016, Kóczé and Rovid 2017).

When Roma come to Canada and file for refugee status, they are not eligible for federal special income assistance as asylum-seekers, and they do not qualify for resettlement assistance or start-up allowances since they did not come to Canada through a resettlement program. However, throughout Canada, asylum-seekers are entitled to apply for social assistance and other state-funded supports usually administered at the provincial level. In Ontario, the welfare program is called *Ontario Works* (OW), and most Romani refugee claimants in Toronto apply for and receive OW payments while in Toronto (IRB 2022a). For individual adults, this is about $600 a month, though rates for households and families with children may be higher. The Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) provides limited, temporary coverage of health-care benefits to refugee claimants who aren't eligible for provincial or territorial health insurance. Thus, once asylum-seekers have filed a refugee claim and are waiting for a decision from the Immigration and Refugee board, they have access to some government services, including social assistance and health care as well as state-funded legal aid that provides legal counsel to assist with refugee claims. These various services are provided by different government agencies, at the federal, provincial, and municipal level. Recent neoliberal austerity measures have decreased some of these supports, and welfare rates have not increased to match inflation or the rising cost of rents in cities like Toronto (Statistics Canada 2015).

Bo's research on Hungarian Roma living in Toronto indicates that Hungarian Roma in Toronto have an annual household income of less than $40,000, of which approximately 95 percent is allocated to household expenditures (Bo 2015). Levine-Rasky's ethnographic work with Roma in Toronto describes how multi-occupational activity is a common strategy for ensuring long-term economic viability for all Roma living in Canada (Levine-Rasky 2016: 57). Echoing my own findings in my ethnographic work, she documents how welfare assistance was regarded by the Roma she worked with as a neutral income source:

> Social assistance or welfare income is not necessarily regarded as shameful dependency… depending on income from social assistance should be understood as part of the informal economy in which impoverished people all over the world participate (Levine-Rasky 2016: 58).

Literature on the relationship of Romani communities with the world of waged labour describe an 'evasion to formal labour,' on the one hand, and heightened skills at 'bartering' and 'scavenging' on the other. Barany's work, for example, suggests that Roma possess an ability "to exploit whatever opportunities offered themselves, to find the odd loophole and unoccupied niche in this or that social and economic environment" (Barany 2002: 15). Similarly, Stewart argues that Roma in Hungary have "cultivated an ethic that inverted prevailing non-Gypsy ideas about labour" (Stewart 1997: 17) in which wage labour was looked down on by traditional Roma, implying subservience to non-Roma (Levine-Rasky 2016: 58). What this research points to is the risks inherent to piecing together a labour history of Roma and the susceptibility to indulging 'Gypsy' stereotypes when looking for explanations about work behaviours. Romani activist-scholar Bila, for example, argues that stereotypes abound about Romani work ethics and flexibility that would otherwise be glorified in the 'gig economy' celebration of 'hustling:' "Would the occupational styles of the Roma be the subject of celebration rather than disparagement if it were not for a social class bias, or simply antigypsyism?" (Bila, as quoted in Levine-Rasky 2016). As Lee argues, the flexibility of Romani communities in their everyday survival strategies should symbolize a strength forged through centuries of exclusion and dispossession: for him, "the secret of the Romani underground economy is versatility and adaptability" (Lee as quoted in Levine-Rasky 2016).

For Roma that come to Canada, it is almost always as a family unit; the movement to Canada is organized as a household. In analyzing the gendered dynamics of the division of labour that takes place within these families, it is therefore necessary to consider Romani relations of kinship. For example, a question that I often asked was if Romani women do social reproductive work in their families because they are "women" or because they are "mothers." Obligations of care may be embedded in kinship relations and not necessarily specific gender roles. Yet at the same time, Romani women's work and agency remains unappreciated in research on Romani communities. As Kóczé emphasizes in her research on Romani women's experiences in Hungary, the academic literature on Roma pays only limited attention to

Romani women's work, political activism, and social struggle (Kóczé 2011, Kóczé 2016). Kóczé along with Daróczi et al argue that Romani women are involved in a spectrum of activities, work, and campaigns, despite the ways that neoliberalism and austerity have a heavy-handed impact on their lives (Daróczi et al 2018). These studies are crucial for acknowledging the work of Romani women when they take on the job of organizing the family's asylum claims. In trying to understand why Romani women shoulder the burden of the asylum-seeking process, I assumed that I would hear about and observe a deeper, historically-rooted patriarchalism in Roma households. Yet the reasons appeared more complex in the discussions I had with families in Toronto.

Over dinner with one family that I grew particularly close with in Toronto, I broached the topic of gender in Romani refugee families and asked why Romani women take care of all the welfare and the refugee paperwork. The parents explained to me that, as Romungro, the Romani community in the city of Miskolc was different from traditional Romani communities in the countryside of Hungary: Romungro women were more modern and on equal footing with their husbands as leaders of the family. Romungro Roma, they opined, were urban and educated and had historically been workers in the large factory cities of Hungary prior to the end of state socialism. As a result, Romungro treated the women in the family equally: "Mothers and fathers equally run the family," the father told me. The mother added: "Romungro women are 'free,' more like Hungarians than traditional Roma." She went on to explain that to Romungro, Vlach, Lovari, and Olah Roma in Hungary were regarded as rural and uneducated. To her, these Romani communities were traditional, and the women were confined to specific gender roles according to Romani customs. A dichotomy was being painted in which, to them, Romungro were working-class proletarianized Roma with modern ideas about gender and families, whereas Lovari and Olah Roma were traditional and rural, upholding an outdated patriarchalism. In this narration, women working on refugee claims and state support applications was an indication of their empowerment and leadership in the family, not an extension of housewife or motherly duties.

Ronald Lee's work on Romani communities in Canada documents similar tensions between Romungro and more traditional Romani groups. He explains how Romungro in Toronto are regarded with a degree of suspicion by traditional Roma: they are described by Vlach Roma as being "neither Roma nor Gadje" (Lee, unpublished manuscript). Conversely, Romungro describe Vlach Roma in terms such as "uncivilized barbarians" or "savages" (Lee,

unpublished manuscript). Furthermore, Vlach Roma are generally happy to leave Hungary and view Hungarians as "stupid peasants," whereas Romungro "see themselves as persecuted [Hungarian] nationals" (Lee, unpublished manuscript). He describes an event of the Roma Community Centre that drove home this message to him:

> At a gathering in a basement Hungarian restaurant in Toronto, the *Romungere* stood to attention while the musicians played the Hungarian national anthem. If it were not for the current persecution and systemic discrimination in Hungary, there is no doubt that they would gladly become part of Hungarian society (Lee, unpublished manuscript).

For Lee, this shows how whereas most traditional Romani communities see themselves as "part of the Romani population of the world" and "able and willing to live anywhere they are not persecuted," Romungro are aliens outside of Hungary and unable to relate to Roma not of their own group. Their music and language is Hungarian, yet because of persecution they are not considered to be Hungarians in Hungary.

These distinctions also play out in the labour dynamics of Romani families in Toronto: for Vlax Roma living in Toronto, fortune-telling and music-playing are common occupations that can be lucrative as a family income. As Levine-Rasky's research shows:

> Fortunetelling is the most lucrative of occupations among some Vlax groups; families consolidate themselves to extract the maximum potential from this work… fortunetelling is typically women's work… the fortuneteller has a high status in the family on the basis of her commercial success and her key contributions to the household. Regardless of their age or gender, family members support her behind the scenes. They all may have a role to play: sisters fill in with readings, and husbands, children, and other extended family members maintain the parlor, place ads and flyers, find customers, interact with authorities, and provide domestic work that frees the fortuneteller from housework and childcare. Children are directly involved in learning this and other trades that, depending on the group and on circumstances, may be given priority over formal schooling (Levine-Rasky 2016: 57).

Such work and gender dynamics are not evident amongst Hungarian Roma living in Toronto, who do not engage in traditional Romani occupations, instead surviving primarily on a mix of state support and undocumented work.

In conversations with Romani families from Hungary, I was further led to believe that one of the reasons for the particular gendered division of labour in Romungro families has more to do with Romani men than the women. Many Romani men originating from Miskolc had experienced varying forms of, on the one hand, tough factory work that left their bodies brutalized, and, on the other hand, harassment and violence at the hands of rightwing nationalist Hungarians that left them physically and psychologically traumatized. One father, for example, told me that he spent a decade working in the metalworks factory in Miskolc in northeast Hungary, and today has severe respiratory issues that he believes are a result of the work. In conversations over dinner at his family home on multiple occasions, he would bring out his phone and show me pictures of the factory and metallurgy, insisting that many Romani men who worked in these factories now have health conditions, such as lung cancer, because of their time labouring in the steel works. He is now unable to work due to health issues, and, as a result, today his family in Canada receives a disability benefit after Canadian doctors evaluated his physical condition and assessed him as chronically ill.

In this sense, the Romani families I met shared commonalities with working class communities in the de-industrializing cities of the Global North, and most of the Romani men that I interacted with exemplified a kind of post-industrial 'fractured masculinity' - unemployed, physically and mentally exhausted, no longer the family breadwinner in the traditional sense (see King 2019, Nixon 2018, Emery 2019). The departure between these Romani families and North American working classes, however, is at the intersections of class with race and nationalism, as the Roma who once worked the factories not only lost their jobs but simultaneously became the scapegoats of rightwing nationalism and violence. For example, one of the main pushes for the father mentioned above to come to Canada was that he and his son were attacked by far-right vigilantes one evening in his city's centre, which left him with a broken leg and PTSD that is ongoing to today. Stories of fathers being beaten by far-right vigilantes in Hungary were common amongst the Romani families I met in Toronto. These kinds of experiences of both overwork and racist violence combined to have an accumulating impact on the Romani father figures I met, many of whom were simply physically and mentally deteriorated by the time they arrived in Canada: suffering from

strokes, heart attacks, lung and back issues, diabetes, and more. It is thus important to locate gendered dynamics of social reproduction within the masculine dimensions of labour exploitation and ethnic persecution.

Paying attention to Hungarian Romani refugees thus offers new insights to our understanding of the contemporary conditions of capital accumulation, particularly in terms of how citizenship and the racialized dynamics of nationalism come into play throughout the ongoing crises in social reproduction under financialized capitalism. It is necessary to study the movement of Hungarian Roma seeking asylum in Canada by locating within the historical context in which their inclusion in both Hungarian labour markets and definitions of the 'people' has been curtailed. Romani asylum-seeking to Canada has become one of the only viable subsistence strategies in this context: the majority of Roma in Hungary have been locked out of waged labour following postsocialist economic reforms, and the ongoing pressures of Hungarian authoritarian neoliberalism have made state-sponsored social reproduction increasingly limited in particular for an ethnicized minority, which has combined with the ethnic persecution resulting from escalating racialized violence at the hands of a growing far-right. My ethnographic work with Romani refugees in Canada showed me the ways in which filing for refugee protection has developed as a form of gendered work to ensure a family's social reproduction, as discussed in the following section.

Economies of work amongst Roma in Toronto

My ethnographic engagement with Romani families in Canada largely centered around assisting them with navigating Canadian immigration laws and state support. Since I spoke a functional level of Hungarian, which improved the more fieldwork I did, I was able to interact with Hungarian Roma in a city where they had a difficult time communicating and connecting with non-Hungarian speakers. As newcomers to Canada, the Roma I met had their hands full figuring out how to navigate the Canadian immigration system and social services. My fieldwork days became filled with the everyday tasks Roma needed to do as they settled into life in Toronto.

Through these field experiences, I gradually came to piece together a sense of the economies of work and the paid and unpaid labour that Romani refugees were partaking in while in

Toronto, and how Romani women's work around securing state support and refugee status was viewed as one of the income-generating gendered forms of work in the families. Most of the Roma that I spent time with in Canada were, officially, unemployed in Hungary and remained, officially, unemployed in Canada. In a similar manner to how they pieced together a livelihood while excluded from wage work in Hungary, Roma in Toronto created a family income through a combination of social assistance and informal labour.

A major part of my fieldwork was helping Romani families navigate the social assistance system in Canada, making sure they are aware of what they are fully entitled to here as asylum-seekers, from Legal Aid to special diet allowances. Often families required assistance with maneuvering the bureaucratic channels of the OW system. I frequently called the Welfare office on their behalf to inquire about their applications; I attended meetings with their personal support workers to advocate for them; I spoke with my anti-poverty activist acquaintances to find ways to ensure the family was getting the maximum amount of social support they were entitled to.

According to Paul, an overworked paralegal originally from the former Czechoslovakia and one of the founders of the Roma Community Centre, Canadian social assistance is a genuine pull factor for Romani asylum-seekers. As he framed it, during an interview I did with him, "the ethnic persecution is the main motivation, but the welfare makes it possible." For him, and for the several refugee resettlement workers I encountered in the field, it was undeniable that this state support provided the material conditions of possibility for Roma to arrive in Canada and remain in Toronto, a city with one of the highest costs of living in North America.

While women take a lead on organizing state support, the men in the families tended to find 'under-the-table' work in construction or the fruit and vegetable markets. One father in his 40s described it to me as an "abundance" of construction work for Roma in Toronto, and that through social networks it was easy to find work. He personally worked with a construction team of Ukrainians, and thus his English language skills were improving a lot while on the job, he told me optimistically. Another young man explained to me while hanging out at the RCC one afternoon, that this kind of labour paid from his perspective pretty well: each day they work they receive around $150 a day for about 10 hours of work, which works out to about the daily minimum wage in Ontario. When I inquired about working conditions, abuse,

or exploitation, the men would often evade my questioning and say they were happy to be working - that, unlike in Hungary, they were able to find a job. For example, Marci, a young man who works in delivering flyers and newspapers, insisted to me that it wasn't bad work since they spend a lot of time in the van driving around to neighbourhoods, and that the money went a long way towards supporting his family. Marci's suspicions didn't fully quell my suspicions that there could be more to this story that I simply didn't have access to: I felt some hesitation from these men to complain to me about working conditions in Canada.

One interesting aspect I encountered was that schooling for Romani refugee teenagers was interpreted in a similar manner to how the families understood their social assistance as a form of work. Through assisting at the RCC, I became acquainted with a group of Hungarian Romani teenagers and would often have casual conversations with them about their lives. One afternoon, I spoke with a teenage girl named Viki who attended the same high school where I was volunteering to tutor Romani teenagers. When she learnt that I was going to the high school and helping Romani students without getting paid to do the work, she was flabbergasted: she explained to me that she wouldn't go to school if she wasn't getting paid. When, puzzled, I asked her to elaborate, she explained that she felt she was obliged to attend school in order for the family to receive its welfare payments. Ontario welfare payment regulations do stipulate that family recipients must ensure that their children attend school regularly. However, I have not heard of this regulation being enforced to the extent that someone's payment was cut off because of a child's prolonged absence in school.

As a shy and quiet girl who spoke almost no English, Viki found school not simply boring but irrelevant and useless to her life. Her attitude toward schooling thus struck me as someone clocking in to do shift work: she showed up, signed attendance, and continued scrolling on her phone for the rest of the day. When I later inquired about her attitude to acquaintances of mine who were teachers at Toronto schools, they explained that they had encountered that attitude often amongst Romani students: the students would only come to school because there was some understanding amongst them that their family's social assistance was dependent on their school attendance.

At the same time, most of the teenage Romani boys that I met were already engaged in informal work before they had graduated high school, instead often forgoing their school attendance in order to deliver flyers or sort produce. I observed that for the teenage boys,

there are often opportunities to make some 'under-the-table' cash and that is a much-preferred option to going to school. When I asked the Romani teenagers about work and school, I was told that a lot of the boys miss school so they can work and that they would rather earn money than graduate high school. I was further told that most of the teenage girls don't reach high school graduation in Toronto either, as they drop out as soon as they become pregnant and begin to receive child benefits. Very few of the Romani students in Parkdale graduate high school, a reality I confirmed in conversation with both Romani teenagers and their teachers.

A gendered division of labour first observed in Romani refugee parents is thus already at play amongst the teenagers, a contribution to Ferguson's study of childhood and capitalism, in which she analyses children as "the future laborers on whom capitalism depends" (Ferguson 2017: 120). One can read Romani teenagers' relationship with high school as a contemporary spin on Willis' ethnography, *Learning to Labour* (Willis 1978), a now classic in the anthropology of work, for which Willis conducted ethnographic work with high-school students of working-class background. His main argument is that 'working class kids get working class jobs' instead of pursuing formal education, largely in part due to their own cultural and community expectations. Here, Romani refugee high school students 'learn to labour' as well, yet the meaning of work has transformed beyond 'the shop floor' under today's global system of financialized capitalism. As teenagers, Romani refugees in Toronto learn to become workers within the complex web of their economies in Canada, comprising of a mix of social reproduction, state support, and informal labour, their upbringing demonstrating 'how Romani refugee kids get Romani refugee jobs,' to paraphrase Willis.

Social-reproductive struggles of Romani Refugees

Towards the end of my fieldwork, in the fall of 2019, I met two Hungarian women living and working in Parkdale as social workers assisting Romani refugees. They were employed by a city organization in the neighbourhood that helps newcomers, homeless people, and low-income families. One of the women had been living in Canada since 2005, when she came with her family to assist her son's hockey career. She had studied psychology and helps abused women at the agency. The other woman was from Miskolc and originally worked for "the Institute," which is what the Roma called the Hungarian version of a Children's Aid

Society (CAS). We discussed extensively the Children's Aid Society in Toronto: because so many Roma families had bad experiences with “the institute” in Miskolc, the women opined, they tend to react “very dramatically” to any help offered by the CAS, according to the women. The women repeated the belief that the CAS in Canada is a helpful institution for families in need, and they framed Romani families as overreacting with their fear and hatred of it, which was more to do with their experiences in the Hungarian system than in Canada. A problematic rhetoric that understates the levels of trauma, surveillance, and punitive treatment Romani families experience with ‘the Institute,’ I was left to believe that it is likely a rhetoric that is repeated by Canadian social workers that assist with Romani families.

Interactions with Child Protective Services was only the tip of the iceberg for Romani families struggling around social reproduction as refugees in Toronto. The women explained to me that most recently many Roma were going back to Hungary, as they were finding life in Toronto to be too financially challenging, in large part related to the housing crisis in Toronto and escalating rental prices. They described how landlords were also increasingly discriminatory towards ‘Hungarian’ tenants, as anti-Romani sentiments were growing in Canada. The women believed that this showed how sometimes Roma have high expectations: some clients of theirs will get angry in their office about not receiving enough social assistance.

As a city with one of the most expensive housing markets in North America and its neighbourhoods being reshaped by the forces of financialization and gentrification (Kern 2022), Toronto poses its own social-reproductive struggles for Romani families. During my fieldwork, I learnt about the bed bugs that infested the cheaper high rises that Romani families lived in, and I heard several stories about the landlords who took advantage of the vulnerabilities of refugee families, pushing them out through illegal “renovictions.” Often while working at the RCC, I would have informal conversations with Romani refugee claimants about the hardships of life in Toronto. They would tell me that it's hard to live in Toronto: it's hard to find work; it's hard to find a place to live; many of them faced struggles with paying rent and resorted to moving to neighbourhoods on the outskirts of Toronto, like Scarborough and Etobicoke. One friend of mine used to work at the Beer Store in the Parkdale neighbourhood during the years of peak asylum-seeking to Canada from Hungarian Roma. She told me it was routine to find returned empty beer cans from Romani apartment buildings filled with cockroaches. To her, this represented a failure of the landlords of these

buildings and a symbol of Romani housing discrimination in Toronto, though to her co-workers it fueled an anti-Romani and anti-migrant attitude. Overall, Romani refugee families routinely expressed a unitary sentiment: they were most concerned about finances, trying to figure out how to make work the meager social assistance, the informal labour, and the other support networks they used.

Romani women have once again been at the forefront of organizing around their families' housing conditions: on two separate occasions and in two different apartment buildings, women in the Romani community of Toronto organized building-wide rent strikes against abusive landlords (Fiorito 2013, Hune-Brown 2018). In 2013, in a low-income high-rise building in Lakeshore Boulevard, a neighbourhood in the southern part of the city, Romani women organized 18 families to withhold rent after their landlord refused to address living conditions such as broken toilets, cracked windows, and pests (Fiorito 2013). In 2018, in Mimico, another neighbourhood for migrant tenants in Toronto's west end, Romani women organized a housing battle against a large real-estate company that attempted to illegally hike their rental fees (Hune-Brown 2018). Their collective action escalated to a full-scale rent strike, with 200 tenants agreeing to withhold rent until the company agreed to drop its proposal for rent increases and to engage in repairs. In both cases, the women won: their collective organizing prevented rent hikes and forced landlords to take responsibility for repairs.

The rent strikes organized by Romani women are one of many responses Roma have to their social reproduction struggles in Canada that I argue should be analyzed through the lens of work and social reproduction: seen through the lens of social reproduction theory and expanded understanding of labour, Romani women's activism around housing rents in Toronto can itself be regarded as a form of social reproduction and working-class struggle. As discussed in Part 1, Bhattacharya uses social reproduction theory to argue for an expanded understanding of the working class, proposing that struggles over social reproduction can form the basis of class struggle (Bhattacharya 2017b). For Bhattacharya, recognizing unwaged work and social reproduction within the totality of capitalism not only brings new meaning to our conceptualizations of labour, this recognition also expands our understanding of class struggle. In Bhattacharya's words, "this link between production and reproduction, and the extension of the class relationship into the latter, means that the very acts where the

working class strives to attend to its own needs can be the ground for class struggle" (Bhattacharya 2017b: 77).

Bhattacharya's analysis offers an argument for seeing Romani struggles around social reproduction, in Hungary and Canada, as part of the struggle against capitalist exploitation. As she states:

> Let us rethink the theoretical import of extra-workplace struggle, such as those for cleaner air, better schools, against water privatization, against climate change or for fairer housing policies. These reflect, I submit, those social needs of the working class that are essential for its social reproduction. They also are an effort by the class to demand its 'share of civilization.' In this, they are also class struggles… It is our turn now to restore to our organs and practices of protest this integrative understanding of capitalist totality (Bhattacharya 2017b: 92)

Such an analysis requires seeing those not engaged in waged work - surplus populations such as Roma - as participants within the channels of revolutionary struggle, as I argue in Part 1 of this dissertation. It is necessary to recognize refugees and other people on social assistance as agents of history, and especially in an era of precarity such as the contemporary one, agents with the power to wage class struggle outside the realm of waged work, in the realm of social reproduction.

It is with these considerations in mind that I began to understand that securing state support as refugees and welfare recipients has emerged as a form of work for Romani families, employed as a social reproduction strategy by Romani women active in toiling for their families. Families in Toronto orient their subsistence and household income around women and girls working to secure state support, which then supplements the work that the men and teenage boys do under the table; in this way, they are able to live a life with some dignity. Hence, while Romani refugee work is unwaged and informal, this work is always in relation to wage labour and connected to valorization processes of capital: their survival is a form of work taking place outside traditional channels of exploitation but always affecting and being affected by those channels. With Bhattacharya's framework of thinking of social reproduction as also a realm of class struggle, it is possible to further consider how Romani labour is not only a part of but also a potential source of subverting class exploitation.

The refugees of capitalism?

An expanded understanding of work amongst Romani refugees, rooted in an understanding of capitalism as an institutionalized social order, troubles conventional notions of political asylum. That is to say, in considering the dynamics of social reproduction and labour that structure Romani refugee-seeking in Toronto, the distinction between 'economic migrants' and 'political refugees' breaks down in meaning, illuminating the ideological separation of persecution from economic hardship. As Rajaram points out, "the term refugee is ultimately a legal construct that privileges a certain idea of what constitutes persecution" (Rajaram 2018: 629). As such, an analysis grounded in social reproduction theory attentive to how 'capitalism as a totality' permeates all social relations problematizes what should be considered grounds for persecution. Under international law, the refugee definition is restricted to those who have well-founded fears of political persecution on account of their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. Yet across migration scholarship and activism, there are numerous critiques of these labels (Zetter 2007). Clearly, the experiences of Roma show that these axes of persecution cannot be disentangled from class and that, moreover, in an era of financialized capitalism, the suffering wrought by economic austerity is tantamount to persecution.

Ellen Meiksin Wood's formative work shows how under liberal capitalism, the division between the 'political' and 'economic' spheres is an ideologically necessary move, so that political equality can exist alongside economic inequality (Wood 1995). Drawing from Wood's analysis of democracy and capitalism, Apostolova argues that the differentiation between 'economic migrants' and genuine refugees' can be traced back to this formation of economic liberalism as an ideology, in which the 'economic' became detached from the 'political', distancing the economy from coercion and violence (Apostolova 2017). Examining border crossings and detention centers in Bulgaria, she argues for the need to interrogate the legal frameworks of migration "in order to understand the relation between capitalism and migration" (Apostolova 2017: 1) and how the economic/political migrant obscures the violence of capitalist economics (Apostolova 2016). The uncharacteristic nature of Romani asylum-seeking - a group of people fleeing a nominally democratic European

country due to postsocialist class relations - highlights these tensions of separating economic migration from political asylum.

During my fieldwork in Toronto, I met a Hungarian priest who exemplified what I came to find as a common opinion held about Romani refugees: that they were poor and had difficult lives in Hungary, but that this did not make them 'genuine refugees.' The priest, who runs a Hungarian-speaking church in the suburbs of Toronto, had assisted several Romani families when they arrived in Canada, translating their stories for their refugee hearings and helping with clothing and food donations. The priest was a proud Hungarian and explained to me his complicated feelings towards treating Hungarian Roma as refugees, a sentiment that was often echoed to me by Canadian teachers and social workers as well as they tried to make sense of Hungary as a nation-state. The priest insisted that he believed that not everyone who came here was "in danger." He believed they were not "real refugees" but rather "economic migrants." He understood and conceded that the families were living in poverty and segregation, experiencing racism in Hungary, but that their lives were not "at risk." The priest believed that life was much better for Roma once they came to Canada, but that this doesn't not make them refugees according to the law. The priest further made a distinction between the Roma who find legitimate work in housing construction and pay into their retirement and those who come to Canada and rely on welfare and work in the black market. He believed the latter were not taking advantage of what Canada had to offer them.

The priest emphasized that for all Hungarians, life is better in Canada, recalling the findings of anthropologist Durst's (2013) very brief fieldwork in Toronto where she attests to meeting Hungarians pretending to be Roma so that they could receive refugee status and live a better life in Canada. The title of Durst's research asserts, "it's better to be a Gypsy in Canada than being a Hungarian in Hungary" (Durst 2013: 203), underscoring the potential upward social mobility for *anyone* with a Hungarian passport who could exchange it for a Canadian one. Durst's findings point to the wider and global nature of these questions around economic and political persecution: despite the escalating cost-of-living and neoliberal austerity faced by people living in Canada, receiving status to live in a wealthy country in the Global North remains a coveted dream for many.

The priest's commentary as well as Durst's findings thus highlight the importance of considering the risks in understanding asylum as a social reproduction strategy. In

emphasizing the economic and financial motives for Roma to come to Canada as refugee claimants, and highlighting their agency and choice in filing for refugee protection in Canada, such an analysis can be interpreted as lending support to conservative arguments about 'bogus refugees' who come to countries to 'scam welfare.' In studying the social reproduction motives of asylum-seekers and framing their movement as a life choice among other choices, there is a genuine danger in providing empirical ammunition for this kind of anti-refugee and anti-welfare politics.

In the case of Romani refugees, this risk is particularly sharp, as Canadian rhetoric in the media and amongst Canadian politicians indulge historically-rooted stereotypes about 'Gypsies' as profiteers, scammers, and swindlers. As discussed in Part 1, the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) wrote a research report in 2012 arguing that Roma refugees come to Canada for financial benefit and recommending that cutting Canadian social assistance would be the best deterrence against these 'bogus refugees' (CBSA 2012). The CBSA report painted Hungarian Roma asylum-seekers as a fraudulent profiteers, stating that "many of these individuals are taking advantage of Canada's refugee processing system, social assistance, and other benefits" (CBSA 2012: 12); that "these individuals enter Canada due to financial motivations and are either taking advantage of or completely exploiting our system for the purposes of their financial benefit" (CBSA 2012: 29); that a portion of claimants "are solely opportunistic and have identified an exploitable weakness in Canada's generosity and assistance towards refugees with a legitimated need for protection" (CBSA 2012: 30); and that "they [Hungarians] are proving adept at manipulating Canadian systems to obtain the greatest possible financial benefit before returning to Hungary" (CBSA 2012: 37). The fact that Roma travel as a family unit has been further used as 'proof' by the Canadian state of their disingenuity, instead of being recognized as a social reproduction strategy of a household, as I have argued here. As the CBSA report states, "considering that families generally receive larger social services benefits, this might be a motivating factor in individuals bringing their entire family to Canada" (CBSA 2012: 16).

Narratives about Romani refugees as criminals and scammers were further exacerbated when a human trafficking case involving Romani refugees from Hungary was discovered by the Canadian Border Service Agency in 2010 (Beaudoin 2014). The Dömötör-Kolompár criminal organization, run by a Romani family originally from Pápa, Hungary, moved to Canada en masse, applied for refugee status, and settled in Hamilton, a city one hour outside of Toronto.

Between 2008 and 2010, the group lured up to 19 people from Pápa to Hamilton, targeting young Romani men who were promised jobs and an easy life in Canada. Once in Canada, their passports were seized, and they were made to apply for refugee status as well as welfare. According to Canadian news headlines, victims were then forced to do construction work against their will for long hours, held in basements, and fed food scraps (Beaudoin 2014). The group was dismantled and arrested when one of their victims escaped; the Royal Canadian Mounted Police eventually issued approximately 60 charges against members of the organization, and 20 members of the family were deported back to Hungary. The case has become known as the largest human trafficking ring in Canadian history, demonstrating some of the tensions around the definition of asylum and the areas of exploitation within the Canadian aslym system with regards to Romani refugees. Beaudoin's an analysis of the media coverage of this incident found that 70 percent of all negative headlines from Canadian Roma-focused articles in 2012 focused on this single criminal case.[46] Beaudoin et al explain:

> There was intense media coverage of the convictions, and the Romani heritage of the perpetrators was widely cited, yet the fact that most victims of the crime were vulnerable because they were seeking to escape anti-Roma mistreatment in their home country was not widely discussed (Beaudoin et al 2015: 16)

Instead of seeing this case as evidence of the 'criminal' and 'fraudulent' nature of Romani asylum-seeking, it points to the immense vulnerability of Romani refugees and their risk of being exploited and abused.

Numerous scholars with Romani Studies have identified the racialization of Roma based on notions of profiteering and swindling that converge in the trope of the 'Gypsy' (Cahn 2004, van Baar 2011, Imre 2005, Oprea 2007). As Cahn explains, the identity of Roma has been constructed through the employment of widely-held beliefs regarding the values and characteristics of 'Gypsies:' as nomads, criminals, frauds, thieves, and generally impoverished (Cahn 2004: 482). This is as much the case in a contemporary context as it was historically. For example, van Baar emphasizes the ways in which contemporary immigration policies reacting to Romani migration often make specific reference to the racialized

[46] , see Beaudoin J. Beaudoin, Challenging Essentialized Representations of Romani Identities in Canada (PHD Thesis, University of Western Ontario, 2014) [unpublished] at 118-121

characteristics constructed in historical narratives about 'Gypsies', outlining how how Roma are ‘problematized’ in contemporary Europe as “profiteers who do not want to work” (van Baar 2011: 206). The imagery of a cheat or profiteer is engrained in the racialization of Roma, as can be evinced by the popular use of the phrase ‘being gypped’ to convey being cheated: “the word ‘gypped’ itself gives insight into public perceptions of Romani people as cheats and swindlers” (Oprea 2007: 33). Furthermore, the Canadian state’s racializing discourse about ‘Gypsies’ contributes to a general neoliberal shift in discourse about refugee claimants in Canada: from “deserving victims” to “masters of confusion” (Pratt and Valverde 2002).

Ultimately, when I ask Roma why they come to Canada, the common explanation I receive is that being a refugee in Canada is a way to survive that allows them to escape both their ethnic persecution and to find a livelihood that supports their family. They regard their movement to Canada as a choice they make as postsocialist neoliberalism made state-sponsored social reproduction an impossibility and rightwing populism excluded them from access to Hungarian citizenship: permanently pushed out of wage labour and targeted by rightwing violence in Hungary, going to Canada to seek refugee status has arisen as a successful life-sustaining strategy. In this sense, an expanded understanding of labour - grounded in the recognition of the totality of capitalism in encompassing all social relations - leads us to expanded notions of citizenship, migration and asylum, allowing us to rethink the division between ‘economic migrants’ and ‘political refugees.’

This distinction between economic migrants and political refugees becomes complicated in this particular case for Roma as a racialized surplus population, in which Romani ethnic persecution is deeply rooted in a historically specific class relation emerging from contemporary global and postsocialist capitalism. Moreover, their asylum-seeking is made possible by the specific arrangements of work, state support, and social reproduction they find in Canada. It is thus crucial to recognize the ways in which ethnic persecution and class dispossession are intrinsically linked, particularly in cases such as Romani refugees. In understanding capitalism as not merely an economic system of production but an ‘institutionalized social order,’ as Nancy Fraser argues, then the very distinction between economic migrants and political refugees becomes unsustainable, underscoring the ways in which our expanded notions of work and class struggle must also expand our definitions of political asylum and border politics.

Conclusion:
Refugee politics through the totality of capitalism

In this chapter I have analyzed the economies of work that have emerged amongst Hungarian Roma refugees in Canada. I have argued that migrating to Canada for refugee protection has become in this particular case a social reproduction strategy, regarded as a form of work amongst Romani women. More broadly, following the work of Fraser and Bhattacharya, I have argued that struggles within the domain of social reproduction, particularly those rooted in citizenship and migration, should be recognized as forms of valorized work and class struggle; indeed, as increasing people struggle for their survival in precarious positions outside of paid labour while navigating financialized capitalism, social reproductive struggles have become crucial in resisting and organizing against both neoliberalism and rightwing populism.

As such this chapter aims to push forward these discussions within social reproduction theory and the anthropology of labour by recognizing how the existence and work of surplus populations operates within capitalism's inside, usually at the intersection of structural racism, labour market segmentation, and state welfare policy. In particular, while working with refugees relegated outside of official labour markets and analyzing their experiences through the framework of social reproduction theory, it is necessary to consider how surplus populations who do not engage in conventionally-recognized waged work may still produce value for capital, while maneuvering global labour economies shaped by structural racism, state welfare policy, and border controls. Analyzing the life-sustaining strategies of refugees helps us imagine 'non-workers' such as refugees as agents of history and how through their everyday strategies of social reproduction can be participants in class struggle. From such an analysis emerges the importance of citizenship and migration to our understanding of social reproduction, work, and contemporary capitalism.

Moreover, in analyzing the life experiences of Hungarian Roma who seek asylum in Canada, questions of a general analytical value emerge: what are the intersections of work, social reproduction, and societal belonging? What happens to citizenship, race, and nationality as changes in capital accumulation and labour markets provoke crises in social reproduction?

How do refugees and other surplus populations engage in gendered life-sustaining strategies when they are excluded from both wage labour and citizenship regimes? How do the dynamics set up by capital accumulation and its labour value regime interact with citizenship regimes that rely on racialized notions of national belonging? In drawing back the curtain on the 'dark underbelly of capitalism,' we can ask, what do those who are made 'surplus' do? How do they respond to their devaluation: how do they ensure their social reproduction and how do they struggle for revaluation? How do surplus populations socially reproduce themselves? How do they survive if they are excluded from waged labour? Do surplus populations generate value for capital? Do surplus populations help to ensure the reproduction of labour power? The aim here is to explore how social reproduction plays out amongst groups of people who have been shut out of capitalism, such as Hungarian Roma, and how their very exclusion plays a crucial part in the totality of capitalism.

An expanded understanding of labour attentive to social reproduction and surplus populations has profound implications for how we think about citizenship, migration, race and the nation - and ultimately the politics of refugee protection. In recognizing "refugees as a surplus population" (Rajaram 2018), we can think more thoroughly on how work and social reproduction plays out in relation to citizenship regimes, racialization, and border practices. That is to say: in paying attention to the social reproduction practices of surplus populations, in particular refugees, it is possible to recenter citizenship access and migration as central determinants of unwaged labour, particularly when we understand how these are conditioned by the changing prerogatives of accumulation. On the one hand, social reproduction dynamics may produce the conditions that cause people to seek refugee status; on the other hand, refugees engage in social reproduction strategies as a form of survival and resistance.

My research has thus attempted to move forward anthropological discussions on the relation between new forms of labour, the gendered dimensions of social reproduction, and the citizenship regimes that emerge under contemporary conditions of global capitalism. It has done so by emphasizing the need for an anthropology of work that pays attention to the dynamics of citizenship and migration within everyday strategies of social reproduction and work. The experiences of Hungarian Romani refugees in Canada lend us the opportunity to think through the dynamics of social reproduction under financialized capitalism in global terms, and to analyze how questions of class and labour are always tied to questions of citizenship and race. In analyzing Romani strategies of survival in both Hungary and Canada,

despite being rendered ‘surplus’ to the demands of capital, my ethnographic fieldwork supports the argument that any contemporary operational definition of ‘surplus population’ today must account for the ways in which the ‘surplus’ are not solely victims but also agents active in struggling for their own social reproduction. My ethnographic fieldwork has found that Romani migrants responding to their ‘double dispossession’ within postsocialist capitalism opt for social reproduction strategies, which is most clearly evidenced by their decision to migrate to Canada to seek refugee status. This realization pushes back against terminology that renders surplus populations as merely “wasted lives” and “abandoned” and looks to how the “refuse of capitalism” actively engage in attempts to form lives that are not centered on the wage relationship, instead finding ways to get by despite being pushed to the peripheries of capitalism.

Ultimately this chapter has used ethnographic work speaking with Romani families to find new strategies of social reproduction that are emerging amongst those who are increasingly pushed out of waged labour while also being targeted by far-right politics. Paying attention to the social reproduction of surplus populations and the ways in which work and citizenship intersect is an essential part of our analysis in making sense of capitalism today: such an analysis problematizes the division made between “economic migrants” and political refugees,” lending new understanding to how people continue to find strategies to survive and resist contemporary conditions of capitalism and border regimes. Taking seriously the narratives used by people on the margins of waged labour and nationalist belonging thus reveals new avenues of resistance and emancipation: a quintessential exercise in ethnographic Marxism, as the following chapter explores.

Chapter 7
Fieldwork, Care Work, and Ethnographic Marxism: Thinking through social reproduction in ethnographic research

Introduction

This chapter analyzes the role of social reproduction within fieldwork, research praxis, and social action. Envisioned as a self-reflexive exercise about the research process of my dissertation, the aim of this penultimate chapter is to offer reflections on ethnography as a research method and its potential as a tool for transformative social research. I approach this task by centering the role of care work in ethnographic fieldwork, asking: how might political engagement through ethnography look different if seen through the prism of social reproduction and care work? Specifically, this chapter explores prospects for building emancipatory research methodologies by thinking through an 'ethnographic Marxism' centered on social reproduction.

Throughout my dissertation I have traced the ways that social reproduction - the domain of unpaid work in which people tend to their everyday needs, subsistence, and survival - is a crucial aspect of capitalist social relations as well as a potential arena of struggle for people pushed out of waged work. Following the theory of social reproduction theorists, my analysis has built on the argument that struggles within this domain of social reproduction should be recognized as emancipatory forms of class struggle, despite taking place off the factory floor and outside the world of waged work. In this chapter, I examine these insights of social reproduction theory and their implications for a research agenda shaped by the politics of activist scholarship and the intent to use knowledge production for societal transformation. In other words, what impact does the acknowledgement of social reproduction struggles have on how we think about activism and academia? How does thinking about social reproduction reframe and reanimate discussions on the relationship between research, politics, and social action?

The chapter focuses specifically on ethnography as a research method, exploring how paying attention to social reproduction can push ethnographers to, on the one hand, reimagine the

intent and activities of their fieldwork, and, on the other hand, reassess their relationships with their interlocutors. The chapter explores in more depth the research methods best employed for an ethnographic Marxism that pays attention to social reproduction and the social totality of capitalist relations. As discussed in previous chapters, ethnographic Marxism is a research approach rooted in Gramscian anthropology that grounds social theory in the lived material realities of subaltern people and the narratives they use to make sense of and transform their world. In taking seriously the ways in which subaltern research informants explain their lives and paying attention to the alternative understandings they may have that challenge prevailing hegemonic narratives, ethnographic Marxism opens up new possibilities for envisioning a world beyond capitalism. The crux of ethnographic Marxism rests on the premise that collective subaltern experience is the ultimate source of new, potentially transformative, political narratives.

In bringing ethnographic Marxism into conversation with social reproduction theory, the chapter explores the idea of an ethnographic Marxism that recognizes transformative possibilities and struggles beyond the wage relation: drawing links between ethnography, social reproduction, and class struggle, I propose that engaging in care work as ethnographers can be a form of emancipatory research, and that the arena of social reproduction can be a terrain on which political action could effectively intervene. In other words, in thinking through an ethnographic Marxism centered on social reproduction, this chapter explores the prospects for transformational research methodologies in which political engagement and social action in research are constituted by the everyday tasks of care work.

To explore these questions, I reflect on my doctoral fieldwork working with Hungarian Romani refugees living in Toronto and the forms of political work I engaged in as an ethnographer, advocate for Romani rights, and migrant justice activist assisting interlocutors with their refugee claims and new lives in my home country, Canada. More precisely, in this chapter I juxtapose two approaches to the relationship between political work and research that I encountered during my ethnographic fieldwork: one that attempts to appropriate ‘expertise’ for activist purposes and one that is grounded in the transformative albeit humble potential of care work. Ultimately while I value the attempts by scholars to strategically wield scientific expertise to support social movements, here I argue that fieldwork shaped by care work should be considered, perhaps even prioritized as, a form of political engagement and

class struggle, one that can be disruptive to the flows of capital and push back against the dehumanizing aspects of rightwing populism as well as border regimes.

The chapter first provides an analysis of the strategic employment of academic 'expertise' within social movements, reflecting on my own experiences with writing supporting documents for Romani refugee advocacy in Canada. I then go on to discuss dynamics of knowledge production, the politics of location, and the dilemmas of attempting 'activist scholarship' grounded in social reproduction during an age of both rightwing populism and neoliberalism. The second half of the chapter looks specifically at ethnographic research as a form of care work and how care work in the field can be regarded as political work and even class struggle.

The limits of ethnographic expertise

Gergő Balogh was already sitting with his seatbelt buckled on the plane that was meant to deport him back to Hungary when a Canadian Border Services (CBSA) officer came aboard and gave him the good news: in a last-minute reassessment, Balogh had received a stay on his deportation order. The officer ordered Balogh to return back inside to the Toronto Pearson International Airport, where he was greeted with emotion by his refugee lawyer and family. Thanks to the intervention of legal advocates, Romani activists, and government representatives campaigning on Balogh's behalf, Balogh was able to remain on the ground when his plane took off for Budapest, leaving Canada and Balogh behind.

Like thousands of Hungarian Roma who have come to Canada to file for asylum since 2008, Balogh had originally filed for refugee protection after fleeing racially-motivated violence in northeast Hungary. And like hundreds of Hungarian Romani refugee claimants in Canada, Balogh's family had had their asylum claim rejected after receiving poor legal representation by a Canadian lawyer who was later found negligent in his treatment of Romani clients and sanctioned by the Law Society of Upper Canada.[47] At the time of his deportation stay, in April 2017, Balogh was 23 years old, married to a Hungarian Romani woman with accepted refugee status in Canada, and a father of the couple's five-month-old baby (Keung 2017c).

[47] The experiences of Romani refugees with negligent legal representation in Canada is discussed thoroughly in Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

Balogh was residing in Toronto with his family and awaiting the results of his application for spousal sponsorship and permanent residency on humanitarian and compassionate grounds when the CBSA booked him for deportation, citing Balogh's previously failed refugee claim as the cause for deportation.

While Balogh's case of potential family separation due to deportation may appear dramatic, his experience is not unique or extraordinary: Canadian newspaper reports from and since this time period allude to several cases, often targeting Romani refugee claimants, in which deportation orders have been executed by the CBSA that would result in the separation of families, usually because some family members had received refugee status and others hadn't (Keung 2017c). What is exceptional about Balogh's experiences is that his deportation order was withdrawn as a result of the dedicated collective organizing work of his second lawyer, his case workers, and a network of Romani activists and allies spanning between Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. After mounting pressure from these various pro-refugee and pro-Roma actors, Balogh's government representative, Member of Parliament Arif Virani of the Liberal Party, intervened and worked with the Ministry of Immigration to postpone Balogh's departure so his situation could be reevaluated. Luckily for Balogh, in May of 2017, less than 24 hours before his third scheduled deportation, Citizenship and Immigration Canada called Balogh to inform him that his application for permanent residency on humanitarian and compassionate grounds had been approved and that he was now able to remain legally in Canada.

As a social scientist doing my doctoral fieldwork with the Toronto Romani Community Centre at the time of Balogh's experiences with the CBSA, I had written a letter to the Canadian Minister of Immigration Ahmed Hussen and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau urging against Balogh's deportation. Working with Romani activists in a desperate and hurried attempt to assist Balogh before his plane departed, I was encouraged by one of the Roma leading the campaign to use my 'academic status and legitimacy' to testify to Balogh's situation. In my letter detailing my own ethnographic experience with Roma in Hungary and Canada, I thus explained that my fieldwork had given me an eyewitness account of the ethnic persecution awaiting Balogh back in Hungary. I wrote:

> As a Canadian ethnographer and researcher who has done months of fieldwork in Miskolc, the city from which Balogh originates, and northeast Hungary, the region

> where Romani ethnic persecution is most pronounced, it is my professional and personal opinion that Balogh will be in danger should he be deported.

I explained that I had conducted several in-depth interviews with Romani people living in Hungary and had myself lived in Hungary off-and-on since 2012, when I had begun my graduate studies in Budapest. I concluded my letter by asserting:

> With this ethnographic expertise of researching in the field where Romani refugees originate, I can thus attest to the persecution that Romani people in Hungary face and in particular those coming from northeast Hungary, and why they should have a right to stay in Canada where they are safe.

Throughout my doctoral fieldwork with Roma seeking refugee protection in Canada, I found myself occasionally engaging in political interventions such as the one I made as part of the campaign to stop Balogh's deportation. I offered summaries of my fieldwork findings for refugee advocates in Toronto when they requested support for their meetings with the Law Society of Ontario. As part of a campaign to seek redress for Roma who had been represented by negligent lawyers, I wrote and legally swore an affidavit for the Canadian Ministry of Immigration and Citizenship detailing my experience meeting Roma in Miskolc who had been deported from Canada. I attended coalition meetings with Romani rights activists and legal experts attempting to assist Romani refugees mistreated in Canada. I showed up to these meetings and these requests wearing the hat of an academic, who could lend support as a researcher: an ethnographer who had been 'in the field.' I began to imagine how my future dissertation chapters and journal publications could be used by refugee lawyers and activists as 'evidence' and 'testimony' to help refugee applications be accepted.

My experiences recalled the debates within feminist scholarship and activist circles on "the ambivalent role of scientific expertise" (Korolczuk 2020: 697) in contributing positively to social justice movements. In her recent work on Polish women's pro-abortion movements, Korolczuk outlines the tensions and potential of wielding academic expertise within activism. She explains how in debates about abortion, medical professionals and doctors, usually men, use their power as 'experts' to support policies that are generally anti-woman. The concept of 'expertise' in public debates and policy often upholds the privileged position of a mostly male perspective, rooted in positivist notions about gender and health; furthermore, expertise

is often co-opted by neoliberal governance strategies, as has happened often with the 'gender expertise' that has informed EU-led project coinciding with austerity measures (Korolczuk 2020).

At the same time, Korolczuk describes how in recent struggles for women's access to abortion in Poland, women's movements are employing legal and medical expertise as a strategy to mobilize effects protesting government anti-abortion laws. She explains how activists have found that using doctors - to say what Polish women have been saying for years now, granted - has proven effective in supporting women's rights to abortion: "doctors' opinions possibly carried more weight due to their professional and personal experiences" (Korolczuk 2020: 707). As she explains:

> A new paradigm of gender knowledge production and dissemination has emerged in the feminist movement. In contrast to institutionalized gender expertise, which proved eerily compatible with neoliberal governance, this new model is non-hierarchical and inclusive, based on the idea that expert knowledge concerning law and medicine needs to be deeply intertwined with the embodied experiences of women and the normative feminist stance (Korolczuk 2020: 711-712).

Korolczuk's discussion about expertise and the role academic work can play in activist movements is timely and raises complex questions. Can feminists and other leftist organizers 'strategically essentialize,' to borrow from Spivak (Spivak 1988), the idea of 'expertise' without setting up competing hierarchies of feminist knowledge and gate-keeping? Or perhaps, there are ways for activist knowledge to become itself recognized as 'expertise': as Choudry's work emphasizes (Choudry 2020), contributions of knowledge produced in contemporary social movements are often overlooked by 'experts' and academics; he suggests that the scholarly insights and theories emerging from activist organizing need to be recentered in social struggles, seen as themselves a form of 'expert' knowledge. These debates recall the insights provided by bell hooks in her groundbreaking essay, "Theory as Liberatory Practice:" for hooks, academic knowledge production is fraught with oppressive practices that alienate black, working-class, and lesbian women from engaging with feminist theory. And yet, she argues, activist circles that indulge anti-intellectualism and an attitude of 'less talk and more action' neglect to recognize the full and truly liberatory possibilities of theory for marginalized people and their political organizing (hooks 1994).

The prospects of my research with Roma 'changing the world' - or at least contributing to positive change - raised multiple questions for me, particularly as a non-Romani academic working with Romani refugees. Strategically employing academic work as 'expertise' leads to the uncomfortable question as to why Roma should require such experts, advocates, and interpreters, to help them and to speak on their behalf in the first place. The dilemma, then, of ethnography as expertise stresses the power imbalances of non-Romani academics providing explanations and research findings to validate the stories of Roma. As Levine-Rasky questions:

> Why do the Roma require explanation? How can the irreducible complexity of Romani lives be respected while attempting to write a singular account of such things? What kind of community development is imaginable and by whom? Whose voices are heard and whose are not? And what does it mean for a non-Roma to articulate these questions and to be the one to give shape to their answers as though their story can be told only through the interventions of a university-sanctioned expert? (Levine-Rasky 2016: 3)

In considering the dynamics of who gets to be an expert and how such expertise is employed, Steinmetz's notion of "ethnographic capital" (Steinmetz 2008) comes to mind, a term he uses to describe how local colonizers' on-the-ground 'ethnographic' knowledge of daily life in the colonies was able to be employed to further colonial policy broadly while also personally building their careers, wealth, and privilege.

Steinmetz' 'ethnographic capital' is readily applicable to contemporary academic knowledge production on Roma. For example, Bogdan, et al explain how, particularly in the postsocialist era, as "the Roma issue became a growing concern for policy makers" (2015: 33) in Europe, sociologists conducting research about Roma "enjoyed the elevated status of adviser" (2015: 33), using their 'expertise' about a 'problem population' for career advancement premised on neoliberal policy implementation. As the socio-economic position of Roma declined under postsocialist neoliberal reforms, 'expert' academics found increased relevance and purpose. This analysis points to a general uncomfortable, if not perverse, condition of academic research with marginalized communities: the more miserable the situation of the subjects of academic research becomes, the more applicable, relevant, and career-building the research of the academic who studies them.

Similar analyses have been made about academic work on migration. As Barber and Lem point out, much research on migration is state-sponsored and steered by policy imperatives aimed at implementing forms of neoliberal governance on immigrants (Barber and Lem 2012: 3). Research about migrant populations is thus often instrumentalized to surveillance and police migrant populations. Marxist approaches to research too question the possibilities for "turning the tools of the social sciences into weapons of class struggle" (Figiel et al 2014: 307). Scholars in the tradition of 'workers' inquiry,' for example, stress the historical use of industrial sociology for disciplining the working class: 'bourgeois sociology' sought to smooth over conflicts.

In sum, 'expert' knowledge is often used to manage marginalized groups, usually in the service of capital and the state, in the same manner that Korolczuk acknowledges as the use of expertise in restricting women's access to abortion. Reappropriating the concept of academic expertise is hence a dangerous and ambivalent line to walk. In the cases of both Roma and migrants, we need to therefore ask why subaltern people cannot be experts of their own experience and should require an academic to offer 'ethnographic capital' or 'expertise' to support and validate their struggles for protection. Why should Gergő Balogh need a PhD student with a B-2 certification in Hungarian language fluency to write a letter on his behalf, certifying what he surely knows better himself?

Once while in Hungary, I was visiting a Romani family I had gotten to know in northeast Hungary, in the neighbourhood in Miskolc called the 'Numbered Streets.' The mother had sat with me for hours one day telling me about why they had gone to Canada and how they ended up back in Hungary, after their refugee claim had been rejected following poor legal representation. We spent the evening together discussing the general situation of Roma who are sent back to Miskolc from Toronto, and eventually I asked her, 'What do you think Canadians can do to help you? What can I do to support you?' She told me to go back to Canada and tell everyone what had happened to her family; she asked me to bear witness and convey everything I had learnt during my time spent in Hungary to Canadians. She believed that in telling me her stories I would be able to share them with Canadian activists, policy-makers, journalists, and anyone who had any decision-making power, and that might lead to positive change. The mother was making the same argument as Korolczuk: if academic expertise can be wielded strategically by well-meaning political organizers, then there is the

potential for academic knowledge to have some use beyond mere knowledge production, to benefit the subaltern people so often the subjects of such knowledge production yet rarely its beneficiaries.

Knowledge production through social reproduction?

The question of expertise and its potential for being employed in social movements connects to longstanding discussions within academia on power dynamics, positionality, and knowledge production. Sociologists and anthropologists have additionally discussed the political impact of research on 'the real world,' the role of intellectuals in activism, and the relationship between social research and civil society. The intent here is to examine the ways in which ethnography and fieldwork methods can contribute to a politics of emancipation and social change by orienting ethnographic work around social reproduction: the question of this chapter is how social reproduction may offer new insights to researcher positionality as well as political engagement in research.

Social-science disciplines such as anthropology and sociology have had contentious histories with political engagement, more often connected to the historical projects of domination than wielded as weapons for radical and emancipatory change. As Tuhiwai Smith's formative work *Decolonizing Methodologies* shows, western academic research has been employed as a tool deeply embroiled in global exploitation, "implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism" (Tuhiwai Smith 1999: 1). She elucidates,

> From the vantage point of the colonized, a position from which I write, and choose to privilege, the term 'research' is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism. The word itself, 'research', is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary (Tuhiwai Smith 1999: 1).

Tuhiwai's work, along with groundbreaking postcolonial interventions, such as Said's (1978) *Orientalism* and Spivak's (1988) essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak," highlight the ways in which academic knowledge production relies on the extraction and appropriation of subaltern knowledge while simultaneously denying subaltern people the ability to be knowledge producers and voicers of their own histories and cultures. Knowledge produced about

subaltern groups after mere brief encounters is then employed in material exercises of power and control, tied to political projects that deny land, material resources, and political determination to marginalized people. Contemporary social theory too has yet to overcome its eurocentrism; as Goh's work emphasizes, even belated incorporations of postcolonial theory into the discipline of sociology have proven inadequate. He argues that for postcolonial scholars, "we should treat our knowledge production as a form of political practice" (Goh 2018: 526).

Recent interventions within Romani Studies have emphasized similar concerns around the need for self-reflexivity about the power relations of knowledge production about Roma. In an editorial entitled "Nothing about us without us?" for a special issue of the *Roma Rights* journal, Romani and non-Romani scholars Bogdan et al (2015) call attention to the important issues of representation and participation of Roma within academic networks, exposing the power hierarchies of a discipline largely dominated by non-Roma whose careers have been built through studying the suffering and oppression of Romani communities. While the Romani movement and Romani Studies as a discipline have been closely tied, Romani scholars face structural racism within academia, and Roma are generally not viewed as the creators of knowledge about Roma.

The issue is further complicated by the reality that the category of 'Roma' is not a homogenous one, and inequalities related to class, education level, and access to institutional networks create additional hierarchies and relations of power amongst Roma; middle-class Romani academics who work within university settings are not necessarily representative of rural and impoverished Roma living in the Hungarian countryside. As Kóczé argues in her work about Romani women's activism, there is the need to remain attentive to the politics of location and researcher reflexivity, so that the unequal relations of power between researcher and researched are acknowledged and resisted (Kóczé 2011).

Yet, the importance of building knowledge that can assist Romani activism remains a crucial goal even if knowledge production is fraught with risks of power imbalance. As Brooks explains, a commitment to reflexivity, a critique of one's own positionality *vis-a-vis* research subjects, and an intersectional approach can assist in creating meaningful and liberatory theory (Brooks 2015). Likewise, van Baar suggests that the development of reliable and accountable knowledge is key to strengthening Romani rights movements and making power

relations between Roma and their allies less asymmetrical (van Baar 2013b). In reflecting on Romani Studies and its connection to Roma rights, van Baar argues that knowledge formation can be a source of challenging mechanisms of marginalization that affect Romani minorities. Crucial to this process is the necessity of training Roma to be knowledge producers and activists, recognizing that Roma are not passive recipients of expertise developed elsewhere by NGOs and academics. In a similar vein, Vajda and Mirga-Kruszelnicka suggest that power imbalances can be addressed through participatory and collaborative forms of research (Vajda 2015, Mirga-Kruszelnicka 2015).

Furthermore, there is the issue of the larger context of academic knowledge production today and the dilemma of attempting to create activist scholarship in a contemporary political environment characterized by both financialized capitalism and rightwing populism. In her Presidential address to the American Sociological Association in 2019, Mary Romero emphasized that the discipline of sociology has "from its inception" been engaged with social justice. According to her,

> We are doing sociology at a time when authoritarian heads of states have been elected around the world; empires are arising; borders are hardening; people are torn from their homes to become stateless refugees; and racism and xenophobia are all over social media (Romero 2020: 1)

Her remarks echo debates in the discipline about "what the mission of sociology should be given the hardship and suffering in the world and the urgent need for significant social change" (Dale and Kalob 2006). C. Wright Mills (1959) originally conceptualized sociologists as public intellectuals who interpret and clarify social problems or injustices for the masses. Likewise, Burawoy's call for public sociology urged sociologists to pursue "political work in the trenches of civil society" (Burawoy 2005a: 314). Viewing the sociologist as "a partisan" (Burawoy 2005a: 314), he argued that sociology's role should be to defend the interest of humanity against market tyranny and state despotism. For Romero, echoing the ideas of Mills and Burawoy, the conditions brought on by post-Trump politics has made sociological research and teaching even more crucial "in equipping students, communities, and the general public with critical thinking skills to understand the dog whistles and gaslighting used by right-wing populist movements" (Romero 2020: 3).

Romero's remarks contrast with the now famous quip by Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who in 2013 asserted, "this is not the time to commit sociology" (CBC 2013), when giving a press conference regarding the arrests of two racialized men in Canada who were accusing of conspiring to carry out a terrorist attack. The then-leader of the Conservative Party of Canada urged Canadians that reflecting on the root causes of terrorism was inappropriate in the face of "serious threats, global terrorist attacks" (CBC 2013). Harper's comments were made during one of the peak years of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, while his government was investigating whether or not Romani refugees were potentially security threats, frauds, and criminals. The Canadian Prime Minister's comments underscore the potential significance of the social sciences as political intervention, regarded by state officials in power as a dangerous act one 'commits' like a crime; 'committing sociology' became a rallying call for critical Canadian sociologists in the years following.

What these accounts underscore is that as researchers we must be thoughtful about the political context unfolding as we conduct our research. Here it is important to note that the historical processes analyzed in my dissertation, such as the emergence of illiberalism and authoritarian capitalism, as well as the increasing precarity of work and the enclosing of citizenship regimes, that have resulted in the making of Romani refugees, have also made their mark on academic knowledge production. Academic knowledge production is not untouched by the political dynamics and social transformations analyzed by scholars of rightwing populism and global regimes of capital accumulation. This realization felt particularly clear for me during the context of my own research process, which was conducted during a time of both heightened attacks on academic freedom as well as the ongoing neoliberalization of academia.

During the second year of my PhD program, which was based in Budapest at Central European University, the Hungarian government implemented new legislation on higher education for which the unspoken purpose was to make it impossible for my university to operate in the country. The move was interpreted widely as an attack on academic freedom by an increasingly authoritarian state (Enyedi 2019, Chronowski and Vincze 2021, Donmez and Duman 2020, Corbett and Gordon 2018, Bárd 2020, Gagyi 2017). During this time pro-government newspapers were denouncing scholars engaging in gender studies or migration research; a year after '*Lex CEU*', the Hungarian state revoked accreditation for university programs in Gender Studies. These developments are not isolated to Hungary or postsocialist

countries: feminist theory and critical race theory have come under attack in recent years around the world, most notable examples surfacing in countries such as France, the USA, and Brazil.

The expulsion of my university from Hungary at the time while I was conducting fieldwork with Romani refugees fleeing Hungary presents an opportunity to think through the connections and potential for shared struggles to emerge from these movements. Shortly after massive protests supporting CEU took place in Hungary and caught global media attention, a Romani woman with refugee status in Canada joked to me, 'Now I see your university has also been made a refugee of the Orbán government!" Undoubtedly there are problematic undertones to liken the experiences of ethnically persecuted asylum-seekers fleeing far-right violence with those experiences of middle-class university professors and students being pushed out by a conservative rightwing government due to their alleged liberal ideologies. The usefulness of the comparison is in thinking through how both expulsions emanate from the same constellation of politics pursued by the same authoritarian state institutions.

While the impact of rightwing populist politics on academia is important to highlight in the current moment, what became evident to me during my years doing a PhD in Hungary is the necessity to contextualize discussions on academic freedom within a political economy framework attentive to the neoliberalization of academic knowledge production. In their article on government attacks against academic freedom in Turkey and Hungary, Donmez and Duman (2020) position the state repression of academics and universities within the global structural transformations of higher education, namely the broader marketization of academia. They argue that the CEU controversy emerged as a particular manifestation of a broader and deeper crisis of capitalism, one that led to further economic reforms of Hungarian higher education. They point out that emphasizing the curtailing of academic freedom in increasingly authoritarian countries indulges anti-communist Cold War rhetoric (see also Gagyi 2017) that implicitly celebrates the liberal West. Such perspectives ignore that "we observe a similar trend of intensifying attacks on academia in the core capitalist countries as well" (Donmez and Duman 2020: 5). For them, the strategy should be one of "challenging both the neoliberal capitalist enclosures of the university and the exponentially repressive state strategies targeting academia today" (Donmez and Duran 2020: 14).

Focusing on academic labour when conceptualizing academic freedom is a key component of this strategy and an important first step when considering social reproduction and care work within research processes. Such a strategy feels especially important to highlight in discussions on academic freedom when growing trends of academic labour precarization are brought to bear on the analysis. For example, a recent report compiled by the PrecAnthro Collective of the European Association of Social Anthropologists paints a dismal picture for early-career researchers: diminishing career opportunities and precarious incomes, increasing casualization of higher academic jobs, reliance on frequent mobility, and a growing dissatisfaction with work-life balance (Fotta et al 2020). What these analyses crucially illustrate is that the looming threat limiting academic freedom today is not simply rightwing populist backlash against a liberal status quo, but, rather, neoliberal restructuring and downsizing of higher education. These debates were at the forefront of my mind when conducting my fieldwork, as an underpaid contract academic forced to navigate, somewhat ironically, many of the same systems of social welfare in Canada as my interlocutors.

The question that remains then is how social sciences can operate and find purpose in "increasingly corporate universities serving deeply capitalist societies?" (Kalb 2022). As a scholar working with migrants and refugees, I am particularly interested in understanding the function of social sciences in the regulation of borders and citizenship regimes. As Barber and Lem point out, migration research that receives institutional funding is geared at "making immigrants economically productive citizens" (Barber and Lem 2012: 3). Even for well-intentioned migration researchers, there is the broader risk of methodological nationalism: reinscribing the framework of borders and nation-states and naturalizing the nation-state by treating them as given in one's research design (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003, Goh 2018).

Critical migration scholars thus call for resisting modes of migration governance that are rooted in academic knowledge production (Casas-Cortes et al 2015, De Genova 2013). This body of work argues that migration research should be framed as "militant investigation" and migration scholars should shape themselves as "militant researchers who are engaged with one or more migrant movements" (Casas-Cortes et al 2015: 59) Such militancy can account for the turbulence of migration practices and engage with the power asymmetries that make migrants into subjects of migration knowledge production. (Casas-Cortes et al 2015: 63-64). As De Genova argues, "there is no neutral ground. The migration researcher is part of the

field of struggle and a participant therein" (De Genova 2013). For him, migration scholarship must be grounded in actual social movements:

> A genuinely critical scholarship of migration must in fact be addressed to the task of not merely describing but also theorizing - and critiquing - actual struggles, the real social relations of unresolved antagonism and open-ended struggle that continuously constitute social life (De Genova 2010: 111)

For Lem and Barber, migration research should thus contend with the "dialectics of capitalism and migration" (Lem and Barber 2013, 2014). For Mezzadra and Neilson, this means finding research methods that can capture the movements of labour and capital as well as people (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013).

Perhaps the secret lies in social reproduction, as an arena that allows us to consider the revolutionary potential of the myriad dimensions of social relations. Given the risks and the limits of fieldwork with and for marginalized communities, it is useful to reflect on whether and how the ethnographic method shaped by social reproduction can be a tool for self-reflexivity on the politics of location and power dynamics within the research process. Here I propose that ethnographic fieldwork centered around social reproduction means shaping fieldwork around the everyday needs and tasks of research interlocutors; it involves a fundamental openness to making research become a form of care work for informants, helping with labour that they could use for their subsistence and survival.

As I discuss in the following section, focusing on the dynamics of social reproduction within fieldwork became my way of operationalizing the academic research process in a direction that felt both beneficial for my interlocutors and politically progressive. In reflecting on the context of academic knowledge production today, I envision social reproduction as an arena for conducting research that responds to the rise of rightwing populism and authoritarianism as well as the increasing precarity of life under neoliberalism. What does it mean, orienting ethnographic work around social reproduction? The following section is an attempt to answer this question.

Fieldwork as care work, care work as class struggle

The ideas for this chapter came out of my time spent conducting ethnographic fieldwork with people attempting to receive refugee protection in my home country. One aspect of my fieldwork activities that was often on my mind was my role as a Canadian conducting migration research with informants who were asylum-seekers trying to reside in Canada. As a migration researcher - for whom fieldwork often entails an inverse of traditional ethnographic dynamics of 'native' and 'visitor' (DeGenova 2016) - I was frequently put in the position where my interlocutors requested my assistance, as a 'native' of Canada, in building their new lives and navigating a foreign place and its opaque social institutions. Doing this kind of 'anthropology of migration' where the 'field' is also the 'home' for the anthropologist opens up the space for interesting questions and potential for new relationships as well as risks of exploitative knowledge extraction. As De Genova asks:

> What precisely is at stake when an anthropologist does not go out from the imperial metropole to some more or less 'faraway' and 'exotic' place to conduct research among people in their own 'native' place, but rather, when the people with whom the anthropologist conducts research come to the place where it is the anthropologist who is 'at home', indeed, where it is the anthropologist who is a 'native'? What happens, in other words, when we consider seriously the curious inversion through which the fact of migration means that the anthropologist becomes the 'native'?" (De Genova, 2016: 230).

As migration scholars have pointed out, most migration research is with people made vulnerable by border regimes and often existing in precarious positions shaped by the interstices of economic insecurity, state-sanctioned racism, and anti-migrant politics. It is thus imperative to not only mitigate the risks of exploitation in the research process but, moreover, find ways that the research can be useful in bettering the conditions for people made vulnerable within the migration process.

For my own fieldwork with Romani families in Toronto, I made myself available to assist Roma however they needed. As newcomers with minimal English-language skills and living under the poverty line in Toronto, most families were left at the whims of their refugee

resettlement workers and extended family networks to assist them in navigating Canadian public institutions, building their livelhoods, and ensuring that their basic and everyday needs were met. To be useful for my informants, I thus used my fieldwork as a way to help Roma with their daily chores: I consequently allowed my ethnographic fieldwork to become filled with the mundane yet crucial everyday tasks of daily survival that my research informants so struggled with as newcomers to Canada, such as arranging their welfare claims, speaking with their doctors and lawyers, mediating between parents and teachers, taking them to their local grocery store, and tutoring their children with their school homework. One family that I originally met in Hungary arrived in Canada a few months after I began my fieldwork in Toronto. They called me from the airport to tell me they had arrived and made it safely through the border checks. The next day I met them with two bags of groceries and a list of phone numbers for refugee lawyers in Toronto. I regarded myself as an advocate and translator in these instances.

In doing research that helped refugee-seekers with these everyday chores and listened to their everyday worries, I saw my ethnographic method as resisting the drive to produce scholarship that would fulfill government directives or build my career through the exploitation of others' suffering. As my fieldwork took shape around engaging in social work activities, questions arose for me about the role of sociologists, anthropologists and, especially, migration researchers within political activism and social justice, with regards to engaging the ethnographic method in the field. When doing ethnographic fieldwork with marginalized communities, what are the possibilities of social researchers in assisting their informants and to what extent should their fieldwork become a form of labour in service of providing, more than anything else, what is needed by their informants? What are methodological strategies that allow social scientists to be useful to social movements and bettering the immediate lives of the people who are the subject of their research?

Namely, tensions became clear to me between, on the one hand, the expressively political campaigning of activism, and, on the other hand, the everyday banal tasks of social reproduction: perhaps the tedious work of assisting a family with buying groceries or learning English is not what Burawoy (2005a, 2005b) had in mind when he conceived of his 'public sociology' or what leftist scholars consider to be 'activist scholarship,' but why shouldn't these acts of care be considered exactly that? I wondered how this tension between activism and social reproduction related to how we understand our research methods, what sort of

labour is made invisible in our fieldwork, and how the everyday activities and relationship-building involved in so many ethnographic encounters could be considered a form of political engagement and class struggle.

What happens to our sociological imagination when we reframe, as Bhattacharya does, social movements and social reproductive struggles as forms of "class struggle"? If "the very acts where the working class strives to attend to its own needs can be the ground for class struggle" (Bhattacharya 2017b: 77), then it stands to reason that fieldwork rooted in care work can form a part of that class struggle. I envision an 'ethnographic Marxism' attentive to social reproduction, in which the fieldwork of social researchers is enlisted as acts of service bettering the material conditions of research participants. Moreover, fieldwork shaped by care work should be considered, perhaps even prioritized as, a form of political engagement, one that can be disruptive to the flows of capital and push back against the dehumanizing aspects of border regimes. By centering social reproduction as a category of analysis in our methodological considerations of activist research, we can think of ways to engage in class struggle within our research with people who are navigating, surviving, and resisting capitalism beyond the factory floor.

My time conducting fieldwork as a 'native' grew into a deep and lasting involvement with Romani families in Toronto and the Romani activist circle assisting them with the everyday tasks of social reproduction. Because I had the familiarity, the language skills, some cultural understanding from my 'expertise' in Hungary, and the 'native' privilege of being a Canadian, I was able to advocate on behalf of Roma as well as organize community events in Toronto, from Christmas parties to public Romani music concerts. As a 'native' ethnographer, I felt I had the potential to use my fieldwork to positively support Romani migrants as well as Romani social movements. Sometimes this kind of labour looked like calling a family's landlord to speak about a broken washing machine or a rent increase; sometimes it looked like riding the subway across the city to attend a medical appointment. Most of my activity for Romani families entailed the tedious and mundane work of social reproduction. In making my fieldwork take shape around helping Romani families with their refugee claims and social assistance, my role as ethnographer morphed into being simultaneously the role of care worker. Doing this kind of care work helped families push back against alienating and oppressive procedures of the Canadian asylum regime.

Paying attention to social reproduction thus forced me to reconsider the relationship between methodology and social action, in light of how this relationship unfolded during my own ethnographic work with Roma seeking asylum in my country of citizenship. What these experiences showed to me was that, as a Canadian researcher who understood both the Hungarian and Canadian contexts well, I was opportunely positioned to serve Romani refugees through my fieldwork, pursuing "political work in the trenches of civil society" (Burawoy 2005a: 314). With the old adage in my mind, 'Everyone wants a revolution but nobody wants to do the dishes' - I felt there could be something useful in employing my positionality and privilege to tackle the tedious and mundane work needed by Romani refugees, to seek out the metaphorical dishes and do them, making those tasks the heart of my fieldwork. Assisting Romani refugees with activities such as applying for welfare, translating at medical appointments, and providing emotional support made my fieldwork a form of care work, but moreover, these acts of care work should be considered political work, even class struggle.

Ethnographic Marxism and social reproduction

These questions point to the wider issues of ethnography and social reproduction. What does an ethnographic Marxism, inspired by Gramsci, look like when oriented around social reproduction? As discussed earlier in my dissertation, Gramscians have what can be called an "ethnographic sensibility" in that they are determined to seek out and take seriously the narratives others use to make sense of their world (Crehan 2018, 2011, 2002). With a commitment to treat seriously the narratives people use to understand their lives, a Gramscian methodology can help social scientists to "trace out the complicated passage between the material structures that shape the basic social and political landscapes within which people live, and the narratives by which they live" (Crehan 2018: 133). This kind of ethnographic Marxism helps us to ask, how do subaltern groups understand their material conditions and realities, and how might those subaltern understandings challenge prevailing hegemonic power relations? Imagining new and transformative ways of organizing remains a key aim of Marxist thinking; as Ellen Meiksins Wood emphasizes,

> The original intention of historical materialism was to provide a theoretical foundation for interpreting the world in order to change it. This was not an empty slogan. It had a

> very precise meaning. It meant that Marxism sought a particular kind of knowledge, uniquely capable of illuminating the principles of historical movement and, at least implicitly, the points at which political action could most effectively intervene… The purpose was to provide a mode of analysis especially well equipped to explore the terrain on which political action must take place (Wood 1995: 19)

Namely, doing social reproductive labour to constitute fieldwork can be a useful way to understand subaltern narratives and find new terrains for political action.

During my fieldwork in Toronto I became particularly close with a teenager named Zsofi, who was 16 years old when we first met. Zsofi had been living in Canada for two years at the time that we met during an event I helped organize for the RCC. We became fast friends and I started to meet with her regularly - once, twice, or more a week - to help her with her high school homework and English practice. We would often meet at a cafe in the Parkdale neighbourhood close to her high school and work on whatever assignments she had to do - reading out loud *Of Mice and Men* for her English class or trying to make any sense of her science textbook.

Zsofi was especially interested in Romani history and social justice. For one of her high school's schoolwide assemblies, she decided to organize a presentation about Romani experiences during the Holocaust. The school, located in the west end of Toronto, had organized an assembly to commemorate Remembrance Day, on November 11, an important national holiday in Canada commemorating the end of World War I. Zsofi's teachers encouraged her to share with the school the experiences of Roma during World War II for the assembly, so Zsofi wrote a small speech to give at the assembly. In the end she was too shy to go on stage and read her speech aloud to the assembly of 1000 students, and instead had me read it while she stood next to me:

> My great-great grandmother, her brother and her family were transferred to Auschwitz at night in their pyjamas, barefoot, and carrying only one coat. One of them was shot and another one died of sickness. Today we remember all those Roma who lost their lives due to this persecution. But persecution of Roma continues today in countries like Hungary and the Czech Republic where many people are racist and violent towards Roma people. This is why so many Roma come to Canada to be refugees. If you are

> Roma in Europe it's really hard to get work, or an education. In Hungary, anti-Roma Neo-Nazis are growing in number and in political power. The Hungarian Guard are known to scare Roma villagers and 6 people have been killed in the last few years just for being Roma. We will not forget Roma history and will not allow the history of the Porjamos to be repeated.

I had visited Zsofi's family home several times and had dinner with her parents and siblings, and often during these dinners we would discuss Hungarian politics and history and the contemporary situation for Roma, particularly in the northeast region. The family had had relatives who had been persecuted during World War II and sent to Auschwitz to perish in the 'Gypsy Family Camp' at Birkenau. In casual conversation the family drew historical lines between this experience of their relatives and their own experience in Canada today. They believed that particularly following the postsocialist transformations, persecution of Roma had grown. Each member of the family was intellectually curious and genuinely interested in discussing current affairs.

I felt it important to foster Zsofi's academic interests in Romani Studies. A few months after we met, one of the leading voices in Romani Studies, Dr Ian Hancock, visited Toronto to give a keynote lecture at York University. I brought Zsofi along with me to see the talk. Afterwards we approached Hancock, and Zsofi asked him some questions about Romani history in Europe and posed for a photo for him. Some weeks later I was giving a public lecture at the University of Toronto in the Department of Anthropology, for the department's 'Ethnography Lab,' and I invited Zsofi along with me to see the presentation. After this I began to speak with Zsofi regularly about my research and invited her to join me whenever I had interviews or fieldwork visits, as a kind of mentorship that continued to develop throughout my fieldwork. She joined me once to interview Ronald Lee, one of the most respected and well-known Romani activists in Toronto, who helped found the Toronto Roma Community Centre and taught Romani Studies at the University of Toronto. Eventually I helped Zsofi apply for post-secondary education following her graduation from high school. Zsofi was bright and insightful in our discussions about Roma in Hungary and elsewhere. She often would tell me that she didn't think anti-gypsyism was a "nazi" thing in Hungary; it is a thing that many "normal" people feel.

I came to see mentoring Zsofi as a form of care work with liberatory potential. Building relationships with her and her family became, to me, part of the meaning of 'ethnographic Marxism' that involved exploring the empirical landscapes of their lives, their way of inhabiting the world, and, most significantly, their own intellectual work in understanding and transforming it. An aspect of Gramsci's analysis centers on the dialectical relationship between the development of intellectuals and the development of the praxis of the masses (Smith 2002: 166). Intellectuals have the opportunity to bring the workings of capitalist regimes into view and making them understandable: "the role of the intellectual is to make connections where it might not be totally apparent" (Smith 2002: 175). Here the goal is not simply to understand how subaltern people view the world, but to understand how they might overcome their subalternity to become a political force capable of bringing about radical change. This is an especially important task today: as Stetsenko points out, we are currently witnessing a questioning of neoliberal hegemony, a shift in politics that "needs to be supported by scholarship that is explicitly activist" and questioning the logics of capitalism (Stetsenko 2020). Particularly in a time of a crisis in hegemony it is imperative to seek out and build "research agendas premised on hope" that can envision a world beyond the logics of capitalism and direct people away from rightwing populist politics.

Social reproduction theory provides an opportunity to do so. As I discuss throughout my dissertation, Tithi Bhattacharya's work on social reproduction theory argues for an expanded understanding of the working class and a broadening of the arenas in which emancipatory struggles against capitalism can take place. While Marxist research privileges the wage relation as a basic starting point for understanding labour, social reproduction theory allows us to consider forms of unwaged work, the activities of surplus populations, and the contours of struggle taking place outside of formal workplaces. Through social reproduction theory, we can recognize capitalism as a complex 'social totality' and see how subaltern groups not engaged in paid work are also agents of history. Bhattacharya argues that new opportunities for solidarities and liberatory strategies can be developed by recognizing capitalism as a wider social whole, sustained and co-produced by human labour, both waged and unwaged.

With the concept of 'ethnographic Marxism,' I am unpacking the implications of Bhattarcharya's argument for academic research and pedagogy. What I am interested in is how we can apply social reproduction's expanded imagination of the working class and capitalist socialist relations to our own research methodologies and fieldwork relationships,

especially those approaches that are rooted in a commitment for societal transformation. How can relationships formed in the field be premised on solidarities and shared political commitments in an era of financialized capitalism? If we acknowledge capitalism as a social totality and the revolutionary potential of work beyond waged labour, then we must also envision an expanded arena in which activist scholarship can unfold. Anchoring ethnographic research within the domain of social reproduction can help to ensure that research is beneficial for interlocutors and guided by their needs, illuminating their subaltern knowledge and offering modest intellectual guidance. Ethnographic Marxism means mentoring informants without patronizing them and fostering genuine intellectual connections. In other words, engaging in ethnographic fieldwork anchored in care work can be a form of activist research that resists capitalist social relations as well as reflects on researcher positionality, and part of care work involves taking the time to build intellectual curiosity, passion, and confidence. This kind of ethnographic Marxism thus should problematize, extend, and decenter the category of workers. In analyzing the meaning of this argument in relation to academic research, I propose that mentoring young people as part of ethnographic fieldwork can be one such arena of emancipatory struggle.

Conclusion:
Social reproduction as research and resistance

The chapter has unpacked debates on politically-engaged research and the role of social scientists within political and social movements. I have reflected on the ethnographic method and its potential for providing tools for transformative research while also analyzing the political context during the time period of my research in regards to its impact on academic knowledge production. Motivated by the broad desire to find ways that academic research can support wider struggles for emancipation and building a world beyond capitalism, this chapter sketches a vision of an ethnographic Marxism attentive to care work and social reproduction as a research approach for activist scholarship. Ultimately I have argued here that an ethnographic approach grounded in care work engenders an opportunity to proffer a research agenda around the exigencies and needs of marginalized people. I have envisioned an ‘ethnographic Marxism’ attentive to social reproduction, in which the fieldwork of social researchers is enlisted as acts of service bettering the material conditions of research participants.

Bhattacharya's framework for social reproduction theory proposes an expanded understanding of the working class and a consequent broadening of what is considered emancipatory struggles against capitalism. This chapter has sought to unpack the meaning of this argument on academic research. I have outlined how the relationships formed in the field can be premised on solidarities and shared political commitments in an era of financialized capitalism through making social reproduction the foundation of ethnographic research. Anchoring ethnographic research within the domain of social reproduction can help to ensure that research is beneficial for interlocutors and guided by their needs, not academic dynamics and power relations. Helping refugee families secure their status and pay their rent can be a revolutionary research; assisting young people with ideas a form of class struggle. Ultimately I argue that engaging in ethnographic fieldwork anchored in care work can be a form of activist research that is both disruptive to capitalist social relations as well as reflective on researcher positionality. If we acknowledge capitalism as a social totality and the revolutionary potential of work beyond the factory floor, then we must also envision an expanded arena in which activist scholarship can unfold.

Chapter 8
Conclusion:
Capitalism and struggle through the prism of peoples' lives

Introduction

It remains unclear to me when exactly was the first time I met the Lakatos family. Vera, the mother, insists that we met in the northeastern Hungarian city of Miskolc in late 2015, while the family was devising a plan to return to Canada while facing the threat of eviction of the Numbered Streets neighbourhood in Miskolc. During the year of 2015, hundreds of Romani families such as the Lakatos were making the move to Canada to file for refugee status, as homelessness and anti-Gypsy racism was intensifying across Miskolc. The UNHCR's refugee database counts 925 asylum claims in Canada from Hungarian nationals for that year and 957 for the following year.

It is correct that during this particular time period referred to by Vera, I had been visiting northeastern Hungary for my preliminary doctoral fieldwork: a Canadian Romani activist and I had gotten in touch with a Romani NGO based in the region, asking for their help in reaching out to families who had been to Canada to seek refugee status and subsequently left or were deported due to receiving poor legal representation from their Canadian lawyers. The "Negligent Refugee Lawyers" scandal had just broken in the Canadian media, detailing how between 2008 and 2012 hundreds of Hungarian Romani refugee claimants in Toronto had been neglected at the hands of three Canadian lawyers, who were later found guilty by the Law Society of Upper Canada of professional misconduct in their handling of Romani refugee claimants. Instead of upholding their fiduciary duty to provide these families with a fair refugee hearing, and despite the fact that they had received public Legal Aid money to do so, it was found that these three lawyers had failed to show up for their hearings, had discarded the evidence submitted by the families to support their refugee claims, and had copied word-for-word the same asylum story for many of the 986 families they represented. As a result, virtually all the refugee claims submitted by these families failed, and the majority of the claimants were sent back to Hungary. The Lakatos family, who had first been to Canada in 2011, was among them.

The Canadian Romani activist and I had come to Miskolc in November 2015 to speak with the families who had been represented by these three negligent Canadian lawyers, in the hopes that we could collect enough evidence to back what had been dubbed by a coalition of refugee advocates in Toronto a “Roma Refugee Redress” campaign. Over a period of three days, we interviewed dozens of families, asking particularly legalistic questions, prepared for us by a team of Toronto-based refugee rights lawyers, that could potentially lead to answers that would assist in appealing to Canada's Minister of Immigration and Citizenship to give these families the legal version of a second chance. When I look back at these notes, I do not see the names “Lakatos” or “Vera” - which is not surprising considering the need for confidentiality with which we had approached our task - but there are some references that indicate a potential first encounter with the Lakatos family: a father who could not attend the meeting because his leg had recently been broken; a teenager who was very soft-spoken but spoke English fairly well; a mother with a husky voice and a nervous condition documented by her psychologist.

A year and a half later, in the early winter of 2017, I was shopping in my neighbourhood bargain grocery store in the west end of Toronto, when I overheard Hungarian being spoken close to me by a family picking out vegetables. At this time I did not realize how common it would become for me to hear the Hungarian language in this part of the city, where literally thousands of Romani refugees from Miskolc would come to be settled, and just how small the world had become between northeast Hungary and west Toronto, and so I paused and looked up surreptitiously to take note of the speakers: a small dark-haired woman, a portly smiling man with a missing front tooth, and a little boy of about eight years. The woman and I met eyes, and a look of recognition flashed on her face: “I've seen you in Hungary - in Miskolc,” she said, in a quiet Hungarian that required some effort on my behalf to follow. “There are photos of you on the internet with the Roma activists, and you are that Canadian who interviewed all of the families who had come back to Hungary.”

Shortly after our encounter in the grocery store in west Toronto, the Lakatos family invited me over for dinner, the first of many home visits I would have with them over a period of three years. Each time I would visit, Vera would feed me Hungarian dishes - though she lamented that the spices in Canada were not up to par for proper Hungarian cooking - and then we would speak over the course of a couple hours about the status of their current

refugee claim, the family's health, the schooling of the younger children, and my doctoral research project. As a component of my PhD fieldwork, I would come to assist the family with translation and advocacy, attending meetings with their Canadian welfare officers, assisting at their doctors' appointments, making phone calls to their refugee lawyer, and spending hours tutoring their teenager. Though I worked with a dozen families in this manner in Toronto, the Lakatos family was the one with which I grew the closest.

Most of the Romani families I met in Toronto, including the Lakatos family, came from the "Numbered Streets" in Miskolc, the primarily Romani neighbourhood that stretches alongside the city's large industrial steelworks factory. During the times of socialism, many of the Romani families who now seek asylum in Toronto held low-level jobs in these industrial factories of Miskolc. For example, the father of the Lakatos family, Laci, had worked since he was a teenager in the factory as a steelworker. Today he suffers from chronic lung and respiratory issues that he says are a result of this industrial labour. As his health condition left him no longer able to engage in long-term intensive physical labour, one of the major tasks I assisted Laci with in Toronto was getting him enrolled in the public disability welfare program in Toronto after the family's refugee claim was filed, a task that involved a series of visits to bureaucratic waiting rooms, where Laci and I had plenty of time to discuss his experiences working for the Lenin Steelworks and growing up a Romani man in the Hungarian socialist heartland of Miskolc. Often the Roma I spoke with during my fieldwork referred to the times of state socialism in the same nostalgic manner as Laci: as a golden age for Roma in Hungary. When asked why Roma come to Canada, the discussion usually began with a description of how Roma in socialist Miskolc enjoyed a level of equality, employment, and integration with their fellow Hungarians.

The father showed me pictures from his phone of his former profession back in Hungary as a steel pourer - he used to work at the Lenin Steel Works, and he told me many Roma, their parents and grandparents, worked there at the factory. He told me he worked in the factory for eight years before he lost his job and the factory shut down. He said his father worked there for thirty years. He said many of the workers who worked here got illnesses like cancer because it was dangerous and unhealthy work, and that it was mostly Roma who worked in the factory. He said there is no compensation now for the illnesses the work caused because the factories shut down.

When the factory closed following the collapse of state socialism, Laci lost his job along with thousands of other workers. Many of the Romani steelworkers, like Laci, were among the first workers to be "cast onto the streets" following the regime change, as industrial companies closed down or were reorganized under neoliberalizing imperatives (Husz 2013: 33). As socialist heavy industry shuttered its doors in the 1990s, unemployment for all Hungarians skyrocketed, yet for Romani workers, this immediate postsocialist shock never subsided. Laci explained to me that the Lakatos family, like all the other Romani families of the Numbered Streets, managed to survive throughout the early 2000s in this postsocialist state of racialized permanent unemployment through a combination of public works, social support, and informal labour.

The Lakatos family began to consider moving to Canada in 2008, when rightwing Hungarian vigilantes initiated a campaign of harassment and violence against Romani neighbourhoods and villages surrounding Miskolc. Neonazi paramilitary groups were becoming active in this region of Hungary at this time, and their sporadic violent attacks on Romani houses eventually resulted in the murder of six Romani people, including a child, and the injuring of fifty-two additional individuals. Whenever I would timidly prod the family about this time period, in which far-right terror stalked Romani villages for nearly fifteen months, Vera would speak of it with an anxious body language, slowly wringing her wrists and explaining that it simply felt scary to live in a 'gypsy settlement.'

The family first arrived in Canada in 2011, a year in which more than 4,000 Hungarian Roma landed in Toronto to seek asylum. The Lakatos family was thus part of the second wave of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, a period of four years in which 11,333 Hungarian families filed for refugee protection in Canada. The year the Lakatos arrived was the peak year of Romani asylum-seeking, when Hungarian nationals were the leading group of asylum-seekers in Canada, making up almost 20 percent of total claims filed that year. Most of these claimants experienced similar fates as the Lakatos family: sent back to Hungary after their refugee claims had failed. Like virtually all Romani asylum-seekers in Canada, the Lakatos family's claim to refugee protection and humanitarian care stemmed from their experiences of ethnic persecution living in Hungary.

Upon arrival in the Toronto Pearson International Airport, the Lakatos family declared to the Canadian border officers that they wanted to file for refugee status. The family's initial

refugee claim was rejected, almost immediately. In 2011, a mere 8.3 percent of Hungarian refugee claims were accepted. They explained to me that they were represented by Erzsebet Jaszi, a Canadian lawyer to be found guilty of professional misconduct who would be disbarred by the Law Society in 2015, stripped of her legal standing and no longer able to practice as a lawyer due to her treatment of Hungarian Romani refugees. Jaszi did not show up to their refugee hearing; she appeared intoxicated on the one occasion when the Lakatos family met her.

Because of Jaszi's legal negligence, the family was deported back to Miskolc in 2012, after eleven months in Canada. The year the Lakatos family was deported, about 90 percent of Romani refugee claims were unsuccessful, and thousands of Romani families were sent back to Hungary from Canada, many encouraged to abandon their claims and appeals processes through an 'Assisted Voluntary Removal and Return' program coordinated by the Canadian Border Services Agency, which provided $2000 CAD to families if they left Canada voluntarily.

The Lakatos family returned to the Numbered Streets neighbourhood in Miskolc, where they spent the next three and a half years devising a plan to return. As the Mayor of Miskolc announced in the media that Roma returning from Canada would not be welcome back, the Lakatos family was harassed by local Hungarians: told to go back to Canada, the children bullied in school. Eventually in 2015 they were threatened with an eviction notice and told to leave their house and risk having their children taken away by the city's Children's Services. At the same time, anti-gypsy violence was on the rise across the country. In March 2016 the family participated in a protest against the evictions taking place in the Numbered Streets and the growing racism in Miskol. A newspaper article picturing the father and child attending the march made them targets by far-right vigilantes, who attacked the family: Laci and his eldest child, while walking home one night, would have an encounter in the city centre of Miskolc with far-right vigilantes, who would beat the two of them, breaking Laci's leg and leaving the teenage child's face with a long jutting scar running from forehead to nose. The family rarely spoke of these traumatic moments with me, instead inviting me to learn about them by reading through their refugee case files.

Eventually the Lakatos family managed to return to Canada in 2016, and, with the help of Toronto-based Romani advocates, filed for permanent residency in Canada on "humanitarian

and compassionate grounds" ('H and C'). As the Canadian refugee processing system does not permit people with previously rejected or abandoned claims to 'try again' - even if their lawyers were found negligent and subsequently disbarred - Romani families who had previously sought asylum unsuccessfully were left with few legal options to stay in Canada. As a family comprising two spouses and four children, the application fee for their H and C application amounted to $2,700 CAD - a sum that was raised through a GoFundMe campaign launched by community organizers in Toronto. After two and a half years of waiting, the family's application was successful: the family was deemed "most likely to suffer irreparable harm" if they returned to Hungary and that "a newspaper article showing [Mr Lakatos] and his [child] attended an anti-racism rally sufficiently establishes that they will be targeted by hate groups or the police, for doing so," according to the judge[48] overseeing one of their hearings. Vera summed it up to me like this:

> I lived in Hungary for 40 years. I gave birth to all four of my children there. My parents passed away there and are buried in a cemetery there. I have six other brothers and sisters, and most are still in Miskolc. I miss Hungary everyday, but I see a future here for my children in Canada.

Today they continue to live in west Toronto, where their children now speak better English than Hungarian and their daughters have given birth to Canadian babies.

Histories of capitalism through oral life stories

In my two years of fieldwork in Canada, especially during my work with the Toronto Roma Community Centre, I encountered several families whose immigration journey paralleled that of the Lakatos family: arriving during the peak years of asylum-seeking to Canada, leaving after an initially rejected or abandoned claim (usually due to poor legal representation), returning to Canada during the years of Miskolc's eviction campaign in the Numbered Streets, and finding a second chance made through a (usually prolonged but successful) humanitarian claim. These families, like the Lakatos, would then receive permanent residency upon the successful though bureaucratically-drawn-out processing of their humanitarian claim. This kind of movement for so many Romani families seemed to amount

[48] I am choosing not to cite the court document so as to preserve the anonymity of the Lakatos family.

to an unrelenting cycle of displacement: between dispossessions and evictions in Hungary and deportations and expulsions in Canada.

What my research has tried to show is that this constant movement cannot be explained with stereotypes about Roma being nomads, holding to an internalized 'Gypsy' culture of migration or pursuing lives as "asylum adventurers" (Kóczé 2018). Instead, their movement provides a well-framed case study of the constellation of forces at play today, between capitalist crisis, rightwing populism, and the changing dynamics of work and social reproduction. Analyzing Romani asylum-seeking through the lens of labour history, and expanding the narrow definition of work through the use of Marxist-feminist theories on social reproduction, makes visible the history of work, social reproduction, and resistance of Roma as they navigate a complex web formed from the relations of capitalist crisis.

In following the Lakatos family from Hungary to Canada, it becomes possible to view the ways in which the logics of capitalism are transforming and playing out in individual lives. The point here has been to historicize Romani asylum-seeking by using a multiscalar approach (Nonini and Susser 2020: 16): placing these individual experiences within the broader historical conditions of the present moment, which is not necessarily a straightforward task. As Smith reminds, "for many of us, the question we find so difficult to address methodologically is how the phenomena on which we focus our ethnographic work can be situated across the complex scales in which they are inevitably embedded" (Smith 2020: 156). By telling the individual stories of Romani refugees maneuvering a particular historical moment, my research has strived to capture the meaning of contemporary life under the current conditions of global capitalism. Importantly, I have stressed the role and agency of people in responding to these large-scale changes, in which Romani refugees are not solely victims of structural forces, but also people making choices, forming narratives, and actively negotiating their position in these transformations.

Overall, my dissertation has analyzed the relationship between class, social reproduction, and citizenship in the current historical moment defined by the twin processes of neoliberal global capitalism and the rise of rightwing populism. In studying the contemporary movement of Hungarian Romani asylum-seeking to Canada, I have argued that applying for refugee status has emerged as a social reproduction strategy for Roma who, throughout the postsocialist neoliberal restructuring of Hungarian society, have been doubly dispossessed of their

inclusion in both Hungarian labour markets and Hungarian citizenship regimes. My research contributes to scholarship analyzing the dialectics between migration and global capitalism, demonstrating the gains that can be made by recognizing displacement and refugee experiences as embedded in the historical and global transformations of capital, and how individuals experience these changes and react to them. I have used sociological research, anthropological political economy, and Marxist-feminist theories on social reproduction to reimagine the connections between capitalist crisis, social reproduction, and rightwing populism. I have done so by centering the experiences of a racialized surplus population, excluded from both waged work and citizenship regimes and framing their asylum journey as a labour history. In using a social reproduction theory that "seeks to make visible labor and work that are analytically hidden from classical economists and politically denied by policy makers" (Battacharya 2017a: 2), I have argued that Romani refugees' stories of exclusion and displacement in Toronto form one part of a bigger story about class dispossession and capitalist transformation in postsocialist Hungary. In paying attention to the individual experiences of Romani refugees, it becomes possible to make sense of postsocialist processes as situated at the crossroads where class and citizenship dynamics converge, as well as the ways in which people make choices and respond to large-scale historical change.

With an expanded understanding of social reproduction and work, what comes into view is the ways in which struggles within the domain of social reproduction, particularly those rooted in citizenship and migration, can become emancipatory and transformative. With this in mind, I have offered an analysis motivated by the desire to unearth opportunities for political action, framing surplus populations and all people pushed out of waged labour and excluded from citizenship regimes to be actors in the struggles against both rightwing populism and capitalism. As increasing people struggle for their survival in precarious positions outside of paid labour while navigating contemporary financialized capitalism, social reproductive struggles have become crucial in resisting and organizing against both neoliberal capitalism and rightwing populism.

Histories and futures

Several pathways for future research have been opened up by my dissertation work, which I have left unpursued for the time being due to the necessary constraints of this project's

contours. As the global pandemic continues, it remains to be seen how Romani movement to Canada will shape up in coming years and the ways in which the Canadian asylum regime will be impacted. Moreover, it is difficult to adequately assess the large-scale changes in capital accumulation and global borders more broadly emerging out of the pandemic at this point. Nationally in both Canada and Hungary, recent political dynamics point to increasing rightwing consolidations. In the spring of 2022, the Hungarian elections resulted in a resounding victory for Viktor Orbán and his illiberal rule: with this recent re-election of the Fidesz party, forming a majority in the Hungarian government, prospects for improvements to Romani lives in northeast Hungary appear dim. Political developments in Canada also point to the fomenting of rightwing populist politics: The Freedom Convoy protests in winter 2022 saw tens of thousands of Canadians protesting at the Canadian Parliament, uniting over a smattering of rightwing causes, such as opposing vaccine mandates and allegedly liberal immigration policies.

Reflecting on the lived realities of Romani refugees maneuvering in the Canada asylum regime invites a comparison between the so-called 'liberal' policies of the Canadian state with the 'illiberal' ones of Hungary, a topic I was not able to systematically explore in my dissertation. In my discussions with my research informants, especially Canadians who assist Romani refugees in Toronto - such as doctors, teachers, social workers, lawyers, and refugee rights activists - the treatment of Roma by the Hungarian state is described in terms of Hungary being a former communist state and symptomatic of Hungary's East-European heritage in which it is still "stuck in the past." In these discussions, when Canadian advocates make sense of Roma refugees, it is through an orientalizing discourse in which Hungary's authoritarian tendencies are constructed as remnants of a socialist past or a regression to its former Eastern communist dictatorial governance.

These framings indulge an orientalist conceptualization about Central and Eastern Europe that scholars have described as a form of "balkanization" (Todorova 1997) and "inventing Eastern Europe" (Wolf 1994). Throughout these narratives, Eastern Europe is framed as "catching up" and implicitly "backwards:" as the "semideveloped, semicolonial, semicivilized, semioriental" space of Europe. In locating Hungary in the past and its authoritarian tendencies as a legacy of state socialism, these narratives indulge a Cold War ideology that constructs a certain orientation of the world and a future, an end-point, defined by Western liberal capitalism (Gagyi 2016, 2017), Fukuyama's "end of history" and the

ideological triumph of Western capitalism. Throughout my dissertation I have tried to destabilize such discourses, instead seeking to make connections between the illiberal practices of Hungary with the (neo)liberal practices of Canada.

The experiences of Romani refugees point to a different historical movement: their decision-making and narrating of moving to Canada is structured by a nostalgia for a lost socialist future – another theme surfacing from my fieldwork that I was not able to consistently and fully unpack here. Yet the postsocialist yearning and homesickness of Romani refugees for a 'radiant future' in which their basic social-reproductive needs are met points to something complex and worthy of deeper consideration. The discrimination they subsequently meet in Canada and the unrelenting cycle of displacement and deportation their movement forms evoke the ideas of Walter Benjamin, who reminds us of the non-linearity of fascism and the need to look beyond a homogeneous continuum of history.

And yet while liberals look to Hungary's legacy of state socialism and blame Hungary's 'democratic backsliding' on an apparent failure to fully adopt Western liberal democracy, leftists struggle to critique the increasing authoritarianism of Orbán's Hungary without indirectly supporting the neoliberal project forced onto the semi-peripheral postsocialist countries of Europe. One of the reasons Hungarian illiberal propaganda is so successful is because it captures a very real and valid critique felt by everyday people towards the neoliberal order of the EU: as Grezbalska and Pető, echoing Fraser, emphasize: "the articulation of the opposition to the liberal project in anti-gender terms would not have been so successful, if it had not been grounded in very real inequalities and contradictions created by the globalized, neoliberal model" (Grezbalska and Pető 2018: 2).

Hence the urgency remains to develop analyses that can articulate peoples' dissatisfaction with neoliberalism, while also refusing the anti-gender, anti-refugee, anti-Gypsy politics of rightwing populism. As Fraser's triple-movement framework shows, as long as the Left fails to trace these crises to their root, the Right will find popularity in its performative antagonism towards neoliberal hegemony while sacrificing emancipation. In this sense rightwing populists have been much more successful than the Left at exploiting discontents and grievances arising from financialized capitalism, despite simultaneously deepening many aspects of neoliberalism once in power and embracing 'hyperreactionary populist' politics (Fraser 2019). In the current historical moment, as "the fundamentally capitalist character of

our world system is on dramatic display" (McNally 2017: 111), rightwing populist movements and social reproductive struggles are both competing projects for an economy embedded in society and Polányi's 'social protection' - one that foregoes emancipation of all and one that foregrounds it. The challenge thus remains to situate Hungarian illiberalism within the history of capital accumulation in Central Europe and a resolute critique of capitalism: to challenge the 'marketization' of financialized capitalism while ensuring the 'emancipation' of those living on the peripheries of contemporary capital accumulation. The ongoing task is to continue to critique postsocialist illiberalism without celebrating European or Canadian liberalism.

Today, in both Canada and Hungary, struggles around social reproduction have become sites of class conflict, pushing back against the emerging social relations of contemporary capitalism: people left out of the illiberal hierarchies of what makes a good citizen, a model family, and a deserving worker are organizing and building social movements built on shared grievances and solidarities. These movements see Roma, migrants, and poor people using social reproduction strategies – rallying against cuts to education and worker's rights, campaigning to get police out of schools, organizing community clothing and food drives, offering warm meals to homeless people, exchanging strategies for maneuvering repressive state social services - as means for survival and resistance (UTA 2022). Social movements engaging in solidarity work with anti-poverty activists, workers' unions, feminist activists, and anti-fascist groups show a way of uniting against the 'totality of capitalism' and offer up hope in the face of the violence of rightwing populism and the exploitation of capital accumulation. Hungary may serve as a 'cautionary tale' of how critiquing rightwing populism without framing it as a problem of capitalism serves to feed authoritarian capitalism, but it also gives us glimmers of light of what "activism in dark times" (Beauduin and Swerdlyk 2021) can look like, modeling how people will continue to struggle against domination and exposure wherever they can, in the realm of social reproduction and beyond.

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