

A conference hosted by **The Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights**  
& **The Romani Studies Program of the Central European University**  
Under the honorary patronage of the **European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture**



# NEGLECTED VOICES: THE GLOBAL ROMA DIASPORA

APRIL 5-6, 2019

[fxb.harvard.edu](http://fxb.harvard.edu) | [#RomaDiaspora](https://twitter.com/RomaDiaspora)

## APRIL 5

Barker Center, Thompson Room  
12 Quincy Street, Cambridge  
Harvard University

## APRIL 6

Taubman Building, 5th Floor  
T-520 NYE  
15 Eliot St, Cambridge  
Harvard Kennedy School

The event is co-sponsored by the Harvard David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, the Open Society Foundations Human Rights Initiative, and the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University.

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Free and open to the public. Seating is limited.

*Background painting by Gabi Jimenez.*

The “Neglected Voices: The Global Roma Diaspora” conference is hosted by the Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights and the Romani Studies Program of the Central European University.

The Harvard FXB Center has organized an event on International Roma Day for the past six years. Previous events have centered on questions of discrimination, exposure to violence, stigma, and marginalization, Roma representations in arts, culture, and literature, and solidarity between Romani and African American communities. This year, we add a new and so far ignored perspective to ongoing debates by initiating a conversation on the complexity and variety of the global Romani diaspora.

A medium-term goal is to use the conference as a launch pad for a sustained investigation into the complexity and variety of the Romani diaspora across the world. We also hope to help mobilize solidarity and cooperation between Romani activists, scholars, and communities across continents.

The event is co-sponsored by the Harvard David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard, and the Open Society Foundations Human Rights Initiative.

The conference takes place under the honorary patronage of the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture.



APRIL 5, 2019

Thompson Room, Barker Center, Harvard University

9:00 AM **Welcome Address**

**Mary Bassett**, Director, Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights  
**Michèle Lamont**, Director, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University  
**Liviu Matei**, Provost, Central European University (video)

9:15 AM **Introductory Panel**

**THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION OF ROMA WORLDWIDE**

*Chair* | **Jacqueline Bhabha**, Director of Research,  
Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights  
*Presenter* | **Margareta Matache**, Director of the Roma Program and  
Instructor, Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights  
*Keynote Speaker* | **Rita Izsák-Ndiaye**, Member of the United Nations Committee on the  
Elimination of Racial Discrimination; Former UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues  
*Discussant* | **Fredrik von Bothmer**, United Nations Office of the Special Advisers  
on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect

10:30 AM **Panel 1**

**SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATUS OF ROMA ACROSS THE WORLD:  
ACCESS TO FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS**

*Chair* | **Mary Bassett**, Director, Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights  
*Presenter* | **Alexandra Oprea**, Romani attorney, author, and activist, USA  
*Presenter* | **Kristin Raeesi**, Board Member, Voice of Roma, USA  
*Presenter* | **Luciano Mariz Maia**, Deputy Prosecutor-General and Professor, Brazil  
*Presenter* | **Dafina Savic**, Executive Director of Romanipe Montreal, Canada  
*Presenter* | **Timea Junghaus**, Executive Director of the European  
Roma Institute for Arts and Culture, Germany  
*Discussant* | **Belen Rodriguez de Alba**, Human Rights Officer, Indigenous Peoples, and  
Minorities Section, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

12:30 PM **Lunch Break**

1:30 PM **Panel 2**

**THE DISPARATE MANIFESTATIONS OF STIGMA AGAINST ROMA  
IN THE AMERICAS AND EUROPE**

*Chair* | **Sunil Amrith**, Mehra Family Professor of South Asian Studies  
and Professor of History, Harvard University  
*Presenter* | **Iulius Rostas**, Chair of the Romani Studies Program and  
Assistant Professor, Central European University, Hungary  
*Presenter* | **Angéla Kóczé**, Assistant Professor of Romani Studies and Academic Director of  
the Roma Graduate Preparation Program, Central European University, Hungary  
*Presenter* | **Victoria Rios**, Singer/songwriter, music teacher, and Romani activist, USA  
*Presenter* | **Aline Miklos**, Doctoral Art History Student, University of São Paulo, Brazil  
*Presenter* | **Lela Savic**, Journalist, Canada  
*Discussant* | **Michèle Lamont**, Director, Weatherhead Center  
for International Affairs, Harvard University

3:30 PM **Break**

4:00 PM

### Panel 3

#### WHAT MAKES A DIASPORA? THE CASE OF THE GLOBAL ROMANI DIASPORA

*Chair* | **Kay Kaufman Shelemay**, G. Gordon Watts Professor of Music and Professor of African and African American Studies, Harvard University

*Presenter* | **Khachig Tölölyan**, Professor, Wesleyan University, USA

*Presenter* | **Ethel Brooks**, Associate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies and Sociology, Rutgers University, USA

*Presenter* | **Marcos Toyansk Silva Guimarães**, Researcher and group leader, University of São Paulo, Brazil

*Presenter* | **Ismael Cortes**, Lecturer at the UNESCO Chair of Philosophy, Universitat Jaume I de Castelló;

*Presenter* | **Petra Gelbart**, Curator of the Music Section at RomArchive; Lecturer, Ramapo College New Jersey, USA

*Discussant* | **Aurora Vergara Figueroa**, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Director of the Afrodiasporic Studies Center at Universidad Icesi in Cali, Colombia

6:00 PM

### Concluding Remarks

**Jacqueline Bhabha**, Director of Research, Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights

APRIL 6, 2019

Harvard Kennedy School, Taubman Building,  
5th Floor, T-520 NYE

9:00 AM

### Panel Discussion

#### ORGANIZING AND MOBILIZING ROMA: TACTICS; FAILURES; OPPORTUNITIES; LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE AFRODESCENDANT MOVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA; STEPS FORWARD.

*Chair* | **Iulius Rostas**, Chair of the Romani Studies Program and Assistant Professor, Central European University, Hungary

*Discussant* | **Aurora Vergara Figueroa**, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Director of the Afrodiasporic Studies Center at Universidad Icesi in Cali, Colombia

*Contributor* | **Radu Marian**, Member of Parliament, Republic of Moldova

*Contributor* | **Anina Ciuciu**, President, ASET93; Board Member La Voix des Rroms, France

*Contributor* | **George Eli**, Filmmaker, spiritualist, and founder of the Romani Media Initiative, USA

*Contributor* | **Ana Dalila Gómez Baos**, General coordinator of the Organizational Process of the Rrom Gitano people of Colombia, Colombia

10:45 AM

### Coffee Break

11:00 AM

### Panel Discussion continues

*Contributor* | **Ariadyne Acunha**, the International Association Maylê Sara Kalí - AMSK/Brazil

*Contributor* | **Tanja Jovanovic**, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Central European University and Harvard; Policy Officer, Justice Initiative, Open Society Foundation, London

*Contributor* | **Zoran Bikovski**, Health Program Coordinator, NGO KHAM Delchevo, Macedonia

*Contributor* | **Carol Silverman**, Professor of Anthropology/Folklore and Public Culture, University of Oregon; Board Member, Voice of Roma, USA

12:30 PM

### Lunch





**ARIADYNE ACUNHA** works with Associação Internacional Maylê Sara Kalí in Brazil as a youth expert. Ariadyne was the co-founder of the Brazilian Youth Coalition, an

organization that works on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She also worked as a coordinator of international affairs for several Brazilian NGOs. As a representative of Brazilian children & youth at the United Nations, she is responsible for the engagement of Latin American and the Caribbean youth in government processes. She has been working for more than ten years in the field of child rights, especially with children and youth in traditional communities as well as Roma youth.



**SUNIL AMRITH** is the Mehra Family Professor of South Asian Studies at Harvard University.

His research is on the trans-national movement of people, ideas, and institutions. Areas of particular interest include the history of public health and poverty, the history of migration, and environmental history. His most recent work has been on the Bay of Bengal as a region connecting South and Southeast Asia. He has a Ph.D. in History (2005) from the University of Cambridge, where he was also a Research Fellow of Trinity College (2004-6).



**ANA DALILA GÓMEZ BAOS** is a Romani activist from the Kumpania of Bogotá-Colombia. She is an industrial engineer, lawyer, and specialist in management and planning. Ana Dalila is also the general coordinator of the Organizational Process of the Rom Gitano people of Colombia PRORROM and a member of different international networks and organizations around the world. She has fought for the Roma inclusion in national and international political agendas and advocated for the inclusion of the variable “Roma” in the 2005 general census. Ana Dalila contributed to the development of a regulatory framework in Colombia that takes account of the rights of the Roma people.



**DR. MARY T. BASSETT** is the Director of the Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights and the FXB Professor of the Practice of Health and Human Rights. With

more than 30 years of experience in public health, Dr. Bassett has dedicated her career to advancing health equity. Prior to joining the FXB Center, she served as New York City’s Commissioner of Health from 2014 to 2018. Originally from New York City, Dr. Bassett lived in Zimbabwe for nearly 20 years,

where she served on the medical faculty of the University of Zimbabwe. She has also worked for the Rockefeller Foundation and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. In 2017 she was elected a member of the National Academy of Medicine.



**JACQUELINE BHABHA** is the Director of Research at the Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights, Professor of the Practice of Health and Human Rights at the

Harvard School of Public Health, the Jeremiah Smith Jr. Lecturer in Law at Harvard Law School, and an Adjunct Lecturer in Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School. From 1997 to 2001, Bhabha directed the Human Rights Program at the University of Chicago. Before 1997, she was a practicing human rights lawyer in London and at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. She has published extensively on issues of transnational child migration, refugee protection, children’s rights, and citizenship. Bhabha co-chairs Harvard’s Scholars at Risk Program and is the former and founding chair of the Scholars at Risk Network. She serves on the board of the World Peace Foundation and the Journal of Refugee Studies and is a frequent adviser to UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM and civil society organizations working on forced migration-related issues.



**ZORAN BIKOVSKI** is a sociologist with 17 years of experience in the Roma NGO sector. Zoran has worked both a researcher and as a practitioner, working directly with

Roma communities. Since 2011, he has been the Program Health Coordinator in the NGO “KHAM” Delcevo, responsible for the implementation of the program of Legal Empowerment and Social Accountability. His work and the work of the NGO “KHAM” team have visible results in advocacy on the local and national levels. From 2014 to 2017, he was the President of Macedonian Platform against Poverty, which included 97 NGOs. Since February 2015, he has been a social accountability mentor for Romanian and Bulgarian NGOs. As a practitioner, he is very connected with Romani communities and leaders, giving him the opportunity to strengthen communities and advocate for the advancement of the rights of the marginalized Roma.

**FREDRIK VON BOTHMER**

works with the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect in Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East.

He supports the Under-Secretary-General Adama Dieng in assessing the risk of atrocity crimes as well as in developing atrocity prevention capacities and strategies. Prior, Fred worked in disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of armed groups for the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; at the Institute for Public International Law in Munich, the UN Division of the German Foreign Office in Berlin; at the Human Rights Council for the Permanent Mission of Germany to the UN in Geneva; as well as for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of St. Gallen, an LL.M. from The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and a JD from the University of Munich.



**ETHEL BROOKS** is Associate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies and Sociology at Rutgers University and a Tate-TrAIn

Transnational Fellow at the University

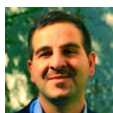
of the Arts London, where she was the US-UK Fulbright Distinguished Chair (2011-2012). Brooks is a member of the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, Chair of the Board of the European Roma Rights Centre, and member of the Bavaripe Academy of the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture. She has served on the US Delegation to the Human Dimension Implementation Meetings of the OSCE and spoke in the General Assembly for the United Nations Holocaust Remembrance Ceremony. Since 2007, Brooks has co-directed the *Feminist Critical Analysis* course in Dubrovnik, and since 2015, the Summer University course on Romani Studies at CEU. Brooks is the author of the award-winning *Unraveling the Garment Industry: Transnational Organizing and Women's Work*.



**ANINA CIUCIU** is a young lawyer and author, a French and Romanian citizen of Romani origin. In 2013, she published "I'm Roma, and I remain," a book that told her own

story: a Romani child living in a Europe full of hate, police brutality, and discrimination and who escaped from the poverty of slums to enter the Sorbonne University. Her book has been translated into Romanian and Italian. She became a model role. She is active in several NGOs, including "The Voice of Roma," "ASET 93," the "May 16th Movement." In September 2017, she was the first Romani person in the French history running for national election (Senate). She is currently the coordinator of the

collective #SchoolForAll, a group composed of young leaders of Romani migrant, French Traveller, and refugee origins who are leading a national campaign for access to education.



**DR. ISMAEL CORTÉS** currently holds a double academic position as a part-time Lecturer at the Unesco Chair of Philosophy (Universitat Jaume I de Castelló) and as a Visiting

Researcher at the Institute DEMOS Paz (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid). Last year he was awarded a postdoctoral position at the Romani Studies Program (Central European University). His research interest focuses on the interrelation among law-culture-politics, by analyzing how ideologies constitute policy frames and action programs. He has been a researcher at the School of Critical Theory & Cultural Studies (University of Nottingham), the Institute for Conflicts Studies (International University of Andalusia) and the Institute of Human Rights Bartolomé de las Casas (Universidad Carlos III de Madrid). He worked as a policy analyst for Open Society Foundations from 2016 to 2018, and he is an associate researcher with the Brussels based think tank Centre for European Policy Studies.

**AURORA VERGARA FIGUEROA**

is Assistant Professor of Sociology and the Director of the Afrodiasporic Studies Center (CEAF) at Universidad Icesi in Cali/Colombia. She is the

author of the book *Afrodessantant Resistance to Deracination in Colombia: Massacre at Bellavista-Bojayá-Chocó* (Palgrave Macmillan). <https://www.palgrave.com/de/book/9783319597607>.



**DR. PETRA GELBART** completed her Ph.D. in musicology/ethnomusicology at Harvard University and went on to earn a

Master's degree in music therapy from Molloy College. Her research interests include intercultural communication, education, and the Holocaust. In addition to practicing music therapy, Gelbart teaches part-time at Ramapo College of New Jersey and is the curator-in-chief of the Music Section for RomArchive. Having immigrated from the Czech Republic, she has been a Romani activist and stage musician for over twenty years and serves on the Board of Directors of the American nonprofit Voice of Roma.



**DR. MARCOS TOYANSK SILVA**

**GUIMARAIS** is a researcher and group leader at the Laboratory of Studies on Ethnicity, Racism, and Discrimination at the University of

São Paulo (LEER-USP). He has a Ph.D. in Human Geography from the University of São Paulo (2012) and undertook post-doctoral research at the University of Seville (2015-2016). He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Gypsy Lore Society. His has organized several conferences and lecture series on Romanies in Brazil, engaging researchers of Romani and non-Romani backgrounds from South America and Europe and promoting Romani Studies throughout the country. He has co-edited and contributed to a volume of essays entitled “Ciganos: Olhares e Perspectivas” (forthcoming). His major fields of interest are territory, Romani minorities, borders, spaces, places, transnationalism, and diasporas.



**GEORGE ELI** is the founder of Romani Media Initiative. As a child, George Eli was taught that the Roma must remain separate from the outside world to maintain their traditions.

George eventually set out to create an ambitious documentary entitled, “Searching for the 4th Nail,” which explores those traditions. The film went on to be featured at many international film festivals and won “Best Connecticut Filmmaker Award.”

George also served as the producer of the successful documentary “Gypsy Caravan” featuring Johnny Depp. He created the Romani Media Initiative, an organization aiming to inspire an art movement that promotes Romani role models and a positive view of their culture. This void in popular culture is the inspiration behind George’s new novel, “The Last of the Magi.” This first of a novel series hopes to promote a much-needed Romani hero. George has been featured on NPR, Fox News’ Tucker Carlson, sharing his opinions on the need for Roma role models.



**RITA IZSÁK-NDIAYE** is a human rights expert from Hungary, currently based in Senegal, who has been working with civil society and multilateral organizations in various

countries, including in Somalia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the fields of discrimination, racism, minority rights, social inclusion, and other related issues. She was the Chief of Staff in the Hungarian Ministry of Justice and Public Administration and was responsible for several key priorities under Hungary’s EU Presidency, including the establishment of the European Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies. She is a former UN Special Rapporteur on

minority issues (2011-2017) and is currently a member and the Rapporteur of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2018-2022).



**DR. TANJA JOVANOVIĆ** is

Post-Doctoral Fellow at CEU-Harvard University. She holds a Ph.D. in Education from the University of Sussex, UK. She was a Graduate

Teaching Research Associate at the Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research (CHEER) while studying at Sussex, and also initiated a research project on Internationalisation and Mobility of Roma in Higher Education within Europe. Currently, Tanja is part of the Justice Initiative Open Society Foundation office team in London. Her work focuses on overcoming barriers to Roma in education and facilitating access to mainstream school.



**TIMEA JUNGHHAUS** is an art

historian and contemporary art curator. She is the executive director of the Berlin-based European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture

(ERIAC). Previously, Junghaus was Research Fellow at the Institute for Art History, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. She has researched and published extensively on the links between modern and contemporary art and critical theory, with particular reference to issues of cultural difference, colonialism, and minority representation. In recognition of her curatorial activities, Junghaus received the Kairos - European Cultural Prize from the Toepfer Stiftung, in 2008. Her curatorial works include the Hidden Holocaust (2004), Paradise Lost - the First Roma Pavilion at the 52nd Venice Contemporary Art Biennale (2007), the Roma Hip-hop Conference (2010), The Romani Elders Intervention for the Unfinished Holocaust Memorial at the 7th Berlin Biennale (2012), the (Re-)Conceptualizing Roma Resistance, Hellerau, Dresden (2015, 2016) the Visual Art Section for the RomArchive (2016-2017).



**ANGÉLA KÓCZÉ** is an Assistant

Professor of Romani Studies and Academic Director of the Roma Graduate Preparation Program at Central European University in

Budapest, Hungary. Between 2013–17, she was a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies Program at Wake Forest University. She has published several peer-reviewed articles and book chapters, as well as several thematic policy papers related to social inclusion, gender equality, social justice, and civil society. In 2013, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, DC, honored Kóczé with the Ion Ratiu Democracy Award

for her interdisciplinary research approach, which combines community engagement and policymaking with in-depth participatory research on the situation of the Roma. She is the co-editor of *The Romani Women's Movement: Struggles and Debates in Central and Eastern Europe* (Routledge, 2018, with Violetta Zentai, Jelena Jovanović and Enikő Vincze).



**MICHÈLE LAMONT** is Professor of Sociology and African and American Studies, the Robert I. Goldman Professor of European Studies, and Director of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University. She is also Co-director of the Successful Societies Program of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research. A cultural and comparative sociologist, Lamont is the author of a dozen books and edited volumes and over one hundred articles and chapters on topics including culture and inequality, racism and stigma, academia and knowledge, social change and successful societies, and qualitative methods. Recent publications include the coauthored book *Getting Respect: Responding to Stigma and Discrimination in the United States, Brazil, and Israel* (Princeton University Press, 2016); a special issue of the *British Journal of Sociology*, “The Trump/Brexit Moment: Causes and Consequences”; and her ASA Presidential Address “Addressing Recognition Gaps: Destigmatization and the Reduction of Inequality,” published in the *American Sociological Review*.



**DR. LUCIANO MARIZ MAIA** is a lecturer on *Constitutional Law and International Protection of Human Rights* at the Centro de Ciências Jurídicas (Center for Juridical Sciences), Federal University of Paraíba. Luciano has a Ph.D. from the Federal University of Pernambuco (Brazil). He is a member of the Ministério Público Federal (Federal Public Ministry), as Associate Prosecutor-General of the Republic, acting before the Superior Court of Justice and the Federal Supreme Court (Supremo Tribunal Federal). From 2016 to 2018, he served as the Coordinator of the Sixth Chamber of the Prosecutor-General Office (national coordination of the judicial promotion and defense of Indigenous Peoples, and Traditional Communities). Since September 2017, he has held the position of Deputy-Prosecutor-General of the Republic (Vice-Procurador-Geral da República).



**RADU MARIAN** is currently a Member of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova. He is the first ever MEP with Roma origins. Prior to becoming MP, he co-founded and managed TwentyTu – an educational project that provides online courses free of charge to all schoolchildren in Moldova. He graduated with a Master's Degree in International Business at the University of Edinburgh, as a recipient of the Chevening scholarship from the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office. For three years before starting his graduate degree, he was the communication manager for Expert-Grup – a leading think-tank in the country. Radu has completed a BSc Degree in Finance & Banking at the Academy of Economic Studies from Moldova (2013) and a Specialty Baccalaureate Diploma in Corporate Management at the Financial Banking College in Chisinau (2010), in addition to a one-year fellowship in Marketing at the University of Louisiana at Monroe in USA (2012). His other interests include public policy, economics, international affairs.

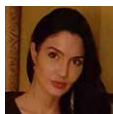


**DR. MARGARETA (MAGDA) MATACHE** is a Roma rights activist from Romania, director of the Roma Program at Harvard FXB, and also a Harvard instructor. In 2012, she was awarded a Hauser postdoctoral fellowship at Harvard FXB and founded the Roma Program. She co-edited *Realizing Roma Rights* (U Penn Press, 2017) with Jacqueline Bhabha and Andrzej Mirga. The volume investigates anti-Roma racism and documents a growing Roma-led political movement engaged in building a more inclusive and just Europe. From 2005 to 2012 Matache was the executive director of Romani CRISS, a leading NGO that defends and promotes the rights of Roma.



**ALINE MIKLOS** is a doctoral Art History student at École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) and at Universidade de Sao Paulo (USP). She is a member of the Center de Recherches sur Les Arts et Langage (CRAL-EHESS) and the editorial board of the *Revue Artelogie*. She published articles in scientific journals that are available at <https://ehess.academia.edu/AlineMiklos>. Aline is also a singer, cultural producer, and manager. In the years that she lived in Paris, she studied Romani at the Institut de Langues Orientales and participated in the organization *La voix des Roms*. In Argentina, in addition to her Romani advocacy, she coordinates the project “Kalo Chiriklo - Latin American Gypsy Music.”





**ALEXANDRA OPREA** is a Romanian Romani attorney, author, and activist who lives in New York City. Under the tutelage of Kimberlé Crenshaw at both Columbia

University and UCLA, Alexandra pioneered the application of intersectionality theory to Romani women. She has worked with Romani asylum seekers for over a decade and has worked with Romani grassroots organizations, as well as with the African American Policy Forum on affirmative action campaigns. She has published in the areas of racism, intersectionality, domestic violence, child marriages, exclusionary discourses, and reproductive rights. She received a B.A. from Vassar College, an M.A. from Columbia University, and a J.D. from UCLA School of Law, where she was an editor on the UCLA Law Review. She is currently devoting her time to defending immigrants in removal proceedings and completing an LL.M.



**KRISTIN RAESII** is an American Romani researcher and activist.

Involved in advocacy on behalf of the American Romani community for over a decade, she is currently serving

on the Board of Directors for the California-based non-profit Voice of Roma. She is contracted as the VOR Program Manager in charge of data collection for Harvard's FXB Center project researching Romani communities in the United States. Raeesi has been a panelist at several national conferences, and given media interviews and written op-eds for national news outlets on the topic of Romani rights and representation. Raeesi holds a Bachelor's degree in International Studies as well as a Masters in Communication with an emphasis on critical and cultural theory and audio-digital storytelling.



**VICTORIA RÍOS** is a teacher, activist, and musician. She studied at Berklee College of Music (2009-2013) and the University of Seville (2009) and holds a *Diplomado de Musicoterapia*

from UDELAS (2017-2018). She founded an inclusive and multicultural center for music and the arts in Boston where she taught for five years (2013-2019), and recently returned to the S.F. Bay Area to continue to study music therapy/memory care with her father, using Flamenco Cante. She is a direct descendant of the *Familia Gastoreña* Flamenco dynasty (Máron D.F. Spain) through her father Agustín Ríos Amaya (1947 -), Great Uncle Diego del Gastor (1908-1973) and Great-Great Aunt Ana Amaya Molina "Aniya la Gitana" (1855-1933). She is a first-generation American who was raised to regard her rich Romani family tradition proudly and has made it her business to seek out her history and people, with every intent to

participate in furthering their recognition, forward social movement, and equal rights.



**BELEN RODRIGUEZ DE ALBA**

is an International lawyer by training, with a Masters Degree in Political Science and Sociology, University

Paris X Nanterre. She was a legal

advisor for Medecins sans Frontières (MSF) in Côte d'Ivoire and Guatemala. She has worked at the United Nations since 1998 in different locations, including Angola, Timor Leste, Colombia and Guatemala and at Geneva Headquarters. She has been working at the Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Section of OHCHR in Geneva since 2009 where she has specialized in minority rights. She has several publications on minority rights, including "The international protection framework for minorities" at the European Yearbook on minority rights, or "The rights of linguistic minorities in international human rights standards," publication of the European Language Equality Network. She is fluent in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese and Italian.



**DR. IULIUS ROSTAS** is the Chair

of Romani Studies and Assistant Professor at Central European

University in Budapest. Previously, he

was an Affiliated Fellow with the

Institute for Advanced Studies at CEU, Senior Fellow with the Open Society Foundations Roma Initiatives Office and Visiting Lecturer at the Corvinus University of Budapest. He has worked for the Open Society Foundations, the European Roma Rights Center and the Government of Romania and consulted the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the World Bank, the European Commission, and the Roma Education Fund. Dr. Rostas is the editor of "Ten Years After: A History of Roma School Desegregation in Central and Eastern Europe" (CEU Press, 2012) and in 2011 he published "Social Inclusion or Exclusion: the Rights of Persons Living with HIV in Moldova" (Cartier Publishing, 2011). His book "Ethnicity, Power and Inclusion: Why Policies towards Roma in Europe Are Failing" will be published by CEU Press in 2019.



**DAFINA SAVIC** is a McGill

University graduate. Shortly after

completing her studies in Political Sciences, Dafina founded Romanipe,

a Not-for-Profit Organization whose

main mission is to defend the human rights and dignity of Romani populations in Canada and worldwide. The organization recently led efforts resulting in recognition of the Romani Genocide by the Canadian Government. In her capacity as Executive Director of the organization, she

contributed and developed several international initiatives seeking to advance the human rights situation of Roma. Her work as the human rights coordinator at the Montreal Holocaust Museum as well as her involvement in the Roma Genocide Remembrance Initiative led her to be appointed as the Youth Delegate for the Canadian Delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). In 2016, Dafina was the recipient of the Young Quebecers Leading the Way Award for her work on human rights issues. Dafina recently co-founded an agency specializing in strategic consulting on matters of diversity and inclusion.



**LELA SAVIC** is a Kalderash Roma from Serbia, living in Canada. She is an independent journalist from Montreal. She has worked at CBC's investigative show *Enquête*, French

Canadian journal *La Presse* and she currently collaborates to various news outlets in Canada. She also gives conferences on media biases and fake news and coordinates the Quebec branch of Journalists of Colour Canada. Lela has a bachelor's degree in Communications and Psychology from Concordia University, a certificate in Journalism from the University of Montreal and is currently pursuing a certificate in Investigations and Intelligence at the University of Montreal.



**KAY KAUFMAN SHELEMAY** is the G. Gordon Watts Professor of Music and Professor of African and African American Studies at Harvard University. Shelemay's recent books

include *Pain and its Transformations. The Interface of Biology and Culture* (2007, co-edited with Sarah Coakley); *Creating the Ethiopian Diaspora* (2011, co-edited with Steven Kaplan), and *Soundscapes: Exploring Music in a Changing World* (3rd ed., 2015). Currently writing a book on musicians from the African Horn in global motion, Shelemay has published numerous other books, articles, editions, and recordings.

A national Phi Beta Kappa/Frank M. Updike Memorial Scholar for 2010-2011, Shelemay is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Academy for Jewish Research, the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences, and the American Philosophical Society. She has been awarded many fellowships and prizes and held the Chair of Modern Culture at the John W. Kluge Center of the U.S. Library of Congress during 2007-2008. At Harvard University, Shelemay has been named a Walter Channing Cabot Fellow and was awarded the Joseph R. Levenson Memorial Teaching Prize, the Phi Beta Kappa Teaching Prize, and the Everett Mendelsohn Graduate Mentoring Prize.



**CAROL SILVERMAN**, Professor of Anthropology/Folklore and Public Culture at the University of Oregon, has been involved with Romani culture for over 40 years as a

researcher, teacher, activist, and performer. Focusing on Roma in Bulgaria and Macedonia and the American and West European Romani diasporas, her research explores the intersection of politics, music, human rights, gender, and state policy with a focus on issues of representation. Her current project examines the issues of appropriation, migration, and race in relationship to the globalization of "Gypsy" music. Her book *Romani Routes: Cultural Politics and Balkan Music in Diaspora* (Oxford University Press) won the 2013 book prize from the Society for Ethnomusicology. She is the curator of Balkan Music for the international digital RomArchive and Board member of the American-based NGO Voice of Roma. Her recent articles appear in *Critical Romani Studies*, *Western Folklore*, *Ethnomusicology Forum*, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, and the edited volume *The Romani Women's Movement*.



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received his BA from Harvard in Molecular Biology and his Ph.D. from Brown in Comparative Literature.

He is a Professor of the Humanities at the College of Letters, Wesleyan University, in Middletown, CT, where he has taught for nearly 45 years, with visiting appointments at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, Johns Hopkins, Columbia, and Oregon State University. He is the founder of two periodicals and still edits one of them, named 'Diaspora: a journal of transnational studies.' He has published a book in his native Armenian on the Armenian diaspora, has co-edited with Waltraud Kokot a volume on *Diaspora, Identity and Religion* (2004, Routledge), and is the author of many articles on diasporas, exile, nationalism, modern American literature, critical theory, and Armenian literature. He has an abiding interest in how migrant dispersions become consolidated as diasporas and in the stateless power of diasporas.

Since 2012, the Harvard FXB Center has implemented an innovative research Roma program. Among the research conducted are projects that: explore the rights and participation of Romani children and adolescents, document past and present state-sponsored violence against Roma, and advocate for Roma rights within academic and policy circles.

### OUR GOALS

The Roma program aims to shift Romani studies away from the margins of academic interest and toward a central place in social and political theory and multidisciplinary and multiregional studies. We seek to introduce questions relating to Roma rights into relevant academic and policy agendas in the United States and elsewhere by amplifying the voices of leading and emerging Romani scholars and spokespersons through research, events, and publications.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Harvard FXB Center's Roma Program, please contact its director, Dr. Margareta Matache, at [mmatache@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:mmatache@hsph.harvard.edu)

<https://fxb.harvard.edu/the-roma-program/>





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